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(See pages 8, 9)



The Cowboy Chronicle



The Monthly Journal of the Single Action Shooting Society®

Vol. 27 No. 12

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December 2014

COMANCHERIA DAYS

Celebrates Fascinating Gunslingers of the Old West

2014

By Yuma Jack, SASS #11261 • Photos by Doug Burress Photography



The Blazing Saddles side match, shooting revolvers and rifle on the move, is a popular attraction at Comancheria Days.

Fredericksburg, TX. Mike Harvey, owner of Cimarron F.A.C° was living in Houston, Texas in 1990. He and Nick Nixon had heard of the Single Action Shooting Society (SASS)™ and Cowboy Action Shooting (CAS)™ and they decided to start a club in the Houston area. Not knowing much about the sport, Nixon journeyed to END of TRAIL (EOT) in California in 1990 to compete and gather information. That effort eventually resulted in the formation of the Texas Historical Shootist Society club located and still shooting in Columbus, Texas.

Then Cimarron F.A.C° moved from Houston to Fredericksburg, Texas. Mike and his wife Mary Lou Harvey, owner of Texas Jack Wild West Outfitter, wanting to start a new Cowboy Action Shooting™ club in the Texas Hill Country, contacted

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In Memoriam

General U.S. Grant, SASS #2

~ June 15, 1930 –
November 25, 2014 ~



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## The Cowboy Chronicle



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*A pair of future Cowboy Action Shooting™ enthusiasts take a break on the gallows steps at the Stieler Ranch, home of Comancheria Days.*



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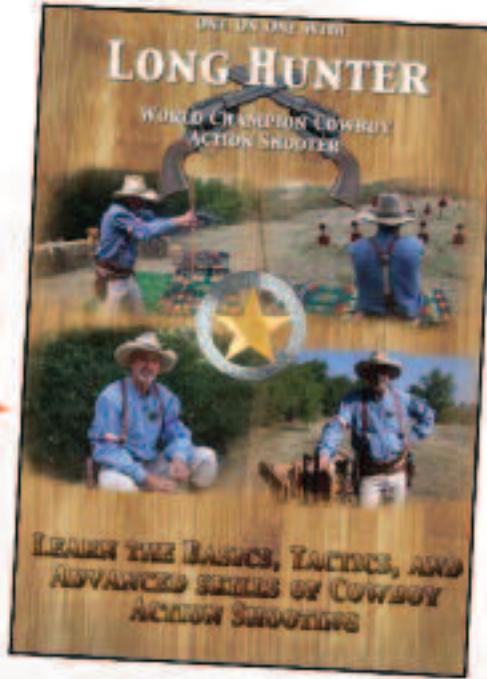
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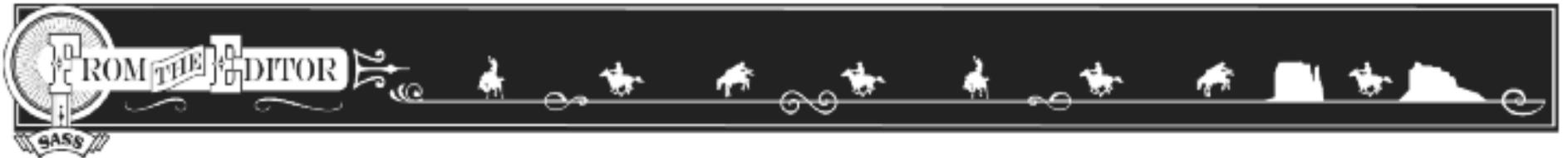
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# SKINNY'S SOAPBOX

By Skinny, SASS #7361

## Farewell General

As this issue is being finalized, we have received news of General U. S. Grant's passing. The General was instrumental to the concept of Cowboy Action Shooting™ as we know it, and he worked diligently through the years to promote and further the sport we love. We will all gravely miss his presence. See our special tribute on the *next page* for more background on this great man.

## Goodbye Colonel Dan

This edition of *The Cowboy Chronicle* also marks the final installment of Colonel Dan's column. After faithfully supplying a regular political feature for the past 12 years, he has decided it's time to relax a bit and, although we will dearly miss his monthly insights, we agree that he has indeed earned some time off. We wish him well on his continued journey down life's road.

## What's Next?

For one thing, Colonel Dan promises we haven't heard the last from him and he will be submitting articles as the mood strikes him. We sincerely hope that's the case.

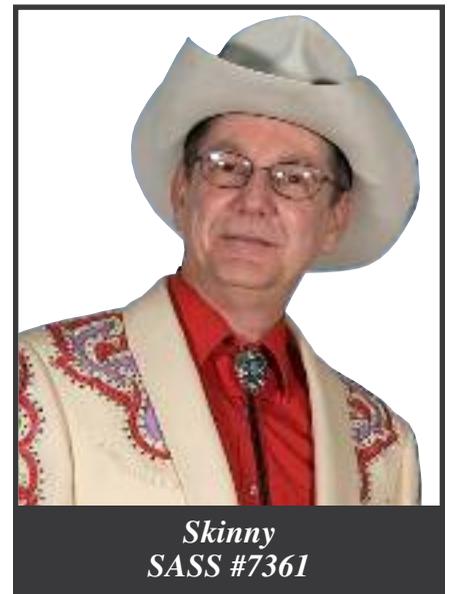
In addition, there's at least one new monthly feature in the works, scheduled to debut next month; we've received a positive response to the new Western comic book section, so we'll continue with that; and of course, we'll always strive to find and present as much interesting and entertaining material as we can. And we'll leave you with that teaser for now.

## SASS Convention

By the time you read this, the SASS Convention will be scarcely a month away. I will be attending the event in my hometown of San Antonio, TX and hope to meet and greet many of you there (but take it easy on me).

In the meantime, check out Beans Aghin's feature on the sights of San Antonio in this issue. Beans is a San Antonio native and, in addition to serving as the editor of the South Texas Pistoleros Newsletter, is also associated with the San Antonio Fire Museum and is a partner in San Antonio Western Shooting LLC. As such, he's had a lot of interaction with tourists and has a good handle on the questions most asked about the city. His article is interesting and well worth a read.

—Skinny



Skippy  
SASS #7361



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## October Chronicle Addition

Congratulations go out to **Two Step Net**, SASS #98311, of Georgia, who won in the Lady Silver Senior category this year's Georgia

State match. Her name was inadvertently left out of that match's list of winners. It was her first win at a big match and she was rightly proud.

## Thank You

A big Cowboy thank you to **Anvil AI**, SASS #59168! Founders Ranch is an even safer place as a brand new defibrillator is on its way, thanks to Anvil AI's coordination and fundraising efforts! And an additional huge thanks to those who donated!

# General U. S. Grant, SASS #2

June 15, 1930 – November 25, 2014

By The Wild Bunch

**Laguna Niguel, CA** – The General passed away November 25th at home surrounded by family. He was feeling “poorly” during END of TRAIL this year and learned shortly later he needed triple bypass surgery. The surgery went well, but the recovery did not. He spent the last several days at home surrounded by family. He’ll be missed by all who knew him, especially his family.

Boyd Davis, as the General was known “on the street,” was a successful real estate businessman as a young man in Southern California. During the Korean War, he served in the Far East as a naval pilot and resumed his real estate career upon returning.

In 1970, Boyd joined Early and Modern Firearms (EMF) and fundamentally changed the company. Under his guidance the company became an importer, distributor, and retailer of firearms ... and also developed a large distributorship for its products. This move positioned his company to become a major supplier of Old West firearms.

The General had been an active shooter for many years, both as a shotgunner and as an action pistol competitor. In the late ‘70s and early ‘80s he regularly shot at Coto de Caza in Southern California, future home of Cowboy Action Shooting™. There, he was a close friend with Judge Roy Bean, Gordon Davis, and Bill Hahn, today known as the Founding Fathers of Cowboy Action Shooting™. As the fundamentals for



Cowboy Action began to coalesce, Boyd was instrumental in the initial planning for the very first END of TRAIL in 1982. In fact, through EMF he supplied virtually all the door prizes for the first three END of TRAILS and later became instrumental in soliciting prizes from the shooting industry for SASS clubs around the country. Boyd has continued to be one of the major suppliers and sponsors of Cowboy Action Shooting™ around the country and especially END of TRAIL.

Boyd’s job at the early END of TRAILS was “tents and toilets” ... and that

epitaph “stuck” for many years, even after those jobs were handed off to others. Boyd could be the most endearing, considerate, and concerned individual possible—a joy to be around. He could also be a gruff old son of a gun when the mood suited him ... but it was always “OK,” because he was “our” son of a gun! Over the years, Boyd became more of a behind the scenes director of SASS events. He is the only individual to shoot every END of TRAIL to date.

In 1987 SASS was reorganized and incorporated. Boyd became the first (and only) President of the Corporation. As President he has presided over all SASS business activities and was instrumental in establishing two related non-profit companies—the SASS Museum and the SASS Scholarship Foundation. He received the Top Hand Award in 1991 and was also inducted into the SASS Cowboy Action Hall of Fame in 2004, the first class of inductees.

The General loved his family, SASS, fine dining, a good story, and hunting. He hunted Africa five times, made numerous trips to Alaska, and many bird-hunting trips to South America.

He is survived by his wife, Bibi, AKA Lonesome Dove, SASS #12, several children, many grandchildren, and numerous great-grandchildren. He lived a good and full life. He’ll be sorely missed!



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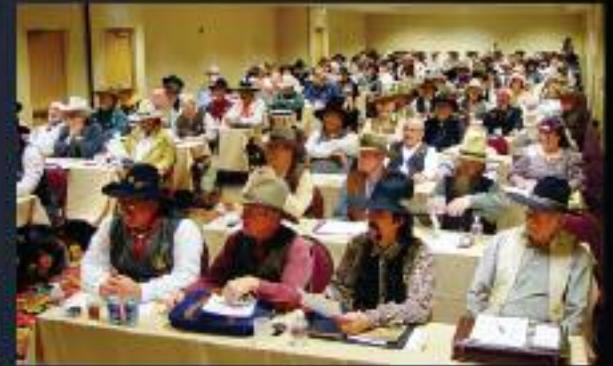
SASS has negotiated a "run of the house" agreement with the hotels, and a special Convention room rate for attendees is offered. Space at the Menger, and the Crockett is limited, make your reservations today!

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# COMANCHERIA DAYS 2014



Yuma Jack, SASS #11261



*(Continued from page 1)*

Becky Patterson, the present owner of the Stieler Ranch about 14 miles south of Fredericksburg. Adolph Stieler, Becky's grandfather, established the ranch in the late 1800s. Originally, the ranch raised goats on a large scale, but is now a range for cattle and horses. An arrangement was negotiated between Mike and Becky to also allow the use of the ranch as the new

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Texican Rangers.

The weather was absolutely beautiful throughout the match. The mornings broke a little cool but clear. But things warmed up in more ways than one as each day progressed. The final threat of rain even held off on Sunday, the last day, until after the end of the Master Gunfighter Match. On Wednesday April 9, Range Officer (RO) level I and II Classes were offered by the Texican Rangers' Territorial Governor, Dusty Lone Star (SASS #31537). A full day of side matches was held on Thursday, April 10 beginning with a three stage Wild Bunch Match in the morn-

*(Continued on next page)*



Old Reed is fired downrange in Capt. Gimp Tumlinson's cannon.

headquarters and shooting range for the Texican Rangers.

In 1994 the Texican Rangers, Inc. was organized as a SASS club. The first match was held at the Stieler Ranch on June 12, 1994 with less than twenty shooters. The following year, Comancheria Days, another inspiration of Mike Harvey's, was first held in March with less than a hundred shooters in attendance. Comancheria Days has been held annually ever since with the exception of one year. As the second oldest SASS club in Texas, the Texican Rangers have grown to be one of the most successful clubs in the state and is proud to be shooting on such an historical ranch. And given the club's origin in 1994, 2014 is the

| Winners      |                    |    | Cowboy        | Phantom            | Lady Duelist   | Brazos Belle      |
|--------------|--------------------|----|---------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 49'r         | Oklahoma Dee       |    |               | SASS #54973        |                | SASS #82399       |
|              | SASS #44562        | TX | Cowgirl       | Shooting Iron      | Lady           |                   |
| B-Western    | Texas Slim         |    |               | Miller             | Gunfighter     | Kansas City Sneed |
|              | SASS #43510        | TX |               | SASS #85140        |                | SASS #71319       |
| Buckaroo     | Cpl. G.W. Williams |    | Duelist       | Taos-O             | Lady Silver    |                   |
|              | SASS #80129        | TX |               | SASS #21142        | Senior         | Texas Flower      |
| Buckarette   | Little Bullseye    |    | Elder         |                    |                | SASS #43753       |
|              | SASS #95965        | TX | Statesman     | Rebel Bill         | Lady Senior    | Misfire Maggie    |
| Cattle Baron | Jackrabbit Joe     |    |               | SASS #75429        |                | SASS #69350       |
|              | SASS #414          | AZ | Frontier      |                    | Lady           |                   |
| Cattle       |                    |    | Cartridge     | Hopalong Herbert   | Wrangler       | Roxinda Rhodes    |
| Baroness     | Boosey Babe        |    |               | SASS #53264        |                | SASS #80135       |
|              | SASS #77984        | TX | FC Duelist    | Dee Horne          | Silver Senior  | Skyhawk Hans      |
| Classic      |                    |    |               | SASS #25603        |                | SASS #70053       |
| Cowboy       | Dragon Hill Dave   |    | FC Gunfighter | Texas Jack Daniels | Silver Senior  |                   |
|              | SASS #59561        | TX |               | SASS #8587         | Duelist        | Texas Mac         |
| Classic      |                    |    | Frontiersman  | Six                |                | SASS #43494       |
| Cowgirl      | Hot Tamale         |    |               | SASS #41283        | Senior         | Crooked Bullet    |
|              | SASS #78531        | TX | Grande Dame   | Lady Ghost         |                | SASS #70870       |
| Cody Dixon   |                    |    |               | SASS #60899        | Senior Duelist | Handlebar Bob     |
| Lever        | Dutch Diablo       |    | Gunfighter    | Brushy Creek Bill  |                | SASS #4650        |
|              | SASS #39529        | TX |               | SASS #49466        | Senior         |                   |
| Cody Dixon   |                    |    | Lady 49'r     | Barbary Coast      | Gunfighter     | General Burleson  |
| Single Shot  | Blacky Vela        |    |               | SASS #21965        |                | SASS #69766       |
|              | SASS #33223        | TX | Lady          |                    | Wrangler       | Copperhead James  |
|              |                    |    | B-Western     | Tombstone Mary     |                | SASS #97028       |
|              |                    |    |               | SASS #19524        |                | TX                |

## Comancheria Days 2014

*(Continued from previous page)*

ing. In the afternoon there was the usual: fastest pistol, derringer, pocket pistol, rifle and shotgun categories. There was a long-range event for big bore lever action and single shot rifles that attracted 35 competitors. (Targets were 24-inch squares and 16-inch circles at ranges out to 200 yards.) Shooters were also invited to try their pistol caliber rifles at the long-range targets. A total of 13 shooters participated, even though there was no award being offered. Starry Knight (SASS #25197) had a top score of 23, shooting a Marlin .45 and J.P. Kidder (SASS #40821) fired a perfect score of 30 using an 1873 in .44-40. Enough interest was expressed that this might become



*Best Dressed man, L.W. Hannabass.*

a recognized category in the future. There was also a Couples Match and the always-popular "Blazing Saddles." The Blazing Saddles side match requires shooting a rifle and pistols from a saddled 55-gallon "steed" while riding down range on rails. Take my word for it, it's

harder but more fun than it sounds or looks. Additional Side Matches were held on Friday afternoon. One consisted of a Shooting Gallery employing swinging targets, a Texas Star, falling plates and pop-up shotgun targets. A new version of Blazing Saddles was also provided employing the use of 1911 pistols instead of single action revolvers. The shooters loved that one!

The main match was kicked off on Friday morning with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer under cool Texas skies. That was followed by a brief tribute to former Texican Ranger Old Reed (SASS #28619) whose ashes

*(Continued on page 12)*

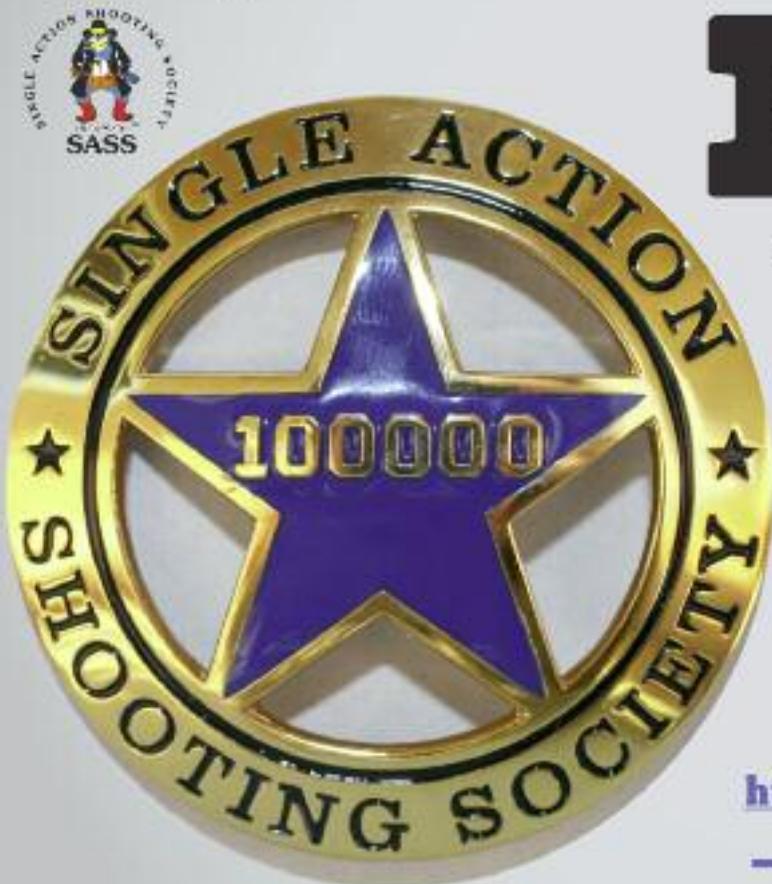


*Lucky Nickel (SASS #46114) in the Wild Bunch Side Match.*



*Best dressed lady, Side Saddle Sas, was pretty good with the 87.*

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# COMANCHERIA DAYS 2014

*(Continued from page 11)*

were then fired downrange from a cannon provided by Capt. Gimp Tumlinson (SASS #63304). The cannon shot was followed by the haunting sound of bagpipes emitting “Amazing Grace” played by Marshal Marvin Hughes (SASS #44047), who rode in from Kansas for the match.



*Match Director Shooting Iron Miller kicks off the main match.*

Then the mandatory shooter’s safety meeting was provided by Match Director Shooting Iron Miller (SASS #85140) and Assistant Match Director Culebra Blaze (SASS #85966). Attendance at the shooter’s safety meeting was also mandatory for the second day of shooting on Saturday.

The side matches and main match stages, written by Shooting Iron Miller, were unique and highly entertaining but not complicated. Shooting Iron Miller and Culebra Blaze did an amazing job of putting this shoot together and making it run like clockwork. The targets were all big and

close with no intentional “procedural traps.” There were no “stand and deliver” stages, as each had at least three shooting positions. Where knock-down targets were used for shotguns, it was the shooter’s choice whether to make up any shotgun misses. Most shotgun targets could be shot in any order. The longer-range targets for Cody-Dixon shooters consisted of two targets to be engaged with six shots on every stage.

Each main match stage was written to highlight a “Fascinating Gunslinger of the Old West.” When shooters registered for the match a confirmation package was provided which included a contest entry form allowing the prospective shooter to guess which ten gunslingers were going to be highlighted. The following is a brief



*Getting serious with the 97 helped place Barbary Coast top lady, overall.*



*Marshal Marvin Hughes plays Amazing Grace on the bagpipes.*

summary of the stages as they were intended to be shot. The first several stages were fun but somewhat routine in terms of the shooting sequences. But by Stage 5 the sequences began to get interesting as things got mixed up a bit.

