



MTA NEWSLETTER

Summer 2010

Mark Zauhar, Editor

Our 100th State Shoot Will be Fantastic!!

This year we will be celebrating our 100th state shoot. It's very appropriate that it will follow right behind our nations Fourth of July festivities as just as they are special, our shoot will be too! It all starts Monday, the 5th, with our ever expanding kids day. Our youth participation has been growing 10% each year for the last few years and we hope this year will continue the trend. Our kids will have the opportunity to shoot up to 200 targets free and the MTA will pick up their ATA membership if they are new members and cover the first 100 shells as well. This is your chance to expose your kids, your grand kids, or just kids you know to our fine sport. From time to time, I think all of us have lamented about the decreasing number of targets registered and shooter numbers in our sport. Well, this is each of our chance to see to it that the future will be bright. I challenge each shooter to bring kids to our shoot. It's a great day for them, it exposes them to safe, fun competition with firearms, and it's mostly free. It's something each of us can do to get the ATA moving forward once more. Help us make the kids day another record for attendance.

On Tuesday, the adults start warming up. Shoot 100 of each and enjoy a pork chop dinner cooked by world renowned chef, Rick Eason. Well, OK, he's not really world renown but he is known to those of us who have sampled his prime rib. If his pork is half as good as his beef, prepare to enjoy! The pork will be easier to prepare for the large crowd we expect and should cut down any waiting time for those who chose to enjoy the meal. The dinner will be free to shooters and their guests but we will have a jar available for free will offering with every dime donated going to our youth program.

Wednesday starts HOA and 100 of each will again be on the menu. If you think the pork chop dinner is special,

wait till you see the walleye dinner cooked by our MTA Vice-President,

George Pappas. Now don't let the nickname Piddler from Minnesota Dog Squad fame fool

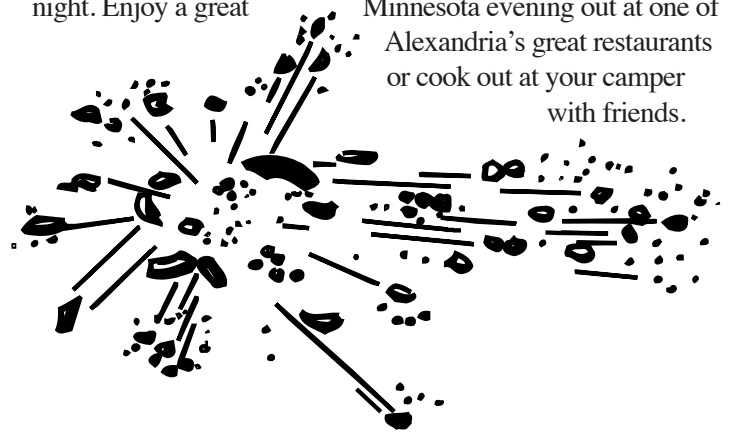
you. When it comes to cooking walleye, the Piddler is really the Big Dog for sure. Again, a free will offering jar will be available with the money going to our youth fund. This is everyone's chance to help build our future while enjoying a world class meal. Please help us out.

Thursday continues the evening party parade with a miss and

out competition in front of the club house and free brats to all comers. We also shoot 100 of each, the last time to sharpen your eyes before the major events begin. The free brats are once more courtesy of Bob Schultz from Target Shotguns. This is Bob's third year sponsoring this event and we are not the only state shoot that has experienced his generosity. All of us need to stop and thank him at his booth at the Grand. He's a first class gentleman.

Friday is our Doubles Championship, our Memorial Handicap, and our awards banquet. It should be quite a day. Mark Zauhar and Bill VanNiewenhuyzen will both be inducted into our Hall of Fame. I can't speak for Bill, but I can tell you being recognized by the shooters of Minnesota as being worthy of the Hall of Fame, is quite special, even more so going in the same time as Bill. I really feel honored. Our youth auction will be again be held at the awards banquet. Dave Dressler has volunteered to be our auctioneer and promises to make the sale even more fun then last year. The complete auction bill will be posted at the shoot but I can tell you to expect some great items. Once again each of us can help our youth program by bidding and bidding high for these items. You will be getting a great value but you will also be helping our next generation of shooters.

Saturday will be our Singles Championship. We expect a record crowd and hopefully many participants in the evening shootoffs. No, there won't be a free dinner this night. Enjoy a great Minnesota evening out at one of Alexandria's great restaurants or cook out at your camper with friends.



Either way, it will be a great night.

The shoot will conclude with our Diamond Badge and our State Handicap Championship, the big one. We wish everyone luck, shoot good, have a great time, and travel home safely.

