

# AGARITA GAZETTE



*A Chronicle of the Plum Creek Shooting Society*



Agarita Ranch

February 2016

Lockhart, Texas

## Sheriffs Helped Tame the Old West

The Old West was often a lawless place where outlaws frequently reigned supreme. Many wild and rowdy places were initially populated mostly by men. These places attracted seedier elements of society to their many saloons, dance halls, gambling parlors and brothels. In any growing community, there were also businessmen and hard-working pioneers who wanted law and order. Confronted with serious issues of crime, disorder, vice and violence, these men turned to members of their



communities to enforce law and order. The office of sheriff, which dates from medieval England, was a natural. The word sheriff is a shortened version of shire-reeve, the person responsible for maintaining order in the shire, the forerunner of modern-day counties. Although borders were not as precise as they are today, a sheriff in the Old West had county-wide jurisdiction.

In 1836, the Constitution of the newly created Republic of Texas formally required that there be a sheriff and other necessary officials in each county. The

Constitution in relevant part read as follows:

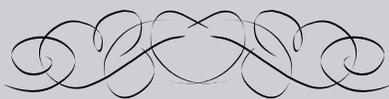
There shall be appointed for each county, a convenient number of Justices of the Peace, one sheriff, and one coroner, who shall hold their offices for two years, to be elected by qualified voters of the district or county, as Congress (of the Republic) may direct. Justices of the Peace and sheriffs shall be commissioned by the President (of the Republic).

The provisions of the Republic of Texas Constitution remained unchanged and endured through the Civil War and Reconstruction. With minor revisions relating to the term of office and removal, the office of sheriff continues in the State of Texas largely as it was in 1836.

Sheriffs were allowed to conscript able-bodied men to assist in the pursuit and arrest of criminals, in other words, to form a posse. *Posse Comitatus* is the common-law or statutory authority of a sheriff to draft

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## Plum Creek Shooting Society Officers

### **President - Dragon Hill Dave**

David Donaldson  
Austin, TX 512-626-8189  
dhdonald@mindspring.com

### **Vice President - Joe Darter**

Tom Morris  
Seguin, TX 210-464-3969  
darterjoe@yahoo.com

### **Secretary &**

### **Editor, Agarita Gazette -**

### **Long Juan**

John Soule  
Austin, TX 512-750-3923  
jsoule@scottdoug.com

### **Treasurer - True Blue Cachoo**

Nancy Forage  
Austin, TX 512-775-0699

### **Territorial Governor - Jake**

### **Paladin**

J.P. Forage  
Austin, TX 512-970-4990  
jforage@austin.rr.com

### **Range Marshal - Delta Raider**

Chuck Leshikar  
Lockhart, TX 512-227-1389  
chuck@agaritaranch.com

### **Range Deputy - Lefty Leo**

### **Safety Marshal - Artiman**

Jay Davis  
Lockhart, TX 512-762-7175  
rebeljaybird1962@att.net

### **Stage Marshal - Phantom**

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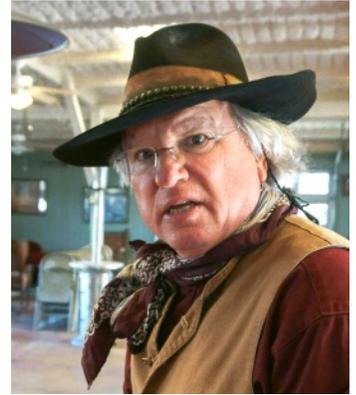
## President's Word

What a turnout at our February Shoot on Saturday! 97 shooters as well as several visitors came out to shoot and watch with us on a pretty Saturday morning in February. Temperatures stayed in the 60s, and it was just about a perfect shooting day. We did get a little slow start when we got that many people coming in, but the good news is that we had some folks that we didn't have in our system that now are in, which will make it go faster next time they come out. A big thank you to **General Burleson, Jake Paladin, Long Juan** and **Bronco Birnbaum** for calmly handling the crowd and getting us on our way as quick as we did.

And a big thanks to all who came out to shoot with us. We appreciated **Colorado Jackson** bringing along pretty much a whole posse of people, and it was good to see the folks from the Corpus Christi area (**Verdadero Dan, Hoss Roonwright**, and other cowboys and cowgirls from that area) coming out to join us. Great to have **Colt Faro** and **Matt Black** out shooting with us, and of course the **Reckon** crowd. And many of our regulars were out as well, including **Boondoggle, Abilene, Texas Sarge, Rogue Heeler, Frank Longshot, Lucky Nickel, Dutch Van Horn, Jim No Horse** (who shot all 6 stages - pretty good for a guy in chemo every other week) and many others. If I left your name out, know that we appreciated your being there.

