AGARITA GAZETTE



A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society



Agarita Ranch

March 2014

Lockhart, Texas

The Cowboy Hat

by Long Juan

Author's Note: I was well into writing this article for the March issue of the Agarita Gazette when my Spring 2014 issue of Guns of the Old West arrived. A great article about cowboy hats by Phil Spangenberger begins on page 48 of that issue. I know I cannot compete with the pros, but I think you will enjoy reading both articles if you have the time.

The cowboy hat is a high-crowned, wide-brimmed hat best known as the defining piece of attire for the North American cowboy. There are few items in the history of American culture that carry



the same iconic weight as the cowboy hat. It is the one item of apparel that can be worn in any corner of the world and receive immediate recognition.

In 1840s America, cowboys and cowboy hats did not exist. The first men going west were the mountain men. They mostly wore hats made of wool or pelts. Even into the second half of the 19th century, there was no such thing as a standard hat in the Old West. Many styles of hats were worn, including top hats, derbies or bowlers, Civil War kepis and slouch hats, sombreros and even sailor hats. The bowler was more



Bat Masterson and his blowler

popular than the slouch hat or sombrero because it was less likely to blow off off in the wind. John B. Stetson is generally given credit for "inventing" the cowboy hat. Just as the Winchester became synonymous with

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President's Word:

What a great start of the month of March for the Plum Creek Shooting Society! Here in Texas at the range we celebrated Texas Independence Day with 51 shooters. Out in Arizona several members of the Plum Creek Shooting Society were distinguishing themselves at the SASS National Championship—Winter Range.

The Texas Independence Day shoot was a little different with some new players at the top of the leaderboard. **Skyhawk Hans** burned up the stages and took top honors with **Hopalong Herbert** and **P.T.** right behind him. **Six Going South** was our top lady shooter (and no. 7 overall). We had a lucky 13 clean shooters—**Bandera Kid, Bison Jim, Bolo Bob, Chisos, English Bob, Jakes Jones, Kap K. Hawk, Kuckleburr, Lars Christopherson, Nueces Slim, P.T., Scooter and Skyhawk Hans**.

A great thing about this club is that people step up to get the job done when needed. A big thanks to **P.T**. for writing the stages and setting targets and to **Lightning McQueen** for getting the range ready to shoot. Other big kudos to **Long Juan** who oversaw the action while his President and Vice-President were running around shooting in Arizona. Thanks also to **Agarita Annie** who pitched in with registration and scoring. As always, **Delta Raider** had us ready and running along with overseeing the whole Texas independence Day event.

Speaking of Winter Range—Plum Creek Shooting Society members did very well. Highest finishers were members **Matt Black** (1st in Junior Boys and 2d overall) and **Colt Faro** (4th in Wrangler and 10th overall). **Tres Equis** finshed 6th in Cowboy and 23rd overall. **Phantom** finished in the top ten in 49'r and 37th overall. **Kickshot** finished out of the top ten in that tough Senior category but did finish 101st

Continued next page.

overall. I was the first loser (2nd) in Classic Cowboy and 121st overall (that **T-Bone Dooley** is a tough Classic Cowboy to beat.) Vice-President **Joe Darter** finished out of the money in 49'r but 133rd overall. **Kit Carson**, shooting as a Gunfighter, came home with a buckle, finishing 8th in his category and 170th overall. **Czexican Dave** (258th) and **Whiskey Kid** (262nd) were in tough categories but acquitted themselves well.

Now that these big events are behind us, it is time to start thinking about the Battle of Plum Creek coming up in early May. If you haven't already signed up for the Battle Plum Creek, it is time to get that application out and send it in. We're going to extend the time for applying without incurring late fees to April 15th. But don't be procrastinating on getting in your application like you're probably doing on your taxes. We need to know who and how many are coming so we can prepare the range and make arrangements for the food and other big events that were planning for the Battle Plum Creek. Just Get R done!

