



Broken Clays

Chicago Firemen Enjoy FSC Hospitality

The two Mikes, Russell and Wilbur, collaborated to pull off another successful shooting event for the second year in a row. The former is of course our president and biggest promoter, and the latter is a member of the Chicago Fire Department. Last year, members of the 5th District, located in Chicago's Englewood neighborhood area, came out and enjoyed the use of our facilities for the first time. Having had such a great time, they decided to do it again and twenty-two of Chicago's finest showed up in force. Since it was a Sunday, normally a busy shooting day, the clubhouse was filled to capacity and was literally busy as a beehive.

Events like this don't succeed without volunteers and the April 13th



shoot was no exception. Setting up near the eating area, Rich Lovell set up a bench and table to handle registration and collection of shooting fees for the 100 target event. 25 targets were thrown for practice, and 75 rounds of 16 yard trap were thrown for score. As many of the firefighters were first timers, more volunteers were needed to provide coaching. Stepping up to the plate to assist were Ted Puch, Brian Svoboda, Mike Russell, Jim Stanart and Ed Hirsch, some of our club's best instructors. Vince was kept doubly busy at

the grill and it was observed by some that his flipper moved so fast that it was only recognizable as a silver blur.

After everyone had a chance to shoot all three rounds of trap, two competitors, Tony Snyder and Tom Stepanek, were tied with identical scores of 50 birds each. In true trap tradition, a tie breaker shoot-off was held and Tom Stepanek emerged as the winner. What started off as a novel idea is evolving into a tradition, and there's not only talk of repeating the experience this autumn, but of involving members of the Chicago Police Department and making it a departmental competition. Considering how many rounds were expended by the CPD in their recent attempt to dispatch a cornered cougar, it should be an interesting indeed!

ISRA Victory Stuns Daley & Suffredin

Wednesday, April 16th is a day that will long be remembered by firearms owners in Illinois. Convinced that they had enough votes in the bag to pass HB0758, Mayor Daley and Larry Suffredin gathered their anti-gun friends and supporters for the long trip to Springfield. As they sat in the gallery of the state capitol building and prepared to preen for the news cameras, they were handed a stunning defeat when they fell short of the 60 votes needed to pass the bill. Afterwards, Mayor Daley allegedly came close to levitating and was reported to be

red faced and gesturing vehemently as a result of his well known temper. As expected, this story did NOT make the news at 10 o'clock that night and there was no mention in the newspapers either. It is not known if Father Pflieger was present or if he suggested that any non supporters of the bill be "snuffed."

If you're reading this article, you most likely own a firearm, and you should be grateful to be a member of ISRA, the Illinois State Rifle Association, for coordinating the defeat of a bill that would have limited gun owners to one handgun purchase per month. If you aren't a member then

you should certainly consider doing so. The \$25 annual fee is less than four boxes of shotgun shells these days and it's money well spent. Were it not for the diligence of Richard Pearson and ISRA's other lobbyists, we'd be in dire straits. For more information, go to ISRA.org or take an application from the window sill closest to the kitchen area.

Note: For those of you who live in the Crestwood/Tinley Park/Orland Park area, state representative Robert "Bob" Rita voted in favor of the bill, something to keep in mind when he's up for election.

A Few Words from Our President

Hooray, hooray, winter is finally over, and I know everyone is 'rarin' to get out and smell some gun power! Many improvements have been made at the club, in spite of all the cold and snow, and I think all will be pleased with what has been done!

Ed Hirsch and Rich Lovell have redone the office operation, and the sign in for squadding is reorganized with no more waiting to get out and shoot. Be sure to wear your club ID, which is necessary when signing in. Ed has new 2008 cards, and they are in the office if you haven't gotten one yet. Lost cards can be replaced for a \$5.00 service charge. You must wear your card while on club property!

On the five stand, another throwing machine has been added. It is a battue machine that throws a special flat disc type target, which is usually thrown on sporting clay courses, but seldom seen on a 5 stand. Now our Monday-nite-leaguers, and 5 stand shooters can practice and improve their skills on this fun and challenging target.

In the club house, new windows have been installed thanks in part to the efforts of Ted Puch. This will make it much warmer in winter, and the easy opening of screens will make the club much more comfortable in the summer.

Our increasing membership has brought in many new shooters who are bringing wives, daughters, and girlfriends. In order to accommodate them, our newly remodeled ladies bathroom will be finished soon. It is completely re-



done, and has turned out great! It's complete with beautiful pictures taken by our news letter editor/publisher, Bob Brudd, thanks Bob! Rich Lovell, Gene Shipanik, Jerry Kunzer and Ed Hirsch did a great job on the construction. The plumbing and fixtures were installed by Steve and Mike Sembach, long time members and owners of Normal Plumbing in Mokena. This project was a great team effort that turned out great. Thanks guys!