*(Continued on page 14)*

| Side Match Winners          |                  |    | Pocket Pistol                  |                               |    | Blazing Saddles               |                      |    |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|----------------------|----|
| <b>Revolver</b>             |                  |    | <b>Man</b>                     | Texas Jack Daniels            | TX | <b>Man</b>                    | Verdadero Dan        | TX |
|                             | Hopalong Herbert | TX | <b>Lady</b>                    | Ellie Mae                     |    | <b>Lady</b>                   | Misfire Maggie       | MD |
| <b>Rifle</b>                |                  |    |                                | SASS #66089                   | TX | <b>Blazing Saddles 1911</b>   |                      |    |
| <b>Man</b>                  | Verdadero Dan    | TX | <b>Derringer</b>               |                               |    |                               | Whiskey Kid          |    |
| <b>Lady</b>                 | Misfire Maggie   | MD | <b>Man</b>                     | Texas Ghost                   | TX |                               | SASS #96877          | TX |
| <b>Shotgun</b>              |                  |    | <b>Lady</b>                    | Yankee Texan and Brazos Belle | TX | <b>Wild Bunch Modern</b>      |                      |    |
| <b>87 97</b>                |                  |    | <b>Long Range Rifle, Lever</b> |                               |    | <b>Man</b>                    | A.D. Texaz           | TX |
| <b>Man</b>                  | A.D. Texaz       | TX | <b>Man</b>                     | Texas Jack Daniels            | TX | <b>Lady</b>                   | Shooting Iron Miller | TX |
|                             | SASS #16339      |    | <b>Lady</b>                    | Ellie Mae                     | TX | <b>Wild Bunch Traditional</b> |                      |    |
| <b>Lady</b>                 | Tombstone Mary   | TX | <b>Long Range Single Shot</b>  |                               |    | <b>Man</b>                    | Crooked Bullet       | TX |
| <b>Shotgun SxS</b>          |                  |    | <b>Man</b>                     | Texas Mac                     | TX | <b>Lady</b>                   | Brazos Belle         | TX |
| <b>Man</b>                  | Oklahoma Dee     | TX | <b>Lady</b>                    | Brazos Belle                  | TX | <b>Couples</b>                | Crooked Bullet       | TX |
| <b>Lady</b>                 | Yankee Texan     |    | <b>Shooting Gallery</b>        |                               |    |                               | Brazos Belle         | TX |
|                             | SASS #56796      | TX | <b>Man</b>                     | Kit Carson                    |    |                               |                      |    |
| <b>Shotgun SxS Hammered</b> |                  |    |                                | SASS #60183                   | TX |                               |                      |    |
| <b>Man</b>                  | Texas Ghost      | TX | <b>Lady</b>                    | Tombstone Mary                | TX |                               |                      |    |
| <b>Lady</b>                 | Shotglass        |    |                                |                               |    |                               |                      |    |
|                             | SASS #17153      | TX |                                |                               |    |                               |                      |    |

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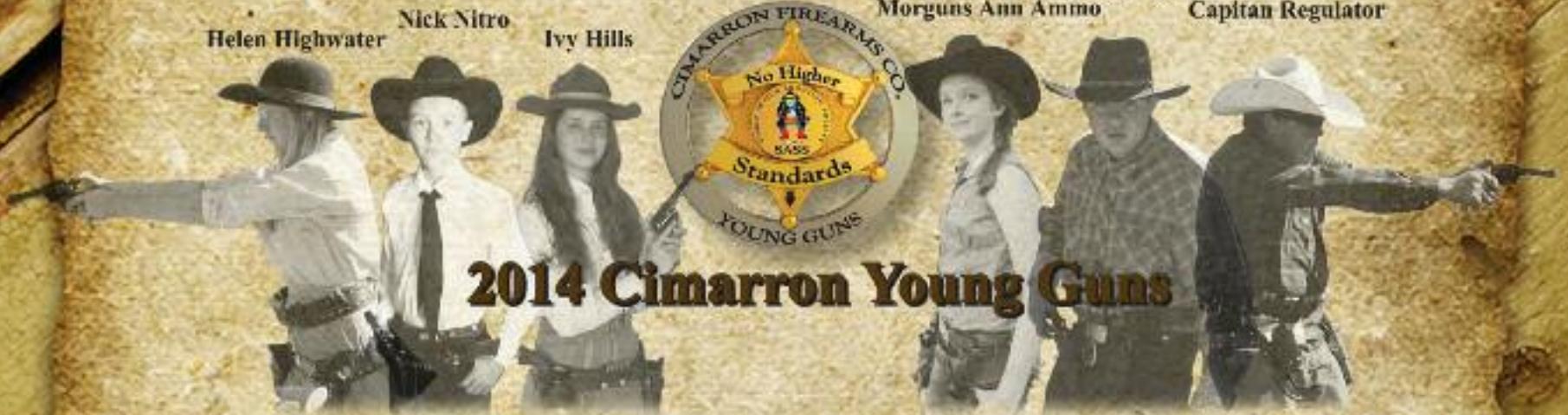
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# COMANCHERIA DAYS 2014

*(Continued from page 12)*

**Stage 1 (The Jail) Billy the Kid:** The shooting sequence for the rifle and revolvers was a “Progressive Sweep” from inside the Jail, finishing with a left to right sweep with the shotgun outside at the wall.

**Stage 2 (The Homestead) Jesse James:** Here the shooting sequence for both revolvers and the rifle was a “Double-Tap Sweep” of five targets in either direction inside the house, followed by moving outside to double-tap two shotgun targets.



*Phantom keeps a couple of brass cases airborne on his way to top men's shooter.*

**Stage 3 (The Barn) John Wesley Hardin:** On this stage four targets were engaged in a “Continuous Nevada Sweep” with the rifle and revolvers and then through the barn door, four shotgun targets were engaged in any order.

**Stage 4 (The Oriental) Wyatt Earp:** At the bar three rifle targets were engaged from the left double tap, single tap, double tap, then repeated from right to left. Three revolver targets were engaged over by the poker table in the same sequence as the rifle, followed by three shotgun targets engaged in a left to right sweep from the doorway. This stage required shooters to first move down-range to the left, then to the right and back to the left.

**Stage 5 (The Train) Sam Bass:** The shooter started in the doorway of the train car with hands at “Texas Surrender” (hands on revolvers). At the rear train window four revolver targets were engaged with 10 shots alternating inside, inside then outside, outside and repeated. Moving to the front car window the rifle was used to engage four targets in the same sequence as the pistols. Then from the engine cab four shotgun targets were engaged inside pair first then the two outside targets.

**Stage 6 (The Line Shack) James “Killer” Miller:** Starting with the rifle, the shooter engaged three targets from the left by triple tapping the first then single tapping the second and third and then repeating that sequence for a total of 10 shots. Moving inside the shack to the back

doorway, the same sequence was used to engage three revolver targets, followed by engaging three shotgun targets in any order.

**Stage 7 (Cow Camp) Tom Horn:** Holding the shotgun in both hands, the shooter started by engaging four shotgun targets in any order. At the center of the fence four rifle targets were engaged starting at either end by triple tapping the outside targets and double tapping the inside targets. Then at the far end of the fence four revolver targets were engaged in the same sequence as the rifle.

**Stage 8 (The Outhouse) Belle Starr:** The shooter first moved into the outhouse to engage three revolver targets, triple tapping each in any order then placing the tenth shot on any of the three. Moving outside, the shooter used the rifle, loaded with nine rounds, to triple tap three rifle targets. A round was then loaded from the body to engage a smaller bonus target. Finally three shotgun targets were engaged in a sweep from either end.

**Stage 9 (Fort Cimarron) Butch Cassidy:** At this stage the shooter could start in either tower of the Fort holding the shotgun in one hand. After engaging four shotgun targets in any order, the shooter moved down the steps to one of windows and engaged two rifle targets with alternating double taps. Then the shooter moved to the gateway at the



*Texas Jack Daniels showing how to shoot Frontier Cartridge Gunfighter.*

center of the Fort to engage five revolver targets in a cross-shaped arrangement. The three-target horizontal string was engaged first in a Nevada Sweep from either end then the three-target vertical string was also engaged in a Nevada Sweep from either end.

**Stage 10 (High Noon) William “Curley Bill” Brocius:** Beginning at the left end of town, the shooter first engaged five pistol targets in a left-to-right sweep. Then moving down the street (boardwalk), the shooter used the rifle to engage the first five targets in the windows and doorways

*(Continued on next page)*

## Comancheria Days 2014

*(Continued from previous page)*



Caprock Leatherneck goes to work.

in a left-to-right sweep then the second five targets in a right-to-left sweep. Still moving down the street the shooter engaged five more pistol targets in a right-to-left sweep. Finally at the far end of town, the shooter engaged four shotgun targets in a left-to-right sweep.

Many vendors were set up to cater to the shopping needs of shooters and visitors alike. Larry Hopewell provided engraving, Old Scyene displayed clothing and topping everything off was hats by Chili Petin. Some of these vendors

indicated that this was their best match ever as far as sales. For those interested in history, representatives from the San Antonio Historical and Genealogical Society were present with information sources. And not to be missed was Capt. Gimp Tumlinson driving around in his hand-made replica 1904 Oldsmobile as a "traveling ambassador" for the Former Texas Rangers Foundation (Est. 1971).

Friday evening after the first round of Main Match shooting, folks gathered at the picnic tables under the majestic old oak trees to enjoy a wonderful taco and chalupe dinner provided by a host of volunteers led by Agarita Annie (SASS #88620) and great potluck selections provided by shooters. The ranch owner, Becky Patterson, attended the Friday night meal and spoke to the crowd. She also brought autographed copies of her two books, which were quickly sold out and additional interest generated a standing waiting list for additional copies. Mixed in with the good food and camaraderie were also 26 awards presented to Side Match competitors.

At the conclusion of the main match the scores were tallied by Fatal Star (SASS #40039), Madam Ella Moon (SASS #56526) and Ms. Lucy in preparation for the evening festivities. Saturday evening found folks in their finest period clothing ready to enjoy a wonderful Texas-style meal at the awards banquet held at the Gillespie

*(Continued on page 16)*

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# COMANCHERIA DAYS 2014

*(Continued from page 15)*

County Farm Bureau in Fredericksburg, Texas.

The food at the banquet was again provided by Buzzie's Bar-B-Q, winner of the Texas State Pitmasters Award. Entertainment was provided by the Texican's incomparable Master of Ceremonies Handlebar Bob (SASS #4650) who, for the "umpteenth year," ran the program and announced the awards. During the evening, because this year represented the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Texican Rangers as a club, founding members who were invited as guests of the club were recognized including Texas Jack Omohundro (SASS #5148) (aka Mike Harvey) and T.H. Boland (SASS #383). Texas Jack has been an active supporter of the club ever since founding it in 1994. Texas Jack even came on stage to address the crowd. This year the Match Director introduced a new award called the "Thrown Rider Award, sponsored by Dutch Dave (SASS #12879) and Starry Knight, who wished to give back to shooters for all the support received during Starry Knight's recovery, the award recognizes a shooter who has suffered setbacks but has overcome them to return to the cowboy action shooting



game. The prize, a Cimarron revolver, was donated by Dutch Dave and presented by Starry Knight to Boosey Babe (SASS #77984). L.W. Hannabass (SASS #27436) and Side Saddle Sas (SASS #92395) took the prizes for men's and ladies' shooting costume categories respectively. The best-dressed lady and gentleman at the banquet were Texas Flower (SASS #43753) and "Doc" Crossdraw Mike (SASS #43968). Main match awards were presented in a total of 33 categories, counting men, ladies and age-based groups. The top shooters for the

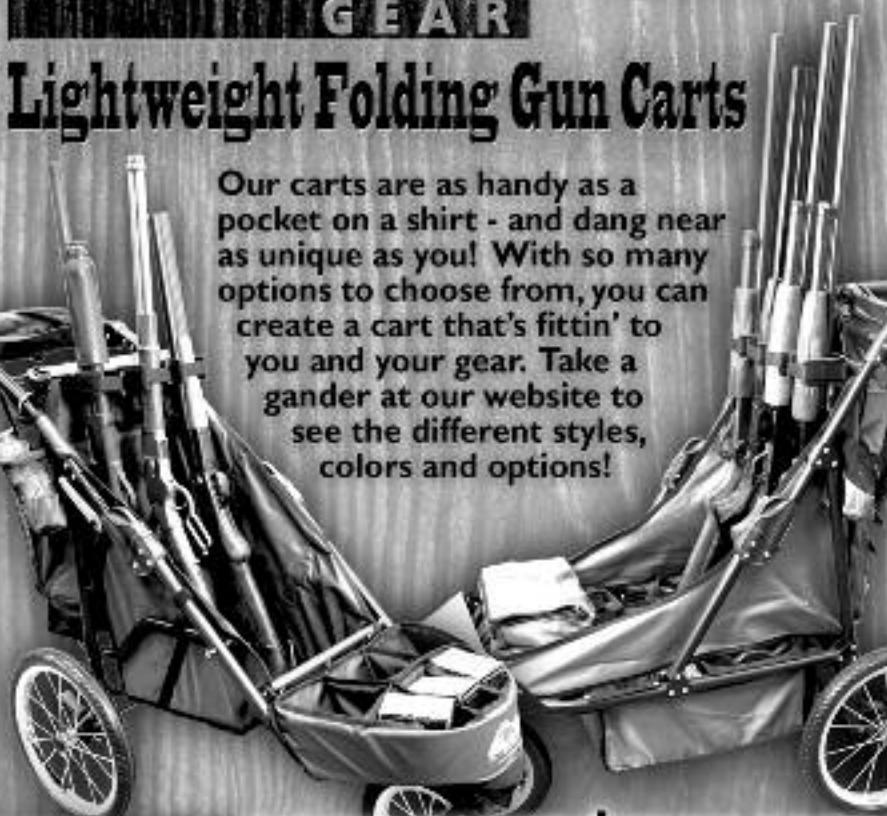
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## Comancheria Days 2014

*(Continued from previous page)*



main match overall were Phantom (SASS #54973) for the men and Barbary Coast (SASS #21965) for the ladies.

During the banquet, Texas Ghost (SASS #50125) introduced Alice Tripp the registered lobbyist for the Texas State Rifle Association (TSRA), the state affiliate of the National Rifle Association (NRA). Ms Tripp addressed the group providing updates on the various Second Amendment focused activities being pursued in the Texas State legislature.

Mixed in with the awards were “stretch” raffles and drawings for guns and other prizes provided by the Texican Rangers, as well as from match sponsor Cimarron Firearms. Six (6) participants went home with new Cimarron firearms, one with a Dillon 650 loading press, and another with a custom knife. For the second year there was a Silent Auction and a Live Auction featuring some fine art and local crafts. Both events proved to be very popular with the

participants if the level of the bidding was an indicator.

With a quiet start on Sunday morning, April 13, at Cowboy Church, the tempo quickly increased with the onset of the Master Gunfighter or Man-on-Man elimination matches. When the smoke cleared, Verdadero Dan (SASS #57083) stood alone ending the weekend as the Master Gunfighter.

This year Comancheria Days was attended by 158 shooters who made the journey from all over Texas and 10 other states to the Texas Hill Country to join in the fun. The 2014 celebration of Comancheria Days was one of the most fun ever. The tradition of this “Old West” shootin’ match has endured for almost 20 years. Mark your calendars for April 8-12, 2015 and plan to come shoot with the Texican Rangers when we will be celebrating the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Comancheria Days. You can check the website for more information at <http://www.texicanrangers.org>.



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# A COWBOY'S VERY UNOFFICIAL GUIDE TO

# SAN ANTONIO

*By Beans Ahgin, SASS #65626*

**W**elcome! Local SASS members are thrilled to have the SASS (now Almost-) Annual Convention come to San Antonio. They are also more than a little embarrassed that the city folks in charge of booking conventions can't read a damn calendar. A delayed Convention in January means no "Holiday" lights illuminating the River Walk, no Alamo Plaza "Holiday" Tree, and no "Holiday" carolers gliding along the river. Still, it will be better than having to break trail for sled dogs in Branson.

Once the largest city in Texas, San Antonio is now the seventh largest city in the United States. Few in the US are aware of this because major TV networks show only Dallas and Houston on their national weather maps. Given what has happened to Dallas and Houston, most locals are just fine with that.

Some 1.4 million people now call the greater San Antonio area home, and that number is steadily increasing as the state of California continues to de-populate. San Antonio has a culturally diverse population. It is not unusual to hear conversations being held in Spanish, Tex-Mexican, Vietnamese, Chi-



nese, Italian, Czech, Polish, French, German and "American." Many of the names given to major downtown streets reflect the civic contributions made by immigrants who came to San Antonio.

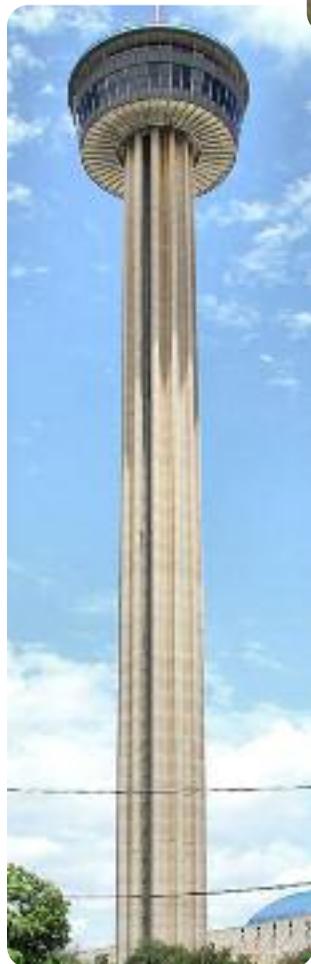
Unlike many large cities, San Antonio does not have ethnic enclaves, such as San Francisco's "Chinatown." Major thoroughfares have alternating Mexican and Asian restaurants every fifty feet or so. Most of the diverse cultures represented in the area hold at least one festival a year. Fiesta 2014 ran for eighteen days, which is perhaps why some locals are a little sketchy on the details.

Today, residents generally fall into two categories: "Native-Born Texicans" and "I-Got-Here-As-Fast-As-I-Could Texicans." Their hand-made cowboy boots, bolo ties, and Stetson hats identify the former. Their flip-flops, bootleg Spurs NBA Champions jerseys, and straight-brimmed ball caps let you easily recognize the latter.

### The Spanish Colonial Period

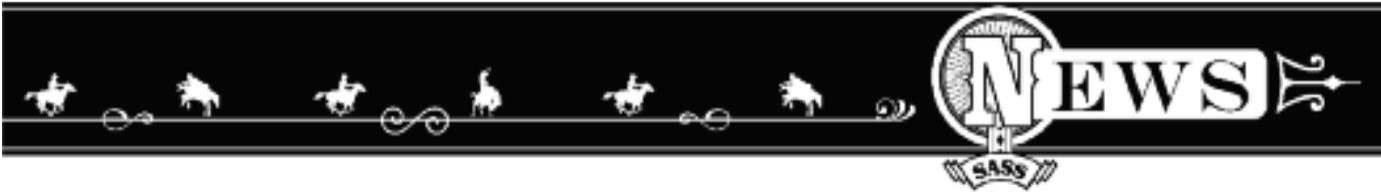
Just north of downtown, San Pedro (Springs) Park is the second-oldest dedicated "public common" in the US with

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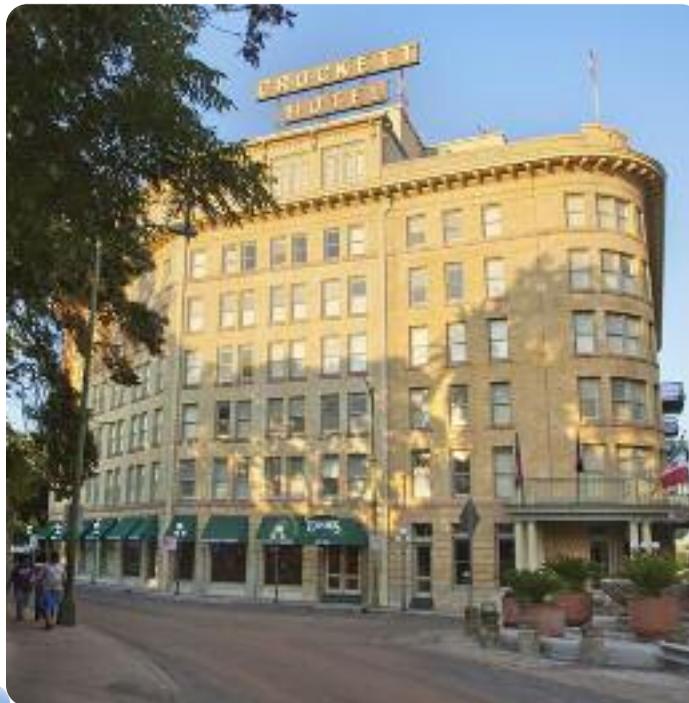


**A Cowboy's Very Unofficial Guide To San Antonio . . .**

*(Continued from previous page)*

only Boston Common (est. 1630) pre-dating it. The park once hosted a bear pit and a boating concession. Downtown, San Fernando Cathedral is the oldest standing structure in Texas. Fifty-five colonists from the Spanish Canary Islands established the original church in 1738. They reportedly expected to find a provincial capital city, and were extremely disappointed at the lack of any European-style, permanent structures.

During the Spanish Colonial period, the Crown needed money, and to counter French expansion into the region. King Phillip sent expeditions in search of the Seven Cities of



idea, although the churches remain.

It rains in east Texas, especially Houston, just about every day. San Antonio lies at the edge of the part of Texas that gets regular rainfall. Crops grown on Mission farms required constant irrigation. Some sections of the stone-lined *Acequia* channels the friars had built are still in use today, mostly for breeding large mosquitoes and collecting empty beer cans. (Mosquitoes are known by many as the State Bird of Texas.) The current drought in San Antonio has been going on for four years. As a result, many locals have been reduced to drinking beer.

While Texas has been the ancestral home of many Native American tribes, there are few "Indians" remaining. As a way to avoid having to cede state lands for (federal) Indian Reservations, in 1874 the Texas Legislature magically reclassified any "Indians" remaining in Texas as "Mexicans." Most of the First American population had already been moved to the Indian Nations, or what is now the state of Oklahoma. Some First American families have occupied the same patch of land near the Missions in San Antonio for more than two hundred years. Only the Kickapoos continue their depredations against the settlers in their casinos near Eagle Pass.

