

# AGARITA GAZETTE



*A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society*



Agarita Ranch

January 2014

Lockhart, Texas



## The Hawken Rifle

By Long Juan

The Hawken was a muzzle loading rifle built by the Hawken brothers and used on the prairies and in the Rocky Mountains of the United States during the early frontier days. The Hawken Rifle has become synonymous with the "plains rifle", the buffalo gun and the fur trapper's gun. Developed in the 1820s, it was eventually displaced by breechloaders, such as the Sharps and lever-action rifles that flourished after the Civil War.

The Hawken was made by Jacob and Samuel Hawken in their St. Louis, Missouri, gunsmith shop. The two brothers were trained by their father as rifle-smiths on the east coast. They moved west and opened a business in St. Louis at the beginning of the Rocky Mountain fur trade. They ran the shop from 1815-58. It continued in operation until it closed in 1915. The Hawkens produced what their customers needed - a quality gun, light enough to carry all the time and capable of knocking down

big targets at long range. They called their rifles "Rocky Mountain Rifles", reflecting their

customer base of fur trappers, traders and explorers. The Hawken brothers also produced light sporting rifles, shotguns and pistols.

The earliest record of a Hawken Rifle is a custom gun made by Samuel Hawken for General Ashley in 1823. Although the brothers had been supplying various goods and services to the American Fur Company from the 1820s, the sale of rifles or guns of any sort is not indicated on surviving documents. The earliest clearly documented sale of a production Hawken Rifle was an order for 18 rifles by the American Fur Company in 1831. At least some of these rifles were probably percussion. Earlier Hawkens were built with a flintlock action.

Subsequent production of Hawkens was extremely limited, probably generally not more than about 120 rifles per year. Peak production of the shop occurred during the 1849 Gold Rush and even then probably did not exceed 200 rifles per year. Hawken rifles were very expensive for the time, but were extremely high quality arms. They reflected the care and skill of two of the best gunsmiths in St. Louis. Production levels were maintained through the mid-1850s. They began to decline over the next 10 years, as "modern" military arms and breech-loading rifles such as the Sharps and

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## **Stage Marshal - Open**

## **Flag Marshal - Artiman**

[www.pccss.org](http://www.pccss.org)



## President's Word:

President **Dragon Hill Dave** is on vacation this month.

*Continued from the front page*

Winchester lever-action rifles gained in popularity. Firearms from other manufacturers, such as Colt also provided competition.

Hawken rifles were handmade, one at a time. They were accurate and reliable. With an effective range of 400 yards, they were good long-range hunting rifles, suitable for taking bison, bear and other big game. Over the past one hundred years, numerous authors have written about these arms and their popularity with the trappers, explorers, hunters and prospectors who tamed a continent during the 19th century. A number of famous men were said to have owned Hawken rifles, including Daniel Boone, Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, Jedidiah Smith and Theodore Roosevelt. Robert Redford starred as a mountain man who used a Hawken rifle in the 1972 film *Jeremiah Johnson*. Actress, Laura San Giacomo, "Cora", used a Hawken in the 1990 film, *Quigley Down Under*.

The Hawken brothers were not only skilled gunsmiths; they were old fashioned craftsmen who could and would make just about anything. Invoices and other records show that the brothers' shop was not a rifle production factory, but rather an all-purpose shop in which all sorts of services, tools and metal items could be purchased. Restocking guns, gun