Your officers have decided that the Plum Creek Shooting Society will once again apply to be the venue for the Texas State match. We're submitting an application to host a Texas State match in May of 2015. We probably won't know whether we get it until sometime in August or September of this year, but our hope is that our good showing in 2013 will encourage the Territorial Governors to support our application.

In that vein, there's an important announcement that begins below discussing the stretch raffle at the 2013 Texas State match. Our club has suffered from a false rumor that has been circulating about the proceeds to the stretch raffle. This statement addresses those false rumors and we hope clears the air in explaining why we were unable to make a direct contribution to the SASS Scholarship Fund after the stretch raffle and re-confirming our commitment to the SASS Scholarship Fund..

The SASS Scholarship Fund offers an excellent opportunity to support the new shooters and young shooters that are the future of our game. I know we all have many calls upon our charity, but if you love Cowboy Shooting I hope you will consider including the SASS Scholarship fund in your charitable giving.

To the SASS Community:

I am **Dragon Hill Dave**, President of the Plum Creek Shooting Society since its inception in 2012. A false and terribly

destructive rumor is floating around in Texas about our club, the Plum Creek Shooting Society, and the stretch raffle held at the 2013 Texas State Championship. This rumor alleges that all of the proceeds of the stretch raffle were supposed to go to the SASS Scholarship Fund and that the

SASS Scholarship Fund received no benefit at all from Plum Creek's activities. An even more malicious and false variant of this rumor is that our landowner kept the money for himself instead of sending it to the SASS Scholarship Fund. **These rumors are false**

and should stop.

Let me address the ugliest rumor first-- our landowner, **Delta Raider**, is a decorated Vietnam veteran who, along with his wife, built a wonderful Western town and Pavilion at their Agarita Ranch near Lockhart, Texas. They have opened their land and their hearts to Cowboy Action

Shooters. **Delta Raider** is a Life Member of SASS and a Territorial Governor for another Central Texas club. For years **Delta Raider**

ran the cowboy shooting operation, but in April 2012 we formed an independent club that uses the range at the Agarita Ranch. It is the club that put on the Texas State match in 2013.

Delta Raider did not receive the proceeds of the stretch raffle, period. The club is a separate entity. We rent the range from Delta Raider, paying him on a per shooter basis. He probably spent more than what we paid him to make his place the best possible for the shooters. Whoever started this terrible lie about him please stop, and those of you who have heard it please spread the truth.

Shotglass agreed to do a stretch raffle for our club with the expectation that the club would be donating some funds to the SASS Scholarship Fund. There was never any agreement or expectation that all the funds collected or that any specific amount would be donated.

We spent a lot of money on the State match and the raffle prizes. Plum Creek invested heavily in range improvements, targets, banners, badges, buckles, door prizes and stretch raffle prizes to deliver a top-notch shooter experience for the 2013 State match. We spent \$3000 on guns, a gun cart and a Dillon 650 that we included in the raffle and gave away as shooter's prizes.

We didn't do a good job handling our money and our costs. We had some unexpected expenses as well as a little too much first-time enthusiasm for putting on the best shoot possible without closely considering the budget. In the end, our expenses significantly exceeded our income, even including the money collected from the stretch raffle. Several of us made up the

difference, over \$3,000, out of our own pockets.

We all believe the Scholarship fund is a huge opportunity to give back, but when it came time to think about donations to the SASS Scholarship fund, the club had no money. I honestly don't know what we were supposed to do - we are a voluntary organization and we had no money left - in fact we owed a lot to others. How could we make a donation?

But the SASS Scholarship Fund did not suffer. My wife **Barely There** and I made a \$1000 donation to the SASS Scholarship Fund on behalf of the Plum Creek Shooting Society. The SASS Scholarship Fund therefore received a donation as a result of the State shoot - the club just couldn't afford to make it.

