

GHSS Round-up...

Green Up!

Catching On, Catching Up...



Territorial Governor and presenter, Kootenai Brown answers a question during this month's Range Officer Training held at St. Jude's Church in North Pole. The class gained much from the use of Power Point and lively interchanges between the students and the instructor. Photo: Valencia

Day-long Session Trains New Range Officers

Nineteen members of the Society gathered at St. Jude's Church, North

Pole, to participate in May 10th's Range Officer I training session conducted by Territorial Governor Kootenai Brown under the watchful eye of Range Officer III trainers, Wind Drifter and Marshal Stone. By successfully completing the class and passing a subsequent exam, eight club members were eligible to receive their ROI pins; eight present ROI's sitting in on the session were eligible to receive new pins with chevrons; and, Kootenai was eligible to receive his black pin as an RO trainer—once letters of support have been submitted to the Wild Bunch by Drifter and Stone.

During the day-long session, Kootenai used a power point presentation to emphasize the main points of the material in the SASS ROI manual and shooter's hand book., with

much of his presentation focusing on the idea that

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Big BUCKeroo...



GHSS's Kanuti River Wrangler raised the most funds for Northern region NRA and was named Top Brass Volunteer of the Year at this month's Friends of the NRA banquet held at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks. Photo: Kootenai

Best get ready- Cowboy Camp Starts Friday

The 2014 edition of Cowboy Camp, GHSS's official start of the shooting season, begins this Friday afternoon at the club's range at Chatanika Gold Camp.

The four-day event will include orientation shoots for potential new members, two six-stage matches, a novelty shoot featuring 22lr firearms, a pot-luck supper featuring the contents of a large bean pot cooked over an open fire, and a cake marking the society's 19th birthday.

"From the looks of things, this promises to be a big gathering of potential new shooters," commented GHSS Trail Boss Poco Loco Louie. "We've had a lot of interest expressed by visitors to the club table at the last gun show, and I've fielded several phone calls from people who have

Aim Small, Miss Small...



Nine year old Rowan Mustered squints down the barrel of her rubber band gun during last Saturday's AF&G's Kids' Day. Photo: Valencia.

Camp...

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been anxiously awaiting the opportunity to try out Cowboy Action Shooting.”

Campers will start arriving at the range on Friday afternoon, and after getting their camps set will have the opportunity to try out their shooting irons on the club range at their leisure.

“If anyone is available, we could use some help setting up the big Marquee tent at 6:30 PM on Friday,” Poco said.

The Saturday schedule calls for a flag-raising ceremony at 9:00 AM, with the introductory stages starting at 10:00 AM. “Our goal is to incorporate new shooters into three basic stages with guidance provided by veteran club shooters,” explained Diamond Mac, range boss. “Once we get them outfitted with guns and gear, we’ll help them get some ‘on the job’ experience by escorting them through three simplified stages,” he went on to say.

“If we have a small turn-out, we’ll be finished early, take a break, and then move right into the novelty shoots,” he added.

Scheduled to start at 3:00 PM, the 22lr novelty shoots will challenge participants with a variety of targets. “We should have something for everyone,” said Wind Drifter, “We’ll even have a team shoot where teams are made up by random draw.”

He went on to say that it would be help-

ful if veteran club shooters would bring an extra box of 22 ammunition to contribute to a pool for use by newcomers who might want to participate.

“I think it would be fun if people would bring their muzzleloaders as well,” said GHSS’s perennial Frontiersman competitor. “After the 22’s are put away and supper is over, we can sling some patched round balls at the targets.”

The community pot-luck is set for 6:30 PM with Wind Drifter in charge of

cooking up some Cowboy beans with ham. “I think we’re going to have a big group, so I’m planning on cooking at least three pounds of beans,” he explained. “With the main dish all set, everyone else should bring something to compliment it—along with their own eating utensils.”

Cowboy Church at 10:00 AM starts out Sunday morning’s activities. After the short service, Diamond Mac is hoping for some help putting the finishing touches to the six

stages for the day. Registration for the shoot is at noon with the shooting to start at 1:00 PM following the safety briefing.

The day ends with the GHSS Birthday Party at 7:00 PM. Cake will be furnished and everyone will have to bring their own drinks.

A flag raising at 9:00 AM complete with a lone piper and prayers for all those who have died in service to our country starts the day off Monday. Registration for the shoot follows at about 9:30AM with shooting to start around 10:00 AM.

“All-in-all, it looks to be a busy weekend and once the shooting stops, everyone is going to be anxious to get home,” said Diamond Mac. “But I hope they stick around to help take down the camp and clean up the range. We want to leave the place with no trace that we’ve been camping there for four days.”

No need for hot air...



Above, the help of an air compressor, Kanuti River Wrangler, Nicked M. Good, Two-thumbs Becky, Pokin A. Long and Doc Harley Davidson fill up a sack of balloon targets during Saturday’s Kids’ Day. Below, Wind Drifter coaches a young shooter in the fine art of balloon popping with a muzzle loading shotgun. Photos: Valencia



Training...

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Cowboy Action shooting as envisioned by SASS is all about having **fun** safely in a venue that is competitively challenging with earned penalties being consistently and fairly applied. “A lot of this is just common sense,” Kootenai said.

“As with any competitive sport there are specific rules that must be followed, and there are also subtle nuances that fine tune the intent of these rules,” he went on to explain. The ultimate goal of this training is to develop a corps of shooters in club who are familiar with the rule book to the point that they can feel at ease serving in a variety of range positions such as Posse Marshal, Timer Operator and Spotter.