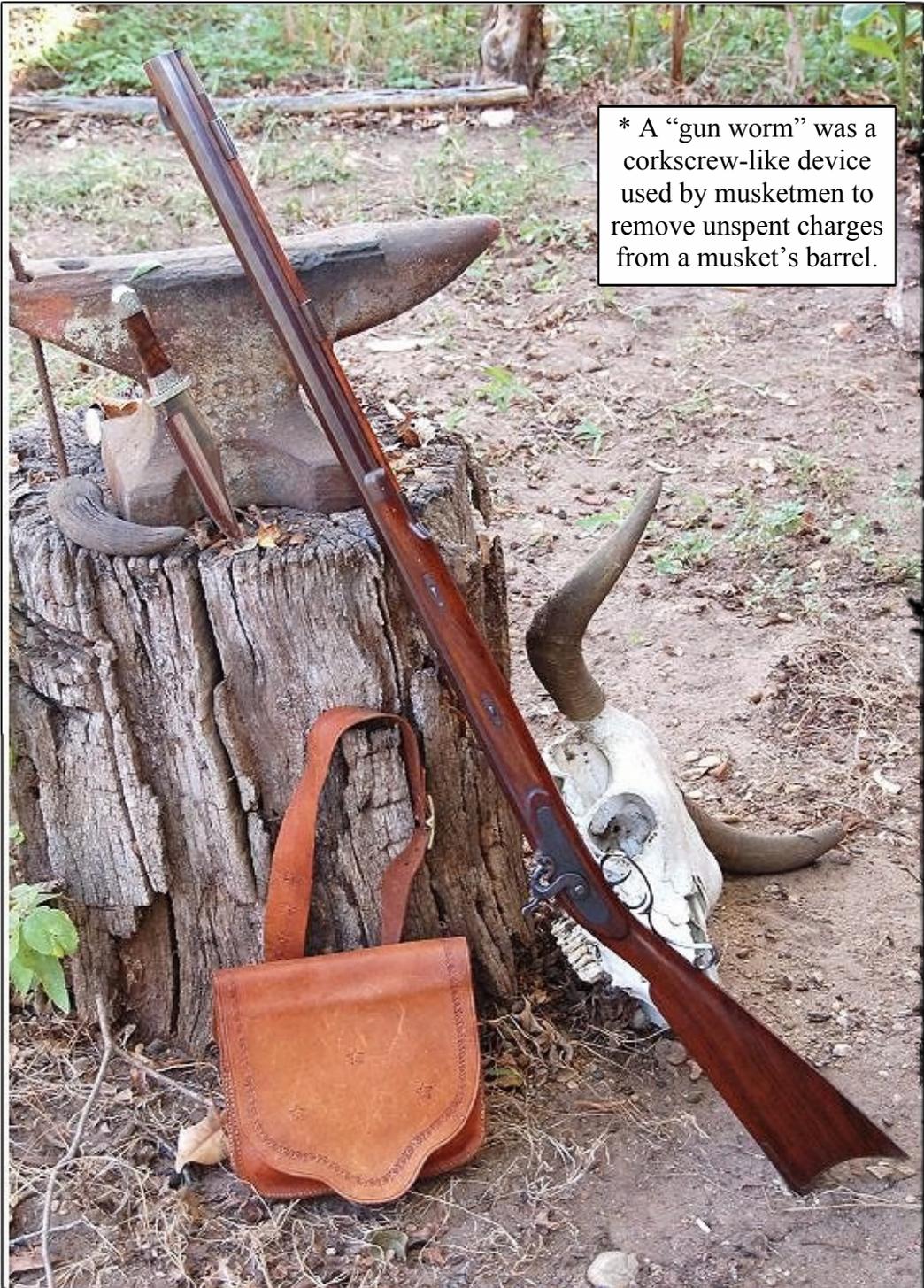


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repairs and cleaning were large parts of their business. They manufactured substantial numbers of iron and brass axes and tomahawks, fire steels, iron arrow points and gun worms.\* On one occasion, they made basket handles for 16 swords. Services even included shoeing a horse. It was not until after 1848 that "sundries" ceased to appear in any amount, suggesting that the manufacture of rifles had become the primary activity by that time.

Hawken rifles were generally shorter and of a larger caliber than earlier "Kentucky rifles." They were typically .50 or .53 caliber, but ranged as high as .68 caliber. They weighed on



\* A "gun worm" was a corkscrew-like device used by musketeers to remove unspent charges from a musket's barrel.

average 10½ pounds, sometimes as much as 15 pounds. Hawken barrels were of varying length, octagonal on the outside and made of soft iron, which reduced fouling. The walnut or maple stocks had a curved cheek piece, often looking like and called a beaver's tail. Most Hawkens had double triggers. When the rear "set" trigger was pulled, the hammer did not fall but rather "set", becoming a "hair trigger" tripped with a light touch. When the front trigger was used without using the rear "set" trigger, it required a firm pull. The front site was a blade sight. Unlike many modern reproductions, the butt plate and other trim was not made of bronze, but of iron.

The Hawken rifle achieved legendary status in the history of the pre-Civil War American West.

