

# AGARITA GAZETTE



*A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society*



**Agarita Ranch**

**May 2012**

**Lockhart, Texas**

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## Sometimes the Indians Win!

**(Especially When You are the One Wearing Feathers)**

**by Joe Darter**

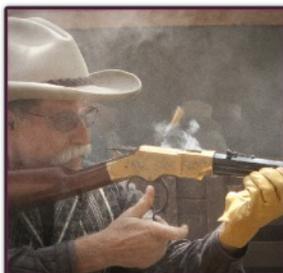
I've been blessed and fortunate during my years of cowboy shooting! Life (or at least employment) dealt me a hand where I got to live/shoot in different states and travel to a number of matches. I've met some great folks, made lifelong friends, and managed with perseverance and some



**Joe Darter**

luck to do pretty well. If we've shot together much, you might have heard me say the title line above about Indians winning, particularly if I'm RO and a shooter has a stage where things just go wrong. It is meant as a gentle condolence and that I understand his or her momentary discombobulation, because brothers and sisters, we've all been down that trail. Get over it, have a laugh, then analyze what went wrong....and don't do it again!

Stay at this game long enough and you'll experience situations that go, ... well, ... not as planned. As long as situations that can be potentially dangerous are avoided, chalk it up to learning experience. We have to remember, whether it's a stage blow up or a gun blowing up, most bad happenings can be avoided with a little more attention to details and common sense. So that *Continued next page.*



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being said; here are a few instances where JD's wheels came off the cart or I tomahawked myself.

Ever dropped a gun Joe? Yep, pistols twice. Missed a re-holster at a state match on the 8<sup>th</sup> stage. Kept on as RO and shot the last 2 stages great. Here's a tip: be very judicious with your use of holster lube, your pistol may come out very fast without your hand on it. *I hear Johnny Morris laughing from far away....*

Twice at state or regional level man-on-man shoot offs, I've taken myself right out of the contest by trusting rifle loads that were my old reloads in old cases or by having to borrow ammo that the rifle did not like.

First time at EOT, first stage, I'm chatting with mi amiga, Shot Glass, at the loading table. We have identical rifles. No problem except I'm talking and loading her .45 rifle with my .38 ammo. Luckily this snafu was discovered before leaving the loading table.

Shooting side matches at an annual shoot, I won the last of them, which was fastest rifle. Good; the rifle is running fine. Stage 1 next day is: pistol, shotgun, rifle, all is good until rifle which goes "click". Firing pin had broken on last shot, previous day. I now routinely check rifle FP at the loading table and have indeed discovered a breakage between stages.

Rifle extractor tension and extractor notches are other good areas to check. See Joe Darter WB – first stage at Poncho Villa this year with his single shot, extraction-by-fingers, 1866.

Once in a multi-gun deal, I wound up with a very, very slick import 97, (oh beware buyer of action jobs by those you do not know). Practiced, shot it and all seemed well. Until at a W3G match, I'm running, shooting it and it comes completely apart in two pieces when I slam the slide home. Funny how our brains work as I remember looking at the barrel- slide in my left hand and receiver-butt stock in my right and



thinking "how do I make this work"? At one time, a pretty funny video of this existed.

Ok, I've shot 97's exclusively for years and beyond the quick disconnect model noted above, I've never had my primary gun let me down, (*Phantom just fainted*). However, I check it out pretty well and burning incense during full moons probably helps. As does owning several.

Bad ammo is likely the number one Injun waiting to ambush ya. So, if you are re-loader, who is to blame? I've been pretty lucky in this area (or at least paid attention while at the press), with only one truly faulty primer experience. Oh, did I mention that was on stage 10 of a state match?

I can also attest if your gun belt has a standard loop through buckle, you might want to invest in a spare. They can break, (most look great but are constructed of fairly weak metal).

Early on I traveled to an out-of-town Saturday-Sunday match and made sure all guns and gear were loaded up. It was summer so I drove up Friday night in shorts, only to discover at the hotel I had left my cowboy clothes. That became known as my Walmart attire cowboy match.

