

OWLKILL ROD & GUN CLUB

SEPTEMBER 2015



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

What club stuff have you been missing? Check out www.owlkill.org

Monthly Meeting: The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Owlkill Rod & Gun Club will be held on Thursday September 10th at 7:00p.m. All members are invited and encouraged to attend.

Board of Directors: Board of Directors meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. on September 24th.

President's Comments:

September 7, 2015: President's Comment:

Where did summer go? Fairs- past; long daylight 'til 9PM- past; vacations- well there's always next year! But...

... hunting season is coming soon so get out to the range and sight in your firearms and string up your bows! Some have already headed for far-away places seeking elk and many of us will soon be stalking their smaller cousins in this area, as well as many other furred and feathered nuggets of the field. So get your last practice rounds in before the hunt.

Let's not forget there are still many good long, warm days ahead for skeet, archery, silhouette shoots, pistol range plinking and fishing as well. Read the account below of fishing the Owlkill Creek in a pitch black moonless night.

We're gearing up for the **Club Workday on Saturday, October 17th**, so put your *John Hancock* on the Workday Sign-up Sheet in the Clubhouse and join the fun! Lots will be done in prepping the clubhouse, range buildings and grounds for the coming winter with many hands pushing it along. Join a Committee and zone in to a task!

Check out the Pistol Shed- what an asset for the club- already being used by many!!! The crew is having a blast and it shows. The sounds of materials- lumber/tin/siding being applied, hammers, saws, nail guns, compressors, screw guns, dimensions yelled to metal break and saw stations for cutting and the general banter is truly music to the ears- a composition of sound and ahhh... the pine wood dust scent. See the action below, and thankfully... **no serious injuries.**



A little mosaic of pics from the Wed. 9/2 effort: from the opening tailgate party, to honing in on tasks, application of craft to doors-shutters-and siding; then a little bonfire to burn the wood fragments and cut-offs from the day's work. There were 11 working and one (Charlie Kovage- a new member this August) was weed whacking the whole club grounds the entire time with a beast of a whacker, so he does not show up in any of the pics. Get to know the faces and names in the pics at the next meeting.

Notice that Mark M. was a bit camera shy this past Wednesday- he was there though and we sure do appreciate his great design and oversight of this project, as well as the donation from The Greenwich Club that funded the pistol shed. **Mark also made the doors in his shop that are being applied to the shed in one of the above pics.**

A hearty Thank You! goes out to **John Sheaff** for organizing the **Club Picnic /Swap Meet/Flea Market on August 8th** and for making it happen! There were many items bought and sold as well as a great time had by all who attended. I sold both of the items I brought and came home with several other items- and a very full stomach. The food brought in from vendors was great and so were the many salads, cookies and other tasty treats provided by members and their thoughtful, wonderful, cooking/baking spouses! **Thank you to all who helped in making this a good way to pass a Saturday! This is a great way to get to know the other members we don't usually bump into in the course of our club activities. As we covered last month- esprit de corps!**

Thanks to Art Carroll for volunteering to represent the Owlkill R & G Club at the Washington County

Fair with the Sportsmen's Federation.

This month's Silhouette Shoot is slated for Saturday, September 26th so dust off your .22, get some standard velocity ammo- one box of 50 should do provided you save the 40 necessary for the shoot- and come and join the fun. Get there early and shoot a few practice rounds and pick up some tips from the generous participants.

****The Club is in need of a Grounds Committee Chair and supporting members to tend to the grounds and clubhouse. Please see John W., Mark Mahoney or John D. or to sign on for the effort.***

We mentioned last month that we have three tasks to accomplish soon and one of them was done – the pistol shed doors by the General Contractor on the job- Mark M.. The remaining two are open to volunteers:

- *to build a new door on the skeet field high house.*
 - *to hang a drop ceiling in the kitchen in the clubhouse- the materials are here.*
- Let's sign up and get-r-done. Contact John D. or Mark M.**

We had 4 new members and families join in August: from Luzerne, Ballston Lake, Clifton Park and Cambridge; some of whom have already been on work crews and other club functions. Great to see our ranks grow.

This month's meeting is September 10th at 7:00PM. Round up one of your busy club friends who have missed some of the summer meetings- they'll be glad you called them!