2010 Election

You should have already received bio's of several candidates for election at our zone meetings and at our state shoot. These candidates were either submitted by themselves or recruited by Bob Wiltse who was appointed to recruit capable candidates for open offices by President Mark Zauhar. Due to the unusually large number of openings this year, I felt it was necessary to solicit candidates to insure we had a good slate from which the membership could choose. Bob spent many hours on this project and, I believe, assembled a great list of people. Additional candidates can be nominated from the floor at this year's meetings to add to the current list. Any candidates nominated at our state shoot meeting will have their names placed on our state shoot ballots along with the current list. When you see the list of candidates Bob assembled, I'm sure you will agree we have a good selection.

The vote at our state shoot will be handled differently than in the past. This year, ballots with all candidates' names will be available in the club house by 12:00 PM on Saturday following our meeting. Members can pick up their ballots at the classification table by showing their blue, 2010 average card. Their name will then be checked off the eligible voter list and the member will have until 10:00 AM Sunday to turn their vote in by placing it in the locked ballot box on the classification table. Members of the board will then tabulate the results and the vote counts will be posted by 12:00 noon Sunday.

This change in procedure was needed to comply with ATA Delegate voting rules and to allow greater voter participation.

New Lease Agreement

The board and Alexandria Shooting Park are working on a new lease. There are just a few points left and the hope is an agreement can be reached for approval at the board's state shoot meeting on Thursday. We have one of the nicest shooting facilities in the country and we need to be thankful to the owners of ASP for securing its use for our association.

Minnesota Youth Chain Shoot

Sally and Mark Stevens are again organizing the popular youth chain shoot. The MTA has financially helped this excellent program in the past and has agreed to help this year with a contribution of \$3,500. This excellent program initiates many new youth shooters to the registered format. It also exposes clubs that have not thrown registered targets before or have quit throwing them to our sport. Anyone wishing to help Sally and Mark can contact them directly. Their contact information is on our new website at www.minnesotatrap.com.

Wenig Coming to Our Shoot

I received a call this week from Wenig saying they planned to have their custom fitting team here at our state shoot. They can make a pattern for your gun that is custom fit to your personal gun mount while you compete at our shoot. This not only gives you a custom stock fit, it also allows you to shoot the gun and fine tune the fit during the competition. When you feel your personal pattern is correct, you can give it to them and they will then copy it on a wood blank of your choice. They have blanks ranging in all price ranges from the bottom priced laminate to the finest Turkish walnut. They will also be bringing several stocks fit for a variety of guns that are already finished. You can have the stock fitted to your receiver and be done in just a few minutes. These finished stocks don't work for everybody but if you have had success with factory stocks, these will likely work for you. Wenig has a great selection of these stocks available, most with the new Harlan Campbell style comb. You can set up an appointment with them by calling Marsha at 660-547-3334. The appointment is not always necessary but it will insure that you can work with them the days that are most convenient for you. I have had several stocks made by Wenig and have always been very satisfied. I have tried to get them to our shoot since they started using their trailer. This is a great chance to get a custom stock without having to travel eight plus hours one way.

Medical Staff on Grounds

We will again have medical staff on the grounds to handle medical emergencies. Steve Schmidt from ASP is working on getting the team to be there during our largest days. You might remember having trained people nearby saved Art Beckstrom's life and gave him another few years in which to compete.

New Website Up and Running

Web coordinator Jim Walkowiak reports our new website is up and running well. The board decided to switch website providers at our last meeting to gain editorial control of our site. Our previous provider and website initiator, Ron Baker, refused to relinquish control of the material on the site so the board felt it had no choice but to switch providers with a hearty thanks to Ron for the past years service. New items are being added weekly to our new site. Jim reports the new provider is easy to work with and very responsive. All clubs can now have their programs and scores posted on the site for free. The address for the new site is www.minnesotatrap.com. Clubs can send their programs and scores directly to our provider for posting.

Target Counts Down

Target counts are down here in Minnesota and in other states as well. Target counts have continued to fall the last five years in most states as well as the ATA in total. Our Minnesota shooters targets are down from 2,317,150 in 2005 to only 1,590,750 in 2009. This is a decline of 31%. Now this decline is somewhat overstated due to the target year being only ten months in 2009, but it still is an alarming decline. The ATA decline for the same period and same target year counting is 84,414,538 in 2005 to only 57,041,960 in 2009, a decline of 32%. Other states near us that I have numbers for include Iowa, 2,065,725 in 2005 to 1,344,650 in 2009, a decline of 35%, and South Dakota, 953,275 in 2005 to 691,300 in 2009, a decline of 27%.

Some other notable states include Ohio, 6,956,925 in 2005 to 3,637,625 in 2009, a 48% decline, probably the result of fewer Ohioans traveling to the grand. Interestingly enough, even the popular Cardinal Center has not been able to stop the fall off in Ohio. Illinois, where the new Grand location has helped them, the change has been less, 3,912,799 in 2005 to 3,225,925 in 2009, a decline of only 18%. Missouri recorded 2,463,350 in 2005 and 1,573,275 in 2009, a decline of 36%. New York residents shot at 3,834,874 targets in 2005 and 2,421,750 in 2009 a decline of 37%. Please remember that target year 2009 numbers were for only ten months in all of the above numbers. Also thanks to Director Tom Sletta who provided these numbers from the ATA records.