*(Continued on page 20)*



Gold, which somehow missed Las Vegas. Phil also sent friars north to establish Mission settlements. They (wisely) stopped when they found water at San Pedro Springs. The Comanche, Apache, and Kiowa (among others) thought Missions were a splendid idea as it gave them an entirely new source of horses, captives, and loot. Drought, disease, and the predatory Native American tribes made San Antonio a difficult place to prosper. The Missions were eventually abandoned as a bad



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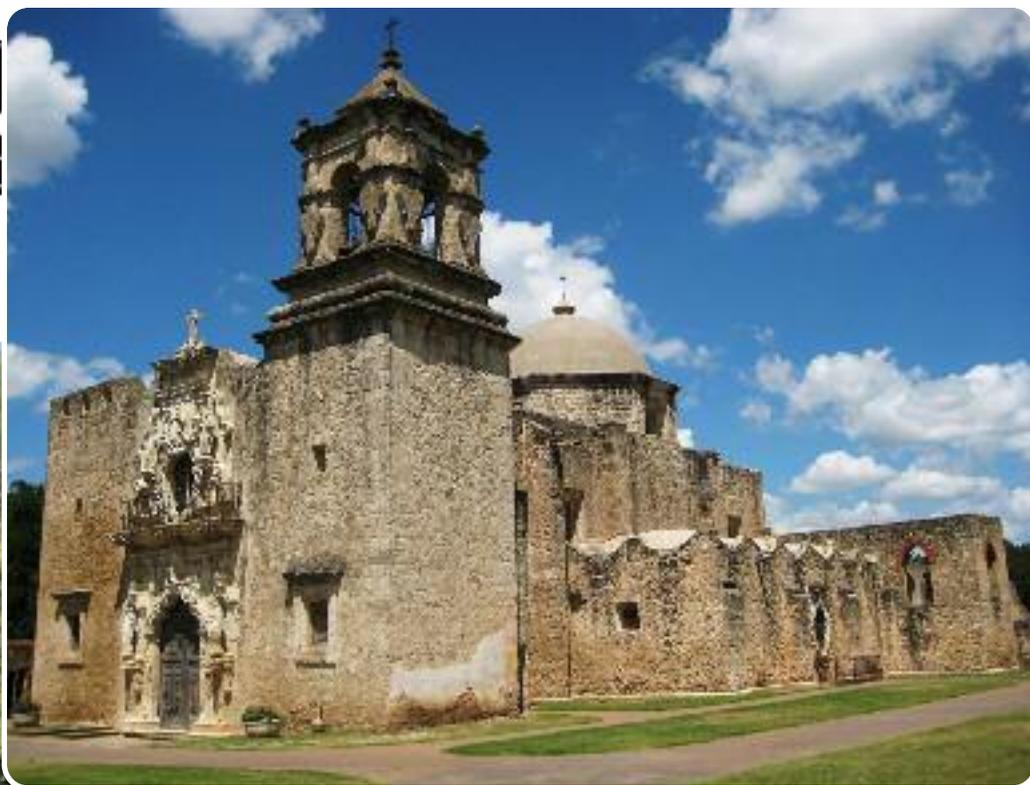
**A Cowboy's Very Unofficial Guide To San Antonio . . .**

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**The Republic of Texas**

The colonies having failed, someone in Mexico City eventually hit upon the idea of inviting the hard-fighting Scots-Irish borderers from Tennessee and Kentucky to come to *Tejas* to soak-up Indian arrows. Soon charters were authorized enabling Non-Mexican settlers to estab-



lish colonies. That was both a good and a bad idea. The hardy, no-nonsense settlers soon found themselves at odds with the distant, and often unresponsive, government in Mexico City. They became rather annoyed when yet another new Mexican government reneged (as the Texicans saw it) on certain treaty provisions. By the spring of 1836, "Remember the Alamo" had become a popular catchphrase. Texas became a Republic shortly afterward.

About ten years later, the Republic of Texas found itself bankrupt. Uncle Sam just happened to have the required \$10 Million in his pocket, and so Texas became a state (by treaty) with the United States. Some fifteen years later, Texas had to deal with the "War of Northern Aggression." Following that little dust-up, there was Reconstruction to get through.

The corruption of various political factions during Reconstruction prompted a mandate that the State Legislature meet (and be allowed to spend money) only every two years. Those who survived Reconstruction proved to be the resilient, determined, anti-government sort of folks that drive Yankee liberals crazy even today.

**Post Civil War San Antonio**

After Reconstruction, San Antonio prospered with the arrival of large numbers of industrious Germans. Germans soon outnumbered all other ethnic groups. Wm. Menger Sr. started a brewery next to the abandoned Alamo. When Senior moved the brewery to larger quarters, Wm. Menger Jr. opened the Menger Hotel on the site. (The tunnels under the hotel were dug well after the Battle to keep beer cool, not to serve as an escape route.)

The Menger Hotel was well regarded, perhaps because for many years it was the only hotel in San Antonio. Many worthy notables, including Lt. Col. Robert E. Lee, USA, and Richard King, roomed at the Menger. The bar is a copy of one found in the English House of Lords. Future President Theodore Roosevelt held a recruiting drive for his U.S. Vol-

*(Continued on next page)*

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*(Continued from previous page)*



unteer Cavalry in the Menger Bar. The bar was conveniently located at the front of the hotel at the time Teddy was buying drinks. It was moved to the hotel's north side during one of the many renovations The Menger has endured.

San Antonio was a rough town. Streets were dusty, when they weren't muddy. The only two-story building was a bordello. The river and the *Acequia* system often

served as both water source and sewer. Yellow Fever, cholera, and typhoid fever epidemics were annual events. German *Biergartens* flourished after the Civil War, and did much to reduce the instance of water-borne diseases.

Main and Military Plazas were the social and economic center of the town. Gambling establishments and bordellos flourished within sight of San Fernando Cathedral. Chili Queens and merchants occupied the Plazas by day. Night-time on the Plazas saw less wholesome activities. After "Bad Bob" Augustine was lynched from an often-used tree adjacent to San Fernando Cathedral, the Rector cut it down in the dead of night.

San Antonio of the 1850's has been described as a "transportation hub" only because people and mail traveled through on the way to California. The San Antonio River was not navigable. Roads to any other settlements were nothing but cart tracks, and those were impassable when it rained. It wasn't until 1880 that the International and Great Northern Railroad finally reached San Antonio. (Often cited as the model for AMTRAK, the IGN was often derided as the "Insignificant and Good for Nothing Railroad.")

The US Army stationed troops in San Antonio shortly after Texas joined the Union. They leased the Alamo property as a Quartermaster Depot, although ownership briefly

*(Continued on page 22)*

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## A Cowboy's Very Unofficial Guide To San Antonio . . .

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shifted to the Confederacy in 1861. The US Army built the iconic arch above the main chapel doors and put a roof on the place. Prior to that, the Alamo was a ready source of scavenged building materials for the local populace. Today, the Cradle of Texas Liberty comes complete with tourist-trap amusement halls built over the very spot where the celebrated Col. William Travis met his end.



The Army eventually moved to Government Hill, and Fort Sam Houston became a major military post. Geronimo and company were briefly detained in the famous Quadrangle with its signature clock tower and collection of birds and animals. Once an "open" installation, post-9/11 security measures makes casual access to other than "The Quad" more difficult. Do not attempt to bring guns onto Fort Sam.

### Modern San Antonio

By 1891, San Antonio was considered a thoroughly modern city with a municipal water system, electric utility, and telephones. Successful German merchants and professionals built (as was the custom at the time) large Victorian mansions in the Kaiser Wilhelm neighborhood on what was then the southern edge of the city. The name was



abruptly changed to "King William" when the War to End All Wars erupted in Europe. Many of the elegant homes have been restored, and a few are open for tours.

The River Walk was pretty much an open sewer until San Antonio experienced a few catastrophic floods early in the Twentieth Century. As flood control became an issue, a few far-seeing entrepreneurs thought flood control could be combined with tourism. It took 30 years for them to convince the local government to get on board. River Walk tourism exploded after HemisFair '68. Today, the River Walk is pretty much the first thing people associate with San Antonio.

### Wandering downtown San Antonio

Most River Walk establishments offer "local" food and drink... "local" if you happen to be from Los Angeles, New Orleans, or Bangkok. Guy Fieri's *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* crew has been to San Antonio on numerous occasions. They came to San Antonio to sample authentic Moroccan, Puerto-Rican, and Italian fare, as well as fish tacos, German pancakes, and Texas BBQ.

No need to worry if a tipsy tourist falls into the river as the average depth is a mere four feet. Each January, the City dredges the river and collects all of the cell phones, cameras, and room keys that went into the water. River Barge tours are popular, and it is great fun listening to the drivers relate their colorful version of local history.

By 1960, local government was in the hands of the Good Government League. The elderly Mayor, Walter McAlister, and other worthy notables of the day figured out how to raze historic old neighborhoods near downtown and still make a buck. So, in 1968, San Antonio was host to HemisFair '68. Most other cities hosted World Fairs, but San Antonio, as usual, had to settle for the half... ah... "sized" version of things.

The Institute of Texan Cultures and the Tower of the Americas are the most visible vestiges of HemisFair. Old

(Continued on next page)

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Walt passed away shortly after HemisFair '68 and the Tower of the Americas was his last project. If you feel lucky, try taking the elevator to the Observation Deck for a panoramic view of San Antonio. Should you dine at a window-side table in the rotating restaurant atop the Tower, do not place your valuables on the windowsill.

People associate San Antonio with cowboys, but until quite recently, the only Western character regularly seen on city streets was the greeter at the Buckhorn Hall of Horns. Fortunately, the late Governor Dolph Briscoe donated several million dollars towards what is now the Briscoe Western Heritage Museum. The "Briscoe" occupies the building that was once the Municipal Library for San Antonio. It is a "must see."

Other museums and attractions are within easy reach of downtown. The San Antonio Fire Museum is just a half-block north of the Menger and Crockett Hotels. The Museum of Art is quite good, as is the Witte Museum (natural and Texas history). The recently restored Spanish Governor's Palace is one of the oldest structures in San Antonio. Mission San Jose is a reconstructed Spanish Colonial Mission that is now part of the National Parks System. Of the five Missions, only the Alamo is not a functioning Catholic church. In a strange twist, you can talk aloud in church, but not in the Alamo.

North of downtown, on North St. Mary's Street, is clustered the San Antonio Zoo, Brackenridge Park, the Japanese Tea Gardens, and the Sunken Gardens theater. The Brackenridge

Eagle miniature train and the Zoo carousel are popular with children of all ages. Much of the limestone that was used to construct buildings in downtown San Antonio was quarried where the Zoo and Gardens now stand.

Cowboys should know that while State Law makes it legal to openly carry long guns in San Antonio, the Police Chief "disagrees." Open carry of handguns is prohibited. You may carry loaded handguns in your vehicle, but they must be "concealed." Texas does honor Concealed Carry licenses from most other states. Should you encounter the local gendarmes while burdened with an armload of artillery, just ask how to get to the Alamo and tell them you are late for a "reenactment" in front of Ripley's Believe It Or Not. *A*



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# Cimarron



## Announces Second Young Guns Program Comments on Inaugural Program

The inaugural Cimarron and Pietta Young Guns Program was a success for all involved. Mike B. (Texas Jack) Harvey, owner of Cimarron Firearms, said, "Team Cimarron is proud to join Pietta Firearms in this very worthwhile 'Young Guns' project. The program is the brainchild of Cimarron Senior VP, Joe Neumann and ramrodded by Cimarron VP, Jamie Wayt, and is designed to promote the sport of competitive shooting to our youth. To say the least this new program has been a smokin' success."

After receiving more applications than expected, reading everyone's stories, and watching many entertaining videos, we did a round of phone interviews with appli-

cants and discovered we had to make a tougher choice than we thought. "I have great memories of the interview process and the quality and the enthusiasm of the applicants," said Joe Neumann. Ultimately, we chose six Young Guns and feel great about our decision.

"As soon as Joe described this project to me, we were excited to be a part of it. Young Guns equals our future. Yes, we care about the kids who are involved in our sport; they train, they have great attitudes. It's not important to be a top shooter. What we really liked about this project is that every kid who shoots in SASS could be part of it. This

*(Continued on next page)*

**"Cimarron's lower, wider hammer makes it really nice to shoot."**

Kenda Lenseigne,  
World & National Champion  
Cowboy Mounted Shooter



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## Cimarron Announces Second Young Guns Program . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

project matches perfectly with our motto: “We sell history, but we care for the future!” said Alessandro Pietta.

The 2014 class of Cimarron and Pietta Young Guns are: Paige Dasher, aka Ivy Hills (SASS #90928), 14, of Tacoma, Washington; Nicolas Lopez, aka Pecos Nick (SASS #94945), 14, of Henderson, Nevada; Morgan Hogue, aka Morguns Ann Ammo (SASS #92217), 13, of Escalon, California; Jayden Daniel, aka Capitan Regulator (SASS #84262), 14, of Capitan, New Mexico; Haley Wilcox, aka Helen Highwater (SASS #97357), 14, of Nuevo, California; and Andrew Jerry Price, aka Nick Nitro (SASS #94156), 13, of Price, Utah.

Helen Highwater said, “I was so excited to get my new guns! From the beginning of my Cowboy Action Shooting™ career, I had switched between three different sets of guns: My .22s and two borrowed sets of .32s. I am very thankful for the people who have helped me along the way. Now that I have my own guns, I can practice more and feel the speed that I have gained because of the consistency of using one set, *MY set*. Cimarron has given me the hope and confidence I need to push forward and be a top shooter.”

The Young Guns have gone above and beyond the expectations of the program by not only competing well, but also providing great camaraderie to each other, and even offering to mentor and work with future Young Guns to come.

“Since receiving the Piettas from Cimarron, I have won first place Gunfighter at the New Mexico State Championship, as well as the Four Corners Regional Championship. I have also won first Place Gunfighter at every match I have been to since receiving the revolvers. This is a great program for the young shooters in our sport, and I believe this program will help in getting the younger generation involved in Cowboy Action Shooting™,” said Capitan Regulator.

“I love shooting my new Pietta Pistols, and I am very proud to be in the first group of recipients in the Cimarron Young Guns program,” said Nick Nitro, who won first place Buckaroo at the Western Legends Roundup in Kanab, Utah, recently.

Pecos Nick said, “Since being inaugurated into the Cimarron Young Guns program, I have made several achievements in my shooting career. Most importantly, I received the title of 2014 World Champion Duelist at END of TRAIL. This was a major milestone in my shooting progress and I was glad to know that Cimarron was present and supporting me through it. Not only was I the 2014 Nevada State Champion Duelist, but I also claimed the title of 2014 Men’s Overall Nevada State Champion as well.”

Online applications are now being taken for our next posse of Young Guns and can be found on the Cimarron Firearms website (<http://www.cimarron-firearms.com/young-guns-instructions-2015/>). Applicants must be SASS members between the ages of 13 and 18. The deadline is January 31, 2015. For 2015, the winners will receive a pair of Pietta single action revolvers, customized with “Young Guns 2015” engraved on the back strap, and checkered grips. ♣

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# Western Antiques and Collectibles Show

By *The Jersey Kid*, SASS #287, *Life, Regulator*



**Amarillo, TX.** One of the greatest things about the old west—and the current west—is the gear that is currently used, and has been used, in the settling of the west. It has been my observation that a great deal of people migrated to and joined SASS as a result of their infatuation with the old west, the characters, the stories, the adventure and the gear. As a horseman and a SASS competitor, I really appreciate high quality cowboy gear—both the old and the new—which is currently being made by some very talented craftspeople today. The leather gear, spurs, bits and saddles coming out of the shops today are both of exceptional artistry and functionality, and I am happy to say I support as many of today's craftspeople as I can. The one complaint I have is there are very few places to go and see these quality products in person. Most of the time I am relegated to merely looking on line and ordering directly. I am happy to share some news with you about one of the best western shows and the oldest continuous cowboy collector show in the US. Next March 13-15, 2015, the thirty-first annual Western Antiques and Collectibles Show will take place at the Amarillo Civic Center. Amarillo is conveniently located to a large number of cowboys and cowgirls and the show is a beautifully presented collection of old and new cowboy goods. As you can see from the photos, the show offers just about anything one would want. I am always impressed by the condition and rarity of some of the goods at the show.

The assortment of antique western goods is just wonderful. You can look for that special F.A. Meanea saddle or those wonderful angora chaps that made Coyote Calhoun stand out at a match. The Old West was a unique and very colorful era that generally began at the end of the Civil War and lasted well past the turn of the cen-



ture. The expansion west included the gold rush, Texas longhorns, and the creation of the unique legend of the cowboy. Cowboys' gear and the

weapons needed for this era were as unique as the people themselves. The Western Antiques and Collectibles Show gives you the opportunity to seek out those tools and accoutrements used by cowboys, gunslingers, lawmen, gamblers, or even soiled doves!

In addition to the wonderful assortment of antique western items the show will feature a large number of contemporary western artisans including:

**Bit and Spur Makers.** Clyde Rodgers, Campo, CO; Gene Rodgers and Mike Dill, Golden CO; Terry Alward, Dumas, TX; Wayne Paul, Canadian, TX; Marion Turner, Clayton, NM; Matt Humphries, Texas; as well as Bill Adamson and Randy Butters.

**Silversmiths.** Braidie Butters, Dalhart, TX; Brenda Butters, Homer, MI; Stephen Lee, New Mexico, silversmith, bit and spur maker and artist; Dave Alderson, Twin Falls, ID.

**Leather Workers and Saddle Makers.** Bob Marrs, Amarillo, TX; Guy Koch, Oklahoma; Clay Jackson, New Mexico; Britt Nance, Graham, TX. The Oliver Saddlery will either be on site or at their saddle shop in Amarillo.

On Saturday morning there will be a meeting of the National Bit, Spur and Saddle Collectors Association ([www.nbssca.org](http://www.nbssca.org)) and in the afternoon, beginning at 4:00 p.m., there will be a western auction presented by The Burley Group, which is expected to offer a large number of fine western lots.

In addition to the show itself, Amarillo offers a number of attractions that will be of interest to all SASS members including:

- \* The Cadillac Ranch (made infamous by Bruce Springsteen).
- \* Palo Duro Canyon (One of America's 10 Best State Parks).
- \* Wonderland Park.
- \* The Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum.
- \* The Don Harrington Discovery Center.
- \* American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum.

Whether you collect guns, knives, spurs, saddles or just Western Americana, you will likely find something interesting and unique to take home. This is an exceptional show and an amazing collection of western craftsmen and women, so plan an excursion next March to catch the show as well as the other attractions. Additional information can be found by contacting:

Brenda or Randy Butters  
517-568-4188 • 517-392-3961  
[buttersbrenda@yahoo.com](mailto:buttersbrenda@yahoo.com)

<http://amarillowesternshow.com/dealer.htm>

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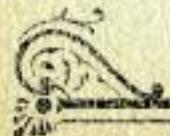


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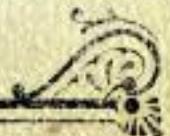


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# Master Hatter **Rebuttal**



David Johnson with a D bar J hat.

*David Johnson, founder of D bar J Hat Company, Las Vegas, has a different view of hatting history from that presented in the October Cowboy Chronicle:*

bodies are made, and what “felt” really is. I also disagree that commercial hats produced by Hat Co., such as Stetson, Resistol, Charlie One Horse and others, are superior to privately made brands.

Hat Co. has been owned by the ProEquine Group since July 2009. The corporation’s main emphasis is horse supplies and is headquartered in Illinois. The hatting industry began in the Northeastern United States in the 1700’s and the Stetson Hat Company was founded in 1865 in Philadelphia, PA, with a rather interesting discovery involving a hat.

J.B. Stetson helped his father, who was a hatter, until he became ill with tuberculosis in his youth. Since not much could be done for TB back then, many people with TB were sent out west for clean air, good food, and relaxation, with the hopes of a recovery. J.B. Stetson did recover from his ailment, and while recovering he noticed that the cowboys had big floppy hats for protection, that needed to be pinned or tied up, to have the brim not block their view.

He had a soft dress hat with him that had a 4-inch brim and 4-inch crown. Since his family worked in the hat factories back east and he helped some, he knew a little about hat making. So he took the technology of the day on how to stiffen Derbies and Top Hats and applied that lacquer to his dress hat. Amazingly, he now had a firm brim and firm crown hat which he quickly sold for a \$10.00 gold piece. That hat is known now as the “Boss of The Plains” hat. Since he was well, he returned to Philadelphia and started a fledgling hat company known as the Stetson Hat Company. Because of his innovation, brims and crowns could be wider and taller, which was a big hit with the cowboys. Although Wikipedia claims that J.B. Stetson invented the cowboy hat, he merely improved upon it.

Other hat companies soon picked up on his discovery and began making larger hats too. During this period, The Bailey Hat Co. was very popular with individuals and the general public. However, the Stetson Co. did not worry about supplying hats to individuals because for decades they had all of the U.S. Military contracts for hats. Under many different labels, J.B. Stetson perfected the felt Mex-

*(Continued on next page)*

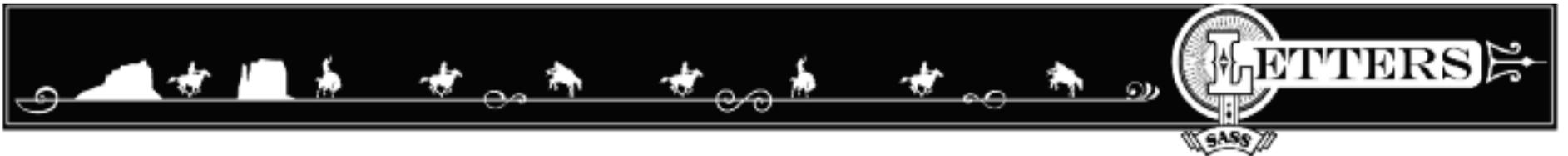
**A**s a hatter for almost 30 years, I felt the need to comment on the article “Things About Cowboy Hats You Likely Didn’t Know.” Because I am totally self-taught, my early days of hatting required a lot of research, and the dismantling of quality hats to learn my craft. I disagree with the article on how a fur felt hat is made, how the hat

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## Master Hatter Rebuttal . . .

(Continued from previous page)



Antique hat-blocking machine,  
circa 1860s.

ican Sombrero, which was a major export item for the company, also for many decades. With all of those contracts, they were busy all the time!

These older hats, which were made in Philly, are fabulous hats. They were well constructed and are worth repairing and renovating. With the many changes in ownership, Stetson has had plants in many states along the way and now has its main plant in Texas. As with many companies who change hands often, the product suffers. Most of the hats they have made in the last 10 years or so, we cannot renovate or repair. I believe two of the issues we face are

the quality of the hat bodies (mostly made overseas) and the lack of finishing the fur shrinking process with the old-time crown irons as was done in the 1800's (they are now hydraulically pressed out). Therefore, they do not hold up well through a complete renovation.

What is felt? It is simply cleaned and processed fur that is blown on a screen form with the proper weight (amount) of fur for the type of hat body being made. In the 1800's, any water rodent, fur-bearing animal, was used to make hats of different blends for different qualities of hats. Animal trappers made their living trading in furs, which were shipped to England where the hats were made. The hats were then shipped back to America at a very high price. Some enterprising businessmen believed they could do the work in America and avoid the time and cost of shipping to and from England. They were able to establish businesses, which bought the furs, processed them, and made the many styles of hats for the day. The hatting business became so big in America that it was the majority of USA's gross national product, and created the first union, which was the hatters union.