Lastly, and in keeping with the request for stories, it has been a hot, dry summer for the fishermen in our club, been out a couple times and caught a couple little stockies- that's it. Better and wetter days are coming as they always do. I found a photo in my old external hard drive of a rainbow taken from the Owlkill Creek, downstream from the club close to Rt. 67, on a completely dark, moonless night in August, about 5 years ago. As darkness fell I kept fishing- stubbornness. Stumbling around in the darkness I came to a pool that seemed like it held some promise. After allowing my eyes to adjust to the disappearing ambient light- my AA flashlight batteries having died- one cast yielded the rainbow below. I usually catch and release but this fish struck so hard that the 3/16 oz., #2 Gold Vibrax Blue Fox was hooked all the way down near the top of the stomach- **inhaled!** The darkness made successful surgery impossible so this is the only fish I kept that year or since. It took me 45 minutes to feel my way out in total darkness- **CHECK YOUR BATTERIES!**



I include this story to highlight that better days are always ahead, little streams can yield nice fish, our area's field hold many deer, turkey and other game. The walk in the woods is reward enough in such a location as ours.

Look forward to great hunting this fall and fishing in coming days!

Have a great month and see you all at the Club Meeting on 9/10!

John D'Allaird, President, Owlkill Rod & Gun Club

EDITOR'S COLUMN

You know, I'm afraid I'm going to end up being one of those old guys who wears white shoes, pants that go up to my chest, and complain about the government full-time. And I say that with full apologies to any of you who.... Wear white shoes, pants that go up to your chest, and complain about the government full-time.

But you know, again we've had high profile violent crimes, and again the phrase "gun violence" is the term in vogue from political spokesmen in the media. I've decided that I refuse to acknowledge this politically charged and inaccurate phrase. The actual problem is not "gun violence," it is "gun crime." Until we get past this semantic roadblock, we will never be able to address the issues.

This is a problem we have in this country, whether its addressing the problem of radical Islamic terrorism or the problem of gun crime – until we define the problem, we cannot address the problem. Step one in the problem solving process – identify the problem, right? If we state "gun violence" is the problem, we have expanded far beyond the issue of "crime," which is the one that should be bringing people with a common interest in moving forward to the table.

For instance, do we think that in addressing "gun violence," gun violence in the media – film and television, for instance – is really going to be addressed? After, all, it reinforces the culture that the left complains about. Of course not. Money from Hollywood tastes particularly sweet in political circles, after all. Don't forget that one of the first amendments to the SAFE Act was to allow the use of "illegal" firearms for filming movies in NY.

No, gun crime is the problem. Is a woman defending her house with a firearm an example of the "gun violence" problem? Or is is a woman defending her house with a firearm an example of how the failure to address "crime" impacts yet another American household? Seems pretty clear cut to me.

L. A. Wang, Editor

TRIVIA



Last month's question garnered an answer from Club President John D'Allaird – at least the first part of the question – as to who the General was. To revisit the question: A former Union general became the president of a national organization fostered to increase the marksmanship skills of Americans not quite fitting the "frontiersman" mold, based on his own observation of their skills during the Civil War. Who was this General, what was the organization, and as a bonus, he also was an inventor of some repute – what was his invention?

Well, John nailed the General's name. Before I get to it – I will also point out I had a great conversation about the question with John Wiley, who was also familiar with the invention. So if it was an oral examination, Wiley would have scored an "A."

Anyway, the General (the one pictured in the slouch hat), was Ambrose Burnside, who had a short but sad tenure as commander of the Army of the Potomac, which culminated in the scandalously poorly led Battle of Fredericksburg. Although he enjoyed some success during the Civil War, his failures outweighed his triumphs, and his skills were better utilized as an inventor.

Burnside, a West Point graduate, resigned his commission during the 1850s to focus on his invention – the Burnside carbine. This carbine was a breech loader which was able to avoid the problem of hot gas leaking out the breech during firing, a problem in breech loaders of the day. The Burnside carbine would become the third most popular carbine among Union troops during the Civil War, only surpassed by the Sharps and Spencer Carbines.



The unusual conical cartridge for the Burnside Carbine, designed by the General, which helped form a perfect seal at the breech.

Returning to service during the Civil War, Burnside lamented the marksmanship skills of troops recruited from large northern cities, writing "One of ten soldiers who are perfect in drill and manual of arms, only one knows the purpose of the sights on his gun or can hit the broad side of a barn." Needless to say, when he was offered the first presidency of the National Rifle Association in 1871, he jumped at the opportunity.

This month's question: This month we're going to turn to the Congressional Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor, our nation's highest award for military gallantry was first authorized in 1861 and has been awarded almost 3,500 times. During a Medal of Honor Board in 1917, 911 awards were revoked (for instance there was an entire unit during the Civil War which was told it would be given the Medal of Honor if they would extend their enlistment – needless to say, these were revoked). Anyway, one of the revoked awards was reinstated in 1977. Name the awardee, the war, the deed, and why it might have been considered controversial....



Pictured to your left is Sgt Frederick Mausert III, Congressional Medal of Honor, from Cambridge, NY. The Marine was killed in the performance of his heroic deed during the Battle of the Punchbowl, 1951, Korea. This week's bonus question – Sgt Mausert was actually one of TWO Medal of Honor men from Cambridge, New York. Who was the other?