

NIANTIC SPORTSMEN'S CLUB

Incorporated 1955



Summer 2010

Coming up!

June-August 2010

- Lounge Open at Scheduled Hours
- Summer Skeet and Pistol Programs Underway
- Indoor Range Work Parties Posted
- Septic, Drainage, and Paving Work Underway
- NSC Horizons July Bulletin Posted on Website

September 2010

- Meeting and Dinner Night — September 10
- Pistol League Matches Begin for NSC and N2 Teams — Monday, September 20
- Summer Skeet Ends; Signups for Winter Skeet League Underway

October 2010

- Meeting and Dinner Night — October 8
- Youth Program Begins
- Sunday Breakfasts Served
- Pig Roast — Sat., October 23
- Dues Reminder for 2011
- Nominations for Officers and Board 2011

Lounge, Ranges Busy Through Summer

In addition to casual gatherings in the air-conditioned Lounge, NSC keeps busy in a number of ways all summer, both recreationally and competitively. If you are not involved in the competitions, you are welcome to spectate, and learn...and sign up.

• **The Lounge** is open throughout the summer — Friday, noon-10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday noon-6 p.m.; Tuesday, 5-10 p.m.; Monday 6:30-9:30 p.m. (after most skeet and pistol matches); light lunches Friday noon-2 p.m. with varied menus. For special events, contact Jodi Stone. Thanks to a nasty lightning strike through the cable connection that damaged our television set, NSC now has a highdefinition, flatscreen television mounted on the north wall of the Lounge. Relax and enjoy it, and thank the members who voted for it at the June meeting.

• **Summer Skeet** uses the range Mondays through Thursdays from 5:30 until darkness. Members, spouses and children 10 and over are welcome. Winter skeet begins in the fall, with signups beginning in September.

• NSC's **summer pistol** league is underway Monday evenings and alternates weekly between air pistol (60 shots at ten meters) and sport pistol (.22 bullseye National Match Courses at 50 feet), with some fun centerfire revolver and pistol marksmanship after the matches. Coaching is available...you are welcome on any

Monday. The schedule is posted on the Indoor Range bulletin board and the website.

• **Work Parties** are scheduled for the Indoor Range on Saturday, July 24, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and again in August at yet-undetermined dates depending on the work to be done. The range will have to be closed during the

July work party. Emphasis will be on carpentry skills in July and on spackling, taping, and painting in August. Watch for posters on the range bulletin boards.

• The next **Meeting Dinner** will be September 10 starting at 5:30 p.m.; Sunday breakfasts will start in October.

Steady Improvement Makes NSC a Better Place for All

In the course of a year or so, small things add up. Usually the work of groups of volunteers — or club members with special skills, equipment, and licenses — the improvements contribute to the comfort and safety of everyone in the club. Here are a few from the past year, and a couple of big ones which are imminent. If you helped out...you know who you are, and please accept our thanks.

- Indoor Range refurbished with relocated target reels, port enlargements, target-stop settings, heat, and lights
- Meeting Hall secure storage areas rebuilt, enlarged by George Stone
- New flatscreen television set installed; new jukebox up and playing them ol' favorites
- Clubhouse grounds cleared; new mower bought and older mower restored



- Pistol-bench stands at outdoor pistol range built by J.L. Kopcha
- Range driveways improved with processed stone; drainage improved in skeet and outdoor range areas; skeet house stairway built by George Stone



- Blackpowder and archery woodland trails cleared and rejuvenated for hikes and matches
- Outdoor Range smoothed with woodchips; berms built up; ports enclosed for winter uses
- Archery trails refurbished with relocated 3D targets
- Major Smallbore Rifle matches hosted on Indoor Range and in Meeting Hall
- Game meats donated, cooked to perfection, and served with style at annual Game Dinner
- Hundreds of dinner and breakfast meals prepared and served with care to hungry members
- Wood donated, hauled, cut, split, stacked, toted inside, and burnt for Lounge comfort
- New automated fire-alarm system installed by Larry Dallas
- Brush clearing, land tilling on farmland reclaimed agricultural land for wildlife habitats
- Major plumbing, septic, drainage investments underway over the summer
- New paving in parking areas underway following piping installation

Remember When... "Muss" Romagna, A Joy to Know

— by Helen Younger

One of the reasons the club flourished in its early years was the dedication of members like Atelio Romagna, affectionately called "Muss" — he was a joy to know.

Full of energy, he was part of

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"Muss" Romagna... from page 1
any project going on as the club became organized. He gathered rocks for the builders of the fireplace in the Lounge, and cleared land to build the skeet houses. Every day for years he gathered over-ripe fruits and vegetables from local merchants to feed the pheasants raised by the club for hunts and dog trials. The birds were plump and beautiful by the time they were released — thanks to the hours Muss spent gathering food for them.