Unfortunately, most of the Hawkens produced

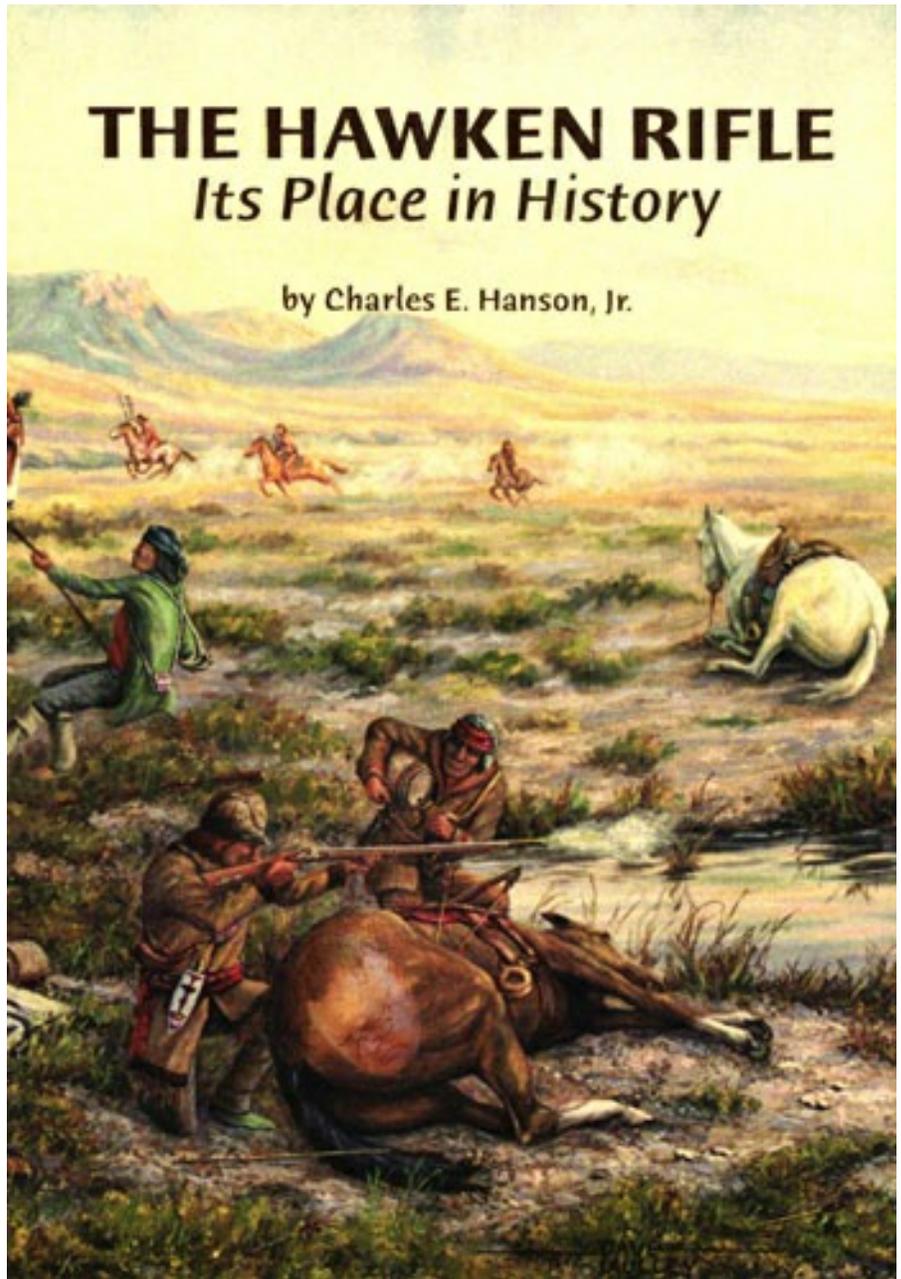
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have not survived to the present day.

For more information about the Hawken Rifle or Jacob and Samuel Hawken, see *The Hawken Rifle: Its Place in History*, by Charles E Hanson, Jr.

For anyone interested in great long-range shooting with 19<sup>th</sup> Century rifles or replicas, go shoot with the *Green Mountain Regulators* on Sunday, the fourth weekend of any month. For more information, see the *Green Mountain Regulators* website. Also read the splendid article on long-range shooting written by **Bronco Birnbaum** and reproduced with his permission beginning on page 6 of this issue.