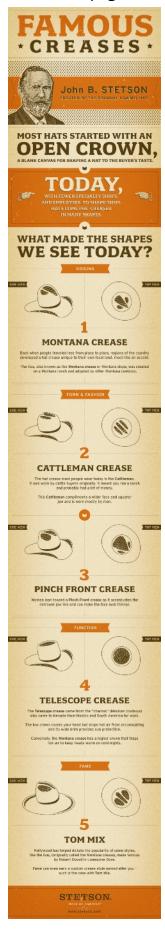
After months, the club is finally in the black again, thanks to the support of our 100+ members and the Central Texas cowboy action shooting community. To show our commitment to the SASS Scholarship Fund, the Plum Creek Shooting Society will donate \$100 from each of its monthly shoots for the next year to the Fund beginning in April 2014. And I will back that with my personal guarantee.

To those who have heard or passed on the false rumors I have addressed, I ask that you stop and take positive efforts to spread the truth. Help us assure that our reputation suffers no more from this and, if you haven't shot with us at the Agarita Ranch, schedule a date to come see what we have to offer. Our 10-stage annual match, **Battle of Plum Creek**, is just around the corner, May 1-4—See details at www.pccss.org and hope to see you there.

Getting ready to shoot the Texas Independence Day match at Agarita Ranch



Continued from page 1



rifles, and Colt with pistols, Stetson's name became the universally accepted name for any cowboy hat. You could water your horse with the crown, take a drink with the brim, roll it up as a pillow when you slept, fan a fire, herd animals or use it as a decoy when you were being shot at. You also looked successful at the local dance when you strode in wearing a Stetson.

Stetson's original "Boss of the Plains" was introduced in 1865. It had a high 4" crown to provide insulation on top of the head and a wide 4" stiff brim to provide shelter from both sun and precipitation for the face, neck and shoulders. A



plain hatband was fitted so the owner could adjust the size of the hat. Made of fur-felt, the original Boss of the Plains was durable, lightweight and waterproof. They were made of matted rabbit and/or beaver fur. A 5X hat was all rabbit, a 10X hat 50% rabbit and 50% beaver and a 100X hat 100% beaver. Wonder what that makes my 3X Boss?

The important parts of a cowboy hat are the brim, crown and crease. Creases and dents make it easier to don or remove the hat by grasping the crown rather than the brim. The original Boss-of-the-Plains design dominated for about twenty years. Most 19th-century photographs that show cowboy hats do not show an intentional crease. Most hats were kept open



crown, i.e., not creased or dented. Through use, abuse and customization by individual wearers, however, hats were modified from their original appearance. In particular, the crown would become dented, at first inadvertently, then by deliberate choice of the owner. The brim was often rolled or curved and ornamentation was sometimes added. Legend has it that the more the curl in the brim of a hat, the more wild-and-woolly the cowboy was; the flatter the brim, the more conservative. In cowbov action shooting, the Classic Cowboy is required to wear a traditional felt cowboy hat. Check out the hats of Classic Cowboys you know to see if their hats match their personalities. In the real Old West, creases and brim shapes reflected where the particular hat owner lived or worked. In some cases. individual ranches where a cowboy

worked could be identified by the crease in his hat.

In the latter part of the 19th century, after seeing the popularity of various self-shaped styles, the Stetson hat company began producing various pre-shaped styles of cowboy hats. The first popular variation was a hat with a long crease sloping from a high crown at the back steeply toward the front. It was called the "Carlsbad crease" after a style used by wearers in Carlsbad, New Mexico. The Carlsbad crease is now often called a "Gus crease" after the hat worn by Robert Duval's character in Lonesome Dove.



Another design, derived from the pointed top of the Mexican sombrero, worked its way north and became known as the "Montana peak." It had four dents resulting from being handled on top with four fingers. This crease found its way into hats worn by the

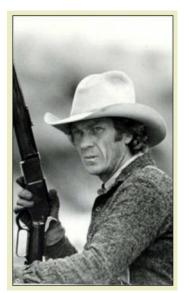


Canadian Mounties. A very popular crease used on modern cowboy hats is the Cattleman crease. The crease goes right down the center of the crown with a dent on each side. It is what most folks picture when they think of a cowboy hat. See picture bottom of page 1.

A cowboy's hat was highly prized and very expensive, often costing a month or two's wages. Hours were spent personalizing the hat with creases to the crown and molding the brim. A cowboy's Stetson was seldom further than an arm's length away and a cowboy would go to Hell and back to retrieve one that was lost.

