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Muzzle Blasts

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The Second Amendment

A WELL REGULATED MILITIA, BEING NECESSARY TO THE SECURITY OF A FREE STATE,
THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS, SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE a.k.a. "Scoring Shed"



Dave Ehrig - Editor

April is the month of renewal. For Christians, Easter reminds us of sacrifice and eternal hope. The golden daffodils bring a bleak winter landscape back to a brilliant spring life and a renewed interest in enhancing the farm, home, cabin landscape full of promise. Whitetails are beginning to show their spotted fawns, wild trout are adding a dash of fresh flavor in the woodfire skillet compared to the bland, canned, frozen or dried items in our outdoor diet. Longhunters will find wild turkeys in all their beautiful plumage; make the hills come alive with music. And the NMLRA Muzzle Blasts April issue promises to get you out of your easy chair with enticing, informative, and fun features to tempting your muzzleloading calendar.

With Daylight Savings Time now in effect, one has more time after work or school to get to the range. In Mike Yazel's President message, he writes about the results of the last BOD elections, make sure you take a look at who is helping to move our association forward. He also reassures that more black powder (Schuetzen) is in transit from Europe to assure us of our Spring National Shoot in June. Mike also asks each of us to share our extra black powder supplies with our friends in their local clubs so that our sport continues uninterrupted. With Estes Energetics returning the GOEX brand back to the pipeline in 2023 your stash will be returned to you within a year, if not sooner.

Knowing that you replaced the batteries in your smoke alarms (?) with the changing of the time in your clocks (?). Did you also remember to renew your NMLRA membership(s)? As editor, I was asked by Membership Secretary, Lindsey Brown to be patient with the USPS return of your membership cards. The renewal forms that were filled out during the February 4/5 Lewisburg 18th Century Artisans was mailed immediately after the show and was in the USPS postal system for two weeks after the Field Reps had mailed them to the office! Just like the late deliveries of your magazine, which is frustrating at best and intolerable at worst; we have asked, cajoled, and pleaded with the postal system to get back to speedier mail delivery. The good folks at your local post office are not to blame; it is the system. Federal help is and has been needed ever since the pandemic started. Please write to your Federal Representatives and Senators to address this national issue.

As the National Spring Shoot is only two months away, it is time to think about getting your favorite muzzleloader ready for competition. If you are a flintlock shooter, Bruce Bear has some thoughts to share of Flintlock Ignition. He writes, "In this series I wish to discuss flintlock ignition from the scientific perspective. Many interactions need to occur to get the ball traveling down range. The points I will consider include; flint meets steel, sparks ignite pan powder and finally main charge ignition. My intent is to consider each of these steps and

the chemistry involved. Before diving into these specific steps I wish to open this series with an overview of black powder chemistry. . .

"While reading Beard's article, it brought one of our obits into clear focus. If there ever was a friend who guided me through the understanding of black powder chemistry, it was Bill Knight of Reading, PA. James E. Kirkland, General Manager, Schuetzen Powder Energetics, Inc. wrote, "Most of you reading this obituary have no idea how this quiet yet opinionated man from Reading, PA, affected our understanding of what makes a quality black powder. The Pernambuco factory in Brazil told me that when they made black powder, they followed the steps in the manual. However, they did not know the whys. Bill provided the whys, and over nine years, he helped me help the Brazilians improve the product to its apex. When I met Bill, he was a retired lab technician and used that experience to tear black powder apart to its core. I learned about potassium nitrate purities, the importance of carbon content of charcoal, and the fact that water—used in the grinding process—can be contaminated with sulfur-eating bacteria. Everything that Bill taught was implemented to improve black powder products and the education of others." Thank you for your contributions, Bill. The "Mad Monk" will live on in all of our BP 10Xs and Longhunter trophies. (Ed.)

Another NMLRA Hall of Fame icon of Dixon's Muzzle Loading Shop and founder of 37 years of Gunmakers Fairs, Chuck passed away in late December, but his lasting legacy lives on in all who knew him. Although I rarely spotlight Letters to the Editor in this report, a letter from Bruce Russell is worth repeating. "There will never be enough said about Chuck Dixon. I am sure he has touched everyone's heart at one time or another with his teachings of "Black Powder". Back in the early 90's when I got started into Black powder I visited his shop, I would drive out there on a Saturday and spend half a day there. There was a world of information in his shop, and everyone was there to help you out."