Take some time to go on the website and look over some of the photos from the shoot. They make some great memories.

We had some issues with splatter this time, but mainly the problem was a target on Stage 1 that was not square to the line, not angled downward, and not protected by the Stage screen between Stages 1 and 2. I know there were a few issues with splatter in other locations, but I think our worst problems came from that target. I didn't realize the problem with that target until the shooting was over. After the shoot we had some lively discussions on the Yahoo Group about splatter. As a result of the problems and the discussion, we are working on



*Continued on next page*

some solutions that we hope will ameliorate the splatter issue while preserving the great shooting experience at Plum Creek. We won't be able to stop splatter completely, but maybe we can suppress most of the return fire from most of the targets.

We sure need some folks to get going on their registration for the Battle of Plum Creek. We barely have enough for 2 posses now, and we know that we can do better than that. With 97 shooters for a monthly match, we should have way more for our 10-stage annual shoot. The early registration discount ends March 1<sup>st</sup>, so now is the time to get those registrations in.

We know that the Sunday of the Battle of Plum Creek is Mother's Day. I hope that won't keep you from coming. We plan to have a special celebration of Mothers on that day and to get you on the road soon so you can celebrate that evening. And, of course, we need some volunteers to help us prepare for the shoot and run side matches on Saturday. Even if you can't get here until the shoot time, we can use you as a

volunteer somewhere when you aren't shooting.

Our turnout for the Sunday shoots has been disappointing. We only had 8 shooters this Sunday after having 97 on Saturday. I sure expected more. We try to offer the Sunday shoots as a chance for those who can't shoot Saturday to come out and enjoy the range or for those who shot Saturday to make it a weekend of shooting. We offer Wild Bunch on Sunday to let folks try their hand at it or practice a little, but we still welcome and accommodate the Cowboy shooters. We recognize many have other obligations or priorities on Sunday and we respect that. We will try again next month (March), then we will give it a rest for a while.

Several of our members and regular shooters are going to Winter Range in Phoenix to compete in the National Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting. We wish them the best of luck.

See ya' at the Agarita!





## Long Juan Here:

The results are in. We had 32 readers who found **Delta Raider** in one or more issues of the *Agarita Gazette* in 2015. The best month was March when 18 readers found him. Worst was September when only **Hairtrigger Hayes** found him. We had three readers find Delta Raider in 8 of 11 issues – **Hairtrigger Hayes, El Sabre** and **Big John Mesquite**. The May issue had no “Find Delta Raider” photo. Instead we identified **Judge Roy Bean’s** cigar. The tie-breaker for best finders of the year goes to **Big John Mesquite** and **El Sabre**, who found **Delta Raider** in 8 issues of 11 issues, but also found him twice in the December issue - once on the mule’s rump and once riding shotgun as Santa on the stagecoach. Congratulations **El Sabre** and **Big John Mesquite**, your next match is on me! All you need to do is remind me.

I do not want to fail also to mention the three shooters who had a perfect attendance record shooting matches last year. **Dutch Van Horn, Phantom** and **Scooter** shot all 12 matches in 2015. Congratulations and thanks to each and every one of you who shot with us. You are what makes the Plum Creek Shooting Society the best place to shoot Cowboy in Texas!

## FIND DELTA RAIDER:

Only four readers found **Delta Raider** in last month’s issue of the *Gazette*. Hereby mentioned in the dispatches are **El Sabre, Nichols Creek, Preacher Man Lee** and **Sheriff Robert Love**. Well done cowboys! You have a good start on a free match next year. How many of you can find **Delta Raider** this month?



Photo on page 10 of January issue with caption - “Texas Sawbones after that Varmint with Scooter on the timer.” Can’t give a much better hint than that.



## RO’s Corner - Dropped or Ejected Ammo

Last month, we discussed the action on a long gun that closes when discarded. That rule change occurred in 2014. This month, we’ll discuss a 2015 rule change relating to dropped/ejected ammunition. The rule used to be that any round dropped or ejected, e.g., when loading or reloading a shotgun on the clock or levering a new round into the rifle, was considered dead. It could not be retrieved by the shooter or anyone else and used during that stage. If retrieved, it was a

Minor Safety Violation (10-second penalty). Now, if the round can be retrieved **SAFELY**, there is no penalty for the retrieval. There are other rules that address safety as it might relate to retrieving a dropped or ejected round, most particularly the 170° rule. Bottom line, if you drop or eject a live round and can safely retrieve it, you may and you may use it on the stage you are shooting without a penalty. Be particularly careful not to break the 170 if and when you do.