Today, no fur processors are located in the USA. The main processor of furs is in Portugal and most of the processed fur is brought to the US by Winchester Hat Co., of Winchester TN, to make the fur felt bodies. Rabbit pelts

## WHAT ARE THEY THINKING?

Dear Colonel Dan,

I can't understand what these "progressives" are thinking. To me, it is more of a Fascist or Communist train of thought. I have drawn my line in the sand and will not cross it. I believe what my family and I have made belongs to us. I have given to many charities, but each year they are fewer and fewer, due to the economy.

I just learned there is no more print *Chronicle*, so I just accessed the latest one today.

The Cuyahoga Kid  
SASS #25690

\*\*\*\*\*

*Cuyahoga Kid, Thank you once again for the kind words about my column. I very much appreciate your on-going support.*

*Yes, the *Chronicle* had to go digital for purely business reasons. The costs of producing a monthly newspaper had escalated to the point that it was either go digital or go home and have no *Chronicle* at all. I'm sure the SASS family will, in time, come to appreciate the benefits of a digital publication. Keep up the good fight and soldier on...*

*Colonel Dan*

come from Europe's food industry where they eat rabbit like we eat chicken. Most of the beaver fur originates in Asia for the fur coat industry. The belly fur section of the pelt is waste when making fur coats, so these parts are used for fur felt. Many "rejected" whole pelts are used also. Beaver fur is still the best fur felt for a hat because of its fiber length and tensile strength, which equates to durability. Mink and buffalo additions to the felt are just marketing ploys.

Winchester Hat Co. makes the hat bodies from the fur bundles it ships from Portugal. Most, if not all, of the custom hat makers, and many production hat manufacturers in the US, use Winchester hat bodies. For many decades Winchester Hat Co. has been acclaimed to be the finest hat body manufacturer in the world. Some people will argue this point, but if you get into the hat making business, make a few thousand hats, and rebuild a few thousand more, you will find their claim to fame is true.

Stetson did not invent the X rating system. It was around long before J.B. Stetson was in the hat business. Originally the "X" was how much a hat cost. During the potato famine, many Irish immigrated to America and at

*(Continued on page 30)*



**Master Hatter Rebuttal . . .**

*(Continued from page 29)*

the same time, many Italians, Jews, and other Europeans also arrived. Since they could not read or understand our language or customs, the Xs denoted the cost of the hat. A 3X (XXX) hat cost \$3.00. More than 100 years ago, \$1.00 was equivalent to \$100.00 or more today. During the Victorian period, a common man's wages were approximately \$3.00 to \$5.00 a month. This made felt quite expensive, but everyone needed and wore hats back then. The Bailey Hat Co. was very big in the late 1800s and most of the 1900s. Early in their existence, they were noted for trying to create a different rating system not associated with the hat price. The 125 was 25% Beaver, the 150 was 50% Beaver. This was not well accepted by hard working hat wearers, so they went back to the X rating. As time went on, the Xs went from meaning \$1.00 to \$10.00. Eventually it became just a rating system within each individual manufacturer, and similar product quality from different makers had the same rating. Today, it is almost meaningless, unless you specifically know what each rating means

within that particular manufacturer. For example, a pure rabbit fur felt hat from three different companies use 5X, 8X, and 10X. A 10X hat from the first company that uses the 5X for its rabbit is a 50-60% beaver blend, which would be better than the 10X rabbit from the third company. So you must ask what the rating in a particular hat actually means.

As a long-time hatter, to me the "X" rating in straw hats is a misnomer. Good straw bodies are hand woven in various places in the world, and are rated by weaves per inch and the material used. There are Normal, Fino, extra Fino and a few other quality ratings of straw bodies. These are understood by any custom hatter who uses them and their customers. In my opinion, the Xs belong to fur felt, not straw.

I don't know everything there is to know about everything, but I believe my hatting history is rather extensive. Many people ask me, "How do you keep all of that stuff in your brain?" I suppose I just love my craft.

**David Johnson**  
D bar J Hat Co.

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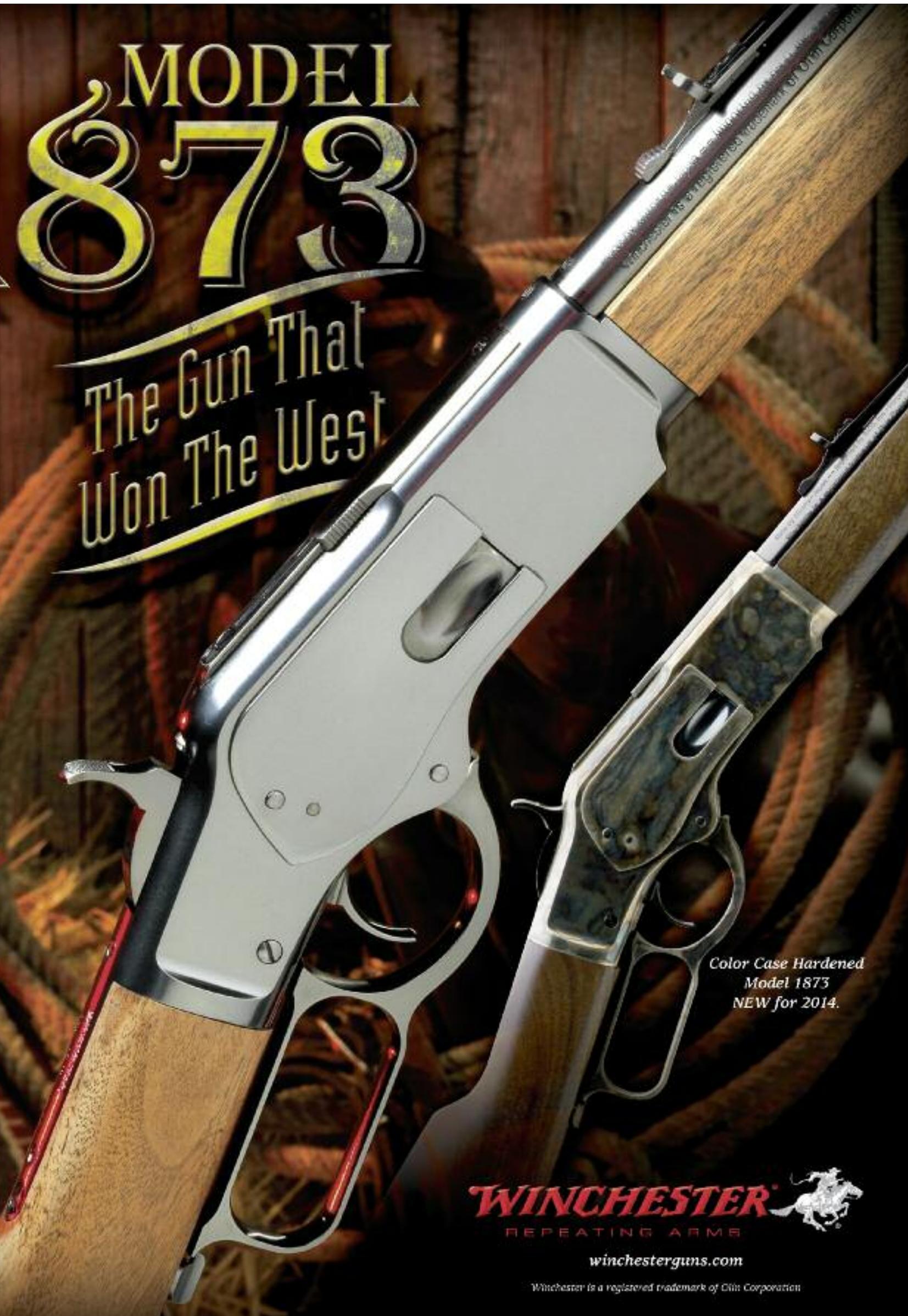
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# Defending Eldorado-ELDORADO

## The SASS Nevada State Championship 2013

**B**oulder City, NV. The little girl is twelve years old; she clutches a dirty, stuffed doll in her hands as she makes her way into the telegraph office. The door swings open easily as the latch was broken the day prior. The glass from the shattered window crunches as the wooden door-frame further scatters the busted panes. Furtively, she looks around to see if her noise has attracted any attention, but the bad men that rode into town yesterday are still too busy enjoying the ill gotten fruits of their raid on this desert community to be concerned with a little girl. Keeping her head down, she makes her way across the room to the shiny brass key that operates the telegraph. Her Daddy was the telegraph agent and she has sat on his lap hundreds of times and watched him send messages; she has to do this for her Daddy and for everyone else in this small town that the bad men might hurt. With her dolly in one hand, she reaches out to the telegraph key with the other and begins to tap out a message. The receiving telegraph sounder in Nelson,

NV begins to click and the agent holds his pencil expectantly as he records the short incoming message—one sent by a scared little girl with tears running down her face: “The Badwater Boys Are Attacking Eldorado. We Need Help.”

161 shooters from 12 states made the trek to Boulder City Nevada, answering the call to attend



our 14<sup>th</sup> annual Eldorado State Championship event. The shooters began arriving on Wednesday and after quick hugs, hellos and howdys, immediately began walking the stages; evaluating steel distances and façade placements. It has become tradition for cowboys and cowgirls to speed to the bays to determine what is new, as the Eldorado Cowboys continually strive to add fun, creative props and exciting action targets to the match every year. This year a fair number of full-grown shooters were heard giggling like schoolchildren as they looked over the stage with track-mounted moving targets for both rifle and revolver. But more on that later, as before the main match comes side match day.

On side match day (Thursday) shooters awoke to a beautiful  
*(Continued on next page)*

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## Defending Eldorado-Eldorado 2013 (The SASS Nevada State Championship) . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



tiful clear blue sky and the promise of fast, fun events. The side matches included all of the expected standbys like speed events for revolvers, rifle and shotgun (divvied up between 87, 97 and SxS), pocket pistol and derringer, and a full slate of long-range shooting. Additionally at Eldorado, the .22 caliber rifles and revolvers are given the opportunity to come out of their cases for a little rim fire exercise on swinging plates. Thursday is also Mini Match warm up day, where shooters can dust off the travel-induced shooting cobwebs and address any pre-match jitters. Three stages of Main Match representative stages allow everyone to get a feel for what is coming this weekend. A couple of bays over, the pistol-caliber long range events are taking place; shooters with main match guns and squinted eyes taking on targets at distances up to 100 yards away. Of particular interest is a recent addition to Eldorado, the Hickok Shot—a recreation of the famous Wild Bill Hickok/Davis Tutt gunfight. The event rules are simple; at the beep, draw your revolver and engage a 16-inch square steel target 70 yards downrange. Only one shot may be fired; fastest hit wins. No second place, no second chances. This year's winner made that shot in 1.69 seconds.

At the other end of the range, a steady thunder of shotgun reports indicates the Shotgun Challenge is in full swing. Competitors engage an array of knockdowns, flyers, soda cans and charcoal briquettes, all being set off by falling knockdowns and bowling balls rolling along randomly triggering targets. The growing pile of Red AA, Green STS and Maroon Field load shotgun shells give testament to the addictive lure of this event.

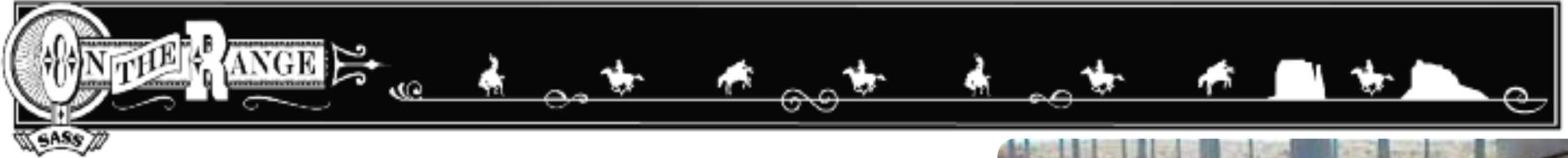
Late afternoon offers even more shotgun opportunity. The Cowboy Clays event begins as the other side matches

wind down. More than one shooter makes a run into town to refill their supply of 12 gauge #7 ½ shotgun shells.

Friday morning begins as most do in Southern Nevada; with a sapphire colored cloud-free sky marked only by

*(Continued on page 34)*





## Defending Eldorado (The SASS Nevada State Championship 2013 . . .

(Continued from page 33)

contrails from jets delivering folks to Las Vegas or the Thunderbirds from Nellis Air Base doing early morning aerial practice. The shooters move toward the registration area for the “Welcome to Eldorado” morning meeting; they listen to a few safety reminders, interrupt to exchange insults and good natured ribbing, hear a couple of bad jokes, and then with shooters books in hands, the posses soon head off to their bays to start the days shooting.

Eldorado is twelve stages of full-throttle Cowboy Action Shooting™. Our targets are generously sized—most at 16 inches or more—but this year brought two of our largest targets yet. A pair of targets each measuring an amazing 48 inches in width and 24 inches in height; these targets, like all of Eldorado steel is placed at a distance that allows and encourages shooters to run at (and sometimes beyond) their personal limits. The shoot is also kept interesting by ensuring there is not a single repeated target array or shooting sequence within the entire match. Varied shooting positions and movements are common with both lateral and downrange directions; most stages having three and some even four locations. But more importantly than varied sequences, movements or even target placement, a match has to be fun.

The Eldorado Cowboys take a great deal of pride in find-



ing “fun” ways to convey the theme of the event and make the experience enjoyable for shooters of all skill levels. Every stage

had a short paragraph that told the story, you were not simply shooting a Nevada Sweep on four targets, but defending your silver mine from claim jumpers. Prop manipulations and “off the clock” actions add to the event, especially if there are prizes to be won. This year, shooters were able to throw a “pickaxe” at one of the evil Badwater Boys. Shooters who “stuck” the pickaxe were entered into a drawing for some great gifts to be given away at the banquet.

In addition to prop manipulations, well placed and imaginatively used façades can change an event from just plain old shooting to “full on playing cowboy.” This year, the Eldorado Cowboys utilized hallways, falling doors, downrange facades, jail cells, ore carts, and wagons.

One well-received stage involved a new for 2013 prop, the flip over card table. With the shooter perched on a stool, this prop blocks the view of the targets until the table is “flipped.” Only after the table is over, can the shooter view the target array and begin engagement. This setup was enjoyable for the shooter as it lends itself very well to reliving our silver screen fantasies, while being spectator friendly and helping to explain components of Cowboy Action Shooting™.

On the next stage, an erector set of steel rails, pulleys and cables awaited the posse. This is the moving target stage I mentioned earlier. The bright red levers and yellow braided ropes stand proudly waiting to release their targets; for the rifle, a steel vulture starts downrange and flies toward the firing line. With their revolvers, Cowboys engage a 20-inch plate moving side to side along more than 20 feet of steel track. As the shooter moves from shotgun to rifle to revolvers, the laughter and encouragement is nearly as loud as the reports from .45 Colts and .38 specials.

Posses shoot their assigned six stages and the first day’s main match is over. But food has arrived, and if there is anything cowboys like more than shooting, it is eating. The smell

(Continued on next page)

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**Defending Eldorado-Eldorado 2013 (The SASS Nevada State Championship) . . .**

*(Continued from previous page)*



of spiced barbeque sauce wafts through the air and draws the shooters to Saturday lunch served up by Famous Dave's Barbeque. This full lunch with plenty of entrees and side dishes is complimentary and part of each shooting package at Eldorado. After lunch, the invitation is put out for team, cou-

ples and person vs. person events, and the interested parties begin to head off to the bays. More clang and bang and a couple more trips into town for shotgun shells.

The second day of the main match begins much like the first; except now there are scores posted. Shooters mill around the scoring sheets, slapping each other's backs and complimenting each other on their speeds and clean shooting. A quick "have fun, be safe" talk, and the shooters head to their assigned stage to join their posse for today's stages. Quick, close, and fun is the order of the day and much too soon the match is complete. Registration becomes a gathering place as shooters are already requesting entry forms for next year. But their day is not yet over. Saturday night brings the formal awards banquet at the Boulder City Country Club.

The Country Club hall officially "opens" at 5:05, but by 4:30 the parking lot is already beginning to fill with RVs, pickups and cars. Drivers, townsfolk, soiled doves, lawman, outlaws and sophisticated ladies in feathered hats

*(Continued on page 36)*

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## Defending Eldorado-Eldorado 2013 (The SASS Nevada State Championship) . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



couple additional. Loyalty awards are given out to the shooters who have attended every Eldorado State Championship shoot and a moment is taken to remember those who have left us over the year.

Interspersed with the awards is “The Great Eldorado Giveaway,” where shooters win accessories, free shoots, spurs and this year, a Baikal SxS Shotgun and a number of Cobra derringers.

Suddenly, the excitement in the hall begins to mount. The Battle of The States Award is coming up next. The Battle of The States is a traveling trophy competition open to any state that has a minimum of ten representative shooters attending Eldorado, the top ten shooters from each state have their scores added together and the state with the lowest total is the winner.

Six states—California, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and Idaho—were represented in this year’s challenge. The hall was raucous as the scores were called off

and states counted down; but in the end, Arizona, again was victorious.

Next the gorgeous handmade trophies for the Top Overall Shooters and the Nevada State Champions were ready to be awarded. Each trophy is hand-selected fine hard wood, shaped and finished by a master craftsman and then mounted upon the display board is a pair of beautiful spurs along with an Eldorado plaque denoting the award. These awards have been referred to by some as the best looking awards in all of SASS.

As the ceremony nears its conclusion, the participants in the Top 20 shoot off, “The Invitation to a Gunfight” are announced. The shoot off is the last event of Eldorado 2013 and is scheduled bright and early Sunday morning.

The Invitation to a Gunfight is a single stage event that allows the Top 20 shooters to take one more run. Allowing the fastest shooter the opportunity to cement their reputation as Top gun, or perhaps for an upstart to put one superior run together to wrest bragging rights away. The shooters began their individual timed runs—position 20 thru Position 1. All of these shooters quickly showed the form and skill that placed them in the enviable placement of Top 20 shooters. Clean and fast was the order of the day, as blistering-fast run after blistering-fast run kept lowering the best times. And when the dust settled, a single cowboy stood supreme.

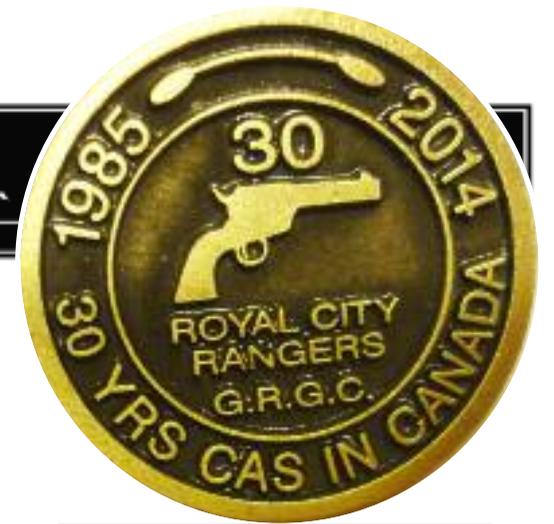
The steel has been put away. The RVs, cars, and pickups are gone. The Badwater Boys have been wiped out and the Eldorado valley is safe once again. All that remains is memories and empty bays.

But maybe, just maybe, if you stand real still with your eyes closed, you might feel the brush of a cloth dolly and the small hand of a little girl tugging at your shirttail as you hear her softly say “Thank you.”

We wish to thank everyone that attended Eldorado. Visit us online at [www.eldoradocowboys.com](http://www.eldoradocowboys.com) for more information. 🤠

| Costume Awards |                      |    |               | Young      | Silver Screen  | Uniqueness |                 |
|----------------|----------------------|----|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|
| On Range       |                      |    |               | Man        | No Hands McGee | Award      | Rayna Terror    |
| Cowboy         | Shorthorn Jim August |    |               |            | SASS #96056    | ID         | SASS #100448 NV |
|                | SASS #7541           | CA | Young         | Lady       | Sass Kicker    |            | Willie Bentfoot |
| On Range       |                      |    |               |            | SASS #91899    | AZ         | SASS #94377 NV  |
| Cowgirl        | Evergreen Rose       |    | Uniform       | Lady       | Lobo Joe       |            |                 |
|                | SASS #37972          | WA |               |            | SASS #15668    | MT         |                 |
| Theme Color    |                      |    | Hussy-Soiled  | Couple     | Red Rock       |            |                 |
| Cowboy         | Gil T. Azell         |    | Dove          |            | SASS #44465    | NV         |                 |
|                | SASS #62569          | NV | Silver Screen | Uniqueness |                |            |                 |
| Theme Color    |                      |    | Man           | Award      | Kota Khaos     |            |                 |
| Cowgirl        | Little Doggie        |    |               |            | SASS #94378    | NV         |                 |
|                | SASS #48593          | AZ |               |            |                |            |                 |
|                |                      |    |               |            | SASS #58843    | NV         |                 |





Thirty-year commemorative pin.

# TRIPLICATION

## THE THIRD DECADE OF COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING™ IN CANADA

By Grey Fox SASS#223, Life, Regulator,  
Hall of Fame Member  
Photos courtesy Indian Frank Archive.



Opening Cannon shot.



Saluting the flag.

Thirty years ago Indian Frank, SASS #38915, had a brilliant idea: why not have a Cowboy Action Shooting™ competition in Brampton, Ontario, Canada at the Peel Gun Club.

It was billed as the Peel Western Shoot. Indian Frank's quote from the match bulletin: "This shoot should prove

to be the most exciting and unique shoot of the many shoots in Ontario."

Frank's instructions for the match were "Western-style dress, Western-style guns, hits on targets and speed." The match consisted of five main stages.

How we have changed, but stayed the same. Frank's instructions could be easily repeated at any current Cowboy Action Shooting™ match.

What was unique and trend setting thirty years ago is now commonplace. There are ranges across Canada that host Cowboy Action matches on a regular monthly basis. There are some regions that, within a short driving distance, one would be able to attend two or three shoots a month.

The initial match was held at the Peel Gun Club. Indian Frank's vision, organizing that first match May 26, began a regular annual shooting competition that was held at the Peel Gun Club until 1993, then moved to the Guelph Gun Club. Guelph, Ontario is known as the Royal City. The Cowboy Action Shooting™ division is called the Royal City Rangers.