The game shooters are back after a long winter off, and they have agreed to shoot on trap 1, which will open up the area in front of the club house, and they can shoot the longer yardage that they like to shoot, safely on trap 1. We are going to make things comfortable and organized for their game events. They are a long time and valued group of shooters who are always looking for new shooters to join them; it involves luck and skill, so give it a try.

Trap one's thrower has been improved with higher voltage, which makes it faster and more efficient, thanks to Ted Miletich. New lights are up on all three

trap fields, and they turned out great, again thanks to Ted Miletich! As a result of the new lighting we can now throw all orange targets all of the time, which will save on loading and labor costs.

More projects are planned, and as the weather gets warmer, several work parties will be coming up with emails and notices posted to announce dates. They will be "come when you can" and "leave when you have to." Many members are coming up with ideas on how to make improvements and are actually offering to help get them done as well, so thanks to all!

Charlie Obesny owner of Charlies Auto Repair Shop in Alsip, has donated a surveillance system, and has offered to help the club set it up. The system will help the trap manager coordinate the operations of the club, and provide him with information regarding what is going on out on the shooting fields. The system will also be on 24/7 to provide security both day and night. Thanks Charlie!

Finally, remember the 3 club rules:

1. Shoot a lot of targets
2. Have a lot of fun
3. Repeat 1 and 2 as often as possible

Fell free to call me with new ideas and suggestion on how to improve the club. All of the above accomplishments are a result of member involvement and their hard work.

Your President,
Mike Russell

New Rules

- 1) No uncased shotguns in the parking lot. Remember, Lane Bryant is only one mile east of the club.
- 2) Do not use the pattern board unless you've checked in with the trap manager.
- 3) No turkey loads, deer slugs, or any loads larger than 7 1/2 shot on the pattern board.
- 4) Do not use the pattern board when the five stand is in operation.
- 5) The left side of the pattern board is for paper usage, the right side is greased.
- 6) If you don't salvage your hulls for reloading, PLEASE try to throw them into the blue buckets on the trap line.

2000 IGOLD Activists March to State Capitol

Pro Firearm Activists Descend on Springfield

by Bob Brudd

March 11th was a memorable day for the firearms owners and manufacturers of Illinois as at least 2000 gun owners gathered in Springfield, Illinois, to advocate full implementation of 2nd amendment rights in our state. Traveling by bus or private vehicles, a record number of well dressed and well behaved demonstrators gathered first at the Springfield Hilton Hotel for a rally that was hosted by ISRA, the Illinois State Rifle Association. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this organization, it is headquartered in Chatsworth and does an incredible job of both defending our rights and keeping its members well informed of downstate activities in the legislature.



The IGOLD (Illinois Gun Owner Lobby Day) participants were addressed by Valinda Rowe, spokeswoman for Illinois Carry.com, representatives Brandon Phelps and Mike Bost, senator Bill Haine, richard Pearson, director of ISRA, and others. After the speeches the participants gathered outside to form up for the ½ mile march to the state capitol. Acting as vanguard were all of the women who showed up to express their views. As the march commenced, the large number of demonstrators filled the street from curb to curb, and the Springfield Police Department actually closed off the streets for us.

Once the marchers reached the capitol building another round of speeches ensued and the group was addressed by more legislators who were/are supportive of gun rights. This year, the demonstrators actually got media coverage by both local and Chicago based television and radio stations. The following morning my daughter called to let me know that NPR (National Public Radio) was running a story, complete with interviews, about the event!

A new twist for this year was a press conference that featured the women of IGOLD was held in the Capitol Press Room. Speaking before the press were Susan Darnall, recipient of an NRA award for distinguished women, Dr. Paula Braitch, Illinois coordinator for Secenc Ammendment Sisters, Colleen Lawson, founder of Gun Owners Against Violence, and Valinda Rowe, spokesperson for IllinoisCarry.com. All four of them focused on the need for Illinois to



join 48 other states that already have a self-defense right-to-carry law in place.

While the ladies were addressing the media, the rest of us lined up at the capitol's many entrances and waited to go through the metal detectors. Afterwards, participants visited their legislators and either spoke to their representatives or their secretaries, or, in the event that neither was present, simply left off cards with their contact information. With most of the participants wearing either yellow IGOLD hats or tee shirts, the interior of the building seemed to take on an amber hue. Lastly, for those who were willing to extend their day, a reception for legislators was held at the State Library across the street. It was a very long fifteen hour day, but well worth it. Hopefully, the Frankfort Sportsman Club will be better represented next year.