After the call was put out for articles from our Charter Clubs, we got a great response from John White down in Georgia. He reports on the Talking Rock BP Shooters Charter Club and is actively talking to other clubs in the region. John states, "The Talking Rock Black Powder Shooters Charter Club was created as a result of a generated idea that the BP station instructors in the PCSC youth program rarely got to shoot their rifles themselves as they supported and were dedicated to the youth program with their personal equipment and funds. This day, just for adults, was to shoot their firearms, test loads, repair broken guns, test fire, create new items for presentation, relax, add to the youth education station experience and just enjoy our firearms that we used with friends and family. These individuals believe in preserving and teaching the history of firearms that helped make this country what it is. The NMLRA has a very similar charter to teach and be a living history of our founding fathers firearms. Out of this objective, a merger of the BP station

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instructors and the NMLRA was created. Thus on January 31, 2020 the so named Talking Rock Shooters organization was granted a charter with the NMLRA and sponsored by the Pickens County Sportsmen's Club of Georgia . . . "

And for you muzzleloading hunters of North America's only-feathered big game animal, MB has not one, but three exciting features involving several subspecies of wild turkey, multiple styles of muzzleloading shotguns, and even closure on "The Flintlock Grand Slam!" If this doesn't bring of spark of life to your front-loading dreams and spine tingling gobbling music to your ears, you had better check your pulse!

Let's roll with Joseph Dabney and a 1770-era fowler on a Merriams Turkey hunt in Colorado. Or, hot-foot it through the Michigan forests to find a mid-April Eastern Wild Turkey at the end of a smoking, Early Virginia-style flintlock 20 gauge. And not to be missed, take a real step back in time to the days of the Blunderbuss as Gary Lewis takes us a Rio Grande Turkey hunt in Oregon "hunting with a kit-built thunder pipe!"

And a must read article by Barton Copenheaver, "Come Home to Friendship" gives us a special glimpse of what is in store for our members and soon-to-be members of the NMLRA when they visit and camp at our National Home Range in the little Indiana town of Friendship. This article brought back many fine memories for this editor who has been coming there since 1979, and can't wait to get my grandchildren to follow in old footsteps.

The adventure awaits the bold; it only takes a first step!

Dave Ehrig^{MB}

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together to research/write/publish in 1978, "The Art of Building the Pennsylvania Longrifle." This book is still in publication and has helped introduce thousands of new builders and shooters to our culture . . . which is a testament in itself.

Sincerely yours,

Dave

Dear Dave,

Attached are 5 photos of a "French" style pistol that belongs to a good friend. He bought it last October at our Rendezvous. He brought it to me to attempt repairs and identify it. As received it had neither frizzen nor cock. The tumbler was destroyed. We agreed not to attempt cosmetic alterations, as is could be actually very old. There is an inscription on the lockplate that appears to be French. The thumb plate and butt plate decoration both appear to be sterling silver. The wood is some sort of hardwood, but too old for either of us to identify. If anyone has any information on it would be very helpful... Is it a real antique or a replica that has seen a lot of abuse? We have no intensions of trying to fire it.



Sincerely,

Richard Emms

emmsrk@yahoo.com

Laguna Rendezvous president and resident gunsmith.

Dear Bruce,

Richard, I will put this in the April Letter to the Editor for readers to get back to you. This antiquity is beyond my knowledge base.

Sincerely

Dave

LETTERS
to the
EDITOR
WE WANT TO HEAR
FROM YOU!

Submit your letter to the editor
by mailing to:

NMLRA Letters to the Editor
PO Box 67,
Friendship, IN 47021
or email dehrig@nmlra.org or
amay@nmlra.org



Charter Club

CHATTER

By Doug Zaffino

Hello everyone. This month I am overjoyed to pass along information and pictures of a club I dearly love to go to shoot. My shooting here has been the Territorials in the dead of summer. In the month of July, the weekend just before Dixons. Most generally hot. But never fear there is ample shade to make your day go a little easier heat wise. They not only have a wonderful range but super wonderful people. Camping is so nearby. Practically next door. And guess what! Cabela's is 5 miles down the

road. So, you know where I spend at least one night (till closing). This club as you notice hosts a Territorial shoot in mid-July every year. They have a staff that has a lot of experience in having a well-run event. Shoot slug gun or bench? Well, here you go! The Blue Mountain Muzzleloaders is an event that you won't regret attending and worth whatever drive you do. I invite you to give them a visit. So let me present to you the Blue Mountain Muzzleloaders club through the eyes of Gerry Rubbo.

Charter Club Spotlight

BLUE MOUNTAIN MUZZLE LOADING RIFLE ASSOCIATION

THE BLUE MOUNTAIN MUZZLE LOADERS
WELCOMES YOU TO THE
N.M.L.R.A. PA. TERRITORIAL MATCH

For the Blue Mountain Muzzle Loading Rifle Association it has been about 35 years! No that is not how old our club is, but the number of years it has hosted the NMLRA Territorial matches. How time flies!