'The Chrono Killer'

In the "Old Days" when GHSS was young, we didn't have steel targets, much less a regular place to shoot. Trying to meet all the requirements of the Single Action Shooting Society produced some interesting and often laughable incidents. One of the early requirements was to make sure that our individual hand-loaded ammunition met a designated velocity standard. At that time only one GHSS member, Montana Kid Hammer, GHSS #2, had even shot with a regular SASS club. Remember, we were "Alaskan Hand Loaders." The norm for most of us was loading as much powder in the case as it was reasonably safe to shoot.

After all, who knew when you might meet up with one of those hairy critters with big claws and sharp teeth on your next outing...?

Most of us knew what a chronograph was and what it was used for, but creating what was being called Cowboy Loads was something entirely new. Once again, only one person in the club had a chronograph. I don't remember who it was that talked the Saint Louis Kid, GHSS #6, into loaning us his chronograph to check our loads one cold windy day in October.

That day, I was the designated Range Officer. Being the RO, I set up the chronograph, along with the nearest thing I was able to make that was close to a steady rest for the firearms. It was my call, and I was not going to

allow anyone else to shoot for several reasons. The main reason being in those early days, few of us knew what skills our fellow shooters possessed. This did not set well with a number of other members.

Wayne Campbell, Alaskan Wrangler, GHSS #1, was our first Club President...our Trail Boss may have been short on any number of things, but his opinion of his point shooting ability was not one of them. When it came time to test his ammunition, he informed me that no one shot his guns but him! What's more, he was the club president and he made the rules. With that, he moved in behind the shooting stand and drew his pistol and fired his first shot. His 44-40 caliber rounds were loaded with the real stuff, GOEX, FFFG powder. When that

shot went off, there appeared the customary cloud of white smoke, but rising out of that cloud was what can be best described as chowder of red, green and black plastic pieces, trailing a myriad of colored wires.

The stunned silence that followed the shower of chrono parts was a thing to behold. The look on Wrangler's face was one of stark horror. He stood there for several seconds, looking first at the twisted remnants of what had been an electronic marvel, then at the still smoking pistol gripped in his hand. No words were spoken until he had holstered his shooter, turned, walked over to his car, and left. It was then that the range erupted in a gale of laughter. Needless to say, that ended the first and only mass examination of ammunition velocities by the Golden Heart Shootist Society to this day. Oh yes, I nearly forgot, the Alaskan Wrangler earned for himself that day the unofficial title of "The Chrono Killer." I believe the shattered remains of that chronograph are in a box on the shelf in my shop to this day. It is difficult to imagine what a 240 grain lead projectile can do to a piece of electronic equipment. The "Club" did replace St. Louis Kid's chronograph. I don't recall if he has ever offered to let us use it since.

I hope you have enjoyed this trip down memory lane, and will join me in the next issue of the newsletter as I share a few of my sometimes irreverent recollections in the history of this great club. ---Wind Drifter, GHSS #9.

Range Officer Training Class of 2014



Attending GHSS's RO training were first row from left to right, Mattie Mahala West, Nicked M. Good, Kootenai Brown, Marshall Stone, Lead Spitt'n Rusty. Standing are from the left, Poco Loco Louie, Wind Drifter, Pokin A. Long, Two-thumbs Becky, Sally Alaska, Smithy Jim, Doc Harley Davidson, Lead Monger, Diamond Mac and Brasspounder. Also attending but not pictured were Alaska Lady Lou, Pedro De Borealis, Montana Kid Hammer and Valencia Rose. Photo: Valencia.

Get'um up...



Red Roy and Mattie Mahala West were part of the Society crew staffing the club shooting gallery at the Alaska Fish and Game Kids' Day last Saturday. Photo: Valencia

Chalk up another Kids' Day

Well, it took over three pounds of black powder, over 300 percussion caps and almost 280 balloons, but the Society's participation in Kids' Day once again proved to be a very popular success.

A crew of 15 club members was on hand at the Alaska Fish and Game grounds last Saturday to help set-up and run a shooting gallery that featured muzzle loading shot-guns charged with bird seed for those children meeting the height requirement—they should at least be as tall as the guns are long—and a rubber band gun arcade for the small fry. The event ran from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

"This has to be one of the best things I've ever done," said one young shooter.

Last year's event had to be cancelled due to the prolonged cold and the lingering ice and snow.

Board Reviews State Shoot

The GHSS Executive Board did a quick review of the upcoming Cowboy Camp schedule and then focused its attention on the evolving plans for the State Shoot at its meeting this Tuesday evening.

Meeting with several members absent due to graduations and travel, the group heard that donations continue to be received with the latest being gift certificates from Starline Brass, Fred Meyers, Sam's Club as well as items provided by club members.

With the registration form posted on the club website, Valencia Rose volunteered to process the forms as they are received and to develop posses for the shoot. Callie Cross Fox and Drover Knutts will handle the registration tent during the shoot. And Callie agreed to do the scoring provided she had the help of two assistants.

Diamond Mac reported that the stages have all

been designed, and Kootenai Brown and Judge Yukon Hatch will be designing and publishing the shoot booklet. One interesting aspect of the stages is that each will have a question associated with them. Any shooter who answers them all correctly will be entered into a drawing for a free registration to the 2015 shoot. Mac also noted that we need several range work days in order to get ready for the shoot. The work days will focus on getting all the targets resurfaced or replaced and the building of new stage fronts for Bay 5/6.

The group agreed that further development of plans can be done at Cowboy Camp.

For the Record

A Memorial service for David Vargason aka "Gold Duster," who passed away on May 2nd, was held in North Pole on May 7th. A card has been sent to the family.

Incognito compadres y comadres...



Pedro de Borealis and Alaska Lady Lou left and Alaskan Gunrunner and Ruby Lil' center right, dressed in "civvies," were some of the 18 Society members attending the Fairbanks Friends of NRA dinner/auction held at the Carlson Center, May 5th. Photo: Wind Drifter