## Stories from Jake (Paladin that is):

### Grave Yard Shift, Dead Ringers & Saved by the Bell

We venture to England for this month's story. England is old and small. When they started out running out of places to bury people, they began to dig up coffins, take the bones to a

"bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins was found to have scratch marks on the inside. They realized they had been burying people alive. They decided to tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, run the string from the coffin to the surface, where they tied it to a bell. Someone then had to sit in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell. That way, "dead ringers" were "saved by the bell."



## Ditties from Jake (Jones that is):

There are three kinds of men: the ones that learn by reading, the few who learn by observation and the rest who have to pee on the electric fence.

If you don't like that one, how about this one?

Baths in the Old West consisted of filling a big tub with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of nice clean water. Next in priority were all the sons and any other men in the house. Women were next.

*Editor's note: My how times have changed!* After the women, it was the children's turn, last of all came the babies. By the time the babies were bathed, the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water!"



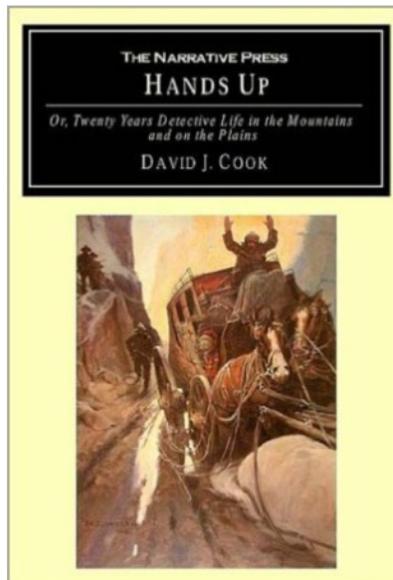


any able-bodied man to assist in keeping the peace or to pursue and arrest an outlaw, similar to the English common law concept of "hue and cry." "Hue and cry" was a process by which bystanders were summoned to assist in the apprehension of a someone who had been witnessed in the act of committing a crime. Upon hearing the "hue and cry," all able-bodied men were obliged to join the posse.

In 1882, David J. Cook, a former Colorado sheriff and Denver town marshal, published a basic set of rules that became standard operating procedure for peace officers in the Old West. His book, *Hands Up! or Twenty Years of Detective Life in the Mountains and on the Plains*, stated these rules of "Self-Preservation"<sup>1</sup> as follows:

<sup>1</sup> An abridged version of Cook's book is available at amazon.com. The full text is available for free online.

1. Never hit a prisoner over the head with your pistol, because you may afterwards want to use your weapon and find it disabled. Criminals often conceal weapons and sometimes draw one when they were supposed to have been disarmed.
2. Never attempt to make an arrest without being sure of your authority. Either have a warrant or satisfy yourself thoroughly that the man whom you seek to



arrest has committed the offense.

3. When you attempt to make an arrest, be on your guard. Give your man no opportunity to draw a pistol. If the man is supposed to be a desperado, have your pistol in your hand or be ready to draw when you make yourself known. If he makes no resistance, there will be no harm done by your precaution. My motto has been, "It is better to kill two men than to allow one to kill you."

4. After your prisoner is arrested and disarmed, treat him as a prisoner should be treated - as kindly as his conduct will permit. You will find that if you do not protect your prisoners when they are in your possession, those whom you afterwards attempt to arrest will resist you more fiercely, and will be inclined to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

5. Never trust much to the honor of prisoners. Give them no liberties which might endanger your own safety or afford them an opportunity to escape. Nine out of ten of them have no honor.

In Hollywood Westerns, the lawman strides into the saloon. Gamblers at the tables, the seductress at the bar and the bad guy sulking in the corner variously address him as "Marshal" or Sheriff." Why? Stars, guns and white hats in the movies and on TV notwithstanding, marshals and sheriffs had different functions and different realms of authority. Although local citizenry throughout the West knew and understood the

Continued on next page

distinction, time has blurred the lines of authority.

A sheriff was chosen or elected at the county level and had jurisdiction in his county. Marshals came in two varieties - town marshals and federal marshals. A town marshal was the town's "chief of police." His deputies were the "cops." A federal marshal's jurisdiction extended to a territory, district or state. The U.S. marshal headed the hierarchy of law enforcement wherever he served because he was appointed directly by the President with the "advice and consent" of the U.S. Senate. Many times, a Deputy U.S. Marshal was also a sheriff or town marshal. Holding both commissions gave him a wider range of authority, but

none of them had a long life-expectancy.

