

## **Dixie Deer Classic President's Message 2023**

On behalf of the men and women of the Wake County Wildlife Club, we welcome you to the 42nd Annual Dixie Deer Classic. Whether this is your first or 42<sup>nd</sup> Dixie Deer Classic, we are glad you are here. The Wake County Wildlife Club is a nonprofit, all volunteer organization with our members coming from all walks of life. The one thing we all have in common is we enjoy and respect the great outdoors by hunting, fishing, boating, camping, just to name a few. It is only because of you that we are able to be here each year, continuing the mission of the Wake County Wildlife Club, supporting and promoting conservation and education programs to further enhance our wildlife and natural resources.

One of our goals, since the inception of the Dixie Deer Classic in 1981, is to compile an accurate record of the largest deer taken in North Carolina. We record where they were harvested and who the lucky hunter was, the manner of take, and other pertinent information. It has been an overwhelming success. We have scored over 19,000 deer heads. The Dixie Deer Classic has earned the title from many as the "Granddad of all Deer Shows". So, bring your deer heads in to be scored (Boone & Crockett for gun and Pope and Young for bow) and displayed on the "Bragging Boards" located in the Expo Building.

In North Carolina we are fortunate to have a thriving black bear population, including some of the largest black bears on the planet. The Wake County Wildlife Club has taken the lead in scoring and keeping record of them at the Dixie Deer Classic. North Carolina black bear skull scoring/tracking continues this year as well. If you were fortunate enough to harvest a black bear this past season, be sure to bring it's skull to the show for an official score.

Over the years, we have tried to continue to improve and evolve the Dixie Deer Classic. You can keep up with our programs and activities through social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. Also, download the free Dixie Deer Classic Phone App to stay informed and get the most out of your visit to the 2023 Dixie Deer Classic. You can also visit our website: [www.dixiedeerclassic.org](http://www.dixiedeerclassic.org) for more information

The 42nd Annual Dixie Deer Classic is honored to welcome special guests and celebrities, Michael Waddell ("Bone Collector"), Rachel Ahtila (Professional Hunting Guide), and Hickock45 (YouTube Gun Expert). This group of experts will be available to share their experience and expertise with everyone attending the 2023 Dixie Deer Classic.

We continue to provide fun for the whole family with a BB Gun Shoot, Archery Shoot, Wildlife Scavenger Hunt, and Kids Fishing Pond for the youth. Educational Courses for both beginners and seasoned hunters will be offered along with a Trail Cam Contest. The Carolina Dock Dogs, a K9 jumping competition has returned and continues to be one of our hottest attractions. Also, there will be up to twenty teams competing in the Venison Chili Championship.

Through your patronage of the Dixie Deer Classic, we have been able to support and donate over \$1,764,000.00 in support of wildlife conservation and education over the past decades. How?

- We fund Hunters for the Hungry to supply enough venison protein for 30,000 meals a year. That's over 380,000 meals through 2022.

- We send kids to annually to Camp Canvasback and the Fur Fish and Game Rendezvous.
- We continue teach people at our education facility about Hunter Education, Becoming an Outdoors Woman, Trapping, Archery, Tree Stand Safety, and more. To date, over 9000 people have been through our programs.
- We partner with area universities to allow college students their first hunting training opportunities through the Academics Afield program.
- We support other wildlife conservation and education organizations such as the following:
  - Coastal Conservation Association
  - NC Bowhunters Association
  - NC Handicapped Sportsmen
  - NCSU Leupold Wildlife Club
  - NC Trappers Association
  - National Wild Turkey Foundation
  - NC Hunters for the Hungry
  - National Rifle Association
  - Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

We would especially like to thank our 2023 sponsors for their support of the Dixie Deer Classic, the Wake County Wildlife Club and the conservation and education programs their generous contributions help us provide. Our 2023 sponsors are: RAM The Official Truck of the Dixie Deer Classic, Mahindra Tractors, Performance East, National Land Realty and Triangle Pond Management.

Once again, we are all at the 42nd Annual Dixie Deer Classic because of our collective passion for the outdoors. Our hunting traditions continue because of the dedication of people like YOU. On behalf of the Wake County Wildlife Club, I want to most humbly thank all of our sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and guests, that make a show like the Dixie Deer Classic a success. God bless and enjoy the show!

Enjoying the great outdoors with you,

Joe Milinichik  
2023 President, Wake County Wildlife Club