Atelio was born in Niantic and lived all of his adult life in town with his adored wife, Alma. He was an avid fisherman and in his "grandfather years" taught his granddaughter, Heather, to fish too. They enjoyed hours on end together in the local streams catching trout. After years of working at Electric Boat, Muss retired, but he remained hard to keep up with because he never gave up on a project until it was done — and done right. He worked always at full speed, and wore out many a fellow member working with him. At club functions he'd be counted on to come early to help set up, and stay late to help clean up.

Atelio Romagna was definitely one of the most valuable assets of the club in its developing years: look around...and you'll still see some of his work!

Ray Falkner, Senior CE/FS Instructor, Will Hold Hunter Safety Courses at NSC

NSC's Ray Falkner will hold state-certified hunter safety courses at the club this summer and fall. The Conservation Education/Firearms Safety course is required to obtain a hunting license and is valid in many other states. The first course will be oriented to youth: that 16-hour course will start on August 16. Falkner said that he "will try to do one more course at NSC before the small game season starts."

Falkner was recently ap-

pointed as a Senior CE/FS instructor for area 9, which includes NSC. Ray works with a team of four other instructors, but can arrange for courses to be conducted by other teams.

This year Gov. Jodi Rell recognized the work of the Conservation Education/Firearms Safety Program (CE/FS) by establishing an annual Conservation Education and Firearms Safety Volunteer Day, which was held for the first time February 24, 2010. "We are hoping that the event — as good as or better than before — can be scheduled for spring 2011," said Charles Bruckerhoff, Ph.D., Coordinator of the statewide CE/FS Program.

The Skeet House... Words from the Towers Clay Critters are a Continuing Challenge

The summer skeet season is in full swing. We have eight teams, totaling 45 members, spouses, sons, and daughters who shoot on Mondays through Thursdays, 5:30 p.m. to darkness. Early September ends the season with a championship match and a big BBQ — with specialty bratwurst included. If you are interested in shooting in the winter league or organizing your own team, you must be set up by August 15. See or call Bill Boehning, the Commissioner, at 860.434.2336 and let him know your plans. If you are a new shooter, come down on a weekday night and learn what skeet shooting is all about!

George Wadsworth, Jr. Award Dedicated to Most Improved Skeet Shooter; Younger Award Presented for Top Average

— by Paul Jezierski (as presented at NSC's June Meeting)

The Niantic Sportsmen's Club is one of roughly 18 clubs that participate in The Eastern Connecticut Winter Skeet League. This league was formed almost 50 years ago, back in 1962. This league has ap-

proximately 350 individual shooters shooting in six divisions. This league holds the distinction of being the longest continuously-active winter skeet league in the world.

At the end of the 1967-68 season, Dick Younger posted the first of many high averages of any shooter from this Niantic club shooting in the winter league. As a matter of fact, he won the club's high-average award so many times that they eventually named it after him. Many of you have seen the Younger award in the lounge. It is an award that I'm sure everyone who shoots out of this club aspires to win...and this year's winner of the Younger award is Craig Murallo, with an outstanding 48.455 average.

I'm going to switch gears here: Last year, our club lost one of its own far too soon. George Wadsworth, Jr., passed away on September 16, 2009, at the age of 53 after a long, tough battle with lung cancer. George wasn't just a good skeet shooter, he was a good friend to many of us at this club. During his years shooting in the Winter League, he steadily improved his average, as well as moved up through the divisions within the league. If George had survived his ordeal, based on his ability and the team he was with, I know he would have shot in Division I this past season, and I'm sure he would have shot very well.

In recognition of his commitment to self-improvement on the skeet field, tonight we dedicate the George Wadsworth, Jr., Most Improved Shooter Award.

This award, like the Younger

award, will be given annually. It will recognize the shooter from this club who most improves his or her average from one season to the next, based on league protocol. This award will hang proudly in the lounge next to the Younger Award.

I'd be remiss if I didn't take a moment to thank fellow club member Doug Lafaille and Lafaille Carpentry for creating the actual award plaque. It is an absolutely beautiful, amazing piece of work. When I approached him initially about creating the award, I had no idea how talented and professional he was. Without this ability and input, I don't know if we would have achieved what we now have. It is truly a piece of art that belongs on a wall.

With that said, the winner of this year's award improved his average from a 44.364 in 2009 to a 45.6 in 2010, which represents an improvement of almost a bird and a quarter. Anyone who's shot in this league for a few years knows how hard this is to do. I'm proud to announce that the winner of the inaugural George Wadsworth, Jr., Most Improved Shooter Award is Bob Prentice from the Niantic Crushers.