So friends remember, "stuff" happens to us all. When we evaluate the root cause, often the Indians are us! If it was not dangerous, laugh it off, figure it out, and it's on to the next stage. Keep your focus and your scalp!

## Long Juan Here!



Our May shoot is in the bag. On Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, we had 42 shooters compete in 19 categories.

Twelve of the nineteen categories had more than one shooter. Congratulations to the category winners and to our clean shooters: **Bad Little Mama, Jake Paladin, Lincoln Drifter, The Adobe Kid** and **Wildcat Bob**. Complete scores are posted on our Yahoo Group <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/PCCSS/> and our website <http://pccss.org/>. Scores were also emailed to those who shot and have an email address.

We had several visitors and some who have not shot with us for a while. Welcome; we hope you will be back soon and often. Of particular note, we had two young men who accompanied PCSS member, **Bunk Stagner** to

the shoot - **The Kid** and **7<sup>th</sup> Samurai**. Both shot in the Young Gun category and did very well. **7<sup>th</sup> Samurai** is an exchange student from Japan and was shooting for his first time. A special welcome to both of you!! Hope you will be back again and thanks to **Bunk** for bringing them and to all of **Posse 1** for making their shooting experience so special.



**7<sup>th</sup> Samurai**

For anyone who didn't notice, it was **HOT** Saturday! The exterior temperature gauge in my car on the way home read 97 degrees. Starting with the June match, the Board has decided to implement "**summer rules.**" We will shoot only five stages, although Stage Marshal **Phantom** may provide a sixth stage for those hardy souls who want to get more for their money. Except for the costume categories (Classic Cowboy and B-Western), the dress code will be relaxed, but remember we are a cowboy action shooting club and cowboy attire is part of the game. We are hoping everyone will continue to wear boots and cowboy hats. Use your own judgment on everything else. Remember to stay hydrated.

In closing, our thoughts and prayers are with **Jarhead Jake** and his family following the death of his mother this month.

## RO's Corner: Picking up the Pace!

Particularly in the heat, we need to pick up the pace during our monthly matches. Finishing more quickly will not only avoid some of the mid-day heat, it will also let us all eat lunch together. By the time the last posse finished shooting last Saturday, the first posse to finish had eaten and many had gone home. Even though the scores were available within a few minutes of the last posse finishing, many shooters had departed before we were able to announce the results. That does not mean we should cut

corners on safety, but it does mean the club, each shooter and each posse all need to be more organized and more efficient.

How can we be more organized and efficient? As a club, we will work to even out the number of people shooting on each posse and plan to limit the total number of shooters on each posse. This past Saturday, we had posses with 11, 14 and 16 shooters and one shoot-through. Ideally, we should have had 14 shooters on each posse. Next month, we will close a posse when 14 shooters have signed up *Continued next page.*

and we may have to reassign shooters to equalize the numbers. A note to GAF/Cody-Dixon shooters. Our posse has gotten pretty big. We may need to split up.

The real key to finishing more quickly, however, is posse and shooter efficiency. Everyone needs to help. Everyone needs to get to the first stage promptly. Read the scenario, get loaded and start shooting. Don't waste time between shooters. If you are first at the reloading table, be ready for the timer operator to call, "shooter up." If you are not ready, defer to the next shooter who is ready. Timer operators, clear the stage, ensure that brass is picked up, ensure the targets are reset and call the next shooter to the line. Everyone needs to help. Each posse needs timer operators (sharing this job is particularly important in the heat), counters,

brass-pickers, a scorekeeper and someone at the unloading table to check each gun as shooters leave the stage after shooting. If you are not doing something to help the posse, you are not doing your part. When the posse finishes a stage, don't stand around visiting. We can visit at lunch. Move promptly to the next stage. Read the scenario, start loading, etc. Let's all make an effort to be both safe and efficient next month. Thanks for helping and don't take offense when the posse leader or timer operator asks you to do your part, whether it is helping or expediting. Our goal is for all posses to finish shooting at about the same time and for everyone to have lunch together. Having said all of that, remember safety comes first. Particularly with new, inexperienced shooters, we need to take our time while we are expediting and being efficient.

