

Sportsman Trails

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President's Corner



By Bill Blackburn

Baby, it's cold outside! It has been relatively warm until now and I hope all divisions have started, are in the middle of, or have completed off season projects or renovations.

It won't be long before spring is in the air and "projects" will be shelved for the many activities for which we belong to this great club. Please bring a non-member friend as a guest to help on a project, participate in a division event, drive around the club, or have a preserve hunt. Blue Grass is NOT a hard sell. All it takes is one-on-one exposure and we can again have a full membership with

a waiting list. Recruiting new members MUST be the job of individual members!

Reports on preserve hunting have all been positive. Not just good, but excellent, with great dog work and birds which have flown well. Please call Ben to schedule. Help us make this fledgling enterprise a success. On a similar note, please purchase chances on the drawing for a spring turkey hunt. Proceeds go to future wildlife projects at the club.

Bill

From the BGS� Chaplain



By Rev. Tom Cottingim

Let's talk about politics. Wait! Wait! Don't run off! It's not what you think. I just want to talk about the system called democracy by which we govern this wonderful country. Oh, and don't worry, I know BGS� is a non-profit, tax exempt, social club which cannot endorse candidates or political parties. With that disclaimer out of the way, let's talk politics. First of all, I have some questions:

Are you old enough to vote? If the answer is no, read on anyway; you need to know this when you *are* old enough.

Are you registered to vote? If the answer is no, put down the newsletter, or back away from the computer and go get registered. *Now*.

Next, here is a short primer on government by democracy:

We, the people, elect representatives to administer the government of our cities, counties, states and the nation;
These elected officials make the laws, the policies and procedures by which we all live;
These same officials are accountable to us.

Seems pretty simple, doesn't it? Actually, it is more complicated than this, but I have simplified it so I can make a point that most people don't seem to understand. Notice in my simplified

primer above, "we, the people," have two of the three tasks. *We elect; and we hold accountable*. What this means is, we have the majority of the responsibility of government. I hear people complaining about all sorts of things that are wrong with our country. More often than not, when I ask if they vote and communicate with their elected officials, the conversation dries up.

How about you? Are there issues in our country that you are unhappy about? I am sure there are. I can't remember a time when there have been more issues, or more dissatisfaction with the way things are going than now.

So, do you vote? Do you know who your state and national reps are? Do they hear from you about what they have done wrong, or right? Do you write to them, call them, or e-mail them? We often hear it said that voting is a privilege, or a right; but I believe it is much more than either, it is our *duty*.

Now, here is where it starts to get more involved, and quite frankly, more difficult: to do your duty as a citizen, you need to educate yourself on the issues and form your own beliefs (don't just take someone else's.) Then, educate yourself on the candidates, learn about how they are qualified for the job and what they believe about how to govern. You will figure out the rest as you go along.

That wasn't so bad, was it? Maybe next time we will talk about religion. See you at the club.

Blessings,
Tom

MORGAN'S MEANDERINGS

Ducks!

Duck hunters come in all sizes, shapes, interest levels, special interests, knowledge levels, etc. and all of these characteristics add up to being an “ilk”. The cementing relationship behind this ilk is ducks. I have not wasted all the lounging time that I have put in taking up space in the clubhouse of the Skeet and Sporting Clays Division. You may think that I could spend my time in a better manner but I testify to you that if you apply yourself properly you can learn many things from the people that pass through these hallowed halls on their way to thither and yon. I betcha’ that all I would have to do is slide my coffee cup aside, jump up from the table and holler “ducks!!”, and immediately a gathering would start and stories would flow forth from every corner of the room relating to every phase of finding, shooting, eating, stuffing, recognizing, raising and calling these amazing fowl.

I did not realize to what extent I had been influenced by ducks until some fellows came jauntily in the door of the clubhouse one day with their arms loaded with mounted ducks of various breeds and presentations. You might remember in my last meander that I brought up the subject of my involvement in the 4H Horse program and some of the fine people I met there. Well, it just goes to show you how influential these programs can be because three of the fellows carrying these trophies were also people that I had known from the earlier mentioned program. One was a father, like me; one was a son, like my son; and one was a farrier like none other. I had no idea that Arv and Andy Applegate had an interest in doing “duck stuffing” as a hobby but I did have a suspicion that Jimmy (Hollywood) Welch might be a duck hunter. (He claims that he shot all the ducks that Arv and Andy mounted). Our new range manager (Jonathan Neyman) had been busy rearranging the clubhouse to his liking and now the Applegate boys were helping him upgrade his décor by supplying some really nice wall decorations.



Andy Applegate and his daddy Arvid



Snow (sometimes called Blue) Goose

Most of the experiences heard in the clubhouse center around harrowing events, missed shots, miracle shots, more harrowing events and how many layers of waterproof clothing you have to wear to survive the joy of the experience. I am told that to truly enjoy duck hunting of any sort, however, we have to eliminate fun and initiate suffering. I would propose that all shooters be required to arrive at the chosen waterfowl site at 4:30 in the morning and drink bad coffee for an hour. The shooting area, most likely, will be surrounded by at least 200 yards of foul smelling mud, shooters, in groups of three, will be sprayed with a fire hose connected to a refrigerated tanker as they trudge out to a decaying wooden box. Once they are seated in the box, which also should be occupied by a large Labrador Retriever, the gunners may settle in for a long anticipated day of suffering. A delay of up to six hours is anticipated and the target will probably be a single that comes from behind and remains in range for no more than a second and a half.

Blue Grass Sportsmen's League



Mallard ducks flushing from Morgan's Small Pond



Ducks stop for a ham sandwich at Tony Roma's



This is how the Pointer/Setter Division handles the duck problem

Here is my idea of duck hunting. In the picture above, I painted the ducks rising from the pond white so you could see them, but they are really Mallards and that bright spot on the water at the far side of the pond is froth from their take-off rush. I tried to sneak up on them from behind the pond dam but as soon as I stuck my head over the berm they took off. I just sit on my patio and wait for them to come to visit.

This next duck hunt took place in the parking lot of Lexington Green Mall and these two ducks were obviously just stopping in Tony Roma's for a ham sandwich or maybe a salad. In the last picture you see how they handle duck hunting at the Pointer/Setter Division.

Anyway, the point is this. If you want to see some really nice ducks without freezing your hind quarters off, just meander down to the Skeet and Sporting Clays clubhouse on Wed., Thur., Sat., or Sunday and enjoy the array of birds on display. You might even learn something about ducks you did not know. I bet the kids would enjoy it as well.

Blue Grass Sportsmen's League

Guests in the Practical Shooting Pits and Pit Pass Changes

As a reminder, you can now bring guests in to the BGSL pits. In general, you must follow the regular BGSL guest rules (fees, limit of 2, etc). Additionally, you must stay close enough to your guest to take control of their firearm if they start to do something unsafe. You are responsible for your guest's actions in the pits. To make sure everyone understands the new rules, we have upgraded the pit passes. **If you want to bring guests, you must have an orange pass.** The green passes are still valid for an individual holder to shoot in the pits, but not to bring guests. You do not have to upgrade the pass if you don't want to, when it expires, you will be issued an orange version. If you'd like a pit pass, please see the Pistol Division's section on the website, or e-mail me at clay.caudill@gmail.com.

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