Cowboy hats are sometimes referred to as "ten-gallon" hats. "Ten-gallon" may be a corruption of the Spanish modifier "tan galán", which loosely translates as "really handsome" or "so fine." *Un sombrero tan galán* translates as "such a fine hat." When Texas cowboys misunderstood the word

qalán as "gallon", the legend was born. Stetson boasted that the tight weave of its hats made them sufficiently waterproof to be used as a bucket. Early print advertising by Stetson showed a cowboy giving his horse a drink of water out of a hat. Even the Stetson, acknowledged that a "ten-gallon" hat would actually hold only about 3 quarts.



In conclusion, I recommend the article in the most recent issue of *Guns of the Old West*. There is also lots of good, interesting information about cowboy hats - historical and current - available on the web and in various periodicals and books.

Find Delta Raider

Lots of you found **Delta Raider** in the February issue. He was hanging out near that round rock in Brushy Creek. See right. Hereby mentioned in the dispatches for finding **Delta Raider** in February are **Sterling Sage**, **Boon Doggle**, **Lincoln Drifter**, **Lorelei Longshot**, **Delta Raider**, **El Sabre**, **Lefty Leo**, **Nichols Creek**, **Meadow Biscuit Slim**, **Preacher Man Lee.**, **Artiman**, **Annalong Longshot**, **G.T. Sharps**, **Six Goin' South**, **Big John Mesquite** and **Marshall John Henry**. That's a record number for one month. Who can find him this month? Only the photo where he is hidden counts. Photos where he is identified do not.





Stories from Jake (Paladin that is): Stage Conventions

As your Territorial Governor, I would like to remind everyone that we all should all be familiar with SASS Stage Conventions. These conventions are stated in the SASS Shooters Manual and are a list of practices every shooter is expected to know and follow on every stage. They apply unless the stage writer directs otherwise in the stage description. The current stage conventions are as follows:

- 1. All knockdown shotgun targets may be reengaged until down.
- 2. All knockdown targets (shotgun, rifle or revolver) must go down to count. Any knockdown target still standing once the shooter has engaged the next sequence of the stage will be counted as a miss.
- 3. All staged guns shall have their barrels pointed safely down range. All long guns initially stage on a horizontal flat surfaces shall be staged lying flat where at

least the rear of the trigger guard is on the staging area. All handguns initially staged on a horizontal flat surface must be staged with the entire handgun lying flat on the staging surface.

- 4. Staged shotguns shall be open and empty.
- 5. Shooters may not start a stage with ammunition in hand.
- 6. <u>Revised this year.</u> Long guns will be discarded open and empty with their barrels pointed safely down range. If the action of a long gun closes after being opened and emptied, the shooter will, at the conclusion of the stage, show it to be clear to the TO or spotter. Appropriate penalties will be applied if it is not clear. No one other than the competitor may handle the gun in question.
- 7. Revolvers are returned to leather after the shooting string.
- 8. Revolvers are drawn and used in accordance with the shooter's category.
- 9. If no starting position is given, the shooter shall stand fully erect with revolvers holstered and hands at the side, not touching any firearm.
- 10. Cowboy port arms is defined as standing fully erect with the butt of the long gun at or below the waist of the shooter, the muzzle at or above the shoulder and the long gun held with both hands.



Long Juan here! See Dragon Hill Dave's President's Word beginning on page 2 for the match report this month. We had a great match and Texas Independence Day celebration. Thanks to **Delta Raider** for making everything happen. See photos elsewhere in this issue. Soon it will be time for Battle of Plum Creek. Thursday, May 1st will be devoted to side matches. Friday, we will shoot the first 5 stages of our 10-stage main match and will continue with side matches in the afternoon. The final 5 stages of the main match will be shot Saturday, followed by an awards banquet that evening. Sunday morning we will

have man-on-man and maybe some other fun stuff. There is lots of work to do in order to be ready. The planning committee will soon be in touch with those who volunteered to help. If you haven't registered, please do.

