

Preparations for the State Shoot hit full stride

The impending Chatanika Shoot-out, the Alaska State Championship Shoot set for July 11-13, was the main topic of discussion at the June meetings of both the Executive Board and the Membership.

The three-day event is always a major undertaking for GHSS and involves a lot of time, talent, and treasure to pull off. This year is no exception.

At this past Tuesday's general membership meeting, Valencia Rose re-

ported to the group that at present 26 shooters have registered for the match and 10 non-shooters. (By comparison 53 shooters registered in 2007.)

Match and related shoots

The course of fire this

year will involve 12 main match stages over two days, three side matches on Friday afternoon and a Charity Shoot open for two sessions on Friday and Saturday. (See schedule in this issue.)

The main match stages will be highlighted by story lines that incorporate GHSS club members as the main characters according to Diamond Mac the club's range boss. Mac and Kootenai Brown have designed the stages to be challenging, fun, and relatively quick to shoot through. Round count for the main match includes 119 rifle, 120 pistol and 36 shotgun shells. This does not include ammunition used in either the three side matches or the charity shoot.

The side matches available to participants on Friday afternoon are a long-range pistol match, using main match pistols, shooting targets placed at approximately 25 yards for speed and accuracy; a speed shoot in which the shooter engages five bowling pins and a stop plate; and a "Last shooter standing stage, which will involve the use of all four of your main match guns.

The Charity Shoot to be held on Bay 3 will be open to participants on Friday from 4:30 to 6:00 pm and again on Saturday from 5-6:00 pm. A blank target with a hidden spot will again be used. It will cost \$5 per shot or \$20 for five rounds with the proceeds donated to a local charity. In recent years the proceeds have been presented to the Wounded Warrior Project at Fort Wainwright.

According to reports also presented at Tuesday's

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GHSS Round-up...

Almost Ready...

Nine Shooters Maintain Solstice Tradition

Nine shooters and four guests participated in this year's edition of the GHSS Summer Solstice Shoots. The shoots are purposely held on Friday and Saturday of the Solstice weekend to give those who work an opportunity to participate in this uniquely Alaska event.

This year the turn out for the two shoots was uncommonly low, with only nine shooters and four guests participating in one or both of the shoots. The weather had a lot to do with the small turn-out as several members reported leaving Fairbanks Friday evening in a windswept downpour arriving at Chatanika to find the microclimate at the range to be nearly perfect with bright blue skies and lighting which turned the greenery almost fluorescent. "People just don't know what they missed," was the common feeling when those in attendance compared notes.

Friday night's shoot saw Poco Loco Louie taking the top spot with a tally of 209.82 with Smithy Jim coming in a close second with a total score of 213.53. Kootenai Brown and Drover Knutts took

third and fourth place with scores of 232.46 and 241.81 respectively. Valencia Rose with 342.49 and Callie Crossfox with 806.03 rounded out scor-

ing. This was the first time in quite a spell that Callie had shot a match and while her pistol and rifle

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Solstice Stalwarts...



Friday night Summer Solstice shooters pose before the Trapper's Cabin at the conclusion of the shoot. Because the posse was so small the five stages were completed about an hour before Mid-night. the ensuing tail-gate finger food pot-luck carrying the group into the wee hours of Saturday morning. Pictured above are from the left, Poco Loco Louie, Smithy Jim, Valencia Rose, Drover Knutts, Callie Crossfox and Kootenai Brown. Photo: Janice.

Want to parade?

Wind Drifter would like to hear from club members interested in developing a GHSS entry in the Golden

Days Parade scheduled for Saturday, July 19th. If you would like to help, contact him at 457-2113

Frontage Refurbishment Features Fabricating Facades

Work has begun on refurbishing Bay 5 in anticipation of the upcoming State Shoot, but there is still a lot to be done.

A work party held June 15th was able to remove the old fronts in the bay and build a new one in line with the AK Corral. The GHSS Executive Board has approved the expenditure of the funds needed to buy materials for a second front to complete the reconstruction of the bay. "Once the work is completed," we can place loading tables adjacent to the East and West berms and an unloading table in the middle, facing down range, between Bays 5 and 6. Once this is done, we can have two posses shoot at the same time in these bays," explained Range Boss Diamond Mac. He went on to explain that now that work has started, the priorities are to: (1) build the second front; (2) build porches for the two fronts; (3) lay down walks; (4) build and install sign boards; (5) weather seal the raw surfaces, and (6) paint the fronts. "We have the money to buy more

materials, but only enough to build the second front. Hopefully, we can get some donations from club members and salvage some pieces off the old fronts," he said. Anyone interested in learning more about the refurbishing can contact him at Diamond-mac@outlook.com or by calling his landline: 488-5738.

him on his cell: 590-4150.

