

Nitro Express

Official Newsletter of Watauga Gun Club

January 4, 2006

By Wayne Green

Minutes from last meeting:

Club Meeting Minutes

2-January-2005

Secretary: Robert Niemi

About 50 members and guests attended the annual club party held at the Golden Corral on December 8, 2005. After everyone had their fill awards were handed out. Shooter of the Year went to Gary Hoyle, followed by Doug Merkle. Member of the Year was voted on by the attending members and the award went to Robert Niemi. Congratulations to all that won awards for the monthly club matches this year.

Tom Smith was voted in for club President to succeed Tom Bennett. Thanks Tom B. for the past two years of service to the club. Robert Niemi was elected Secretary. Gary Hoyle will take over the responsibilities of Range Officer and Wayne Green will take over as Publicity Officer. All other club officers have offered to serve for another year.

Monthly club match information:

Our next match is .22 revolver in the Hut. See the Range officer Report for more information. two each month. Let me know if you have ideas, can help, or know of some one who would like to shoot in this program.

As the last meeting was the Christmas Dinner, there are no scores to report. However, congratulations to Gary Hoyle for winning shooter of the year for 2005 and to Robert Nemi for being voted member of the year for 2005. We had seven people shoot seven matches in 2005. All these people were given awards to commemorate this. Of these seven, Charles Harmon and Doug Merkel shot all ten matches.

Upcoming Events

- The I.D.P.A. Winter Pistol Frolic will be held January 21. This is the match that is never canceled due to weather so some of us call it the d__ned fool shoot. It has been held in conditions where proper clothing was anything from shirtsleeves to ice skates.
- The NRA Range Officer class will be held on February 11. This class is a general range officer course. It is intended to cover safety and range issues that are common to the different disciplines (rifle, pistol, and shotgun). It will be helpful to those of us that are involved in the ATA, IDPA, High Power, and Bench Rest matches. It will also be helpful for anyone that shoots. Safety is a prime concern when using the range. If we have more people that have

been through this course, then we will have more certified knowledgeable people to assist new shooters if they need help on the range. This would be a big plus if we have to contend with people that are trying to shut down the range. The cost for this course is \$50.00. Breakfast and lunch are included in this price. A \$25.00 deposit will need to be placed at the January or February Club meeting. Robert Camponovo from Kingsport, Tennessee will be the instructor. Mr. Camponovo trains instructors for the NRA.

Agenda for the next meeting

It's that time of year again. If you haven't paid your dues now is the time. They are the same as last year. That is \$100.00. Remember the \$50.00 fee if you did not do 5 hours of work at the range. We will be mailing the new work cards soon.

We will have a discussion about the manner in which the Club Matches are scored and how the Shooter of the Year is chosen. A member brought up these issues informally at the Christmas dinner. He was under the impression that you had to shoot all ten of the matches to be eligible for Shooter of the year. Under our previous rules, there were only seven matches that counted toward this award. These matches were either NRA matches or an ATA trap shoot. As time went by, we changed some of the matches and added others. People that were interested in other types of shooting than the standard NRA format wanted to have the matches they liked counted also. In November 2002, I made a motion that we count the best seven of the ten matches toward the Shooter of the Year Award. My reasoning was that it would be very hard for everyone to shoot all ten matches. This was approved and the Shooter of the year has been awarded using this format since 2003. (See the November 2002 minutes and the Club Membership and Range Use Manual).