## Where's Chuck?

Two people found Chuck last month at the State Capitol. Congratulations to **Mesquite Creek Mike** and **Lincoln Drifter**. For the rest of you, *see below*. Chuck is hanging out in another picture in this month's issue of the Gazette. See if you can find him. If you do, send me an email and you will be "mentioned in the dispatches!"



## True Blue Cachoo remembered Cinco de Mayo



## What's it mean? Wrangler

A **wrangler** was the hand, either on the ranch or trail-drive, who looked out for the saddle horses or *remuda* of the ranch or trail-outfit. Occupying a junior position on the crew, the wrangler was usually a young and inexperienced hand. The

wrangler was expected to know every horse in the *remuda* and to which rider it belonged. Anglos first corrupted the Mexican spelling and pronunciation, from *caballerango* to *caverango* and then to wrangler. Other terms used for the wrangler included horse rustler and *remudero*.

# Derringers & Pocket Pistols

by Long Juan

**Introduction.** Hollywood would have us think every man in the Old West went about his daily affairs packing a big six-gun in a visible leather holster. Texas Rangers and other lawmen most always did. Indian scouts, frontiersmen, and drovers also usually packed six-shooters openly. A concealed pocket pistol was, however, also a hot item in the Old West.

Between 1848 and 1900, when the population of the entire United States only thirty-five to fifty million, Colt and Smith & Wesson alone produced more than a million handguns intended to be carried concealed.

Anyone could go into a hardware or general store in the Old West and buy a gun. There were no concealed-carry laws. Pocket pistols were carried as commonly as cell phones are today. They were easily concealed and offered the element of surprise. They were carried by gamblers, prostitutes, little old widows, schoolmarm, lawyers, judges and others. Most gun manufacturers produced a line of pocket pistols. These "hideaway" guns came in various calibers, from .22 to .45, and ranged from single-shot to as many as 10 shots. Even at the close

distances, they were less than deadly.

Nevertheless, they contributed to an owner's sense of security.

Brandishing alone was often enough

to calm escalating disputes. No one wanted to be shot, even by an underpowered round. The dread of being wounded was justifiably greater in the Old West, with its scarcity of doctors, questionable hygiene and failure to appreciate fully the importance of sterilization when it came to dressings, hands and medical tools. Many deaths by gunshot were the result of subsequent infection, rather than the size or location of the wound.

**Derringers.** The original Philadelphia Deringer (produced 1852-1868) was designed by Henry Deringer, a famous 19th-century maker of small pocket pistols. It was a single-shot, muzzle-loading pistol. A popular concealed-



carry handgun of the era, the Philadelphia Deringer was widely copied by competitors, sometimes down to the markings. Used on copies of Deringer's design, the common misspelling, "derringer", is now used to refer to any small-size, often large-caliber handgun, that is neither a revolver nor a semi-automatic pistol.

Initially popular with military officers, the Philadelphia Deringer became widely popular among civilians who wanted a small and easily concealable pistol for self-defense. Approximately 15,000 Deringers were manufactured. All were single-barrel pistols with back-action percussion locks, typically .41 rifled bores and walnut stocks. Barrel-lengths for the Deringer varied from 1½" to 6". Because of their small size and easy availability, the Philadelphia Deringer

sometimes had the dubious reputation of being a favored tool of assassins. John Wilkes Booth used a snub-nosed percussion Deringer to assassinate Abraham Lincoln.



By adding a second barrel on top of the first and pivoting the barrels upwards to reload, the famous Remington derringer design doubled the capacity of the Philadelphia Deringer while maintaining its compact size. Each barrel held one round. A cam on the hammer alternated between top and bottom barrels.



The Remington derringer was a .41 rimfire caliber and achieved wide popularity. The .41 rimfire bullet moved so slowly it could be seen in flight. Still, at close range, it could kill. The Remington derringer was sold from 1866 to 1935.