Also at the meeting, Wind Drifter brought up the fact that construction is focused on Bay 5, the entire range could use a little sprucing up in preparation for the annual championship shoot. "It wouldn't hurt, if people want to help, for them to walk around the range and repaint where it's needed and fix what needs

mowing can call him on his cell: 322-0503.

And finally, lest we forget, as far as the anecdotal history of the fronts go, the fort on Bay 1 was one of the last to be built in the initial drive to furnish each bay. Completed right before a State Shoot, Tnwhaya volunteered to use her skills with a router to build a name placard to hang from the gate posts. The morning of the shoot she arrived with her creation and it was indeed a work of art with only one issue. The name of the fort had been misspelled and competitors ended up shooting the stage at "Fort CATanika."

Shortly after the earthwork for the bays had been finished in one long marathon session, the paneled fronts were built during another multi-day effort on the front lawn of Mastadon John's house in Fairbanks and then trailered up to the range and installed. To add versatility, several were capped with sign boards that pivoted on spikes so that they could easily be turned and a front could be instantly renamed.

Miss Lydia's on Bay 3 was the result of work by Grey Griz and Lydia, Ted and Linda Smith, who were the first couple to get married after joining the club.

The Clearwater Stage front was the project of the Carlson family and named after Clearwater Creek down Delta way where they had a ranch.

The jail recently removed from Bay 5 was the sight of many challenging scenarios involving breaking out of the cell, shooting through the bars, and (probably the most crea-

One up, one to go...



Pictured above is part of the range renewal crew that retired the Clearwater Stage Stop from Bay 5 and erected a new façade on Sunday, June 15. From the left, Diamond Mac, Lead Spittin Rusty, Drover Knutts, Kootenai Brown, Lead Monger. Photo: Pokin A. Long.

The next scheduled work party is on Sunday, July 6th, with folks asked to gather at the range at 11:00 am.

While weekend work parties provide an opportunity to muster a large group on the range, at this week's membership meeting, Chatanika Scout reminded the club that there may be individuals who could work on range projects during the week. He went on say that if anyone was interested in doing so, they should contact him at Chatanikas-cout@hotmail.com or call

fixing," he said.

Kanuti River Wrangler has volunteered to mow the large areas of the range the week before the shoot with his tractor-pulled mowing deck, but there is also a need for push mowers to trim the inside of each bay. With that in mind, Kootenai Brown asked for volunteers with weed wackers to work on the bays and reminded workers to be careful as several mowers have been damaged when they hit steel hidden in the weeds and no longer visible. Anyone wishing to talk to Kanuti about the

GHSS Round Up June 2014

An occasional publication for the sole benefit of the Golden Heart Shootist Society members, their friends, casual acquaintances and any one else interested in the life and times of Interior Alaska's Cowboy Action Shootists.

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'Dirty Dingus'

I think that my subject this time has something to do with age. When I was much, much younger nearly every town had its characters. Now being a character didn't necessarily mean that anything was wrong with the tag. It simply meant that that person generally stood out from the main, whenever and wherever they happened to be. In our town we had a number of them. The case in point, we had Dirty Shirt Smith, Bird Bennett and Itchy. Of course Mr. Smith was not noted for his obsession with cleanliness, while Bird's handle had something to do with having been raised by a group of Native Americans. Itchy's moniker came about because of his constant scratching, especially if there were women around. I guess where I'm going with this is that characters, for whatever reason, make our sometimes humdrum lives a little richer by just being there.

That said, the Golden Heart Shootist Society is an extraordinary group of individuals. We seem to have more than our share of those special people. If you were to ask virtually any GHSS member who has been with the club a while to name a character, one name would be called out without hesitation: "Dirty Dingus McGee." I know you have heard the often used phrase, "if they didn't have

bad luck, they wouldn't have any luck at all." That, my friends, is Dirty Dingus.

J.R. McGee is not just smart. I'm sure based on any kind of test that measures such things, he is pushing the genius category. But I'm here to tell you, with no disrespect intended, in the course of answering the call of nature he would have to be so careful so as to not injure himself in the process. To illustrate this propensity for self destruction, I am going to share a number of happenings that took place while he was a member of this group.

In the early days of GHSS, we were often asked to perform more as a group of actors than competitive shooters. Alaska Land, as it was known in those days, often asked us to dress Western, wear our guns and do such things as ride the merry-go-round, rob the train, and stage an honest-to-goodness gun fight! On one such occasion the gun fight was to take place on the street just east of the river boat Nenana.