Another issue is making up matches by either shooting them early or late. When I joined the club, the format was that if a club member could not be at a match he could shoot the match in front of another club member as a witness. If he shot the match early, the score would count both toward the trophies for that match and Shooter of the Year. If he shot the match late, the score would only count toward Shooter of the Year. I talked with the man that started the monthly Club Shooting program. He told me originally that you only counted the make up scores if they were shot early, but the club decided to be more lenient and voted to count those shot late for the Shooter of the Year. We have compiled scores this way for about 20 years. The member that brought this up at the Christmas dinner seems to think this is not fair because everyone is not shooting under the same conditions. I have talked with a number of people about this issue. They appear to be divided. Some think that since you only count the best seven scores, then you do not need to be able to make up matches. Others think that some contingency might arise that would keep you from shooting your favorite match and you should be allowed to make it up. Some examples might be sickness, bad weather, The ATA State Shoot being the same time as the Club Match, or your National Guard Unit being sent overseas so that you have to shoot five matches in a week. There is no doubt it would be easier on the Range Officer if you could only shoot at the Club Meeting when the Match is being held and it would force everyone to shoot under the same conditions. On the other hand, we are not shooting for all the money in the world and sometimes people have legitimate reasons they can't make a shoot. Please come to the meeting and make your opinion known. Should we count all ten matches or just the best seven (or some other number)? Should we allow people to make up missed matches and under what conditions?

Finally, we need to make sure everyone understands how the scores are tabulated for the Shooter of the Year award. We shoot several different kinds of matches that have to be factored to make each match be of the same value when they are added together to determine the shooter of the year. Some of our matches have a total possible value of 200 points. Other matches have a total possible value of 50 points. It would be possible for someone to come in tenth on a 200-point match and have more raw points than someone that shot a perfect score in a 50-point match. Each match is factored so it has the same effect as any other match when the scores are tabulated for Shooter of the year. This is done by giving each shooter of a match his proportional score in relation to the winner of that match. To do this all scores are divided by the winning score in the match and then multiplied by 100. Suppose Joe wins the trap match with a score of 47 and Jack has a 40. $47 \div 47$ is 1 times 100 would give Joe an adjusted score of 100 for the trap match. $40 \div 47$ is 0.851 times 100 would give Jack an adjusted score of 85.1. This method of scoring evens the playing field for the people that do well in the matches with a smaller possible score.

Another item for discussion is the possibility of getting some match grade air guns for the youth program. Gary Holye is working on getting donations so as to take advantage of a deal from Daisy if I remember right.

Trap 2006

Here it is again the first of the year. 2006

Hope this note finds everyone coming down off their New Years Eve Party. For now it's back to the grinding wheel of work. Wayne called and needed something for the newsletter, and it's a little early since the shooting doesn't get really started until the month of April. But this is a good time to start plans for the upcoming year.

The club league nights have changed this year. Instead of two separate leagues one in the spring and one in the summer. It has all been changed to just one league in the summer. It will begin the third Thursday of April with two nights of practice and the forming of the teams. Then we start with nine weeks of competition, with a cook-out in the middle. So you need to be aware of this and make plans. This way we can start a little later and maybe the weather will be a little more pleasant by the first of May. The dates will be posted later on the calendar and more will be in the news letter.

The ATA program is in full motion for 2006. This year shows to be one of our better years for trap shooter. We have a couple of items on the burners and hope they take off this year. The first thing in the Points Championship, last year was our first year at a championship program, and it showed to bring some great interest and prize money to the program. So with that we hope to step it up a level and once the work is out, see the number of shooters to increase for 2006. Second is a youth team. Last year we had several young men come out and start shooting. They also put in several long hours helping on weekends running the ATA matches. Well this year we want to field a team of young shooters. Trap shooting is a very expensive sport for a young person to get into, and we hope to have something in place to help set off some of this expense. The base to the ideal is they work and help out on Thursday night and the weekends of the ATA matches, and the money they earn is turned into shells, clothes and trips to some of the other clubs and state shoots. We really need to get these young people out there shooting. So if you have a young person that shows interest and wants to try please let me or Morgan know.

I will be cutting this short this time and getting it into Wayne. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you might like to see please let us know. And also look for more information on all three items mentioned above in later issues of the news letter, and take a little time and come out to the club meetings. 2006 shows to be another great year for all the shooting sports at Watauga Gun Club.