## The Dispatches

**Long Juan** here. Election results are in. **Dragon Hill Dave** and **Joe Darter** were reelected as President and Vice President for one-year terms ending December 31, 2014. Yours truly was re-elected to another two-year term as Secretary. Treasurer **True Blue Cachoo** is beginning the second year of her two-year term that expires at the end of this year. Congratulations to all. Thanks to **Artiman**

and **G.T. Sharps** for running good campaigns in their election bids. Many ideas were brought forth that will help us be a better club in the future. The Board looks forward to both of them helping in that regard.

If you did not get a PCSS 2014 calendar and would like one, please let me know right away. We will be placing another order. See the cover of the calendar on page 20 of this issue.

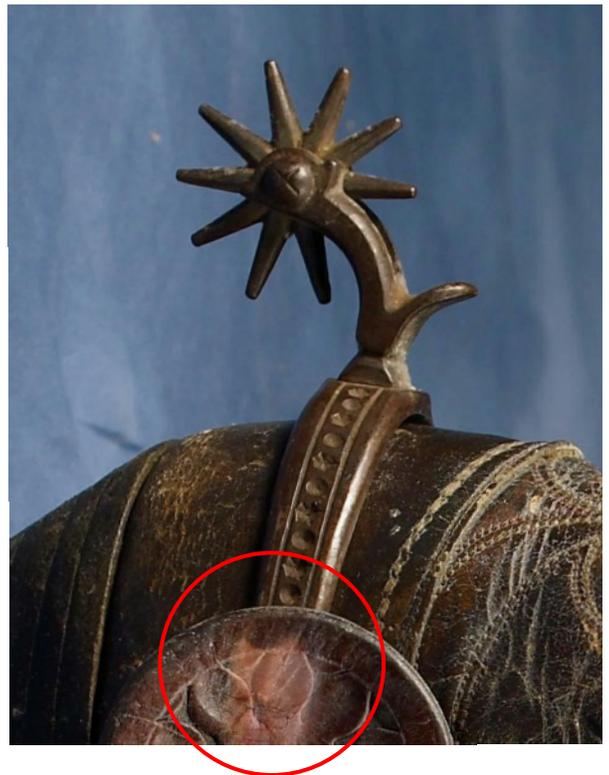
# Find Delta Raider

It must have been too difficult to find **Delta Raider** last month. Only four of you reported finding him. Hereby mentioned in "the Dispatches" for finding him in the December issue of the *Agarita Gazette* are **El Sabre**, **Boon Doggle**, **Lincoln Drifter** and **Meadow Biscuit Slim**. See if you can find him this month. There will be a free match in December to the person finds **Delta Raider** the greatest number of times this year.

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## Good Advice

Always drink upstream from the herd.  
*Will Rogers*



## Stories from Jake (Paladin that is):

### "Chew the Fat"

Settlers of the Old West were proud of their pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man "could bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

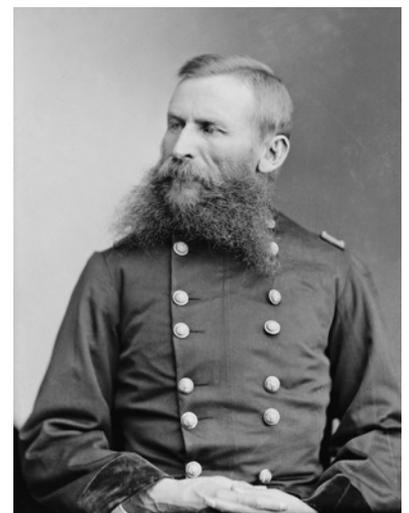
## General George Armstrong Custer - Best Obituary



Sheridan

*The adulations heaped on him by a grateful nation for his supposed genius turned his head, which, added to his natural disposition, caused him to bloat his little carcass with debauchery and dissipation which carried him off prematurely.*

General George Crook delivered this unusual obituary in memory of General Philip Sheridan, who was disliked by many Army officers of the West.



Crook

# Long Range Shooting at the Green Mountain Regulators

by Bronco Birnbaum

Picking a long range gun:

The most popular single shot guns that appear on the GMR long range field are Sharps 1874, Rolling Blocks and High Walls. We have also seen Trapdoors, Handi Rifles, Sharps 1875 and Martinis. When picking a gun, find one with a shotgun butt and a 30 inch barrel as a minimum length. A rifle with a crisp 3lb standard trigger or a rifle equipped with a single or double set trigger is required for accurate shooting. Legal single shots require an exposed hammer and thus the Martini is not a valid SASS tourney gun, but the Martini is exceptionally beautiful and fun to shoot. We allow Martini's and other single shot Creedmoor style guns at GMR just because we like them.