*(Continued on next page)*

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**TRIPLICATION • The Third Decade Of Cowboy Action Shooting™ In Canada ...**

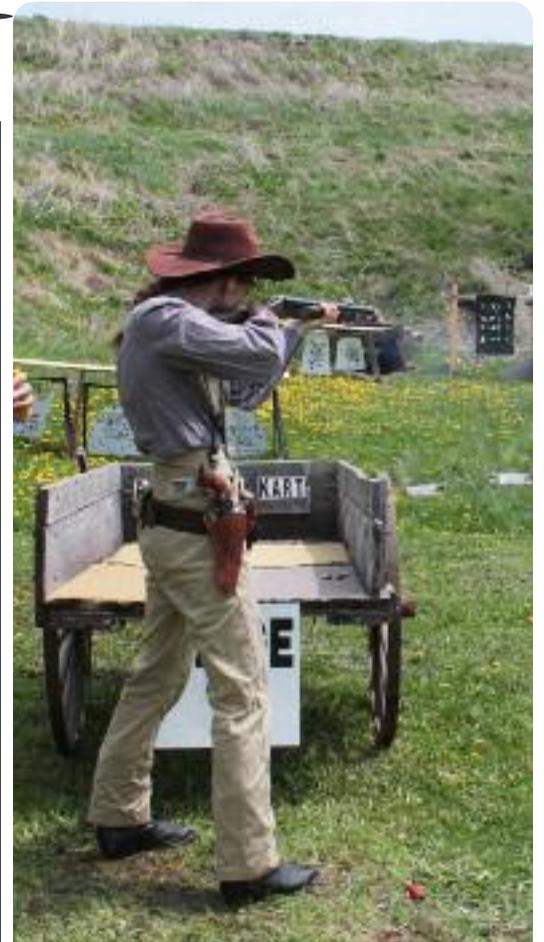
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*Indian Frank receiving 30-year appreciation plaque.*



*Sunny Jo, Top Lady.*



*Smoke N Ash and her winning ways.*



*Chance Arizona ROing Easy Rider, SASS #92528.*



*Slow Don being not slow.*

Frank's initial efforts have grown into a dedicated cowboy range at the Guelph Rod & Gun Club that features monthly matches and Cowboy Action practice sessions. Indian Frank has attracted a dedicated cadre of enthusiastic followers, organizing matches, assembling props, running the events and growing the club.

The 2014 30<sup>th</sup> edition of Indian Frank's original inspiration of 30 years ago was classic Cowboy Action Shooting™ at it's very best. The accompanying images confirm the creation of a long lasting legacy. The cannon's roar, open-

ing the competition, up to the awards and closing ceremonies, are a serious credit to the great contribution Indian Frank has made to cowboy action shooting.

Five of the original participants in 1985 were on hand for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual. Indian Frank; Rawhide Wilson, SASS #40834; Doc Bailey, SASS #553; Snake Montana, SASS #12393; and Major, SASS #38916. It is interesting to note that the second place winner in 1985, Rawhide, was top gun in 2014 and Indian Frank finished second in Silver Senior. 🤠

**WINNERS**

|               |                  |    |
|---------------|------------------|----|
| Top Gun       | Rawhide Wilson   |    |
|               | SASS #40834      | ON |
| 49'r          | Slow Don         |    |
|               | SASS #66977      | ON |
| Cowboy        | Chance Arizona   |    |
|               | SASS #80609      | ON |
| Duelist       | Lock n Load      |    |
|               | SASS #87491      | ON |
| Frontiersman  | Crow             |    |
|               | SASS #96514      | MA |
| Gunfighter    | Mickey O'Rye     |    |
|               | SASS #86989      | ON |
| Junior        | Smoke N Ash      |    |
|               | SASS #86017      | ON |
| Lady          | Sunny Jo         |    |
|               | SASS #94627      | ON |
| Silver Senior | Legendary Lawman |    |
|               | SASS #73160      | ON |

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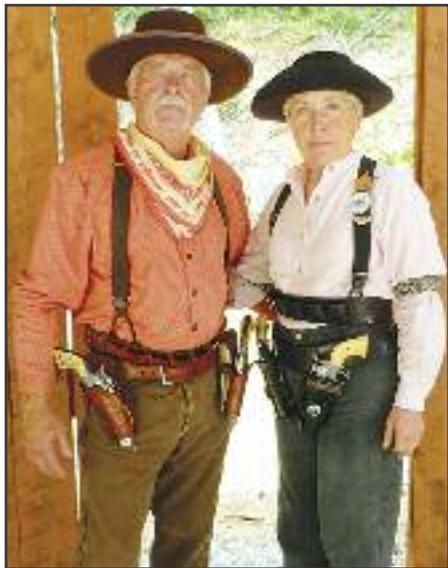
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*Rio Drifter, SASS #49244 and Tennessee Tall, SASS #49245*

# SHOOTIN' OUR WAY ACROSS AMERICA

## Delaware

*By Tennessee Tall, SASS Life/Regulator #49245,  
and Rio Drifter, SASS Life/Regulator #49244*

**B**ridgeville, DE—June 15<sup>th</sup>, Father's Day shooting our 41<sup>st</sup> state. Nicknamed "The First State," Delaware has 1,954 square miles of land area, as opposed to our home state of Florida, which has 53,927 square miles. What they do have in common is loads of waterfront property, the Inter-coastal Waterway, wildlife areas, state parks and forests, serious farmers, lighthouses and fishermen/watermen, as they are known in Maryland and Delaware. Delaware is a little state with a lot to offer.

A small lively crowd of shooters showed up on Father's Day where each Dad was given a "mulligan" to use for a free miss. Unfortunately, every one of them were used. Deacon Will, SASS #24170, Territorial Governor, was very kind in giving us instructions for finding the range and things to do in the nearby town. Deacon Will recommended Jeff's Taproom for a burger. Rio's cousin, Darlene Watkins of Night Dove Farm in Federalsburg, Maryland, joined us for a Friday night at Jeff's, where the beer was cold and the folks friendly. Our burgers were stacked high with all the fixings; a meal for two on each bun.

Vaquero Dan, SASS #31330), Match Director, wrote six good stages for us. His wife, Wyoming Schoolmarm, SASS #32070, brought out coffee, fresh baked cinnamon rolls and brownies. It was great to see all the members in full cowboy costume, Marshlan, SASS #22743; Two Gun SASS #68105; Corkscrew Tom SASS #68972; Cool Hand Lee, SASS #81764; and Vaquero Dan all looked like they were trying out for a new Open Range role. Hazel Pepper, SASS #49662 was just one of the multi-taskers that day as she was often keeping score, spotting, and keeping us

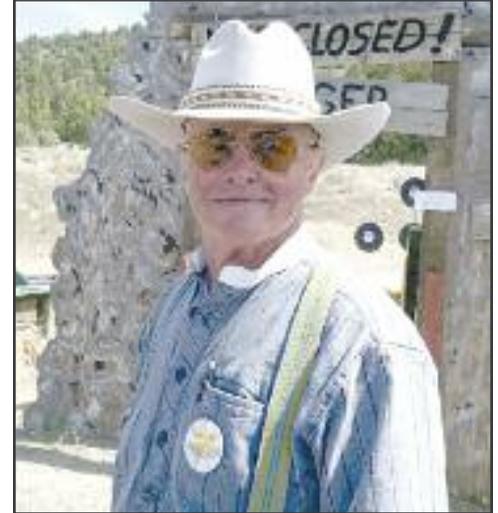


moving to shoot. We all shot, worked, and enjoyed shooting in good weather.

After our shoot we went back to Federalsburg to the Night Dove Farm with Darlene for days of visiting in the neighborhood, sitting by the pool with her friends and eating way too many good meals. We found our dream house in Herlock, Maryland on the banks of the Choptank River. A three-bedroom ranch with fireplaces inside and out, beautiful terracing and landscaping, complete with a tunnel down to the river opening into a club house with a dock hung with boats and jet skis complete with a private beach. Unfortunately, it wasn't for sale and we couldn't have afforded it anyway! Amazing how we find interesting beautiful areas wherever we wander. Off we go to shoot our 42<sup>nd</sup> state in New Jersey!



# A SALOON SHOOTOUT AND MORE PUBLICITY FOR SASS



*Palaver Pete,  
SASS Life/Regulator #4375*

*By Palaver Pete, SASS Life/Regulator #4375*



*Looking like one of the meanest Bad Guys, Deadwood Pete, SASS #57450, moves to the action, while the spectators eagerly await the next shot. Even the little tyke in the stroller is interested*



*Members of the Pine Mountain Posse shoot it out with the bad guys as local citizens—seen in the background—cower in fear as the onslaught begins. Note the two “dead” Cowboys on the ground.*

August marks the second year that the PMP has thrilled residents and guests alike with their beautiful Western costumes, and exciting shootouts.

Events such as this are great publicity for not only the local Cowboy Action Shooting™ Club, but for SASS as well. Curious spectators want to know all about our sport and game, and questions on how to join and participate abound—a great market-

**S**isters is a small town nestled alongside the Cascade Mountains in Central Oregon. Some years ago the citizens of Sisters decided that the future of their economic growth lay in tourism; thus they decided that their marketing approach should be western in nature. With that decision made, they embarked on an ambitious program to convert all the downtown business buildings to a western façade—overnight they became a western town of the mid 1800’s. Their idea paid off, and since then the town has prospered and is recognized throughout the west for its Western Day celebration as well as an annual Quilt Show that draws people from around the world. But for one weekend in August, the town celebrates its western heritage by hosting a Cowboy-type shootout provided by the Pine Mountain Posse (PMP), a SASS affiliated club also located in Central Oregon. This past

ing tool for bringing more people into the game we love so much. Needless to say, safety is a primary concern of all. Each SASS participant receives an airport-style shake down before being issued blank ammunition by only ONE appointed person. Even at that, each firearm is checked twice before the shooting begins. The PMP also participates in a similar Western event at the Deschutes County Fair Ground, normally a week after the Sisters gathering. Deschutes County is Oregon’s most rapidly growing region and is home to two Cowboy Action Shooting™ Clubs, the PMP as well as the Horse Ridge Pistoleros. But, enough palavering dear reader, let’s let the photos do the talking.

Please visit our Website at: [www.pinemountainposse.com/](http://www.pinemountainposse.com/) for more photos, story line, and Oregon CAS news. You’re a Daisy if ya do. 🤠

*Black Powder Shooter Brownie Nash, SASS #3656, challenges the bad guys with his drawn horse leg. Brownie has been a club inspiration for years, as one will note from his SASS Number.*



*Ladies of the PMP come to the rescue of their men. Pictured ready to draw her pistol is Arctic Annie, SASS #37265, while Cascades Annie, SASS #70533, watches the action from the doorway. Nestled against the Saloon wall is a well armed Antety, SASS #43598. She cautiously waits for her turn to engage the bad guys. Note the little guy (near the doorway) drinking in the action—a future SASS member, no doubt.*



# THE TOMBSTONE Inaugural WILD BUNCH MATCH at the Livery

By Blaze Kinkaid SASS #253 Life/Regulator

**T**ombstone, AZ. Mules always know when something is brewing besides coffee. They were fidgety, but alert, as the tempo changed and the pace quickened here at Fort Huachuca.

It was 1913, and the territory of Arizona had just achieved Statehood the year before. The easy duty, here at the Fort, ended as word was received of potential border fighting between Mexican Federal Troops and Pancho Villa and his bandits.

G Troop, 5<sup>th</sup> Calvary, had been dispatched to Nogales, AZ to protect American interests on this side of the border. Other units from Fort Huachuca became actively engaged in the border fighting as the revolution developed into a full-fledged bloody rebellion. From Texas to California, all military units were on full alert and constant patrol.

Civilians on the U.S. side of the border weren't overly concerned and some even thought of the rebellion as a bit entertaining and often attempted to view the proceedings; that is until stray bullets whizzed by! Then, the un-thinkable happened. In the dark of the night, Pancho Villa and 500 of his bandits raided Columbus, New Mexico, burning, looting, and killing many Americans. Reprisal was immediate.

A military force was dispatched to pursue Villa and his



bandits, and a reward of \$5,000 was offered for his capture whether dead or alive! All the border towns were on alert, especially Tombstone, as silver mining could help finance Villa's revolution. At the time, Tombstone was in decline. Jobs were scarce and many men were looking for excitement so, a force was formed to scout for Villa and claim the reward. The Tombstone Wild Bunch was expected to defend the town from the bandits, and rightly so!

*(Continued on next page)*

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Logos for Henry, Tang Sights, Hawken, Traditions, and Turkey K USA are also visible.

| <u>Winners</u>     |                               |    |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|----|
| <b>Traditional</b> |                               |    |
| First Place        | Bison Bert<br>SASS #56880     | AZ |
| Second Place       | August West<br>SASS #45079    | AZ |
| Third Place        | WoodrowAZ<br>SASS #24069      | AZ |
| <b>Modern</b>      |                               |    |
| First Place        | Gilly Boy<br>SASS #18499      | AZ |
| Second Place       | Windy City Red<br>SASS #62468 | AZ |
| Third Place        | Blaze Kinkaid<br>SASS #253    | AZ |



## The Tombstone Inaugural Wild Bunch Match At The Livery . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



On September 6, we gathered at the Livery to outfit. We decided to stage some mock drills, fully armed and preparing for what we were contemplating would happen. One in our group, Augie, provided some possible scenarios that we might encounter in the field. A posse was formed, and as we waited for the Quartermaster to issue ordinance, we learned that our old SAAs were being replaced with the new-fangled Colt 1911, a semi-automatic that featured a magazine rather than a cylinder. Wow, dude! The learning curve was shot as most of us lived by the gun anyways, or at least we used to. We generally used an alias and no questions were asked about one's past. Me? I'm Packer Tom, a civilian contracted by the U.S. Army to provide pack mules and tack for patrols in town and along the border, but enough about me. The rest of the bunch "heeded the call to arms" as responsible citizens always do.

When we hit the trail, we numbered thirteen, from all walks of life. We were a very colorful and fun-loving group. We left our handles behind, letting others follow—monikers like Bowie, Scant, Gilly, Augie, Buck, Blaze, Rafe, Slow, Windy, Slim, Bison, Woody and IPlant.

Once afield, our plan was to track Villa and his 500 men, which was easy as they left dead bodies behind. I've heard that before somewhere. We figured to surround them and force their surrender, and collect the reward. At the time, we thought it was a good plan, but don't tell anyone, they didn't surrender. In the end, we successfully defended our turf, had a great time, and exhausted our stores of ammunition. Now, we're looking forward to the next skirmish.

Thanks to August West for writing the stages and setting the steel; and to Gilly Boy for his computer work; and to the rest of the posse for their contributions. Special thanks to Doug and Terri Evans proprietors of the Tombstone Livery; and to Gene and Melinda Brown of Old Pueblo Leather, who donated the awards 🐾

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Larsen E. Pettifogger, SASS Life #32933



# PALO VERDE GUNWORKS

## Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit

By Larsen E. Pettifogger, SASS #32933L, Regulator

After a new shooter has shot a few SASS matches one of the things many of them consider is an action job. We are operating our firearms at a much higher rate of speed and shooting far more rounds than a typical cowboy from the 1880s. A good action job not only makes the gun easier and quicker to fire, it also enhances durability. Something else a lot of new shooter's are looking for are affordable firearms. Buying two handguns, a shotgun and a rifle (not to mention clothes and leather, etc.) can put quite a dent in a household economy for someone who is just starting the sport. A rifle that many new shooters purchase is the Rossi 92, a reproduction of the Winchester 92. They can be purchased for about half the cost of a Winchester/Uberti 73. Many people like to tinker with their own firearms, or the cost of a professional action job may not currently be in their budget. A common modification by the home craftsman is to replace or alter the springs in their firearms. On some types of firearms a change of springs can make a dramatic change in the feel and performance of the gun. On others the change may not be so noticeable, but there is still an improvement. Let's see how a new Rossi 92 responds to the installation of a Palo Verde Gunworks spring kit.

I have not shot a Rossi for almost ten years. The last one I had worked OK, but was clunky and some of the machining and the fit and finish of the wood were less than stellar. For this article I started with a brand new in the box Rossi. **Photo 1.** My first reaction after opening the box and picking up the rifle was that things have changed in the past ten years. The fit and finish were markedly better than

those from years past. Working the action also revealed that it was pretty darn good right out of the box. So, this rifle looked like a good candidate for some tuning.

Next, I picked up a Palo Verde spring kit. **Photo 2.** Opening the bag revealed a fairly detailed instruction sheet, five springs and several color-coded plastic bushings. **Photos 3 and 4.** The instruc-



tion sheet notes, "These instructions assume that you already know how to disassemble and reassemble your 92. If you are not completely familiar with the 92, get help from someone who is." Which gets back to my comment that the instructions are "fairly detailed." The instructions explain how to install springs into the various parts after the gun is disassembled because, like the instructions note, it is assumed the installer knows how to disassemble a 92. There are several websites (do a Google search) that have detailed instructions on how to disassemble a 92. For our purposes, we'll go ahead and hit the highlights of disassembly and reassembly of the gun.

First, remove the tang screw,

**Photo 5,** and remove the stock.

*(Continued on next page)*





**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**

*(Continued from previous page)*



6



7

**Photo 6.** Next, locate the bolt pin plug screw on the left side of the receiver and remove that screw. **Photos 7 and 8.** After the plug screw is removed look into the hole and you can see the end of the pin that holds the lever in the bolt. **Photo 9.** (Make sure the lever is in the UP position.) Turn the rifle over and

*(Continued on page 46)*



8



9

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### Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .

*(Continued from page 45)*



above the loading gate is a hole. **Photo 10.** This hole allows a punch to be inserted in the right side so the lever/bolt pin can be driven out the left side. **Photos 11 and 12.** Open the lever so the screws holding the locking

lugs to the lever are revealed. **Photo 13.** Remove the lock screw (the round one) and then remove the lever screw (the one with the half moon in it) and pull out the locking lugs. Depending on the tolerances of the gun, the lever with locking lugs still attached may pull out of the rifle as a unit. **Photo 14.** When you are done you should have the parts as shown in **Photo 15.** On the lower tang is the main-spring. Cock the hammer until the hole in the hammer strut

*(Continued on next page)*



**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**

*(Continued from previous page)*



lines up with the notch in the strut retainer and put a nail or other straight pin into the hole. **Photos 16 and 17.** Next, remove the hammer/lower tang screw. **Photo 18.** The lower tang fits into mortises cut into the receiver. Pull it  
*(Continued on page 48)*



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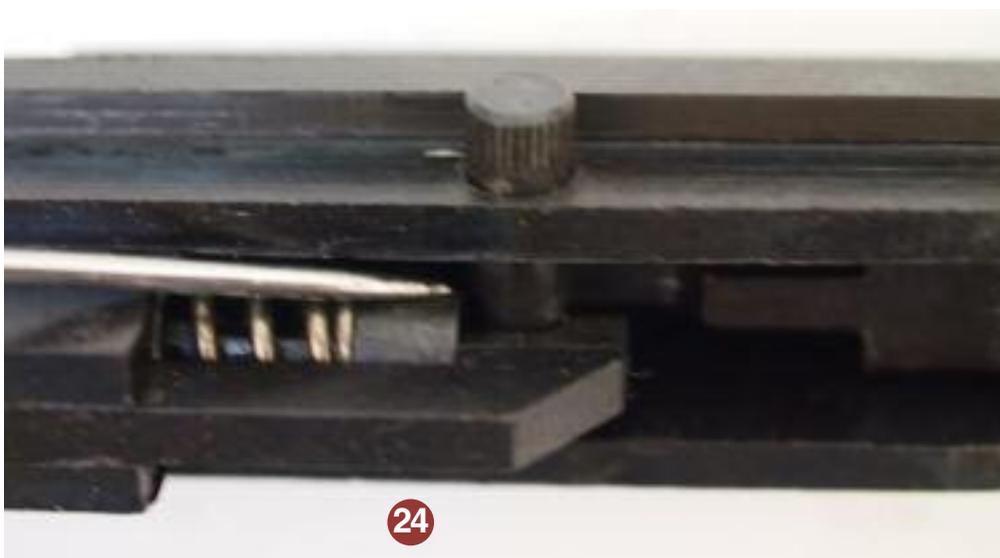
### Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .

*(Continued from page 47)*



backwards until it is out of the receiver. **Photos 19 and 20.** Now the hammer can be removed out the bottom of the receiver. **Photo 21.**

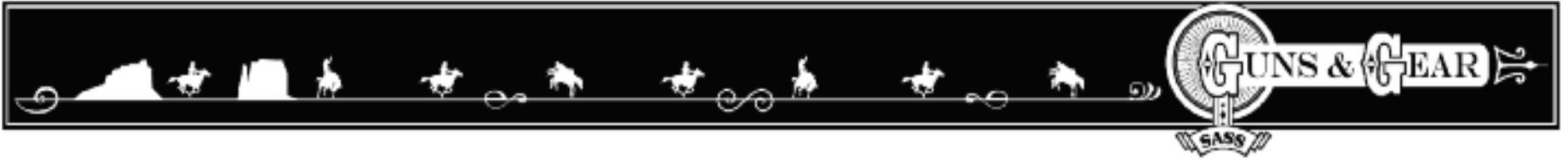
Remove the bolt carefully and pull the ejector out of the front of the bolt. Take care to notice how the parts are assembled on the ejector. **Photo 22.** Installing the ejector is often the most difficult task for many people so let's take a closer look at this part. The ejector body has a spring on it followed by a small metal collar. The end of the ejector shaft has a notch cut in it. **Photo 22.** When the ejector assembly is placed into the bolt the collar bumps up against a tab in the bottom of the bolt. **Photo 23.** Note above the tab you can see part of the notch in the tail of the ejector shaft. Also note that the ejector is sticking out of the face of the bolt. When the ejector is pushed into the bolt face



the notch is fully exposed and when the lever/bolt pin is inserted when the gun is reassembled it locks the ejector in place. **Photo 24.** When we get to the reassembly process we will make sure all these parts line up properly.

