Group of kids taking part in deer hunt

Chance to shoot Sahara deer for 12 special people

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Twelve special people are getting a rare chance to bag a deer this weekend at Sahara Woods.

Brigid O’Donoghue, president and founder of United Special Sportman Alliance, for the fourth year, has brought 12 critically ill or disabled people down to Saline County’s deer hotspot where there will be more skill required to get a deer than shooting fish in a barrel, but not all that much more.

“When shooting, identify your target,” Site Superintendent Eric McClusky said.

He told the crowd of young people, friends and parents the hunting guide will call all shots and to not shoot until the guide says. He also told the parents to remain patient.

“But I promise you if they don’t get to take that shot, there will be another shot to take,” McClusky said.

He said last year’s hunt was not a 100 percent success. The day was warm, sunny and breezy. But this weekend should be great for deer, though uncomfortable for humans — rainy, chilly and ugly.

The hunters will be in small blinds with about three per blind, the hunter, the guide and a parent.

Illinois State Conservation Police Officer John Williamson went over the rules of the hunt for the crowd Thursday night at the Carrier Mills Municipal Building, reminding them hunting hours are dawn to dusk and to keep in mind Sunday’s end of daylight savings time. Outside of those hours, firearms need to be unloaded and tucked away into cases. The hunters need a complete blaze orange vest and hat even inside the blinds. The deer will be checked in at the main office of Sahara Woods as soon as possible.

“But the main thing we want to do this weekend is to have fun and to have fun we have got to be safe,” Williamson said.

“The only thing I want to say is welcome you. You are very welcome and we are glad to have you all,” McClusky said.

McClusky and about all travelers between Saline and Williamson county.

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