Lever repeating guns most seen at GMR are Marlin 1895s and 336s, Winchester 1894s, Winchester 1876 and Browning 86s. The triggers on these guns are usually very bad and some work on them is a good idea. Legal lever guns require a tubular magazine and an exposed hammer.



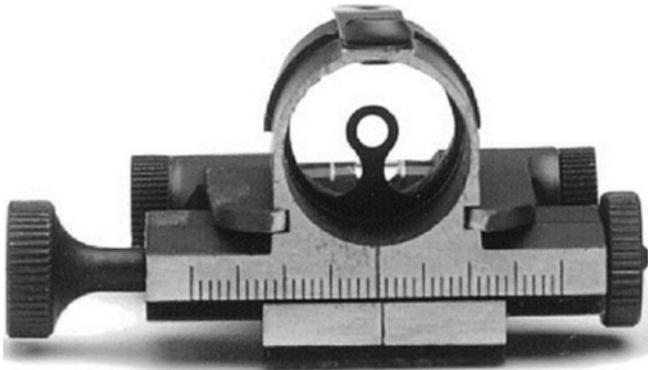
Calibers:

The most frequently seen caliber in single shots on our range is the 45-70 Govt. Other calibers are 40-65 Win, 45-100 and 38-55 Win. Bullet size in 45 caliber is between 400 and 500 grains. I recommend 400 grain bullets in 40 caliber. The traditional 38 caliber weight is 265 grains.

The Marlin and Browning lever guns come in 45-70 and the Marlin and Winchester can be found in 38-55 Win. Some shooters choose to shoot 30-30 and 32-40 in lever guns, but these are not considered "big bore". I have not seen a lever gun in 40-65. Winchester 1876 guns can be had in 45-60 and a few other obsolete calibers.

Sights:

Front sights should be a globe style with interchangeable inserts. Adding a bubble level to the front globe is a great idea because if the gun is tilted left or right, then bullet will follow the sights and miss the target. A third option that can be added to a front globe sight is a wind gauge. This is a micrometer mechanism that allows the front sight to move left or right to augment windage.



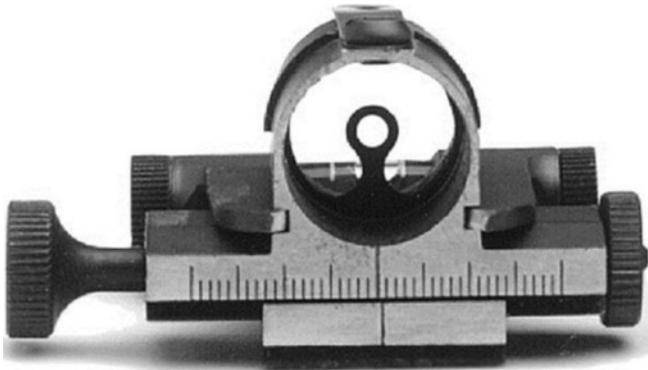
Rifles with period correct  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch diameter scopes are also used at GMR. The scopes can be from 24 inches long, to full barrel length. They are mounted in Creedmore Malcolm-Style mounts on 17 in. centers and are adjustable for parallax and focus. These scopes are usually 6x power and may be modified with an interchangeable reticle. Scopes can be mounted on single shot guns or lever guns.



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Rear sights can either be Soule or Creedmore style. Rear sights must have vertical and horizontal adjustment. One minute of angle (MOA) scale is the only recommendation. Finer scales can't be read by our old eyes, coarser scales won't let you be accurate enough. A Hadley style eye disc gives the shooter a competitive edge. A deeper eyecup, along with a black matte finish, helps to reduce glare plus it supplies different aperture sizes. I recommend Sharps bases on Sharps and Winchester bases on Rolling Blocks and High Walls. Lever guns require special bases because the bolt drives back to where the sight is mounted. MVA makes a base specifically designed for Marlin rifles.



We do not allow any shooter to shoot past 200 yards with open buckhorn style sights. There is no way to measure bullet placement with open sights at longer ranges. Bullets can't be allowed to exit our range onto neighboring property. We require shooters to know where their bullets will land at every yardage prior to shooting on our range. There are calculators on the web that can plot the path of the bullet given: weight, diameter, speed and ballistic coefficient. The shooter must be able to transform inches of bullet drop or windage to the MOA micrometer

scale on the sights. Knowing how air temperature, wind direction and speed will affect your trajectory is helpful. Knowing how to adjust for those natural functions are what separate winners and losers on the range.