Also one last note, Some brave shooters will try to pick a pretty Sunday afternoons for some practice though out the winter. It's pretty much we check on what the weather is going to be doing and then I try to contact everyone. I do this through email. So if you want on the list please let me know.

Tom Pitts

Range Officers report.

Chase away the winter blues. Break out the rim fire hand guns and long guns. The first four club matches are rim fire. January February and March matches are in the Quonset hut. Starting with this month's club match, Sporter revolver. Any revolver any sights. No lasers allowed. Sight in period. 10 minutes. First round, 10 shots in 10 minutes. Change targets, on the rapid fire target, 2 strings, 5 shots in 20 seconds each. For February, You have a whole month to practice. Target hand gun, rim fire any sights except laser. Slow fire, 10 shots 10 minutes, Timed fire, 2 five round strings, 20 seconds. And Rapid fire, 2 five round strings 10 seconds each.

For March we will have Target rifle. Get more info from your membership book or from the club web page. We have not been able to get as much work done on the hut as we hoped. The doors have been repaired so the wind dose not hit you as direct.

Start times for the club matches will be around 4:30 PM and run until we are done. Hopefully by club meeting time at 7: PM. Be sure to bring eye and ear protection for yourself and anyone you bring. Visitors and family are welcome to take part. Remember any time you are on the range eye and ear protection are required.

Shootsenvarin: Several members enjoy shooting in the Q-Hut during the winter time. Keeps one from getting to rusty. Starting January 11th we will meet in the "HUT" at 6: PM. For our first session. Any rifle, any handgun, any sights, as long as they are rim-fire. Targets will be fired a minimum of ten rounds. Shoot as many guns as you wish. Accumulated scores can be applied towards NRA qualification ratings. There are several different ways you can do this. It is a challenge and it is fun. You can shoot your target any time in the week, Wednesday to Wednesday, shoot at your own pace and convince. Cost for first gun is \$10 and each gun additional is \$5. to cover the cost of targets and awards. This is an excellent way to be ready for the upcoming club matches.

Junior air rifle program. There is much interest in starting a junior safety and air rifle program. Several individual members have promised donations to get started. The basic package is around \$600. Enough equipment to get started and to hold a match. I hope to have some solid details for the next club meeting. Should this program "take off" there will be plenty of opportunity for club members to be involved. We will need to have NRA qualified Safety Officers. There is a class for you scheduled in February. Can you make the class and help out? We hope to be able to serve ages 8 thru 18. Possibly shoot on a Sunday afternoon or two each month. Let me know if you have ideas, can help, or know of some one who would like to shoot in this program.

IDPA We have spent a good deal of time during the Christmas holidays sending State Match information out. Contacting match sponsors. Working out schedules and so forth. We are looking to have a large turn out again next October. The 06 program starts the 3rd sat in January with an any weather match. Over the years we have had any weather you can imagine. The shooters look forward to this match as many have been holed up for a while due to the weather. February we have a Safety Officers Clinic. Gets every one on the same page so to speak. Then in March there will be an IDPA qualifier match. A chance for new shooters to get their ranking and a chance for others to move up a notch or so. April we start our regular match season. IDPA at WGC has grown every year since we started and is doing well. In a side to IDPA we also have extra shooting opportunities. Defensive shot gun and rifle. We plan to have more of our Appalachian Home Guard events this year. This is precision shooting. From a few yards out to 300 yards. The shooter sees the course of fire the first time he shoots it. He shoots the whole course by himself with no one else on the firing line. He has to recognize his targets, and follow a written set of directions. Lots of fun and a challenge. There will be 3 or 4 matches this year on the Sunday after the regular IDPA match. Keep an eye out for dates.

CONCEALED CARRY HANDGUN

Sandy and I plan to hold a Concealed Carry Handgun Class once a month, usually on the second weekend of the month. Any one who has a carry permit and wants to take a refresher let us know. If you have a group {3 or4} let us know. We will have handgun safety and personal protection courses also.