Pistol League Competition Corner NSC Pistol Team Hits League x-Ring

The Pistol Team of the Niantic Sportsmen's Club placed first in the New London County Pistol League for the 2009-2010 season (September 2009-March 2010). The team posted both the highest average score (1392.71) and the highest match score (1423-37x) in the nine-team, .22 caliber bullseye



Paul Jezierski presented Most Improved Shooter Award to Bob Prentice.



league. High Match scorers were Matt Thompson, David Fontaine, Chris Peterson, and John Flood.

The league's High Single score was fired by David Fontaine with 295-11x. League Achievement awards were won by Gary Baier, Charles Benson, and David Fontaine, while Chris Peterson and David Thompson received the Team Achievement award.

The League President's Award was presented to NSC's team captain Myron Kavalgian for "exceptional service" to the League and "inspirational leadership" to his team. The combined teams of Niantic and N2 won 36 percent of the New London League's awards for 2009-2010.

The 2010-2011 season will start this September; schedules will be posted in the Lounge and Indoor Range.

N2 Team, Based at NSC Range, Looks Forward to Next Season

N2 is in its third year after leaving its founding E&B Sporting Goods range, and thanks Niantic for the use of its fine facilities. "The E&B team was number one in the league for seven years in a row," adds captain Amber Sneddon, noting that the team has "eight original members, and eight new members who joined us this past season."

The N2 Pistol team emerged from the 2009-2010 New London County Pistol League season a solid third in division A and fourth overall in the league. The 1375.00 team average included a match high of 1407, the third highest in the league.

"Shooting requires dedication to the sport to achieve success," Sneddon said. "During the pistol team season we meet every other Sunday for practice at Niantic. Our shooters have been invited to shoot in the Niantic summer matches, which is great practice for the season. We welcome new



members to the team and those who are interested may contact me at ambersneddon@rocket-mail.com. Our seasoned veterans are willing to teach new shooters to succeed."

The N2 team plans to hold a match-shooting clinic later in the summer to which all are invited.

.22 Lollipops: Tough Targets Tempt 30 Marksmen on May 16

They're about the size of a 50-cent piece, the colorful, tasty, biodegradable lollipops...and they are half a football-field away. So it's just you, your scope, the wavy mirage, and a pinch of .22 rimfires from WalMart or your secret Competition Super-X-Specialties supplier. And there's your trusty .22, whether it's Grandpa's Squirrel-Hunting Rifle...or your very own Olympic Match tack-driver.

It is NSC's .22 Rimfire Fun Match, and you have five minutes to hit five lollipops sticking out of your target at 50 yards, you and eight others on the line trying to do the same thing.

If you were lucky on the NSC Outdoor Range on May 16, you may have hit all five 'pops. Maybe someone else did too. Then you and the other guy get to try it again, but at 60 yards, for Best of Five and a nice prize.



Hmmmm....not so easy, but still fun.

About 30 shooters of all ages entered, and re-entered, and re-entered again to hit the challenging targets placed by Stan Bowdish, Jack Douton and their range team, with rangemaster Ray Falkner keeping tabs on

safety and procedures.

It was a nice morning...and there will be more of these .22 events to come!

Targets, Trails, Tradition Make Archery Great Sport

NSC has a long history of successful bowhunting-style archery on woodland trails with the club's 3D targets. In recent years, we have become a centerpiece of regional activity, sponsoring several topflight competitions over the year. But it takes a fair amount of work and commitment to keep our trails in good shape, and the course challenging for experts as well as accessible to relative beginners.

Greg Hoagland, our new archery committee chairman, has been studying other clubs' approaches to archery trails with Bobby Clark, an NSC archery mainstay, and they are looking for members who are interested in sharing and learning practical marksmanship skills as they refurbish and update the club's outdoor courses for the winter.

Contact him at greg_hoagland@yahoo.com or at 860.460.0670 to get involved...and have some fun!

Muzzleloaders Braved Snowy Trails and Challenging Targets in the Woods

The residue of big snowfalls did not stop NSC marksmen from trekking NSC's ledge-filled paths for a test of real-life blackpowder, muzzleloading skills on several "trail shoots" this past winter and spring.

Targets of carrots, potatoes, playing cards, pendulums, gongs, running bears, climbing squirrels, and clay birds — all at varying distances and degrees of visibility — simulated the hunting environment of our forefathers and foremothers. Indeed, our ancestors may have walked these very same woods two centuries ago, fetching the family food for dinnertime. (Yes, the stakes were



higher than, but the skills are the same!)