The scenario was that a group of nasty, mean river pirates were to assault the Nenana, and steal the gold shipment it was carrying. We divided into two groups and went to our respective positions. On the signal, because none of the visitors in the park knew what was going to happen, all Hell broke loose. The boarding party was led by none other than Dirty Dingus. As they rushed down the street to attack the boat, McGee

knelt in front of the board walk with the smoke of numerous black powder blanks swirling around him. With a trusty six gun in each hand, he leapt to his feet to lead the charge. What he didn't know, but was soon to find out, was that one of the loops on the "Jingle Bobs" of his spurs had firmly fitted itself over the head of a nail that stuck out maybe a half inch from the edge of the board walk. When McGee lunged forward with all the force an attacking pirate would generate, due to the placement of his feet, his body moved but his feet stayed right where they were planted.

As I noted earlier, no one else in the park knew what was going to happen. Two older ladies who were frozen mid-stride by the gun fire, saw Dingus go down. One of them yelled to the other, "My God, they shot him!" When McGee hit the street, it was full force--bang. It did indeed look as though he had been shot. With several nearly hysterical women going ballistic, and Dingus down, the pirate attack fizzled out right then and there.

While several of the club members went about trying to calm down the park visitors, several others set about tending to Dingus. When he fell, he tried to break the fall with his hands. Unfortunately, he had a six-shooter in each hand. Landing full face down with the guns between him and the pavement, his ribs were about the only thing that could give. The result was, as I

remember it, two broken ribs, a badly sprained right wrist, and a twisted right knee. Later we attempted to fit that loop over the head of the projecting nail, but it was not an easy thing to do.

I guess a life of "pretend" crime just wasn't in Dirty Dingus' best interest.

The following year, during a train robbery at the park, he stepped down off the train, slipped and fell backwards astraddle of the train track and broke his tail bone, rolled down the embankment, crashed into a tree and broke a rib!

This just goes to show you that there is much truth to the saying, "Without bad luck, he'd have no luck at all." Maybe at another time, I'll try to relate his run-in with a Georgia Brown Recluse spider, while on a hunting trip in Alaska.

Truly, characters are where you find them. Until next time,

Wind Drifter, GHSS #9

State Shoot...

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meeting the shoot booklet is well on its way to publication with the materials for it coming from donations.

Shoot Food

Food for the shoot will include sandwich lunches for registered participants and a Saturday evening banquet at the Chatanika Lodge. The banquet menu is composed of Pot Roast/Barbequed Chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable, coleslaw, pasta

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Solstice Shoots

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shooting was pretty much on the mark, she struggled a bit working her double. A finger food pot-luck closed out the evening's activities.

Nicked M. Good took the top spot on Saturday night shot under threatening skies and occasional sprinkles. Nick's win marked not only his second match win this season but also his second clean match. Nick tallied 181.38 for the five stages. Poco took second with a 193.04. Diamond Mac and Drover Knutts swapped stage wins as the two gunfighters worked their way through the stages. Mac took the first three stages and Drover edged him out on the last two. Still, Mac's early lead proved hard to overcome as he logged a final score of 200.09 to Drover's 206.90. Valencia Rose and Lead Spitt'n Rusty closed out the scoring with tallies of 303.82 for Valencia--who was persistent in her efforts to shoot up rounds with faulty primers--and 404.23 for Rusty.

Drover's guest, Janice, graciously volunteered to keep score on Friday, and Two Thumbs Becky kept track of the individual stage results on Saturday.

Also in attendance on Saturday were Sally Alaska and Wind Drifter. Sally did a trial run of covering the shoot photographically, while Drifter helped spot.

Fabricating Facades...

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ative) escaping the long arm of the law while being shackled to a bowling ball. The idea was that once you got out of the cell, you would move from shooting position to shooting position carrying the ball which was shackled around one of your ankles. Unfortunately, the first time we were to shoot this stage Judge Roy Bean, SASS #1, was one of the shooters and he was walking with the help of cane. Needless to say the ball and chain were quickly eliminated from the scenario.

The trapper's cabin on Bay 4 was built on a design developed by Col. Don Reed, one-time range boss, and the logs were cut on his place near Two Rivers and hauled to the range. To date, the porch

on the front has proven to be invaluable when it rains during a shoot. The original design calls for the back of the cabin to also be roofed as well, but lack of materials has delayed completion. Among other things, the Colonel is also responsible for the cut-out gambler and table often used in Bay 3 and for the slinky cowgirl silhouette that makes an appearance every now and again.