**Pocket Pistols.** Concealable handguns were a hot item when Sam Colt got his firearms-manufacturing business running for the second time in 1848. One of his first projects was to come up with a good pocket pistol. The result was the Baby Dragoon, a .31 caliber five-shooter. Even by modern standards the Baby Dragoon was light at only 22 ounces with a 4" barrel. 700 fps with a 48-grain round ball was considered a "hot load" for the Baby



Dragoon. In foot-pounds of energy, that put the Baby Dragoon between the .22 Short and .22 Long cartridges in firepower. After the five diminutive charges were fired, the gun had to be broken into three pieces for reloading. It could take even experienced shooter 10 minutes to get the BD up and running again. Colt nevertheless sold 15,000 of the Baby Dragoons in only a year before upgrading to the Model 1849 Pocket Pistol. The latter used the same frame as the Baby Dragoon, but with a loading lever beneath the barrel, reload time was cut at least in half. Between 1850 and 1873, the Colt factory turned out more than

340,000 Model 1849 Pocket Pistols, more than any other cap and ball firearm. It took 68 years and several government contracts before Colt produced 357,000 of its more famous Single-Action Army "Peacemakers." The Model 1849 was manufactured in some 200 variations, among them the Wells Fargo model. Without a loading lever and with a only a 3" barrel, the Wells Fargo was very easy to carry.

In 1860, after much experimentation directed at reducing the size of its .44 caliber holster pistols, Colt took advantage of stronger, mass-produced steel by rebating the frame of the Navy revolver to hold a larger diameter cylinder chambered in .44. The same technology was applied to Colt's .31 caliber revolvers, configuring them to accept five-shot .36 caliber cylinders. Other changes included lightweight fluted cylinders, round barrels and a ratcheted loading lever. The result was the Police Model of 1862. The Pocket Navy retained the octagonal barrel and traditional loading lever of



the earlier pocket model, but was up-sized to .36 caliber, just like the Pocket Police. Those revolvers could push an 80-grain round ball all the way to 850 fps. Between 1862 and 1873, Colt produced 19,000 Pocket Navy and more than 20,000 Pocket Police revolvers.

In the 1850s and 1860s, Smith & Wesson got things going with its own pocket pistol. The .22 Short rimfire cartridge was introduced with the No. 1 S&W. Between 1857 and 1881, S&W sold over a quarter million of the little single-action revolvers. In 1876, S&W introduced the .38 S&W cartridge. The revolver introduced with that cartridge has always been known as the Baby Russian because the



design was scaled down from large-frame revolvers the company was making for the Russian Government. A year later, Colt came up with the design for a *double-action*, concealed carry, cartridge-firing handgun. A factor in selecting a handgun, hideaway or otherwise, was how fast one could get off repeat, aimed

shots. The single action revolver (in which the hammer has to be hand-cocked each time) is nearly, if not equally quick, for the first round. The double action revolver (with the hammer cocked and the cylinder rotated by a single long pull on the trigger) has a significant edge when it comes to subsequent aimed shots. Smith & Wesson's first double-action, top-break revolvers hit the shelves in 1880. More than 1,000 Model 3 revolvers with shortened 5" barrels were sold to Well Fargo Express for use by its agents and guards. These firearms remained their primary hideaways until the 1899 advent of S&W's "hand ejector" (swing-out cylinder) design, exemplified by the "Chief's Special" Model 36. The Colt Model 1877DA was made in .38 Colt and .41 Colt calibers, dubbed the "Lightning" and the "Thunderer" respectively.

Other substantial .38 caliber, centerfire, double action top-breaks were made in the latter part of the 19th Century by manufacturers Harrington & Richardson, Merwin, Hulbert & Company, Hopkins & Allen and Iver Johnson Bicycle Works. Some companies were downright brilliant about concealed-carry and self-defense handguns. Merwin Hulbert offered a Pocket Army .44. It was a normal-sized six-gun, but

they offered the option of two pre-fitted barrels - a 7" long, the other 3½". The barrels could be switched in a matter of seconds. The long barrel would be worn openly on the trail and replaced by the short one for concealed carry. The M&H Pocket Army even came with a pointed butt frame, called the "skullcracker", for more intimate altercations.