New member classes will be held on the Friday after the club meeting or at other times to accommodate new members, Current members of the club are encouraged to take this course at a cost of \$25 to cover materials., The course is a combination of Range use and the basic NRA firearms safety course.

Gary Hoyle

For sale, lost, found, want to buy

Items found on the range will be kept in the clubhouse office if they are turned in. Tell any club officer what you lost and if it has been turned in, he will get it for you or tell you who has it.

If you find anything on the range, please either turn it in to an officer or let us put it on a list of who has it so people can get their belongings back.

Please send me anything your want to sell or buy and it will go in the newsletter.

And The Last Word Goes To:

We had a very good year in 2005. Hopefully, we will have an even better year in 2006. All of the formal shooting disciplines were successful. A lot of people put in a lot of work to make this happen so thank you to all of them. A special thanks should go to Tom Bennett for his service as president.

We have been successful because we all work together. I don't know how many of you remember the bad old days when the different disciplines did not get along with each other, but I sure do. We went from being broke all the time and never making any improvements on the property to being able to do more than struggle just to do maintenance. We went from having to see a proctologist to have our eyes checked to helping each other out. Along the way, we found that shooting the other man's game is a lot of fun.

We need to remember that the majority of our members do not actively participate in any formal shooting discipline. They are there to have a place to shoot and to have fun. These people do not get anywhere near the credit they deserve. They are the reason we can have a range. The newsletters need to reflect views from this segment of the club. I can't do this if you don't tell me what you want said. If you are a member of the Club, you have a voice. Use it.

There are a lot of rumors out there that the Club is shutting down. This is because of the letters that were in the newspapers. A member of another range said that he even heard we were going to close from a local deputy sheriff. Whenever you hear these kinds of rumors, correct them. Be polite but tell people we aren't going anywhere. We need to do everything we can to give the club a positive image. Talk to your friends and neighbors about shooting. Write polite letters to the editor about the range and shooting if you think you need to. Do not sink to the level of our opponents and start calling people names, but be vocal. As the song says, you have to stand for something or you'll fall for anything.

Invite guests to shoot with you. Make a special effort to get some ladies started in shooting. We really need to support the youth program and to expand it.

Finally, the following is an excerpt from the ABC television show 20/20. It was broadcast on December 30, 2005.

*MYTH # 5 — Guns Are Always Bad for Us
America is notorious for its culture of gun violence. Guns sometimes do cause terrible harm, and many kids are killed every year in gun accidents. But public service announcements and news stories make it seem as if the accidents kill thousands of kids every year.*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, however, fewer than 100 kids 15 and under are killed in gun accidents every year. Of course that's horrible, and I understand why demonstrators say we need more gun control. But guess what? The Centers for Disease Control recently completed a review of studies of various types of gun control: background checks, waiting periods, bans on certain guns and ammunition. It could not document that these rules have reduced violent crime.

The government wants to say regulations and laws like the Brady Gun Control Law

are making a difference, but they aren't. Some maximum security felons I spoke to in New Jersey scoffed at measures like the Brady law. They said they'll have no trouble getting guns if they want them.

A Justice Department study confirmed what the prisoners said. But get this: the felons say that the thing they fear the most is not the police, not time in prison, but, you, another American who might be armed.

It's a reason many states are passing gun un-control. They're allowing citizens to carry guns with them, it's called concealed carry or right to carry. Some women say they're comforted by these laws.

But many people, including Rev. Al Sharpton, are horrified at the idea of concealed carry laws, and predict mayhem if all states adopt these laws. But surprise, 36 states already have concealed carry laws; and not one reported an upsurge in gun crime.

Can you believe a pro-gun story on ABC? What's next, seeing pink owls flying in the daytime?

Be safe and happy in the New Year.

Wayne Green.

Nitro Express
PO Box 3284
Boone, NC 28607