A lot of people have put a lot of thought and work into building up the range into its present state. This year's effort on Bay 5/6 falls right into that tradition.

Last one...

The last shoot before State is this Sunday, June 29. Registration starts at noon. Shooting starts at 1.

(Mid) Night Court...



Drover Knutts, seated, appears to be presiding over the Shootists who were on hand for Saturday's Summer Solstice Shoot. From the left, Nicked M. Good, Two Thumbs Becky, Poco Loco Louie, Valencia Rose, Drover, Diamond Mac, Lead Spittin Rusty and Wind Drifter. Photo: Sally Alaska

State Shoot...

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salad, dinner roll and desert. According to Berry Woman, as has been the custom, snacks and drinks will be available in the Hospitality tent. In addition she is laying in extra sandwiches for anyone not registered who chooses to eat lunch on the range for a nominal fee. Her list of needed-supplies was passed during Tuesday's meeting. Upon its return the list was found to be filled with donor sign-offs. "About the only thing we could still use is homemade baked goods," she said, after looking it over.

Staffing the Hospitality tent and serving as greeters and guides to visitors are Wind Drifter, Yukon Don and Trinity Rose, Ruby Lil' and Alaska Gunrunner.

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State Shoot...

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Scoring help still needed

Callie Crossfox noted that she is still in need of volunteers to help tabulate the scores for the shoot. Posse scorekeeping will be done by Two Thumbs Becky and Pedro De Borealis.

Clay Street Kid and a friend will be on hand to serve as brass pickers for the posses according to Alaska Lady Lou, this takes care of a burden that older shooters often find physically challenging.

Sally Alaska has volunteered to serve as photographer for the shoot and explained to the membership that she will handle the processing and fulfillment of orders for both individual pictures and a collection of shoot pictures. Her tentative plan is to send out flash drives containing the collection to those ordering them.

Plaques for the first place finishers in each category are also close to completion. Smithy Jim reported that the horseshoe plaques were just about finished and Kristen sent a bundle of the wood-burned hearts and dated ovals for the club to look over. Reaction from club members was very positive.

Trade Blanket

Once again this year, a table will be designated in the Hospitality Tent as a trade blanket. Members are encouraged to bring any items they wish to

sell or trade for display over the course of the shoot. Sale items should be clearly marked not only with the price but also with the seller's contact information.

Like last year, write-in ballots will be provided in the registration packets for the best dressed male and female registrants. Remember that costume contest hopefuls must remain in costume for the length of the shoot.

Finally, the Trail Boss noted the club continues to receive prize donations solicited by Pokin A Long from a variety of gun-related businesses. The latest are several screwdriver sets from Brownells and a \$100 gift certificate from Rugged Gear. Yet to be heard from is Sportsman's Warehouse.

Preparing for a State Championship Shoot involves running rabbits down a multitude of divergent trails. At this point in the chase, it's heartening to hear Beagles baying loudly that the object of their chase is in sight.

Something to

Think about

A recent phone call from a SASS shooter in California raises the prospect that GHSS could soon have a new 11-year-old shooter.

While finding the hardware for her use is fairly easy, it probably might not be a bad idea to start thinking about how best to incorporate young competitors into our shooting venue.

From the record book

Long time GHSS member Pokey Okie will be moving his medical practice to Anchorage at the end of June. We will miss him.

Chatanika Shoot Out Schedule

Friday, July 11, 2014

12:00-6:00 PM Registration/shooter packets issued—Hospitality Tent

1:00-5:00 PM Speed Shoot—Bay 5

1:00-3:00 PM Last Shooter Standing—Bay 6

3:00-4:30 PM Long Range Pistol

4:30-6:00 PM Charity Shoot—Bay 3

6:00 PM Range Closed

Saturday, July 12, 2014

8:00-9:00 AM Registration—Hospitality Tent

9-9:30 AM Mandatory Safety Briefing—Hospitality Tent

10:00-12:00 Main Match Stages

12:00-1:00 PM Lunch break

1:00-5:00 PM Main Match Stages

5:00-6:00 PM Charity Shoot—Bay 3

6:00 PM Range Closed

6:00-7:00 PM No Host Social Hour—Chatanika Lodge Bar

7:00-10:00 PM Banquet—Chatanika Lodge

Sunday, July 13, 2014

9:00-10:30 AM Cowboy Church

10:00-12:00 Main Match Stages

12:00-1:00 PM Lunch Break

1:00-3:00 PM Main Match Stages

3:00 PM Range Closed

4:00-5:00 PM Awards and Closing Ceremony—Hospitality Tent