It takes a lot of work from many hands to get it to run smoothly, but we have been blessed with hard-working members that "show up". We only have one scheduled work detail every year to weed, trim, remove dead trees and limbs, repair back stops, paint roofs or rake leaves.

Somehow, throughout the year someone "shows up" and all the other little things just get done. Phone calls are made if something major needs attention and then the

elves "show up" again. I could not be prouder to be a part of such a fine group of people.

The Territorials have seen a lot of changes through the years. The beginning years saw hours upon hours of handwriting on every target, such as the aggregate, the distance to be shot, the sights, maybe if the gun needs to be weighed and of course the competitor number.

We can now print out labels with all of this information and stick it to the correct target. With a computer program we can now have all the scores tallied for each participant making it much easier to find ties that will have to be sorted out by the scoring committee.



We now offer 21 aggregates to our faithful shooting family, with categories for men, women, intermediates, youth and sub-juniors, who all come to compete with their muzzleloaders. Rifle, bench, light bench, cap lock, flintlock, smoothbore, sighted smoothbore, pistol and even scoped events are held.

Surely there is a discipline that suits your talents. So please come to compete; come to be entertained; come to get answers to most any possible questions you may have.

We are one of the very first clubs to be chartered with the NMLRA, and there has been shooting on the grounds of Blue Mountain Muzzle Loading Rifle Association since 1938. We are a black powder-only club.

We have a fully covered firing line which includes 25,50,100 and 200 yards. There is always food and soft

drink and water available in the kitchen of the clubhouse.

We have flush toilets and some limited room for camping with electric. During the Territorials please make reservations ahead for your camping, and there are several campgrounds with swimming pools in the area as well as motels, restaurants, shopping—Cabela's is a 15-minute drive—and amusements.

We shoot every month from April to November, and regularly include offhand, bench and cross stick matches varying from month to month. September is a Slug Gun Championship match.

Check us out at www.bluemountainmuzzleloadingrifle.com Memberships are \$20 for the year and you need not be a member to participate in individual matches. All are welcome and we hope to see both old and new faces this year.

Charter Club Spotlight

TALKING ROCK BLACK POWDER SHOOTERS

I would like to introduce another one of our charter clubs. This club is one of our newest ones as to date. Please welcome Talking Rock Black Powder Shooters. John

"The Talking Rock Black Powder Shooters Charter Club was created as a result of a generated idea that the BP station instructors in the PCSC youth program rarely got to shoot their rifles themselves as they supported and were dedicated to the youth program with their personal equipment and funds. This day, just for adults, was to shoot their firearms, test loads, repair broken guns, test fire, create new items for presentation, relax, add to the youth education station experience and just enjoy our firearms that we used with friends and family. These individuals believe in preserving and teaching the history of firearms that helped make this country what it is. The NMLRA has a very similar charter to teach and be a living history of our founding fathers firearms. Out of this objective, a merger of the BP station instructors and the NMLRA was created. Thus on January 31, 2020 the so named Talking Rock Shooters organization was granted a charter with the NMLRA and sponsored by the Pickens County Sportsmen's Club of Georgia.

White one of the founding members will give us some information on them and we hope you get a chance to get out there with them.

Our inaugural year, 2020, was a difficult year as we learned what worked, what did not work, what range locations we could use, what folks wanted to shoot and the list goes on. We learned the 100 yard range does not work for us for now. SOP says no offhand shooting, roof line is unsafe for taller shooters and the bigger issue is the PCSC members do not read or listen so they refuse to let us use the range exclusively for matches and showed up trying to run us off. We generated a lot of interest in our first year charter club, but were severely hampered if not outright stopped by covid.

For 2021 we held nine formal matches with one cancelled due to weather out of 10 scheduled. In many ways they were all the same, we shot targets, but none were the same. They ranged from standing up to lying down. We used most every shooting position and developed our match rules to ensure fairness and consistency. As well our match rules were designed to be all inclusive to make sure all

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Founding member of the Talking Rock BPShooters



Youth shoot participants

shooters were welcome and could compete. We had steady attendance at our Wednesday social shoots that were designed for shooters that wanted a relaxed, shoot as many or few shots as desired, without structure and goals of simply burn some black powder, show off the new rifles, work on loads and generally enjoy life. All of our matches have been different this year and yet a similar theme. We try for fun, such as swingers and a scoring target mix each

month. It has made our BP participants better shooters rather than just throwing lead downrange at a big steel plate. They focus more and are trying for better scores and have been succeeding overall. But the most significant benefit it appears is the new friends made, friendships reestablished and a fellowship of enjoying this shooting sport." MB

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MuzzleBlasts

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