The following is from *The Life and Death of Juan Coy: Outlaw & Lawman*, by Charles L. Olmsted and



Edward Coy Ybarra

Of course, there were lawmen around to protect and defend the area, but sometimes they were as bad as the outlaws themselves. Many times,

the lawmen were nothing more than outlaws with a badge. It was difficult at times to distinguish who was on which side. The gunfights weren't just outlaws against outlaws or lawmen against outlaws but could be lawmen against lawmen. Longevity was not a prevalent trait of the 1800s lawman. It was rare for a sheriff to live long enough to retire.

We have good examples from last month's story about Helena, Texas, Sheriff Edgar Leary was killed by Emmett Butler after only 5 months in office. His successor, Sheriff Fate Elder, was killed only 20 months later, along with Karnes County Deputy Sheriffs, Bud Elder and John Bailey. Juan Coy, an employee of Bill Butler played a role in the killing of Elder and his deputies.



Posse and horse thief at Judge Roy Bean saloon circa 1900

# February Match Photos

Thanks to Dutch Van Horn, Bolo Bob and Six Goin' South for our photos this month. To see more photos go to the Photos Page on the Plum Creek Shooting Society website [www.pccss.org](http://www.pccss.org)



Six Goin' South always gets a good photo of her posse. This month was no exception. Not sure Matt's head ware is period correct? Sure would look cute skiing though!



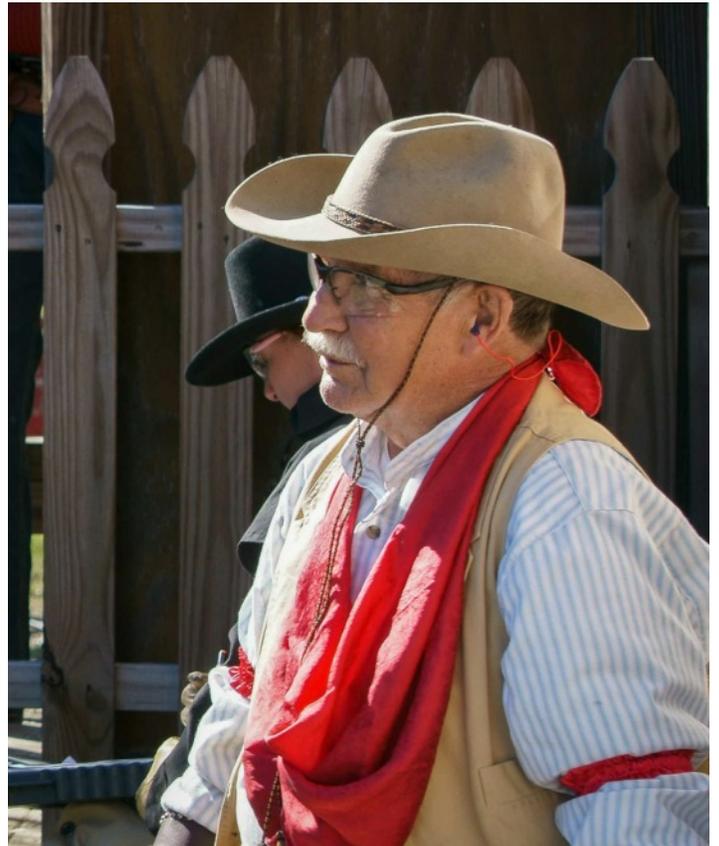
We all need to remember to thank those who work so hard to make our club so successful and our matches so much fun to shoot. Two who deserve lots of our thanks are Scoring Marshal General Burleson and President Dragon Hill Dave.



Agarita Ranch and its flags sure are purty, particularly early in the morning



Agarita Ranch Pavilion Men's Outhouse Art



Good to have Jim No Horse back out shooting with us



Is that a Ghost shooting with us?



Patience taking dead aim!