**Fact and fiction.** Lincoln's assassination has been mentioned. In his sunset years Buffalo Bill Cody carried an ivory-gripped, nickel-plated Remington over and under .41 caliber derringer with amateurish engraving. Circa 1881, El Paso City Marshal Dallas Stoudenmire packed a Colt Richards Conversion .44 with its barrel shortened from 8" to only 3". He had a special leather-lined pocket built into his trousers to house it. Luke Short, a famous gambler and gunfighter, took a large-caliber revolver to a gunsmith and had the barrel cut off. He then took the modified gun to a tailor and had him customize a hip pocket with a leather holster. Short used this arrangement very effectively on two particular occasions - first in 1881, when a gunslinger named Charlie Storms forced Short into a shootout outside the Oriental Saloon in Tombstone and then again in 1887 when Timothy Isaiah (Longhair Jim) Courtright

drew down on Short outside the White Elephant Saloon in Fort Worth, Texas. In both cases Short was faster on the draw and killed his assailants. By the 1890s, shoulder holsters were common. Reformed outlaw John Wesley Hardin was packing either a Colt Lightning and a S&W Model 1881DA in such a rig when he was gunned down in an El Paso saloon. The character Paladin on "Have Gun Will Travel" packed a derringer under the skirt of his revolver holster. In the TV series, The Wild Wild West, special agent James T. West had a Remington derringer rigged on a mechanical device inside his



shirt cuff, allowing it to spring into his hand on command.

**SASS – Cowboy Action Shooting.** Pocket pistols and derringers are popular for use in annual club, state, regional and national matches, usually in side

matches, but occasionally as an additional firearm in main-match stages. Cimarron and others offer replicas of many percussion pocket pistols and the Remington derringer. Many of the percussion revolvers can be converted to shoot cartridges. I have great 1849 Pocket Pistol converted to shoot .32 S&W. Originals of many double-action pocket pistols can be found for reasonable prices at gun shows and online. All are a hoot to shoot and side matches are an opportunity to show off guns that often spend the rest of the year in the gun safe. As I frequently say, try it, you might like it.

## Western Movies on "Worth"

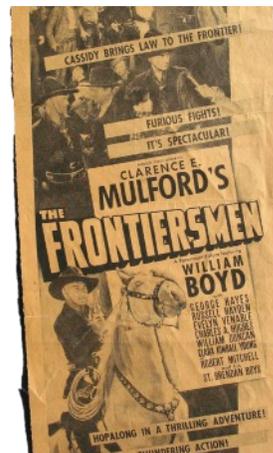
A man's worth has got nothing to do with money. *Sam Kendrick played by Stacy Keach in Desolation Canyon (2006)*

It wouldn't be worth having if it came too easy. *Lash Larue played by himself in Frontier Revenge (1948)*



The only way I could ever tell how much a thing was worth was by how much I wanted it. *Jeff McCloud played by Robert Mitchum in The Lusty Men (1952)*

**In my book, they all had it right!**



Anything worth having is worth earning. *Hopalong Cassidy played by William Boyd in The Frontiersman (1938)*



# PCSS MAY SHOOT

Spyder John shooting the Holy Black



Farr Ranger on the Move!



Abilene: Gunfighter Extraordinaire

You think Cactus Jack believes anything LW is telling him?



BAD Little Mama

Someone has to keep score

I am trying to hit it, Scooter, but it keeps moving!



# PCSS MAY SHOOT



Cowboy Small  
unloading his shotgun



Drifter says, "Don't hit that no-shoot target  
in front of the tombstones, Tejas Bob!"

An interesting hat rack, eh?



That's **THE Adobe Kid** to  
you, pard!