Next remove the carrier pivot screw from the lower left side of the receiver and pull the carrier out of the receiver.

*(Continued on next page)*



**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**

*(Continued from previous page)*

**Photos 25 and 26.** You now have the gun disassembled to the point where all the springs can be replaced. **Photo 27.** First off, let's work on the carrier. The carrier has a spring-



29

loaded plunger on its left side. **Photo 28.** This plunger goes into two grooves cut into the inside of the receiver, **Photo 29,** and locks the carrier in the up or down positions. Moving the carrier up and down and the plunger in and out creates a lot of friction. Even more friction if there are burrs on the sides of the grooves. Check the grooves and stone down any burrs. On this gun, the grooves had no burrs.

*(Continued on page 50)*



25



27



26



28

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Evil Roy (aka - Gene Pearcey)

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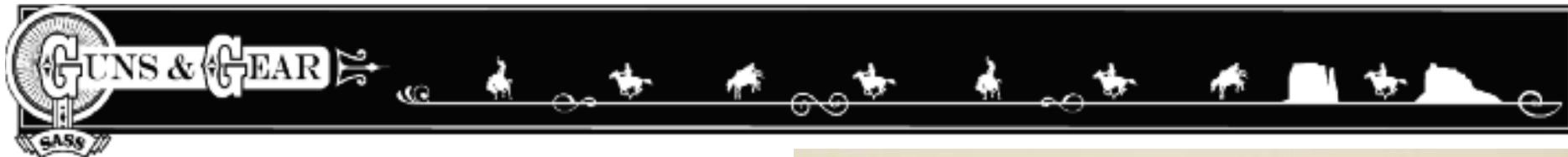
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**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**

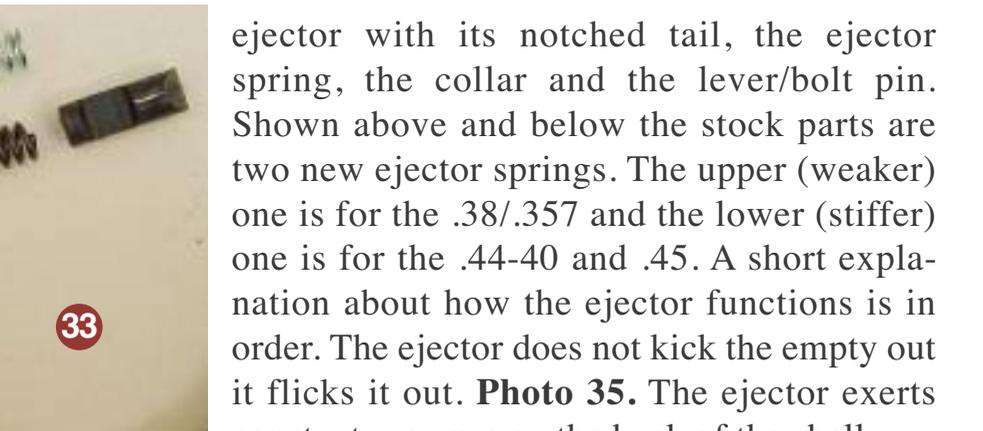
*(Continued from page 49)*



There is a pin retaining the plunger. **Photo 30.** Drive the pin up from the bottom of the carrier and you wind up with the parts shown in **Photo 31.** The new, lighter, plunger spring is shown above the stock spring. Insert the new spring into the carrier followed by the plunger and tap the pin in from the top down.

Moving on to the lever, the arrangement is pretty much the same as the carrier. There is a spring-loaded plunger retained by a pin through the sides of the lever. **Photo 32.** Drive out the pin and remove the plunger and spring from the lever. **Photo 33.** The new spring is shown above the stock spring. Insert the new spring in the lever followed by the plunger and its retention pin.

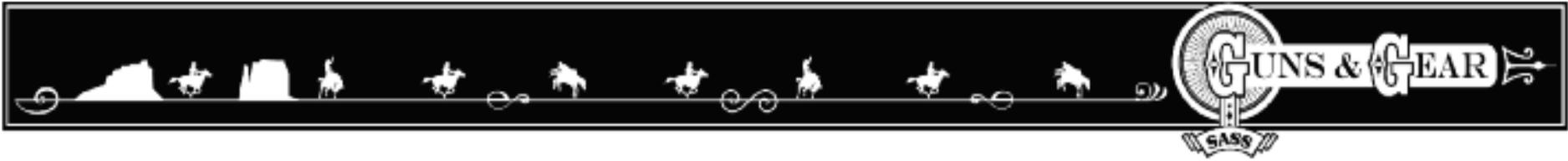
Now we are back to that ejector. The parts and their relationship are shown, once again, in **Photo 34.** There is the



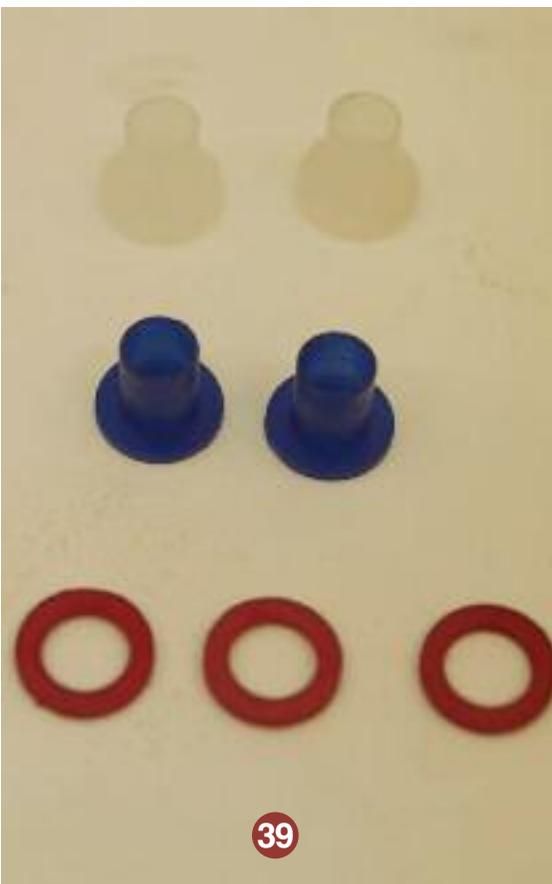
ejector with its notched tail, the ejector spring, the collar and the lever/bolt pin. Shown above and below the stock parts are two new ejector springs. The upper (weaker) one is for the .38/.357 and the lower (stiffer) one is for the .44-40 and .45. A short explanation about how the ejector functions is in order. The ejector does not kick the empty out it flicks it out. **Photo 35.** The ejector exerts constant pressure on the back of the shell casing. As the bolt moves to the rear the casing is forced upward and when it clears the chamber it is flicked out. The spring pressure is most noticeable when closing the bolt. The spring has to be compressed and you can feel significant resistance as the bolt is closed and has to overcome this pressure. So, the object is to get enough spring pressure to allow the case to be ejected, but to have as little as possible so that it doesn't impede the bolt closing. Hence the two springs in the kit. This gun is a .357 so the lighter spring was installed. Insert the ejector and its parts into the bolt face and set it aside for reassembly. **Photo 36.**

The trigger spring is a leaf spring and is the only spring that is reused. Remove the screw holding in the trigger *(Continued on next page)*

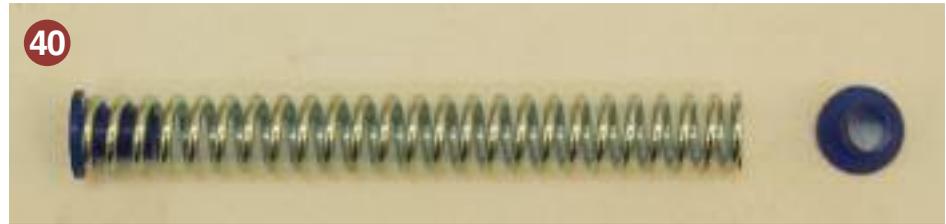




**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**  
*(Continued from previous page)*



spring and remove it. **Photos 37 and 38.** Follow the directions in the kit on how to lighten the spring and reinstall it into the lower tang. The last spring to be replaced is the mainspring. There are numerous combinations of bushings and shims that can be installed depending on which primers are being used and how much friction is in the action. **Photo 39.** The bushings are color-coded but can be mixed and matched to give the desired hammer pull. Since this gun had a



smooth action out of the box the lightest bushing combination was used. **Photo 40.** The new spring and old spring are shown in **Photo 41.** After the desired combination of bushings and shims have been selected slide everything  
*(Continued on page 52)*

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**Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .**

*(Continued from page 51)*

onto the hammer strut, compress the spring and put in a nail or other straight pin to retain the compressed spring.

Now that all the subassemblies have had their springs replaced or modified, it is time to put everything back together. First, replace the carrier and its pivot pin. **Photos 25 and 26.** After the pivot pin is in make sure the carrier plunger is in the “down” groove. Next, place an empty case into the chamber and insert the bolt into the receiver. **Photo 42.** Making sure the ejector is positioned properly push the bolt fully forward. **Photo 43.** This should have all the ejector parts in position to receive the bolt/lever pin. Insert the hammer up into the frame and slide the lower tang into place making sure the tip of the hammer strut mates with the hole in the retention block. **Photos 16, 17 and 44.** Install the hammer/lower tang screw, **Photo 45,** cock the hammer, and remove the pin that was inserted to retain the mainspring. Insert the lever making sure it enters its recess in the bottom of the bolt and install the lever/bolt pin and the plug. **Photos 8 and 12.** Insert the locking lugs



and their retaining screws. **Photos 46 and 47.** Lever the gun a few times to make sure everything is working correctly. If so, replace the stock and tang screw.

So how did our project turn out? In a word, phenomenal! The Rossi 92s seem to have improved over the years and I was surprised and impressed at how nice this gun was out of the box. Adding the spring kit turned a nice gun into a great gun. The effort needed to lever the action, smoothness of the action, and trigger pull were all greatly improved. The kits are available through Brownells.

*(Continued on next page)*

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### Palo Verde Gunworks (Rossi Model 92 Spring Kit) . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



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*Captain George Baylor,  
SASS Life / Rugulator #24287*



# DISPATCHES FROM CAMP BAYLOR

## AN INCOMPLETE HISTORY OF SIX-SHOOTER MODIFICATIONS

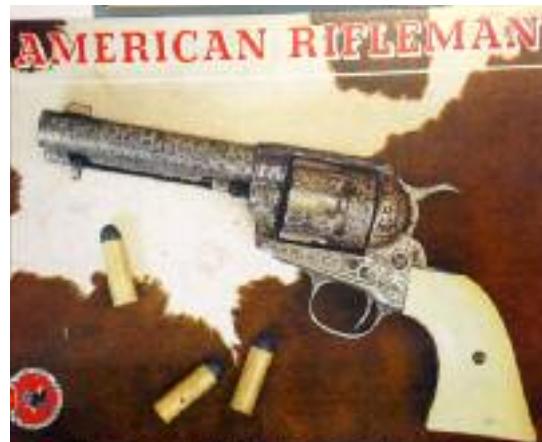
*By Captain George Baylor, SASS Life/Regulator #24287*



**Bat Masterson's Custom 1885 Colt**

*In 1885 Bat Masterson ordered a Colt SAA with a wide, tall front sight, and a light hammer, textured hard rubber grips, and nickel plating.*

Some people think modifying guns to suit you is something new to SASS and somehow evil. It's not. A letter survives on the letterhead of the Opera House Saloon, Dodge City, Kansas dated July 1885, addressed to Colt Firearms and signed by William B. "Bat" Masterson. He was ordering his eighth Colt SAA directly from Colt. He wanted it "Nickel plated... 45 Calibre... I am willing to pay Extra for Extra work. Make it very Easy on trigger and have the front sight a little higher and thicker than the ordinary pistol of this kind. Put on a gutta percha [hard rubber] handle and send it as soon as possible. Have the barrel about the same length as the Ejecting rod is..."



*This first generation Colt had a Gold front sight and a lowered hammer long before SASS came along.*

Higher and thicker front sight? Easy on the trigger? Grippy textured hard rubber grips? 4-3/4" barrel, easy to clean finish? Sounds very close to a modern competition gun for SASS.

The Colt Bisley was a competition modification that went into production in

1894. A few years ago *Wild West* magazine had a photo of a 1904 production Colt SAA with brass 1860 Army grip frame and a Bisley hammer. More than 100 years later, SASS approved Bisley hammers for all grip frames to the horror of a some traditionalist SASS shooters, so that gun would be legal in SASS.

### Colt-erizing Rugers

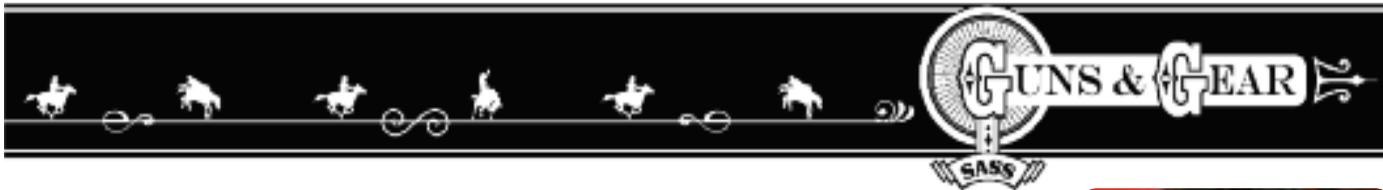
Fountain Firearms, Houston, Texas, has on the wall one of fast draw and trick shot artist Joe Bowman's old buscadero rigs with two plated pistols. Earl Long, a master gunsmith from Houston, made them in the 1950s. They weren't Colts. They were Ruger Flat Top Blackhawks welded up, re-shaped, and re-sighted to look like Colts. The Blackhawk itself was a complete re-engineering of the Colt SAA concept using modern coil springs and adjustable sights. This was the father of the Ruger Vaquero.

The "old" Vaquero was 110 percent the size of a



*"Factory Tuned Guns" became a trend in 2008. Several guns available in 2009 for SASS shooting that had been factory or distributor modified for competition. On top a Cimarron Evil Roy pistol, tuned by Cimarron gunsmiths. Checkered grips and lightened springs, action job, and wide rear sight notch were standard. Next Taylor's Smoke Wagon tuned by Cody Conagher for Taylor's with checkered grips, wide rear sight, competition springs, wire bolt spring, and trigger adjusted to three pounds. Next EMF Pietta Alchimista with factory tuned action had Colt 1860 Army grip frame, wide, set back trigger, and checkered grips. A Super Blackhawk style hammer became an option in 2011. Bottom USFA SAA from Long Hunter Shooting Supply with Long Hunter tuned action.*

*(Continued on next page)*



## Dispatches From Camp Baylor . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



*This second generation Colt belonged to Gene Autry. It wasn't intended for competition, but it had a lowered hammer and a gold plated front sight. Well, the whole gun is gold plated for that matter.*

Colt. It soon became very popular in SASS. Power Custom offered a half-cock hammer and trigger kit that could be installed by a ham-fisted idiot like me. The purpose of the half-cock notch is to prevent "skipping" a round and having to "go around" if you fail to pull the hammer back far enough to engage the full cock notch (called short stroke, not to be confused with the modification of the same name). I put these kits on my Vaqueros in 2000 or so. Eventually Ruger would make a new Vaquero the size of a Colt with many improvements inside and out.

### Ruger-izing Colts

Rugers have coil springs. Gunsmiths such as Bob Munden did full coil spring conversions to Colts, and now Uberti and Pietta "clones" have coil hand springs, much like Rugers.

### Grips

Grips have been a source of modification from the beginning, both for cosmetics and to fit the hand and deal with recoil. Some

years back Joe Bowman and Raj at Eagle Grips got together and designed Gunfighter Grips. These fit small and average-sized hands and are shaped to help control recoil. They are also available checkered for a firmer grip. When you see a World Champion, check the grips on his guns. Odds are they're Eagle Gunfighter grips.

A major exception is Evil Roy. When he was developing the Evil Roy pistols with Cimarron he slimmed the stock grips, I be-



*End view of stock Ruger grips. Note they flare toward the bottom.*



*Eagle Gunfighter grips—ergonomically shaped and checkered for a firmer grip.*



*Eagle Evil Roy grips do away with the flare of stock grips.*

lieve with a belt sander. He liked the resulting profile and convinced Raj to make checkered Evil Roy grips with the same profile. Both of these are improvements over stock, slippery grips for our purposes.

*(Continued on page 56)*



*Bad Hand's Ruger Old army with Bisley grips and hammer by Alan Harton.*

*(Photo by Bad Hand)*

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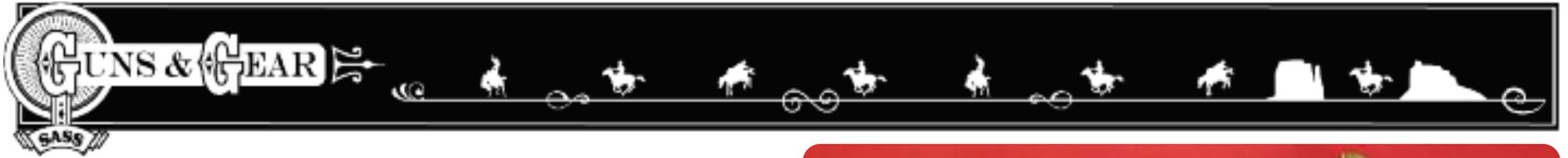
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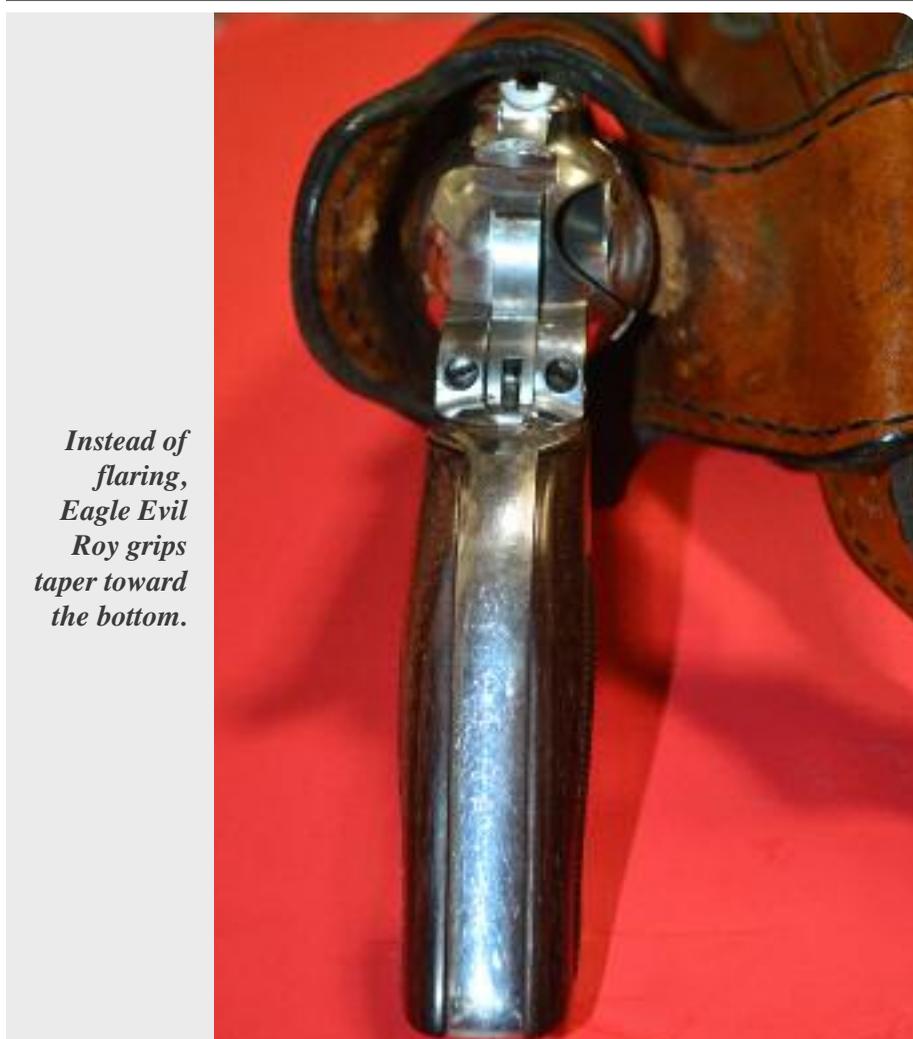


## Dispatches From Camp Baylor . . .

*(Continued from page 55)*



*Gunfighter grips are shaped to fit the palm and thumb.*



*Instead of flaring, Eagle Evil Roy grips taper toward the bottom.*



**EXAMPLES OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE TODAY:**  
*Top, Ruger Vaquero with Slick Hit sight, widened rear sight, gunfighter grips, and Game Changer short stroke kit.*  
*Bottom, Ruger Old Army with Slick Hit sight, widened rear sight, gunfighter grips, SliX-Shot nipples, tuned springs, and Super Blackhawk hammer spur.*

### Sights

The original Colt SAAs were sighted for combat distances. Bat Masterson was in gunfights that would fit in a saloon. So he wanted a big, tall front sight. It was tall because otherwise he would shoot high, and big and thick to see easily.

We're usually speed shooting pistol targets well within 15 yards. A front sight is needed that is very thick and very bright so you can see it quickly. When I started SASS in the late twentieth century, Colt "clones" had thin, tapered front sights. Rugers had wider un-tapered sights. Sights on clones got wider. Then gold plating sights became popular. We generally shoot black steel targets. After a bunch of shooters they're dull grey. Gold or brass stands out. Then Slick McClade (<http://www.slickmagicguns.com>, 318-278-9071) started selling Slick Hit sights, hydro-formed brass sights that fit over the stock sights and are secured with metal glue. They're about 0.15" wide.

Evil Roy, among others, has long recommended wider rear sight notches. With the wider front sights they're a necessity. One of the secrets for hitting targets quickly is a "flash sight picture." Having a wide, bright front sight with light on both sides makes that easier. 0.15 ± seems to be optimum.