Bronco dreaming about the Ghost



Rogue Heeler at the ready



From the Agarita Ranch Valentine Holiday Tree



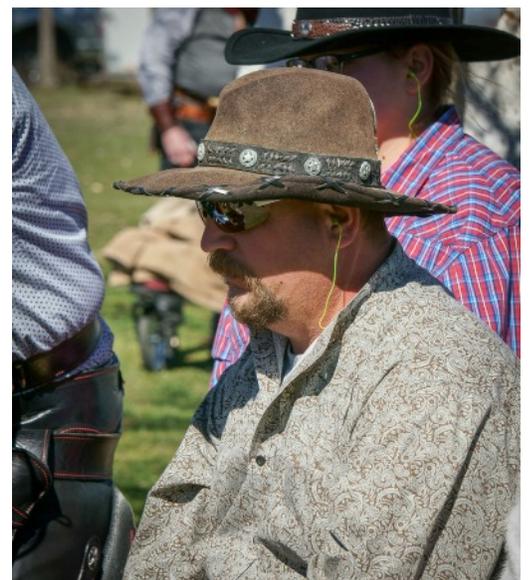
Totes Ma Goats - Best new alias!! By far!



Artiman & Boon Doggle with the beautiful Agarita Ranch Chapel in the background



Abilene & L.W. Hannabass



Rumor has it "I Reckon" is now just "Reckon"



Turns out General Burleson is not just a good scorekeeper!



Totes Ma Goats, Verdadero Dan, Ginger, Hoss Roonwright & Lobo McClosky



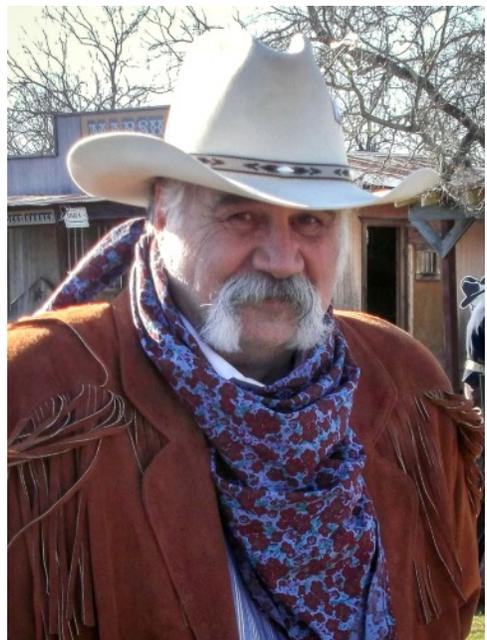
Guess we can tell why he's Silver Sam?



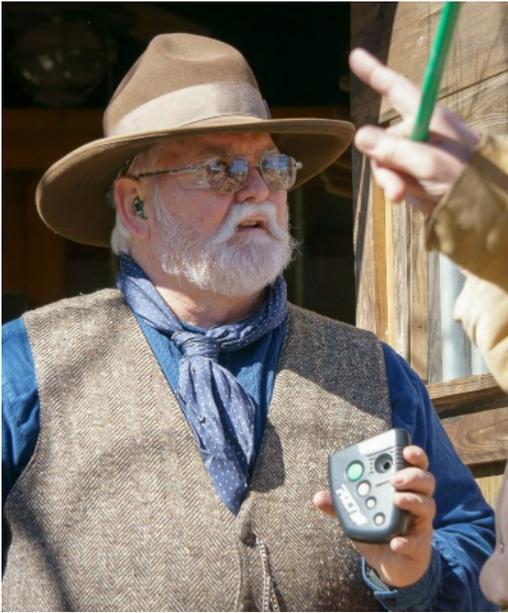
Forty Dog Kid with Colorado Jackson on the timer



Still Smokin' on the run!



Great whiskers. Tumbleweed Tex



Dutch Van Horn



Miz Ella and Green Mountain Regulators President Wildcat Bob



Bellekaye keepin' her hands warm



Captain Buffalo visited. Hope he'll be back soon.



Frank Longshot & Abilene sporting period-correct warm head ware



Charlie "Hollywood" Reynolds



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David Anthony Torres: [texashatters@aol.com](mailto:texashatters@aol.com)  
Joel Aaron Gammage: [joel\\_texashatters@yahoo.com](mailto:joel_texashatters@yahoo.com)

A brief note about a great experience with Rugged Gear this month. I bent the axle on my cart. In an attempt to straighten, I needed to remove the wheels. I pulled the pins on each wheel instead of pushing. Result, two broken pins and wheels that would not stay on the cart. Email and call to Rugged Gear. Talked to Norm. I explained it was my mistake, my fault. If I had only read the instructions, I could have avoided the entire problem. Norm said he would send replacement parts for the wheels. I asked how much I owed. Answer, nothing. Two days later the parts arrived. They installed quickly and easily. Problem solved. Great customer service.  
Thanks, Norm!

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Rick Page 210-844-9362

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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.