What's it mean? "Seeing the Elephant"



Elephant Rock - Gettysburg Battlefield

If asked, many of us would respond, if you've "seen the elephant," it means you've been in combat, but why the elephant?

In the 3rd Century B.C., Alexander the Great's Macedonian warriors defeated the elephant-mounted army of King Porus in the Indus valley. These men brought home with them memories of the strange beasts. Considering the distances traveled by this army and its many exploits, it may be that "seeing the elephant" became synonymous with journeys and experiences in strange and far-off places, including experience in battle.

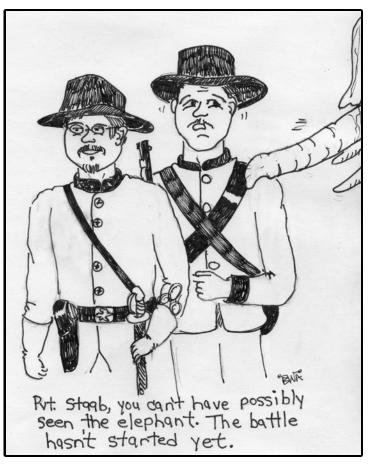
More than a 1,000 years after Alexander, Charlemagne heard stories of an enormous animal that could uproot living trees. He became obsessed with acquiring one. An elephant was brought by land and sea from Baghdad to the emperor's residence in what is today western Germany. Word spread throughout the Frankish world that the elephant had pulled down its own stone stable, but would eat gently from its royal master's hand. When the elephant was paraded during festivals and celebrations, peasants, who had seldom if ever left their homes before, traveled miles to "see the elephant."

There is a story about a farmer in the early days of traveling circuses in America. The farmer had heard much about elephants, but had never seen one. Told that a circus with an elephant was expected in a nearby community, the farmer set out early one morning in his wagon, hoping to make the first performance. Upon reaching a crossroad several miles from home, he encountered the circus train, led by an elephant. There was a collision. The farmer's wagon was smashed to splinters, his horse was killed and the farmer was knocked unconscious. The circus train continued as if nothing had happened. Awakening after several hours, the farmer surveyed the destruction and dryly stated, "Well, at least I've seen the elephant."

In the generation before the Civil War, Mexican War volunteers had their adventures referred to by reference to the elephant. Newspapers and periodicals of the 1840s often carried cartoons of depicting Death in an elephant's howdah (a bed or carriage carried on the elephant's back) trampling American dragoons and infantrymen.

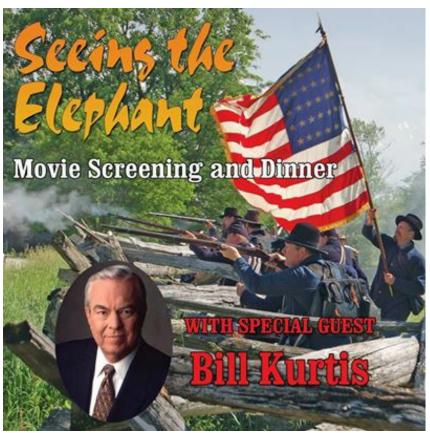
Old soldiers in the Civil War coined a phrase for green troops who survived their first taste of battle, They would say, "He has seen the elephant." Diaries and letters of Civil War soldiers often included the phrase, "I've seen the elephant" or "I'm off to see the elephant" to describe their experience in combat. A vast majority of young soldiers in the Civil War had never faced enemy fire. Many were away from home for the first time in their lives. They had lived quiet and peaceful lives in small towns, farms, or cities. Now, they were learning to kill and facing the possibility or even likelihood of being killed. As these men trained and marched, preparing for battle, the thought of "seeing the elephant" for the first time weighed heavily on their minds.

The elephant was also present in brothels and saloons of the Old West. A picture of a red light district in 1890s Colorado has the caption: "The Row, Cripple Creek: a part of town where everybody goes to see the



elephant." Patrons of Old West saloons drank alcoholic beverages in hopes of "seeing the elephant" and several Old West saloons had "elephant" in their name, including the famous White Elephant Saloons, one of which is still open in Fort Worth.