### Action Jobs

Action jobs, such as what Bat Masterson ordered, have long been a staple in SASS. They ranged from leather spacers on the original Colt mainspring to changing springs, stoning, and fitting for light hammer and trigger pulls. In

*(Continued on next page)*



## Dispatches From Camp Baylor . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

the early 2000s Eddie Janis at Peacemaker Specialists (<http://peacemakerspecialists.com>) did action jobs on my SASS Colts that feel like they almost have no springs at all when cocking, and the triggers have the proper “glass rod” crispness. Some gunsmiths put in spring kits and call that an action job. Some, like Jimmy Spurs at Cowboy Gun Works (<http://cowboygunworks.com>), convert transfer-bar Rugers to extremely light, extremely smooth actions with no transfer bar and a half-cock notch. Trigger pulls are as low as a pound or so if desired. He also does extremely smooth, light action jobs with transfer bars intact.

### Short-Stroke Conversions

When Wes Flowers (West Fargo) popularized short-stroked Rugers in SASS several years ago, there were people who wanted this modification to be illegal. But it was allowed for a simple reason. Gunsmiths had been doing the modification before SASS was formed.

Several gunsmiths have been doing short stroke conversions of both Colts and Rugers. Wes Flowers is retired now, but several others do short-stroke work. Lasiter (937-687-1039) makes extremely strong, extremely durable short strokes for both Colts and Rugers. Among others, World and National champion Hell’s Comin’ uses and swears by them.

### Game Changers

Shotgun Boogie makes short-stroke kits for gunsmith installation in Rugers he calls “Game Changers.” In many ways they do change the game. The kits are German-made of stainless steel, not modified Ruger units. Colt Faro, one of the gunsmiths who in-



*Ruger Vaquero frame with Shotgun Boogie’s “Game Changer” Short Stroke kit. Gun is at full cock.*

stalls them, describes it: “It comes with a spring kit engineered to work with it. Springs consist of main, bolt, plunger, pawl, trigger and firing pin. Firing pin spring is

*(Continued on page 58)*

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## Dispatches From Camp Baylor . . .

*(Continued from page 57)*

optional, as you don't need it if you are using Federal primers. It also has a hammer stop, trigger and extended pawl. This produces the smoothest most solid action and short stroke available today." It comes with either a Super-Blackhawk profile hammer or a Colt profile. A new model Vaquero is very complex inside because it has a transfer bar and a hammer lock system, necessary for sales in the silly states. The Game Changer kits do away with both. The resulting mechanism is considerably simpler. It's also more efficient since the hammer strikes the firing pin directly. It also gives the installing gunsmith a choice of three mainsprings, marked "Federal," "Winchester," or "CCI." Federal primers need the least force to fire. Winchester is next. CCI primers are very hard. The trigger is crisp, and reset is short. Mine have 30-ounce trigger pulls. Like a Colt, only five rounds should be loaded at a time.

Colt's average installation time is 45 minutes for a pair. But Colt has done a lot of them. He averages 40 installations per match at END of TRAIL or Winter Range. I will note that since he can sell all he can get, even famous gun writers have to pay retail. I hate it when that happens.

I talked with Shotgun Boogie in late September. He is trying to get the U.S. permits to open a business and work in the U.S. He plans "to teach some gunsmiths like Jim Bowie and Slick McClade how to install them right." He mentioned one problem. Because of the production tolerances in Rugers, for example, he has five different lengths of pawls to fit. He emphasizes that the gunsmiths must always have enough of the five different pawls. There have been shortages in the past, but this was complicated by the fact that his gunsmiths would only order the kits customers had ordered. "That makes



*After the Montado/Super Blackhawk hammer was approved for all main match revolvers, Taylors & Co. came out with the Runnin' Iron, essentially a Smoke Wagon with a Montado hammer and available in stainless steel.*

the planning a little bit difficult for me." Currently he has 400 kits in stock and plans to bring them with him. He adds he will be installing them himself as well.

### Hammers

Hammers, too, have a history in SASS. Long before SASS gunsmiths were changing the angle of the hammer spur to suit the customer. Both Colt and Ruger had produced hammers of different profiles for the same frame. Eventually switching them out became less restricted in SASS. A race among manufacturers and distributors to get more hammer variants to market created a spike in sales of both new guns and parts for old guns. Taylors put slightly lowered hammers on their Smoke Wagon a few years back. They were matching the contours of late 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Colt hammers. When Ruger brought out the new Vaquero, its hammer matched 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Colts, but that was a higher profile than the old Vaquero. Complaints about the hammer being too tall poured in. Go figure. Gunsmiths began installing old Vaquero hammers. Then Ruger came out with the Montado for mounted shooters, designed for duelist shooting with a hammer the shape of the Super Blackhawk, lower than Vaqueros, with a wide spur with checkering (Montado) or grooves (Super Blackhawk). The Territorial Governors approved it in 2008. Collaboration between SASS and Ruger resulted in the SASS Vaquero, with the Montado hammer and SASS emblems in the grips.



*Bisley hammers for Ruger Old Armies by David Clements.*



*This ROA hammer with Super Blackhawk spur over a stock Vaquero hammer shows how much lower is the Super Blackhawk spur.*

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*(Continued on next page)*

## Dispatches From Camp Baylor . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*



*Vaquero by Jimmy Spurs of Cowboy Gunworks converted to Bisley grip frame and hammer with light, smooth action job and light trigger, transfer bar removed and half-cock notch. Bottom gun is on half-cock.*

These sold (and still sell) explosively and started a mass gunsmith cottage industry putting Super Blackhawk hammers in regular Vaqueros and similarly shaped hammers on Uberti and Pietta guns. Now you can get guns with lowered hammers from all of the long-time SASS suppliers (alphabetical order), Cimarron, EMF, and Taylors. Gunsmith-tuned guns are available from all three. Heating and reshaping hammers is a popular gunsmith alternative due to parts shortages. Super Blackhawk hammers still sell out.

### Two Hand Vs. Duelist

Note that if you shoot using two hands, cocking with your weak thumb, the lowered hammers might not be desirable. If your gun isn't short stroked, the spur is likely to hit the web of your strong hand in cocking. The Game Changer hammers are available in the original shape, or the Super Blackhawk shape.

### Ruger Old Armies

All of this short stroking and the like didn't help Ruger Old Army shooters. They're "modern" percussion pistols that Ruger modified to meet SASS fixed sight (in black powder categories) rules. Wes Flowers could short stroke them, but stiffer springs were needed to fire percussion caps. That's why Ruger Old Armies come with '58 Chevrolet ¾ ton pickup overload springs. The advent of SliX-Shot nipples allowed a tuner to put in lighter springs, but the hammers were still way up there. Gunsmiths worked their magic and lowered the hammers to Super Blackhawk cur-

vatures, but making those into Super Blackhawk spurs was harder. Still, more than one gunsmith does it. Slick McClade took my hammers and the "donor" hammers taken off my Vaqueros when the Game Changers were installed. He gave them to his partner, Gunsmith Frank (Frank Casella), of F and D Guns, (636-441-5897 <http://fdgunsmithing.com>), and he performed a Vulcan Hammer Meld, and the ROA hammers came back with Super Blackhawk spurs. This was easier said than done, but the results were beautiful and functional. My arthritic thumb can last through several more stages with these hammers.

There are even a few Bisley Ruger Old Armies! Bad Hand has some that were done by Alan Harton ([aharton@hotmail.com](mailto:aharton@hotmail.com)). David Clements (<http://www.clementscustomguns.com/home.html>, [bigbore51@yahoo.com](mailto:bigbore51@yahoo.com)) did a run of CNC Bisley ROA hammers but discontinued from lack of interest (or lack of publicity. Maybe if a large number of readers contact him...)

This wasn't meant to be a complete catalogue of six-gun modifications available or of SASS gunsmiths. I just mentioned some I'm familiar with. If you're a SASS gunsmith who thinks his work should have been here, contact me. Hopefully I've shown you "the state of the art," and the fact tuning them for a stated purpose isn't new. It also isn't illegal, immoral, or fattening. 🤠

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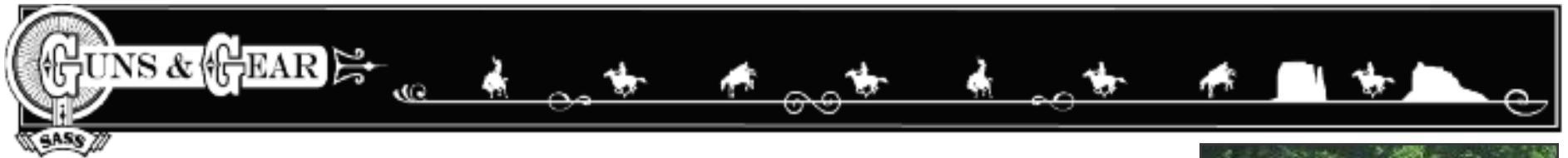


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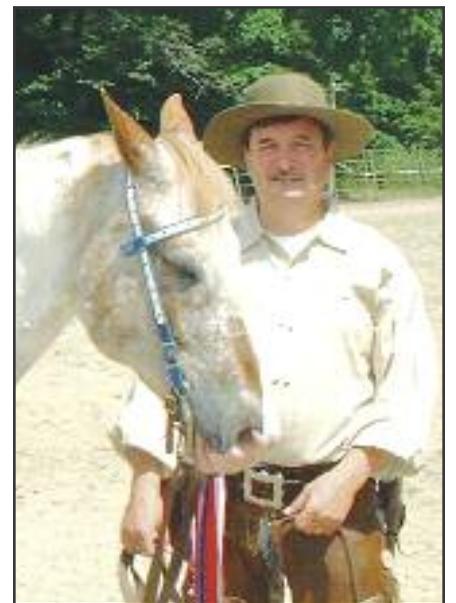
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# THE CAPGUN KID RIDES

## Get a Grip... One Piece, That is...

By *The Capgun Kid*, SASS #31398



*The Capgun Kid*, SASS #31398

I was at a monthly match in Ohio (whilst we lived in Pittsburgh N@) when three shooters each took the time to compliment me on the grips I had on my Ubertis. Boy, did I get a big head. Shot a clean match, too. The grips were striped maple and every year somebody notices those grips. Eighteenth century gunmakers prized Curly and Striped Maple for the quality of iridescence that it can have, even in work-a-day flintlocks that were not otherwise ornate. In fact, that Eighteenth Century Heritage was what prompted me to stock my Ubertis with that wood in the first place.



*My Uberti on the right and the new gun finished on the left.*

Guns take on a new personality when you change the grips, and several times that act of crafting and applying grips to a sixgun dulled the urge to go out and buy another one I could not necessarily afford. Helps the marriage once in a while and keeps feeding the leash that lets a body go to regionals. Besides...I like a gun to fit my hand and enjoy tinkering and personalizing my stuff. This How-To, including making mistakes, is written for the guy with little more than a standard set of tools and a willingness to do something crafty over the winter when a body can't shoot Cowboy matches.



*Using either contact or rubber cement, glue the left grip onto the frame.*

We'll start with a small board of striped maple, about a half-inch thick, but not more than three-quarters, otherwise it is too difficult to work. Get thee

to E-Bay. I like to run some thinned yellow dye to the surface that represents the inside of a grip to see how the striping will run. I tend to run it straight up and down but angled and slanted from front top to heel rear makes for an attractive, balanced look. Use that idea to determine how you place your templates on the board.

Most guys have a Dremel tool, and getting a bunch of sandpaper in several grades, some wood glue, rubber cement, a couple of clamps and either a band or coping saw should not be hard to do. You can almost do this project at the kitchen table, but a dust gathering shopvac is going to be essential. Because of my periodic ineptitude, I tried to write this piece with an eye toward preventing past mistakes I've made. The only real edge I have over most of you crazy enough to read this piece is my shoe-making rollers and sanders.

There's gotta be a video somewhere on YouTube where grip making is demonstrated, and it will doubtless advocate a certain dimension or some rule of thumb. I always deferred to the "feel" of my guns. For example, having a small hand, I never felt comfortable with Rugers or Gunfighter grips because they looked too squared off and extend a little too far from the rear of the frame. I'm little, they're big. I liked the old Cattleman Ubertis because their early models took the brass trigger guard and backstrap off the Navy Thirty-Six Percussion sixguns, which were inherently smaller. The grip that's right for me does not have a lot of bulk at the butt and the flare from behind the trigger guard down to the butt is not extreme. I like rounded corners at the butt and a rounded surface all the way from the top to the bottom. I am not a speed

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*The spacer positioned on the left grip.*

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*(Continued on next page)*



**The Capgun Kid Rides •  
(Get a Grip . . . One Piece, That is . . .)**

*(Continued from previous page)*



*An idea of what the grip and spacer templates will look like.*

shooter, but like to know that I can outshoot anybody in a real gunfight and go for the clean match. Besides, I like movies and read my John Wesley Hardins, Wyatt Earps and Bat Mastersons.

Before you do anything, wrap your hands around the grips that are on that gun you

want to gussy up and imagine where you would like to be. Take the backstrap off your gun, remove the grips and then put the strap back on. Now take some cardboard or poster board and jam the ninety-degree corner up underneath the hammer on the gun. Hold it tight on the grip frame and trace the outside of the entire backstrap and triggerguard. Once drawn out, add not more than an eighth of an inch to that outline, except where it fits into the corner. This is your template.



*I like to run some thinned yellow dye to the surface that represents the inside of a grip to see how the striping will run.*

To make the spacer that holds the two grips together, start with a sharp pencil that you have sanded flat on one side of the point. You want a fine point here and the flat edge allows you to get real close to the metal on the wood itself. If you don't do that, you'll never get a close fit. Trust me.

Now stick the cutout back onto the gun and trace a line on the INSIDE of the back strap from about a third of the distance

*(Continued on page 62)*

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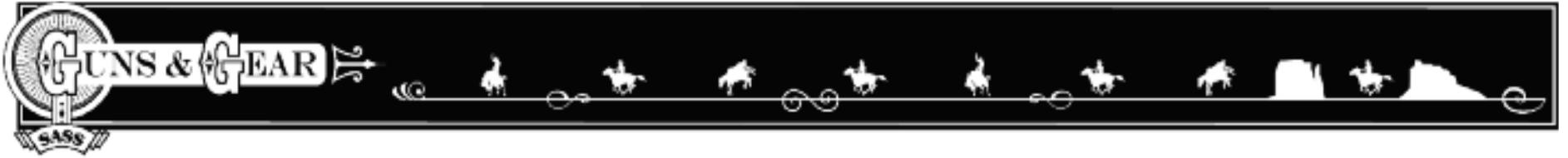
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## The Capgun Kid Rides • (Get a Grip . . . One Piece, That is . . .)

*(Continued from page 61)*



*Try not to get impatient, instead letting it sit clamped for the whole night. Both grips are clamped tight.*

from the top, down to the inside curve of the butt about a third to halfway toward the mainspring screw. This is going to be the spacer between the grips once you cut it out. The spacer should be no less than three-eighths of an inch from the mainspring. By putting it on the grip template, you can see where it will sit. You might want to cut it out of the grip template. That way you can trace it onto the insides of both grips. Check out the pictures to see a spacer as I use it.

You can trace...right? And you know you need one spacer and two handles from the wood...right? If your piece of wood has only one finished side you know to flip the template over before tracing the second grip...right? Go for it. Once you cut out the patterns, you have to make sure that the spacer is the exact width of the backstrap. The best way to do this is to lay a piece of sandpaper on a flat surface and keep working the spacer until you get it the exact width. Patience is a virtue. This is a touchy-feely thing because the tolerances of factory gun parts may vary. That's why they almost always attach and machine fit the grips at the factory before the gun is finished.

Using rubber cement, glue the left grip blank onto the frame. Don't worry about the glue. It won't permanently stick to the metal or the wood once they are pried apart. Make sure the fit is as tight as you can get it up by the base of the hammer, and evenly fitting tight against the metal.

Now take some wood glue (Epoxy if you are working with those fake ivory grips sold commercially) and glue the spacer to the inside of the wood grip. Jam it against the back and bot-

tom of the backstrap tight, pilgrim, and make sure you clamp it tightly. The fact that you have left the grips with flat surfaces will help secure them. Don't worry if there is a little play when you are ready to unclamp the next morning. I'll show you how to shim later. I prefer to let wood glue set for a whole night regardless of what the directions say. I am into Borden's Cow instead of somebody else's Gorilla, but that's your call.

Up by the hammer base, trace the top of the back strap onto the top surface of the grip overhang with your sharpened pencil. Now trace the outside edges of the frame onto the inside surface of the grip. Once the grip is off the gun, start shaping the edges trying to stay just outside of the line.

Dremels are OK on a medium speed; hobby belt sanders work too, but be careful to not begin rounding the middle of the grip surface. As stated, clamps like flat surfaces. You will almost certainly want to have some sort of system to gather the flying dust, and most of my sanding is done against the irritating whine of my trusty Shopvac. I clamp the hose end to the bench and dremel sand my piece right there against the mouth of the hose, or I rig it to my rollers to catch as much dust as possible when it is ground off the wood.

Now comes your first critical step that you can't undo. Put the first grip with the spacer back onto the frame and load up the spacer and corresponding surface on the inside of the other grip with your glue. When you drew the lines for the spacer on the second grip you also marked off where you can apply the wood glue. Good idea, huh? I like to secure the top corner against the metal before positioning and clamping for the overnight set. That's clamped for the whole night. Look the whole assembly over at least three times, and be prepared to

*(Continued on next page)*



*Shape the grips while mounted, but be prepared to take them off if you don't feel comfortable after taping and wrapping the gun.*



## The Capgun Kid Rides • (Get a Grip . . . One Piece, That is . . .)

*(Continued from previous page)*

take it apart and start over if you don't think it's right.

Nighty-night, buckaroo.

Now that your pleasant dreams are over, take your time because you might be a little tee-ed off when you take off the clamps and the grips rattle a bit. If they don't shift at all, then move on to the next step. If they do, figure out what makes them rattle or shift:

- The grips shift *either* up and down or front to back.
- The grips shift both up and down *and* front to back.
- The spacer is too wide for the frame

Could be the glue allowed for spacer slippage before being clamped tight and you didn't catch it, or you got impatient and did not narrow the spacer enough. One-piece grips fit because the pressure of the lower back end of the grip counters the snug, top fit against the frame and top of the backstrap under the hammer.

If they are really loose you might have to take them apart and rework the spacer. Impossible...right? Since wood glue and that Gorilla stuff grab forever? So, make sure your spacer is right before you start cobbling everything together. The best material for shims is the clear plastic used in the old overhead projectors. It'll glue up against the back or bottom of the spacer with rubber cement and can be cut with ordinary scissors. If you need more than two layers, then you did it wrong and you gotta start all over.

Now, from here on, it is purely subjective. You can take the grips off and put them on over and over again as you work them, but my shoemaker training taught me enough skills to leave the gun assembled. I have goofed this phase enough to have to re-blue because I leave the blanks right on the gun, but I judge the exact fit I can get as worth it. For your first time, though, take the grips off and fit them as often as you need.

SHAPING is done with rough paper, the Dremel or files. FINISHING is done with progressively finer grits of sandpaper...by hand. When sanding and shaping the wood, I have found the hard way that the only way to avoid deep scratches is to set the Dremel on a lower speed, make even strokes from the top of the grips to the butts, and to leave a little meat for finer paper once you are satisfied with the general shaping. I like to take meat out from behind the triggerguard where my middle finger wraps around the inside of the grips and take a lot of wood off where my palm and lower end of my hand holds the grips. There is not a lot of taper or flare on my grips and the butts are rounded and narrow. You need a light touch and smooth strokes for the entire length of the grips when fin-



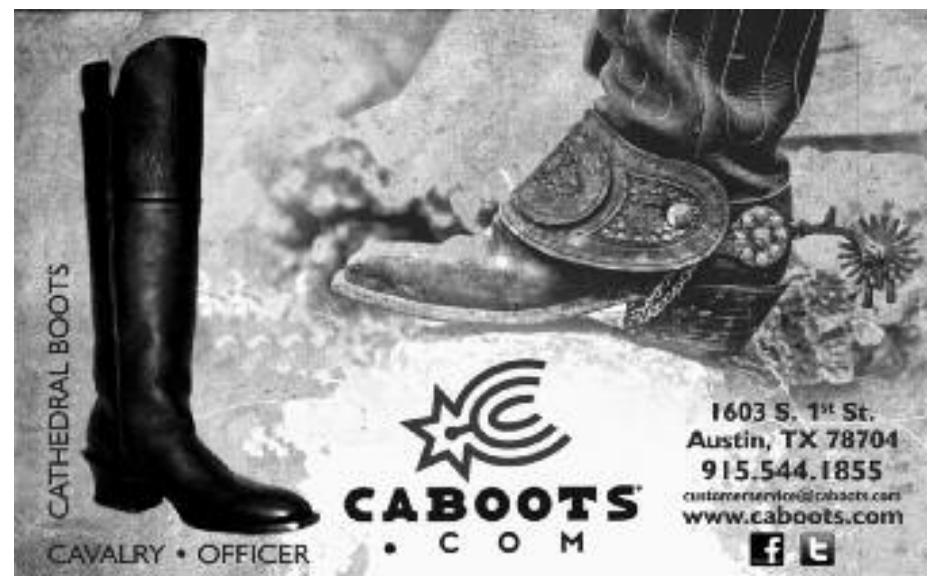
*My shoemakers rollers and sanders. If inclined, hook a rig up to a 1500 or 1700 rpm forced air furnace motor.*

ishing, and you need to work your way through three or four grits of sandpaper. Steel wool is not a good idea, and I don't know of any flintlock rifle makers that use it.

I guess you can use a vice if you have one, but the aforementioned shoemaking precluded that for me. When you think you are finished smoothing, take a damp sponge that you wrung out and wipe both sides of the grips with it. When the grain rises and roughs up the wood, use the finest grits to work it back down to smooth. Then dampen them again, and repeat this until your light sanding (or WHISKERING as most rifle makers call it) yields no rough burrs of wood. Smooth, even strokes in one direction every time, Pilgrim. More patience. Lots more patience and you will notice that the striping becomes pronounced more and more as the wood gets smoother and smoother.