So what does this mean? Why is it happening? What's the fix? These are all good questions. Problem is the answers are not easy to come by. Certainly there has to be opportunity to shoot. In Minnesota, we have more shooting days scheduled than ever before. Back in 1992, there were 113 shoot days on the schedule. In 2010 there are 191. One problem for sure is of the 191 total, 102 are scheduled for Buffalo and Waseca. This means the rest of the clubs only have 89 dates, down 24 from 1992. Now that doesn't necessarily mean that Buffalo and Waseca should not have so many dates, but what it does say is those folks living far from these two clubs might not be getting opportunities to shoot. What will it take to get the shooters in the Winona, Worthington, Proctor and Bemidji more opportunities? And in the metro area, all shooters don't like marathons, the lack of regular meets could be a factor. Shooters will shoot when they have the time, the money and the opportunity to do so. Now, that being said, without people interested in shooting, none of this matters. Getting more people to become shooters is the real challenge. One way is with the youth program to get kids started. Another way is to get the league shooters to move to registered shooting. The MTA, I think can do a lot for youth shooters, we've proven that. For the league shooters, the MTA can help here, and we have with dues paying programs,

help sponsoring the Mark and Sally Steven's chain shoot, increased trophies at the state shoot, and increased communication with our members. These things have not turned the tide however. I believe the member clubs are the key. Have more shoots, schedule them with good trophies and food, and more shooters will show up. Members can help too. It's time to drag some of your friends to a shoot. It's how I got started, and I've registered over 250,000 targets. One of my friends got me started. You can do the same.

Three Big Contributors Bow Out

This year marks the last for three big contributors to our past state shoots. Steve Richards has decided not to run for re-election this year. Steve has been in charge of state shoot trophies for the last several years. To understand the size of the job he has done, just think of having to order as many as 400 trophies. Receive them, mark them for event and title, transport them to the state shoot, stand behind the counter, create all the trophy reports plus hand the trophies out to the right shooters, and don't make any mistakes. Now Steve has had a couple of errors over the years, but guess who gets to fix them, Steve of course and he did a great job at that too.

The second individual is Paul Cyr. Paul has done our shootoffs every year I have been President and before that too. He handles this very stressful job with humor and control. He has done a great job, so good that three years ago when he wanted to give it up, I told him if he ran for director again all he had to do was this one job every year at the state shoot. Thankfully Paul accepted my offer.

Third on the list is Jim Walkowiak. Jim has done every crap job that came along that needed to be done. He did the program for two years, he has done a good share of the advertising for the last six years, and he has been there to support me and help me whenever needed. He has served as Director, Vice-President and Alternate Delegate.

Please stop and just say thanks to each of these three fine contributors for all their years of service.

New Youth Org Moving Forward

The new non-profit tax deductible organization is making slow but sure progress. The board will have a chance to approve the by-laws at our state shoot meeting. This new organization will be responsible for helping finance the many youth shooting functions we support and will also help raise funds for facilities to support these programs. Being tax deductible, the new organization should be able to raise funds much easier.

State High School Shoot

The second annual Minnesota State High School Shoot is planned for June 13th as this edition of the newsletter went to press. This is the best example of what our youth fund dollars are used for. Last year eight schools and 141 kids participated in the first annual shoot held at the Minneapolis Gun Club. This year thirteen schools and more than 250 kids were expected to show for what is beginning to be a great event. The MTA covers the cost of targets and trophies for the kids and the Minneapolis Gun Club covers the cost of a lunch for each kid. Last year we spent about \$5,000 in support of this effort. The real good news here is as the championship becomes more popular, more schools are accepting shooting as a sport. The growth from eight to thirteen schools this year speaks volumes about our success. Schools participating this year include Whitebear Lake, Wayzata, Armstrong, Orono, St Francis, St Louis Park, Elk River, Minnetonka, Prior Lake, Hopkins, Sibley, Worthington, and Brainerd. Clubs located near these schools have seen a large increase in shooting by kids at the club.



100th Logo Patches for Sale

We will have 100th logo patches for sale at the cashier windows. There are a limited number so hurry and get yours. They are \$5 with all proceeds going to our youth fund. One of our shooters called me to ask if we were going to offer a patch and I thought it would be a good idea. They look great and they will make a great keepsake.

Range Feasibility Study at the Shoot

I will post a copy of the DNR range feasibility study recently completed by the DNR. It is quite impressive for a first attempt. This was the first step in developing a mini-Sparta type facility here in Minnesota. The rough proposal is not without issues but it is a beginning of what hopefully will be a great facility for the shooting sports. If you see Rep. Dave Dill, please thank him for his efforts in getting us this far. Without him we would be nowhere on this issue.

**MTA's 100th Anniversary!
State Shoot July 5-11, 2010
Alexandria Shooting Park**