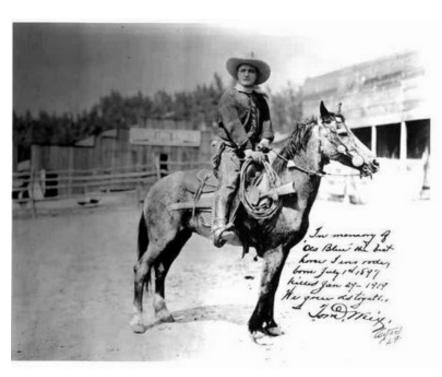


t the Civil War Museum in Kenosha, Wisconsin, a new, high-tech digital movie gives viewers a glimpse of the elephant using 360° movie technology. The 10-minute film incorporates visual and sound effects as well as ground motion to enhance the movie experience. The film was made to offer intimate views of what soldiers went through, from enlisting to maneuvers to a skirmish to the consequences of the war,. The story follows three characters: a young man seeking adventure, a patriotic family man and an abolitionist – from enlistment to their first taste of combat. All three face battle together and ultimately deal with the consequences of war.

More than 200 actors, re-enactors, film crew, technical and historical advisers and museum staff worked for five days in June 2013 to create the movie. Broadcast journalist Bill Kurtis narrates the film. The script is based on letters, journals and diaries of Civil War soldiers. Some re-enactors

played several parts: civilians, Union soldiers and Confederate soldiers. Most brought their own costumes for the roles.

The movie trailer and photographs of the filming of the movie can be viewed online at www.thecivilwarmuseum.org. The trailer can also be found on YouTube by searching for "The Civil War Seeing the Elephant."





Tascosa (a/k/a Tascosa Kid) & Miss Sassi Fras

Regular shooters at Plum Creek will recall that **Tascosa** and **Miss Sassi Fras** moved to Santa Fe at the end of 2013. **Tascosa** sent some photos that I intended to run them in the December issue of the Gazette. I forgot. Better late than never, here is what it looked like in late November/early December outside their home in Santa Fe. **Tascosa** reports they have shot at Founders Ranch and shoot regularly with the Magdalena Trail Drivers. He has encouraged all of us to consider shooting Billy the Kid Breakout in August in Ruidoso, NM, with the Lincoln County Regulators.





Texas Independence Day Celebration at the Agarita Ranch



Artiman



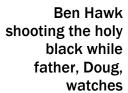
Lightning McQueen, Little Lightning & Little Bullseye



How real men load their firearms



Kate Johnson's stagecoach





Match Photos

Lars & Kuckleburr figure out the stage description





Long Juan takes dead aim and misses the first pistol knockdown.

El Sabre at his VERY best!





Delta Raider & Six Goin' South



El Sabre steppin' over Little Muddy



Bolo Bob knockin' down the rifle knockdowns



Jesse's Boots



Chisos says, "One miss and one P."



Posse 3:

Left to right - El Sabre, LaDonna, Chisos, English Bob, Hoppy, Skyhawk Hans, Dutch Van Horn (front), T-Bone Paul (tongue), Bison Jim, Lightning McQueen, Frank Longshot, Little Bullseye, Six Goin' South, Bandera Kid & Bolo Bob



Show Me showin' some teeth



Fightin' Parson & kiddos

Rogue Heeler



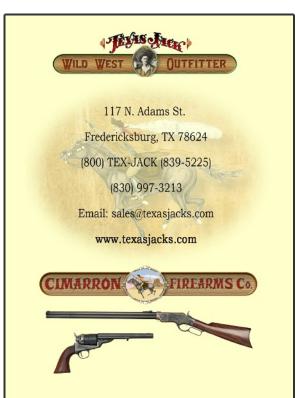


Big Johnn Mesquite



Bronco Birnbaum & Six Goin' South take a "selfie"











"There's no place like this place, anywhere near this place, so this must be the place." Manny Gammage 911 S. Commerce St., Lockhart (512) 398-4287

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	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.