Ammo:

Lead bullets only. 1000 fps to 1500 fps should work well for any caliber. The club has a chronometer and every once in a while we pull it out to measure load speed.

Club Rules:

1. All bullets must be lead.
2. Period correct micrometer sights only.
3. The rifle butt stock can only be supported by the shooters shoulder.



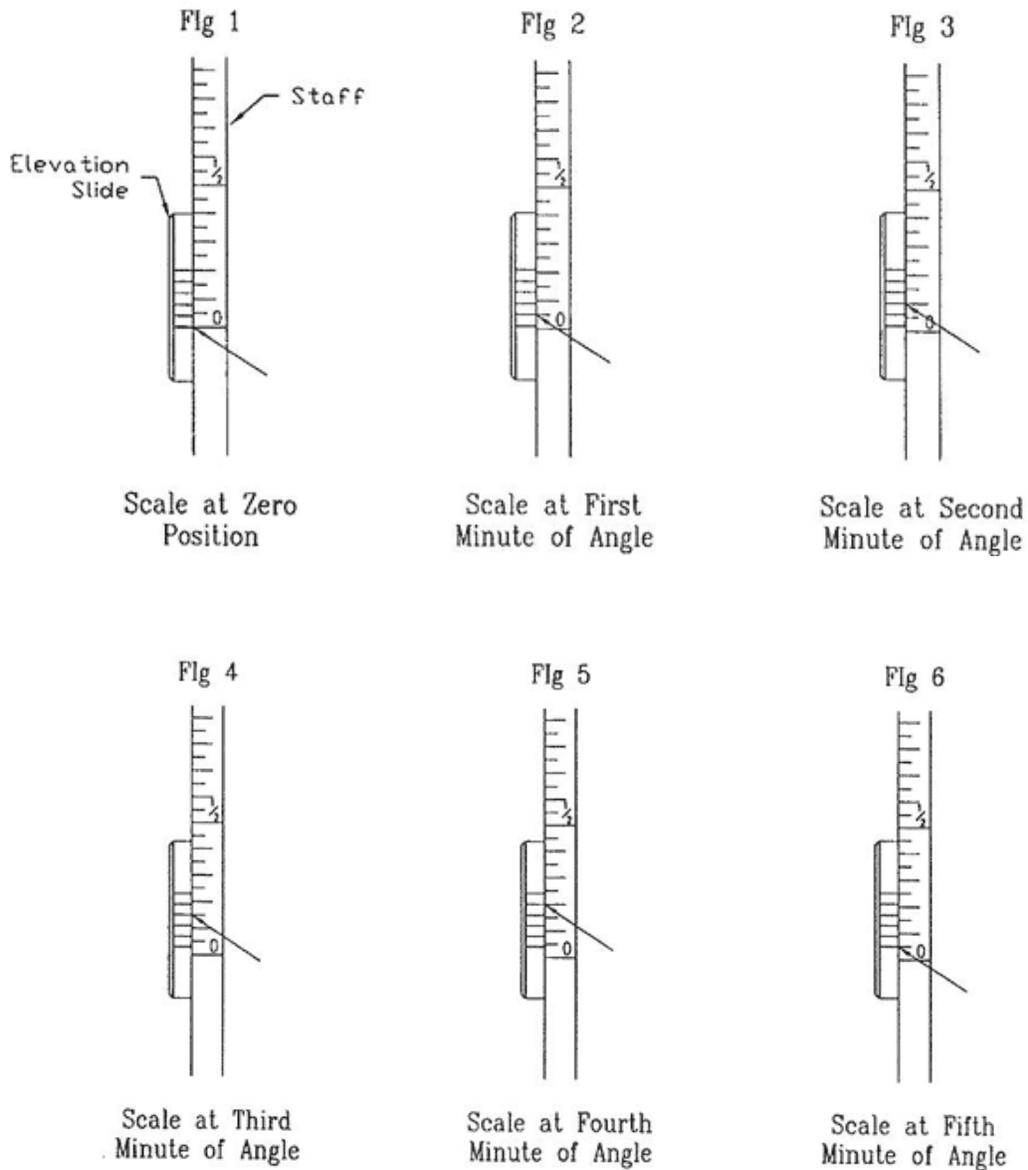
Our Game:

We call it Cowboy Gong Shooting. We simulate a buffalo hunter in the 1870's. For the buffalo hunter, every shot should generate revenue. The shooter can take advantage of the best solid rest that they can to make a money shot, but must adhere to the three Club Rules, specifically how the rifle butt can only be supported by the shooters shoulder. Steel targets of all shapes and sizes are placed

at 100, 150, 200, 250, 300 and 400 yards. Three targets at each distance, one shot at each target = 18 rounds per tournament. Shooters can use any position they want: table supported forearm while sitting, stick supported forearm while lying or sitting, standing, sitting, lying or whatever is the shooters desire. The course of fire is determined by the Range Marshall just before the match starts. We currently charge \$15 per shooter, all money goes to the club.



Minute of Angle definitions. Pictures drawn by Montana Vintage Arms Corp.



A Minute of Angle (MOA) is an *angular* measurement. An MOA is 1/60th of a degree.

1 MOA spreads about 1" (1.047") per 100 yards. 1 MOA is a different size at different distances.

100 yds	200 yds	300 yds	400 yds	500 yds	600 yds	700 yds	800 yds
1"	2"	3"	4"	5"	6"	7"	8"

## Scoring:

A bullseye hit is two points. A non-bullseye hit is one point. A miss, with no hit on the steel is zero points. Tie scores are broken by number of bullseyes. Further ties are broken by shoot off with shoot-off rules being extemporaneously designed by the Range Marshall. Only one person shoots at a time. Other competitors are required to use spotting scopes, when not shooting, to watch the target and pass judgment on the quality of the hit. Bullseyes, non-bullseye hits and misses are determined by multi-person argumentative agreement instantly. There are no appeals.



Original Sharps Creedmoor Rifle at the Autry Museum of the American West



GMR shoots long range on the Sunday following the scheduled Saturday cowboy action shoot. This is typically the fourth weekend of each month.

<http://www.greenmountainregulators.org/>

# Match Report by Long Juan

We had a great match in January. We had great weather. We had LOTS of fun. We had 75 total shooters – 5 posses of 15 shooters each. Congratulations to Top Man, Young Gun **Matt Black**, f/k/a Rattlesnake Wrangler (98.38 seconds). He was followed closely by father, **Colt Faro** (103.64 seconds). Congratulations also to Top Women, Cowgirls **Spur Broke** and **Ivory Venom**, who finished with identical scores of 140.14 seconds for the 5-stage main match. They were followed closely by Girl's Young Gun, **Diamond Kate** at 147.56 seconds. Diamond Kate was in turn followed closely by father **Fairbanks Sam** at 147.91 seconds. He responded to the scores with, "HEY! I'm calling foul on Diamond Kate. She threw dirt in my rifle!! LOL" For those who do not know "LOL" is laugh out loud in texting language. We had only 4 clean shooters in the main match. Congratulations to **Artie Fly**, **Colt Faro**, **Kap K. Hawk** and **Scooter**.

Category scores and additional scoring information can be found on the Plum Creek website, [www.pccss.org](http://www.pccss.org). The posse shoot, "Cut Down a Christmas Tree", was great fun. Thanks **Lucky Nickel** for the idea. Thanks **Jake Jones** and **Lucky Nickel** for setting up and running the stage. Winning time was a very impressive 5.6 seconds (Posse 3, led by **Sheriff Robert Love**. DAL was my posse at 21.46 seconds (Posse 1).

We had 18 shooters for the morning Wild Bunch match. Winners were **Shooting Iron Miller** – Ladies Modern, **Jake Jones** – Men's Traditional and **Joe Darter** – Men's Modern.

Dinner was great. Thanks to **Tina** and all the others who helped with planning, preparation and serving.

A special plaque was awarded to **Elroy Rogers** Saturday evening in recognition of his years of service to the Plum Creek Shooting Society.



Plum Creek Shooting Society,  
In Grateful Appreciation and  
Hearty Thanks, Recognizes  
  
Elroy Rogers  
(Mack Farrell)  
  
For his Hard Work, Dedication  
and Support of the Plum Creek  
Shooting Society



One plaque was given to Elroy to hang in his home; an identical plaque will hang in Elroy's Rogers Wheelwright Shop (Stage 3). Thanks Elroy for all of your many contributions to our success as a cowboy action shooting club.

