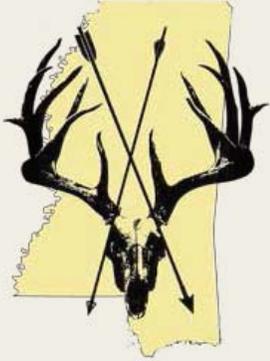


PASSING



IT ON

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Children usually look up to an older student or an adult to influence them in things that they do. Whether it is baseball, football, softball, hunting, archery, golf, or any other sport, mentors help guide young children in the choices they make. Adults who have been taught the love of team sports or the love of hunting as a child, should continue the tradition and pass it on to the next generation.

My father and uncles took time to teach me the love of the outdoors and the love of archery. Back in the 1970's we would take a gum sapling and put trotline string on it for a bow. Milk weeds made great arrows to shoot out of the homemade bow. To advance to a more sophisticated bow, one uncle made me a homemade hickory recurve. Later in my childhood, my parents gave me a Herter's recurve, and then as a teenager a compound bow.

Watching my uncle shoot his recurve getting ready for bow season lit a fire in me that has burned for more than 40 years. When I was working as a young coach, Mr. Bob Lambuth, a member of Percy Quinn Archery club, taught me to make bow strings. He also introduced me to field archery. Bow hunting friends introduced me to 3D tournament archery in the late 1980's. While there are children out there who love the sport of archery and bow hunting due to someone showing them the way, there are many other children who have not yet been introduced to this wonderful sport.

2008 was the year that I got involved with an archery program taught in the schools and started teaching children the love of tournament archery. This a great basic introduction to the archery program and is offered in most states. There are also many after school programs that are really good. One of my daughters competed in the school program, but also hunted and shot some real



archery competitions. Along with her good grades and her love of archery, she was able to pursue archery at the collegiate level. Four years later, after watching her achieve an individual national championship, several team championships, and many top three finishes, I realized that there are more children who need to be introduced to my passion of archery.

One reason that I have been introducing kids to archery, is the hope of getting them into bow hunting. There are several great archery programs out there, but the one that I foresee growing bow hunters is Scholastic 3D Archery, or S3DA. This program started as a tournament 3D program, but has expanded to also include both indoors and outdoors. This more closely follows the college archery format. The things that have really caught my attention is that their numbers are doubling every year and this program allows kids to shoot

real bows. S3DA does not require any specific equipment, but follows a standardized tournament format. Children can choose any equipment they want, as long as they are within the rules. There are compound classes, Olympic recurve classes, basic bow classes which include both recurve and long bow. S3DA not only teaches tournament archery, but promotes ethical bow hunting. In 2016 kids participating in S3DA where polled and 86% said they planned to start bow hunting. 45% of the students said they used a separate bow for bow hunting, which means more dollars to shops. Many children in this program have been able to attend college on archery and academic scholarships to continue the passion of archery. In 2016, S3DA National Tournament archers saw well over \$4 million in college archery scholarships received. 2017 has introduced the S3DA program to even more states like Mississippi. There

have been scholarships received at the state levels also.

Whether it is to just shoot a bow for competition or hunting, there are children out there waiting for someone to introduce them to the sport of archery or bow hunting. If we want to see more hunting licenses sold for archery season, or bows sold for target archery, it will not happen if we as adults don't take the time to show them. Haley, who is my 22 year old daughter, told me towards the end of her 4 year college undergraduate degree and college archery career that when she finishes Physical Therapy School, she plans to stay involved in archery. She plans to compete some as an adult and maybe teach archery as a coach on the side, passing on what she has been taught to other children. This is truly a beautiful sport or outdoor passion that needs to be passed on.

