

OWLKILL ROD & GUN CLUB

February 2018



President: John D'Allaird

Vice Pres.: Bret Seiler

Board of Directors: Mark Mahoney (Chairman), Tim Barry, David Langlois, Lance Allen Wang

Treas.: Randy Burgoyne

Secretary: Tom Duclos

Have you visited our home on the Web lately? www.owkill.org

Monthly Meeting: This month's meeting will take place on Thursday, February 8th at 7:00p.m.

Board of Directors: Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday**, February 27th at **6:00p.m.**

President's Comments:

Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow yesterday- as did Wiarton Willie (his Canadian- and albino-cousin) and that means: **SIX MORE WEEKS OF WINTER!** 'Staten Island Chuck' did **NOT** see his shadow and I favor him for it.

At the writing of this PresComm on Saturday, we're experiencing the bitter February cold we could all live well enough without. The eco-balance though demands the deep freeze and is better off with it... so count us in too.

The benefit for us is fewer ticks and a balance in wildlife populations next year.

-Spring - it's a grand time to ponder and is soon to arrive.

I passed over the Battenkill and Owlkill Rivers one warm day last week and was *bit by the bug* to get the gear out and jump in. This is the time of year it hits but it was unexpected at the moment in the middle of the on-and-off-again cold spells. Funny the triggers that rev the mind into gear. **Prep that gear and dream of big fish!**

There's still a lot of ice fishing left to go in February for those who prefer to **walk on water than in it**, so enjoy it while you can. There are rabbit and grouse requiring some hunting pressure- and to fill the new pots we received as gifts.

-The shooting sheds are available for the intrepid who fear-not the weather and I'll bet the skeet gang could be talked into some range activity without too much difficulty as soon as the snow clears and it warms up a bit.

-Traces of snow-shoeing have been seen around the club grounds, which is well suited for it.

-February can bring cabin fever until we consider how quickly winter turns into spring, so after the recent post-holiday breather, plans are being laid for the coming year. *Watch the web site calendar* for news as dates are firmed up for all events and club functions. Continuing to maintain and build into our facilities is in the plan with a date set for a spring Work Day for May 12. Stay tuned.

-4-H Hunter's Safety Education commences on Saturday, March 3rd and runs nine consecutive Saturdays covering the gamut of 4-H shooting sports. We are striving towards our stated goal of preparing the next generation of new sportsmen with classes such as this and the 4-H High School Skeet program which is growing this coming year.

February Elections: The February meeting this Thursday (2/8/18) will include the election of two BoD members. As mentioned last month, Ray Phillips has consented to stand for the seat being vacated as Lance steps down. Tim Barry will be stepping down as well and Heath MacNeil has agreed to run. **Come, vote and get to know your board.**

The Connex shipping container has been delivered. This is a great storage option for the club, secure and dry with ample space to store clay birds and range accessories. Thanks to all who made it possible and wrestled the box into place.

*The Lottery is going gangbusters-**LOTTERY TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE!** The prizes are great!*

Support the club with a good chance of winning a prize!

The Lottery needs a Sales Manager now to handle Lottery Ticket Sales and Distribution. Tim is still involved but another is needed in this capacity to make the Lottery function. **Contact Tim or me.*

Enjoy the remaining days of the winter snow-spring is coming.

See you at the meeting, 7:00 PM Thursday, February 8th.

John D'Allaird

President, Owlkill Rod & Gun Club



EDITOR'S COLUMN

Friends, Spring is coming. 99 percent chance of it anyway. I write this on a snowy Super Bowl Sunday, and Spring looks anything but near. But soon enough.

A lot going on this year, as sportsmen and sportswomen, and as citizens. There will be significant issues being decided by the ballot, and as always, I do not ask you to vote a particular way, I only ask that your vote be informed. Become educated on issues that are important to you and vote. The only thing I would ask further, for those who wish to become further engaged and who wish to channel their passions productively is to be involved. Run for public office. Don't know how? I'll be happy to help you. It's our country's system of government, from the smallest village all the way to our nation's capital. Let's own it. Happy with the way things are going? Help keep them going. Not happy with the way things are going? Help change it. It's the American way.

Have a great month!

L. A. Wang, Editor



TRIVIA

Last month's topics: meteorology, history, and handguns! Thanks to Rich Allen again for his answers, good to see you back in the game, Rich! So last month's questions:

Meteorology for two points. In dry places like Death Valley, California, snow can transform into penitents. What is a penitent (or penitente)?

While I first thought the word was another word for prisoner (as in a penitentiary), in fact it is an interesting meteorological phenomenon in very dry air... A penitente is a closely compacted formation of "blades" of snow or ice found in dry areas and high altitudes which point in the general direction upward at the sun. For instance, like this one made of glacial ice:



Now history for three. New York's Christmas Bird and Wildlife Sanctuary can trace its founding to what significant New York weather event?

This Schenectady County landmark's origins go back to the Blizzard of '88 (1888 that is), at the time one of the worst blizzards on record to strike the New York area. This fearsome blizzard, with deep snow and heavy winds, blanketed New York City, Albany, Saratoga, and many other parts of the Northeast. W.W. Christmas began a winter feeding program for birds that year because of their inability to find food in the heavily snow blanketed outdoors. Their project grew into a 105-acre sanctuary which is utilized to this day.

Handguns – one point. Russian Cosmonauts carried handguns with them in space. From 1986-2006 they carried a specific model called the TP-82. Why?

After several space capsules landed way off course after re-entry, a cosmonaut suggested replacing the 9mm pistol in their survival kit with something more substantial to defend against the significantly larger wildlife they could encounter in the Siberian wilderness.

Bonus – one more point. The TP-82 had an unusual characteristic for a handgun. What was it?

The TP-82 had three barrels – two upper smoothbore barrels for shooting 40 gauge rounds, and a lower barrel that could shoot 5.45x39 ammo. In addition, the removable buttstock held a machete. Meet the TP-82:



Okay – so on to this month’s questions:

1. “Hunting” for 100:

Interestingly, these bucks and does are considered “small game.”

2. The Great Outdoors” for 100:

What is the name for a piece of dry land or trail that a boat or canoe is carried over between two bodies of water?

3. “Military History” for 300:

The Vietnam War is often treated as a war with four parties – North and South Vietnamese, Viet Cong, and the United States. In fact the United States had several allies who fought alongside them in that war – name three countries that deployed troops to Vietnam under their own flag to support the South Vietnamese.

Daily Double: NATO – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed to fight communist expansion in Europe. A similar organization existed to fight expansion in the Pacific – what was it, and who were its members?



SKEET AND SCHOOLS!

The Owlkill Rod and Gun Club has been on the forefront of trying to return competitive skeet shooting to local schools, and it has not been without success. Salem, Greenwich, Hoosick Falls, and Cambridge are schools we are working with either to help establish programs, or attempt to assist with logistical, training, and infrastructure support. Do you want to get involved? Do you want to help? Contact Chairman of our Board of Directors Mark Mahoney! Help develop an appreciation for the safe conduct of shooting sports among our youth! Seriously – do you want them learning safety from television....!?



4-H SHOOTING SPORTS STARTING UP

Do you want to get yourself or someone else enrolled into 4-H Shooting Sports? They have a course starting up on 3 March. Sign up by calling Cornell Cooperative extension (518) 746-2560. We have a number of folks who are heavily involved with 4-H Shooting Sports as instructors – John Wiley, Mark Mahoney, John D’Allaird, and George Sigut, for instance. Any of these gentlemen can answer questions or point you in the right direction. Bottom line – this a great program that gets future sportsmen and sportswomen started out right and safely. Support the program.