# PCSS MAY SHOOT



**Scheutzum** takes Dead Aim

Two of the three counters say, 3. What about you, **Jake**?



**Texas Sarge**  
Recovering



**Abilene**



**Kyle Moon** shooting at the knockdown tombstones and then telling **Bunkhouse Bob** and **Scheutzum Phast**, "I did too hit 'em. They just didn't go down. And, no, I don't shoot whimpy loads!"



# PCSS MAY SHOOT

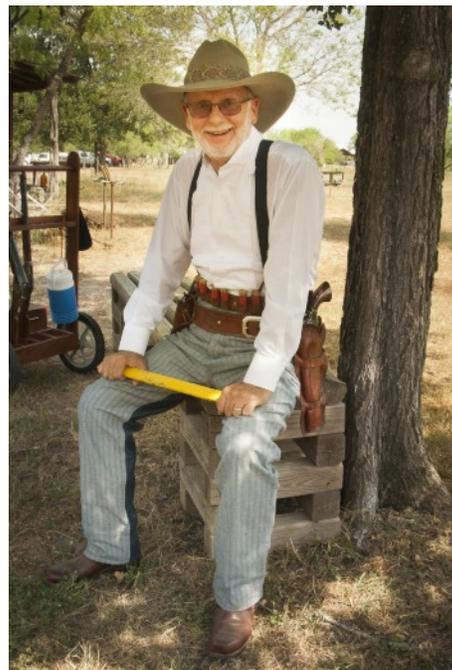
Chisos



Hat Creek Mac



Farr Ranger



Lightning McQueen



Bunkhouse Bob



Posse 3

Agarita Annie



Cactus Jack and Jake Jones

Little Mama and Duke



Renegade Bullet Company  
 Pricing as of 1 February 2012  
 830-446-2123

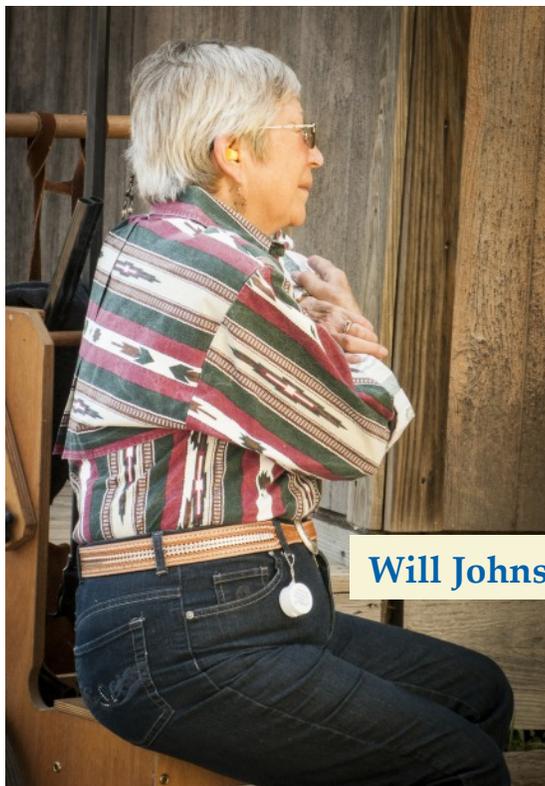


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Caliber	Weight	Config.	Price/1000
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	105	FP	54
	125	RNFP	58
	125	FP	58
	130	RNFP	59
	158	RNFP	63
	158	FP	63
	158	SWC	63
.380	100	RNFP	53
.38-55	245	RNFP	92*
.41	215	SWC	77
.44	180	RNFP	67
	240	SWC	81
.44-40	200	RNFP	70
.45 COLT	160	RNFP	76*
	180	RNFP	67
	200	RNFP	70
	250	RNFP	83
9MM	124	RN	58
	125	CN	58
40 S&W	180	FP	67
.45ACP	200	SWC	70
"New"	200	RN	70
	230	RN	79
45-70	405	FPT	168*



Will Johnson always has a loyal spectator!

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