Important Dates to Remember

April 26th—Shooting School

September 6 & 7—Hunter Safety Class

December 14th—Christmas Party

April 27th—Art Giroux Shoot

September 27-28—Hunter Safety Class

Board Meetings are on the following dates: 5/13, 6/10, 7/8, 8/12, 9/9, 10 14, 11/11, and 12/9.

May 25th—Shooting School

November 4th—Election Day (Vote!)

June 21st—ISRA Range Open House

November 23rd—Turkey Shoot

Special Guest for our May board meeting will be Doug Mayhall, 2nd vice-president of the Illinois State Rifle Association

Al Braner Makes a Custom Stock Part One

In the 3 ½ years that I've been shooting shotgun, I've never had one that fit me properly. Besides being overweight, I have a wide face and a narrow pupil distance. Combined with two Beretta trap guns, a Urika 391 and a 682 Gold E, possessing low ribs, the existence of a good fit was simply non-existent. Last winter, I decided that it was time get a custom stock. In determining a course of action, I tried out the gun of Greg Monnet, who was the subject of an article in last year's newsletter. He had gotten his stock made by Wenig down in Missouri and he's been very happy with the improvements in his ATA scores. After reading the article, another FSC member, Dan Tompkins, went to Wenig as well, again with positive results.

As one who is prone to research, however, I checked with other shooters as well. Ron Merkel, who has a similar physique, let me try out his stock-in-progress, which was being made by an Ohio craftsman, and it too felt good. Finally, I spoke with Al Braner, an FSC member who also makes stocks. At the time, however, he was extremely busy filling contracts for Koler, the Milwaukee shotgun maker of upper end guns. However, before I could do anything, an internal spring broke inside my 682 and made it impossible for me to shoot doubles. I took the gun to Mason & Company and was later informed that Beretta in Italy would be unable to supply the necessary spring for at least a month.

By the time the gun was ultimately repaired, it was almost spring and I was just about to put in a call to Wenig when I bumped into Al at the club. He informed me that he'd cut back on his con-

tract work for Koler in order to focus on custom work for individuals like myself. When I debated driving seven hours each way to Missouri and spending the night in



order to use Wenig's services and then returning for a final fitting weeks or even months later, I opted to use Al who works out of his home shop in nearby New Lenox. I felt it was better to have the work done locally by someone I knew than to go through the expense and hassle of traveling back and forth to a neighboring state.

The first step in the process was to give Al my shotgun so that he could replace the existing stock with a blank made of poplar. When this was completed, I was invited to his basement workshop where I spent considerable time mounting and re-mounting the gun. Periodically, the gun was disassembled and the wood was altered. Sometimes the modifications were minor ones performed with an electric sander, but there were also those moments when the wood was attacked with a band saw. Every change brought the gun closer and closer to that dreamed of, but never experienced, "perfect fit." After only a couple of hours, I was actually able to mount a shotgun that fit MY shoulder pocket and MY cheek and lined up with MY eyes. It was unbelievable!

After removing the stock from the receiver and fitting it with two recoil blocks to protect the soft poplar, everything was reassembled, packed in the travel case, and returned to me to shoot for awhile. A few nights later, Al came out to the range to observe my first round of trap with my new temporary stock in place. After a couple of rounds, we traveled down to the patterning board to check point of aim. The gun was dead on and shot exactly where I aimed it. After that, I was instructed to hold onto the gun and shoot it until I was either comfortable with it or determined that there was need for further alteration. Al stayed in touch via the phone and sought regular

feedback regarding both my scoring results and reactions to the stock.

At about the time that the new wood was becoming comfortable, Al called to let me know that he'd gotten a shipment of five walnut blanks and that if I wanted first pick, all I had to do was get out to his home at my earliest convenience. I was there by the next day and selected a really nice piece of American black walnut that combined both crotch graining combined with some impressive fiddleback figuring. Luckily for me (and you the reader) Al agreed to let me come out when it was time to put the two pieces of wood on the duplicating machine. More about this in the next issue of the newsletter.

Finally, during my visits to Al's home I learned about his background and how he got into working with wood. One of his most most prized possessions is a photograph that was taken of him when he was five. It shows him holding a saw in one hand and a large piece of wood in another. Born to a father who was a general contractor, it was only natural that Al would



grow up to become first a carpenter and later a general contractor himself. Eventually, he narrowed his focus to specializing in the building of custom stairs and he ended up with a 3000 square foot shop in Morris, IL. As he was doing this complicated work, he still managed to make time to shoot. When he discovered that he needed to alter his stock to fit him better, he decided to build one from scratch instead. And that, as they say, is how it all started.

Part two of Bob Brudd's stock story will appear in the next issue of Broken Clays

REMINDER:

**Please, No Uncased
Shotguns in the Lot**