The Sunday-morning smokepole matches were successful and fun, said organizers Craig Grimord, Tom Snow, and Stan Bowdish, and probably will be run on a regular basis this coming year. Hot-dog-and-bean feasts will follow the events, they said. This past June, the blackpowder marksmen also held a line shoot on the outdoor range on traditional, bottle-shaped, targets which posed challenges of their own — like hitting them at 35 yards, with tiebreakers out farther.

NSC Youth Programs Had Banner Year

NSC's youth programs had a "really great season," said Jay Cole, youth programs coordinator. The fall-through-spring program stresses safety from the beginning, and includes NRA smallbore classifications and the development of archery skills. The youth are exposed to traditional woodland skills and special outdoor events which combine marksmanship and teamwork...and offer a good time. Parents and relatives are encouraged to observe and participate.

More advanced youth in the program are able to enter formal competitions which are nationally standardized.

Niantic Junior results for the indoor season were spectacular, said Kent Lacey, who with Lisette Grunwell-Lacey and other club volunteers coordinated the competition efforts.

The various NRA Sectional smallbore (.22 rimfire) rifle matches finished up with the coming of spring, Lacey reports.

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NSC Youth...from page 3

When the results from all over the U.S. were tabulated, the Niantic Junior rifle shooters were often prominent in the awards listing. In the three-position Junior sectional, Kimberlee Grohocki won a National Championship as the best Sub-Junior shooter in the country. She fired an excellent score of 549 out of 600 and was awarded the silver National Champion medallion. This is her second national championship in the last 12 months. In the same match Sub-Junior Eric Sloan finished in ninth place out of 165 Sub-Juniors from across the country.

In the Intermediate Junior category (15-17 years) Drew Denno finished 132, Emily Britt was 173, and Jacob Lathrop was 234 out of 370 shooters in their age group. The Niantic team placed fifth out of 28 teams shooting in this match, which consists of prone, kneeling, and standing stages of marksmanship.

In the open four-position rifle sectional (which includes the sitting position), where the Niantic Juniors compete with both Junior and senior shooters from across the nation, the following shooters won

awards: Drew Denno, sixth place Marksman class; Kim Grohocki, seventh place



Lisette Grunwell-Lacey, current coach of the NSC Youth Competition Program, with Dave Thompson, founder some 40 years ago.

Marksman, and Emily Britt, fifteenth place Marksman.

Along with Eric Sloan earning nineteenth place, their team, the "10-X Terrors," finished as the first-place Marksman team in the country. Congratulations are due on a wonderful team effort where consistent performance by all four team members earned them the first-place spot. Their team score of 1543-68 was 39 points ahead of the second-place team.

In the NRA open international three-position sectional matches the team of Grohocki, Denno, Britt, and Lathrop finished first place in

the Marksman class with a score of 4015. This score bested the second-place team by 103 points. The final sectional competition for the Niantic Junior shooters was in the open air-rifle championships, where again the Junior athletes have to compete with adult shooters. The three-person team of Emily Britt, Eric Sloan, and Jacob Lathrop earned a seventh place out of 21 teams.

The Junior shooters will begin the 2010-2011 season in October. Any interested young people (age 10 or older) are encouraged to stop by and give it a try.

Next Meeting Dates

Executive Meeting—Tuesday,

September 7, 7:00 pm

Regular Meeting—Friday,

September 10, 7:00 pm

Prime Rib Dinner, 5:30 pm

www.nianticsc.org

Officers 2010

Matt Fleisher, *President*

John MacDougall, *Vice-President*

John Santos, *Recording Secretary*

Judy LeBlanc, *Financial Secretary*

Executive Board

Term 2009 through 2010—Stan Bowdish, Al Cocola, Tom Davis, Al LeBlanc, George Stone;

Term 2010 through 2011—Jack Douton, Peter Edmondson, Ron Michaels, Frank Zito, Jack Cutillo

Committee Chairs 2009-2010

Judy LeBlanc—*Finance*;

John MacDougall—*Membership*;

Stanley Bowdish—*Outdoor Range*;

Peter Edmondson—*Indoor Range*;

William Boehning—*Skeet*;

Tom Snow, Craig Grimord—*Black Powder*;

Charles Chambers, George Stone

—*House*;

Jay Cole, John Dube, Lisette

Grunwell-Lacey, Ron Michaels—

Youth/Competition;

Greg Hoagland—*Archery*;

Bruce Vandal, Jeff Schwartz—

Conservation;

Emil Tillona—*Website*;

Tom Davis—*NSC Raffle Planning*;

John Stratton—*NSC Newsletter/*

Membership Services

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Niantic Sportsmen's Club Newsletter

is printed quarterly and is distributed by mail and email to club members and their families; it is supplemented by *Horizon*, an email-only bulletin that is updated frequently. Both *NSC Newsletter* and *Horizon* are posted on the NSC website.

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