Winners of the costume contest were **Shooting Iron Miller** – Best Dressed Cowgirl, **Texas Sarge** – Best Dressed Cowboy (make that Mountain Man), **Anna Long Longshot** and **G.T. Sharps** – Best Dressed Couple and **Artiman** – Best Dressed Military. Congratulations to the winners and thanks to **Boon**

**Doggle and Six Goin' South** for organizing and judging.

Thanks to everyone who helped to make this special day a great success, including **Lady B Bruce, Anna Long Longshot, G.T. Sharps, Artiman, Lefty Leo and Leo's Lady, Lightning McQueen, Lucky Nickel, Jake Jones, Captain Jim Bison, Dragon Hill Dave, Joe Darter, Delta Raider, Jake Paladin, True Blue**

**Cachoo, Doug the Kid, Lonesome Doug, Wild Hog and Elroy Rogers.** Thanks also to Skinny Steve's children, **Andrea and Cole** for their help. Finally, thanks to **Skinny Steve, Lightning McQueen and Six Goin' South** for contributing photos they took during the day. My apologies to anyone whose name was omitted and thanks also for your help.



**Harley & J.T.**



**Joe Darter, one good lookin' cowboy  
(At least that's what he thinks!)**

**Sheriff Robert Love**





Deadeye Denton, the picture of concentration



Big Irish



Posse 2



**True Blue Cachoo: She's back!**



**Lucky Nickel & Jake Jones ran a great posse shoot!  
Sheriff Robert Love's posse won!**



**Cut down the Christmas Tree Posse Shoot**



**Shotgun Jim, Dodge City  
Mike & Charlie Saringo**



**Gun Worm**



**Run Kickshot, run!!**



**Artie Fly makin' smoke!**



**Captain Jim Bison lookin' good  
shootin' Wild Bunch**



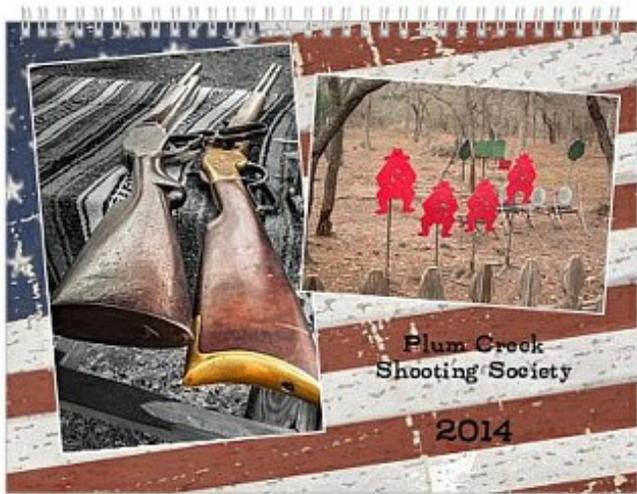
**Costume Contest Winners:**

**Best Dressed Cowboy: Texas Sarge**

**Best Dressed Cowgirl: Shooting Iron  
Milller**

**Best Dressed Military: Artiman**

**Best Dressed Couple: Anna Long  
Longshot and G.T. Sharps**



2014 Plum Creek Shooting Society Calendar  
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[bumpbuster.blogspot.com](http://bumpbuster.blogspot.com)

# Longhorn Bullets



Pricing, effective 9/1/13\*

Don Herbert (Hopalong) 210-602-6994

Rick Page 210-844-9362

Caliber	Weight	Config.	Price/500	Price/1000
.38	100	RNFP	32	64
	105	FP	33	66
	125	RNFP	35	70
	125	FP	35	70
	130	RNFP	36	72
	158	RNFP	39	77
	158	FP	39	77
	158	SWC	39	77
.380	100	RNFP	33	65
.38-55	245	RNFP	59	117
.41	215	SWC	49	98
.44	180	RNFP	41	81
	240	SWC	52	104
.44-40	200	RNFP	45	90
.45 COLT	160	RNFP	46	92
	180	RNFP	41	81
	200	RNFP	45	90
	250	RNFP	53	106
9MM	124	RN	35	70
	125	CN	35	70
40 S&W	180	FP	41	81
.45ACP	200	SWC	45	90
	200	RN	45	90
	230	RN	51	101
45-70	405	FPT	111	222

\*Price increase because of higher cost of lead. Sorry for any inconvenience.