Whatever floats your boat with staining, but the best advice here is to use oil basing, stay away from polys, and don't rub too hard. A light even coat of color, then a couple of oil, will bring out a depth effect with Striped Maple that makes the difference between an amateur and a Pro. Use your fingers for rubbing the oil in and wash your hands afterward. That factor of hand rubbing commands some very high prices in the flintlock rifle field, and is almost guaranteed to start a conversation at a loading table.

Don't Shoot Your Eye Out, Kid 🐎





Big Dave, SASS #55632



# Herros von Borcke

## CONFEDERATE JUNKER

By Big Dave, SASS #55632

Major Johann August Heinrich Herros von Borcke was unusual even among the eccentric officers of the Army of Northern Virginia. One of the most obvious reasons was because of his physique. Von Borcke was a huge man; about six feet, four inches tall and between two hundred fifty and three hundred pounds. Another quality that distinguished him was his accent—definitely not the drawl of a southern aristocrat. He was a *Junker*: a member of the Prussian landed nobility.

When the American Civil War broke out in 1861, von Borcke was a second lieutenant serving in the Brandenburg Dragoons. He decided to resign his commission, travel to the Confederacy, and offer his services. He took a ship to Bermuda, obtained passage aboard a blockade runner and arrived in Charleston in May, 1862. He then managed to get a commission as a captain and was assigned to J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry as an adjutant. This was quite an accomplishment since von Borcke could barely speak English at the time.

Stuart and von Borcke quickly became friends. The two men had a lot in common. They both were professional military, upper class and recklessly brave. Both were excellent horsemen. Because of his lively personality, von Borcke was also a favorite among the other members of Stuart's staff. He enjoyed hunting, social occasions, brandy, and adventure. During his time as a member of Stuart's staff, he would get plenty of opportunities to indulge in all of these things.

"Von," as he became known, was present during the Seven Days' Battles and Stuart's famous ride around McClellan's army in 1862. Stuart singled him out for praise after the event in his dispatches to Robert E. Lee—the Confederate Army's equivalent of earning a medal. Not long afterwards, Captain von Borcke was promoted to the rank of major. He also served during the Northern Virginia Campaign leading up to the Second Battle of Manassas, and the Maryland Campaign, which culminated at the Battle of Antietam. He missed out on the invasion of Pennsylvania due to a serious wound. Perhaps he consoled himself that Gettysburg was a battle to be avoided; at least from a Confederate's standpoint.

After the war, von Borcke wrote an account of his time during the Civil War. His "Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence" are recommended reading for any Civil War



Von Borcke was also known as the "Giant in Gray." He carried an enormous sword which became famous.

buff. Though they are biased, to say the least, von Borcke's recollections are highly entertaining.

One of von Borcke's more interesting observations concerns the obsolescence of bladed weapons. He recounted a story about a squadron of Federal lancers who looked rather

*(Continued on next page)*



## Heros von Borcke • (Confederate Junker)

*(Continued from previous page)*

imposing from a distance. Once they were engaged, however; they broke ranks and rode off. Most of their lances were flung to the ground so they could get away faster. Von Borcke also noted that bayonets were no longer very useful. "As far as my experience goes," he wrote, "bayonet fights rarely occur, and exist only in the imagination."

Even though he considered lances and bayonets to be obsolete, von Borcke was very fond of his own sword, which he brought with him from Prussia. It was a remarkable weapon, "of tremendous size and excellent temper." He used it to chop up a large rattlesnake that had crawled over him during a bivouac. Later he used it to nearly decapitate a Union cavalryman during the Battle of Brandy Station. Von Borcke wrote of the event: "It is to me one of the most exciting recollections of the war."

As the war progressed, it was obvious even to von Borcke that the South was losing. It took him a while to reach that conclusion; he believed Antietam was a Confederate victory. Most historians would disagree.

On June 19, 1863, von Borcke's luck ran out at the Battle of Middleburg in Virginia. He had just remarked to Stuart that they were perhaps a bit too close to Federal sharpshooters. Suddenly he felt "a tremendous blow to the neck" and toppled from his horse. A bullet had entered von Borcke's neck and lodged itself in his right lung.

Though he was told the wound was mortal, von Borcke thwarted the doctor's prognosis. His convalescence was long and painful; he lost about 90 pounds. By May 1864, he had

recovered enough to return to limited duty.

Unfortunately this meant that he would be nearby when Stuart was himself wounded at the Battle of Yellow Tavern. Stuart was not so fortunate as his friend. Stuart had been shot in the abdomen and died a day later in considerable pain. Von Borcke was at Stuart's bedside at the end.

In December, 1864, von Borcke received another promotion; this time to lieutenant colonel. Along with the promotion, he was awarded the official thanks of the Confederate Congress. He was later sent to England on a diplomatic mission. When the war ended, he was still overseas. In his memoirs he commented that the mission spared him the sight of the Confederacy's final defeat. For that he was especially thankful.

Von Borcke returned to Prussia in 1865 and resumed his service in the Prussian Army. Ironically, Prussia was at this time fighting a series of wars that would ultimately unite the German states into a single empire. He was member of Prince Friedrich Karl's staff during the Austro-Prussian War in 1866. He received a decoration, the Order of the Red Eagle, for bravery at the Battle of Koniggratz.

The following year von Borcke retired from the military.

*(Continued on page 66)*

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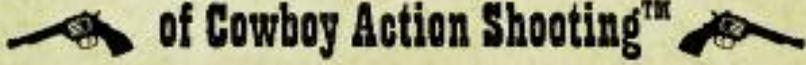
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## Heros von Borcke • (Confederate Junker)

*(Continued from page 65)*

His health had never fully recovered from his wounding at the Battle of Middleburg. He bought an estate in Western Prussia (now part of Poland), married, and fathered three children. He flew the “Stars and Bars” from his manor house.

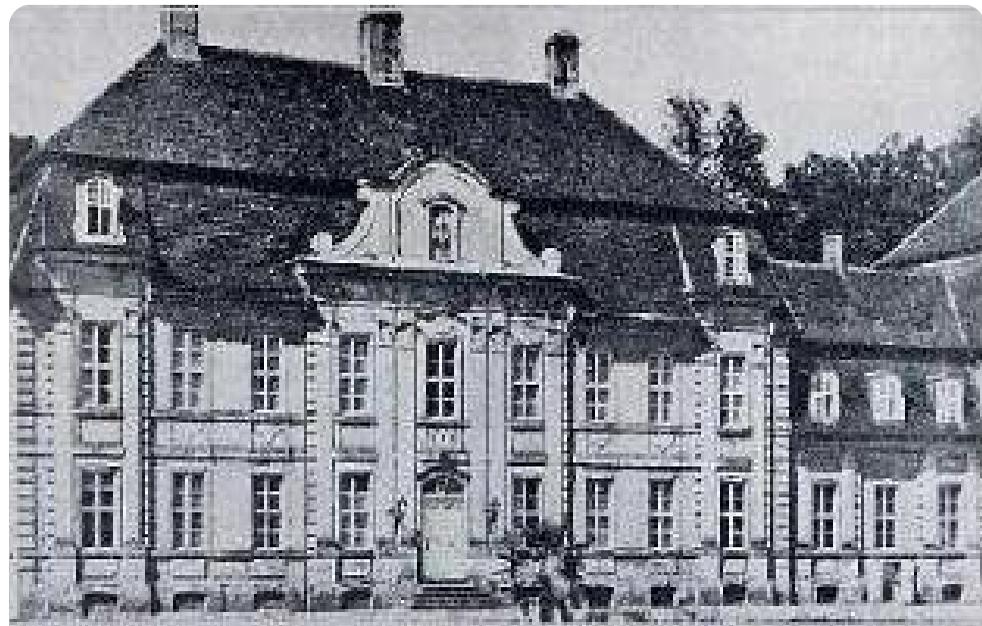
Von Borcke died in 1895 at the age of 59. It was probably the result of the old wound from the American Civil War.

The obvious question is: “Why was a Prussian fighting for the Confederacy?” Prussia, a distant country in Eastern Europe, had no dog in that particular fight. Von Borcke wasn’t expecting remittance; he’d brought a sizable quantity of gold to America that he (unwisely) converted to Confederate dollars. Apparently he could afford the loss.

His memoirs don’t really explain his decision, but one can make some educated guesses. As a Prussian aristocrat, he probably had a natural affinity for the Antebellum South’s institutions. Back in Prussia, von Borcke enjoyed a lifestyle similar to that of a southern planter. Moreover, he seemed to think that slavery was part of some kind of “natural order.” A person does not need to read very far into his memoirs to come to that conclusion. Perhaps he envisioned a plantation in his future if the Confederacy won.

Serfdom, a “milder” form of slavery, had been abolished in the early nineteenth century in Prussia. This occurred only a couple of generations before von Borcke was born. He might have yearned for the lifestyle of his ancestors. Since he could not have peasants toiling at his European estate, perhaps he would have slaves who toiled at his plantation.

Clearly, Von Borcke loved adventure. He also liked to ride horses and he liked to hunt. He liked weapons and was proficient with them. It was considered his duty that he would fol-



*Von Borcke would no doubt be appalled if he knew his estate is now part of Poland instead of Western Prussia.*

low some kind of military career. He enjoyed genteel company and parties. Slavery did not trouble him in the least. In other words, he would have made a perfect upper class Virginian if he had been born there. He was hardly the only member of the European aristocracy who had Southern sympathies. Heros von Borcke only took those sympathies to a higher level by actually fighting (and probably dying) for the South.

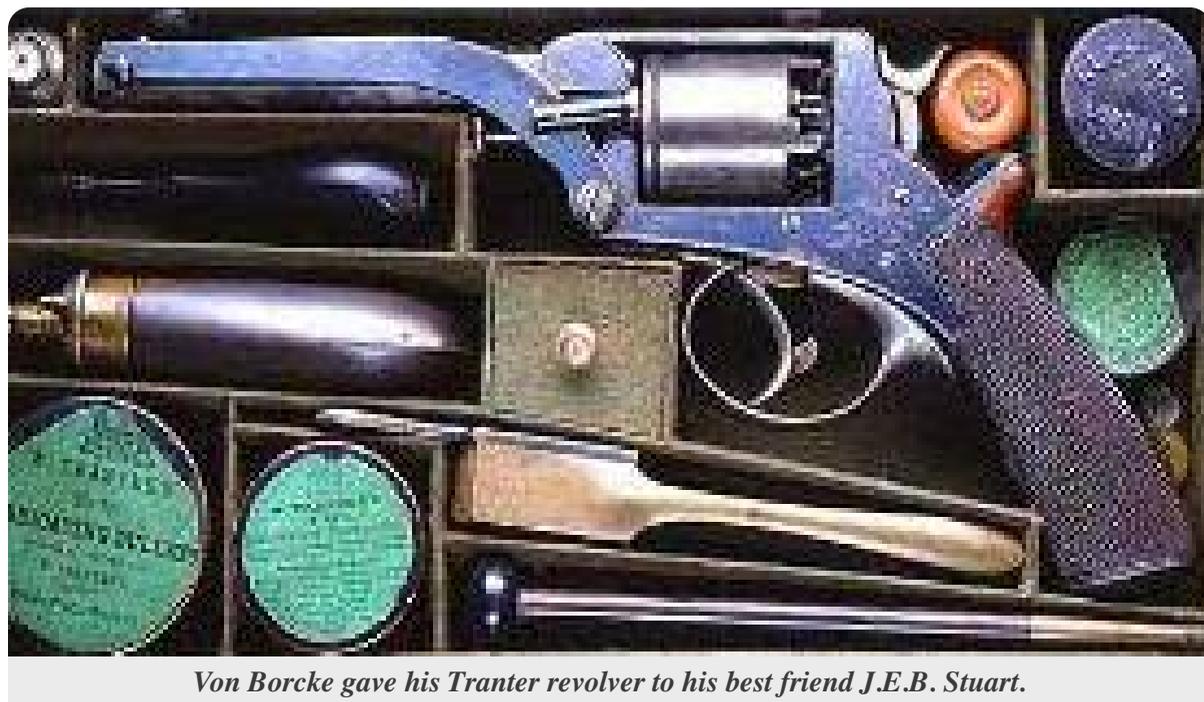
Von Borcke’s concepts of liberty and independence were somewhat contradictory. He wanted the Confederacy to be free of the Union, largely because he was content with the South’s “peculiar institution.” When the Civil War was over, he personally participated in one of the wars that ultimately unified the German states. Prussia’s role, in effect, was similar to that of the American federal government that had crushed the Confederacy. Prussia’s King Wilhelm was crowned Wilhelm I of the German Empire in Paris in 1871. Otto von Bismarck, another Prussian, was The Empire’s chancellor. Berlin was the German counterpart to Washington, DC. My guess is that all of this did not trouble von Borcke in the least.

Prussian officers were a strange breed anyway. So were the officers of the Confederacy. Take a look at Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, Richard (Birdy) Ewell, or A.P. Hill—all of them were kind of weird; especially Jackson. Heros von Borcke could fit in with either group.

During a reprieve in the fighting, von Borcke participated in a comic skit called, “The Pennsylvania Farmer and his Wife.” Von Borcke dressed in women’s clothing and appeared as the wife. The sight was so ridiculous that everyone present dissolved in laughter. To von Borcke’s dismay, he was asked to play the role over and over. General Stuart said that he would never forget the skit as long as he lived. Unfortunately, by that time Stuart didn’t have very long to live.

Though Heros von Borcke was eccentric and riddled with contradictions, he was

*(Continued on next page)*



*Von Borcke gave his Tranter revolver to his best friend J.E.B. Stuart.*

**Heros von Borcke • (Confederate Junker)**

*(Continued from previous page)*

downright normal if you compare him to Dietrich von Hulsen-Haessler, of the next generation of Prussian (now German) military leaders. His manner of death was so strange that it belongs in some kind of dark comedy.

General von Hulsen-Haessler was chief of Kaiser Wilhelm II's military cabinet in the early twentieth century. In 1908, in honor of the Kaiser's birthday and in the Kaiser's presence, he danced "Swan Lake" as a ballerina; complete with tutu. In the middle of the performance, von Hulsen-Haessler had a heart attack and died. Pictures of von Hulsen-Haessler in uniform (with the distinctive spiked helmet) show a large, heavy man with a thick mustache. Though he may have possessed some form of elephantine agility, the mental image of him dancing in a tutu is particularly repugnant. His performance, unlike von Borcke's, was not intended as a joke. Apparently von Hulsen-Haessler's hobby was known and accepted. There is no record of the Kaiser's comments about the incident or of what he thought of the performance in the first place. The Kaiser did insist that his fallen general was to be buried in proper attire.

Put in this perspective, Heros von Borcke's decision to leave his homeland and fight for the Confederacy seems to have been a rather mild form of eccentricity.

In 2008, Heros von Borcke received a posthumous honor from the Sons of Confederate Veterans. His gravestone, which had been destroyed (along with his manor house) by Soviet troops after WWII, was replaced with a Confederate Veteran's gravestone at the site of his grave in Poland. It is a fitting tribute to a soldier from far away who gave so much for the Confederacy.

\*\*\*\*\*

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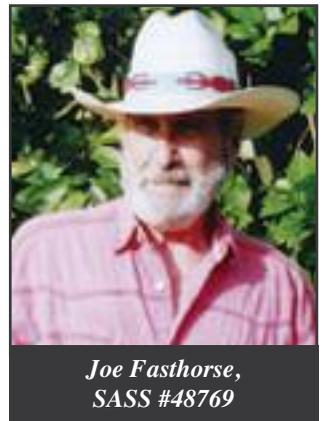
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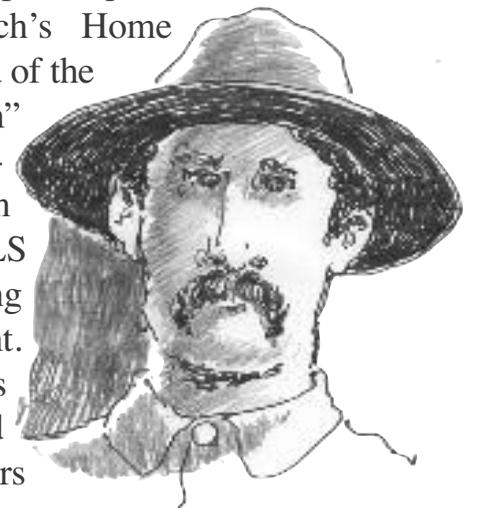
**The Catfish Kid**



*Joe Fasthorse, SASS #48769*

The gunfight at Tascosa, Texas is little known today, but at the time it was more famous than the Gunfight at the OK Corral in Tombstone, Arizona. In the spring of 1884, Pat Garrett was hired by the big ranchers to organize a company of Texas Rangers to put a stop to cattle rustling in the Texas Panhandle. Garrett set up headquarters at the LS Ranch.

By 1885 Pat's "LS Ranch's Home Rangers" had cleared the area of the rustlers known as "The System" and the Rangers were disbanded. Some of Garrett's men continued to work for the LS Ranch and their hard drinking ways aroused local resentment. Ex-LS Ranger Ed King was especially quarrelsome and quick to draw his gun. Tempers flared when Sally Emory dumped her boyfriend Lem Woodruff, ex-System man and Jenkins Saloon bartender, and took up with Ed King. On a mild March day in 1886, Ed King and three ex-LS Rangers, Frank Valley, John Lang and Fred Chilton, rode into the town of Tascosa, Texas to attend a local dance. After the dance they headed for the Equity Bar. Someone in the cantina hailed King as they passed Jenkins Saloon. As King stepped onto the porch, Lem Woodruff rushed out and shot King in the face. King died immediately. The three remaining LS ranch hands rushed around back of the Jenkins Saloon just as Woodruff, Louis Bousman, Charley & Tom Emory, Jesse Sheets and the Catfish Kid were exiting from the back door. Six-guns flashed. Woodruff and Charley Emory went down first. Frank Valley was shot in the head. Chilton shot Jesse Sheets and he fell dead. Chilton was shot in the chest. Dying, he handed his gun to Lang. Lang ran from the fight and met Sheriff Jim East and his deputy. The men went back to the Jenkins Saloon. The Catfish Kid ran from the scene unhurt. The fight left John Lang without a scratch. His three friends and Jesse Sheets lay dead or dying. Lem Woodruff, Charley Emory and the Catfish Kid survived to fight another day. [1](#)



*The Catfish Kid*



Col. Richard Dodge,  
SASS #1750



# Black Cowboys of the Old West

## DANIEL WEBSTER WALLACE:

### “80 John”

By Col. Richard Dodge, SASS 1750 Life



*Of the thousands of black men, mostly freed slaves fleeing west from the Old South, many became expert at the cowboy craft, mastering the tools and skills that earned tolerance and respect from employers and peers alike. Many gained lasting fame in the rodeos—and still do. A few, very few, became respected owners of their own spreads and practiced management skills that brought a measure of wealth. Daniel Webster Wallace, known as “80 John” was perhaps the most successful.*

In July of 1860, three months before his birth, Daniel Webster Wallace’s slave mother, Mary, was sold to Mary O’Daniel in Texas for \$1,000. A pretty, light-skinned woman originally from Virginia, Mary was quickly placed in the O’Daniel household slave staff. Webster, as he was called, was born, raised and cared for in the big plantation house. Mary wet-nursed the O’Daniels’ son, born just a few months after Webster and the two became close friends. It wasn’t unusual for master and slave to become close friends in spite of the relationship.

When Webster turned five years old, his life suddenly changed. Instead of being burdened with the chores of a young slave boy, he was suddenly free when the Civil War ended. The O’Daniels decided to move further north to a much larger farm near Flatonia in Fayette County and Mary decided to go with them because of her close friendship with Mary O’Daniel.

The O’Daniels presented Mary with the gift of three acres for her own homestead. Young Webster spent the next ten years working that farm, longing to be gone from dull farm life. He could see cowboys riding past on their cow ponies. The first sight of a black cowboy was the beginning of his dream.

One day he overheard Mr. O’Daniel mention that the trail herd would begin tomorrow. It was his last day on the farm. No

sleep came to him that night and at 3:30 in the morning he lifted his hat and coat and, heart pounding, quietly left the house, his sleeping mother, and two brothers, and ran away to become a cowboy.

Arriving at the herd panting and out of breath, he confronted the trail boss, Mr. Carr, pleading to be taken along as a hand. Recalling his own dream to be a cattleman, Carr was touched by the earnest young man and hired him on the spot. Young Webster’s career was underway.

Carr placed Webster with him on point and during the hundred-mile drive undertook to teach him about being a cowboy. Webster absorbed the lessons like a sponge, learning how to identify good stock, how to read brands, treat injuries on man and beast alike, rope and tie a wild cow, calm the herd, even estimate the size of a milling herd of longhorns with a casual glance. He learned to anticipate the behavior of cow, horse—and men. At the end of the drive he was a seasoned, savvy cowboy; his pay came to just \$15 and he was cut loose.

As many cowboys did, Webster drifted from ranch to ranch, working as wrangler, line rider, horse trainer, whatever work came his way. He loved it and continued to hone his cowboy skills to become a top hand. He had a knack of gaining the favor of his employers with his dedication to hard work, his honesty and cheerfulness, always doing his best with whatever task he was given.

His talents brought him to the NUNN outfit at the headwaters of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River where John Nunn took a

*(Continued on next page)*



## Black Cowboys of the Old West: (Daniel Webster “80 John” Wallace) . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

fatherly interest in the lad. Here he worked for sixteen months, helping drive a herd of 8,000 head some seventy-five miles to Brown County, Texas. He learned about Indians and how to fight them. Nunn, a devout Christian, tutored Webster about the realities of being a cattleman. The young man listened to and learned the lessons that were to serve him well in the future.

Two years after leaving home, a letter from Mary O’Daniel reached him of his mother’s serious illness. Her death before he could reach her saddened him for the rest of his life—he had never said “good bye” to her. He gratefully accepted Mrs. O’Daniel’s kind offer to care for his orphaned siblings and departed for west Texas to join up with the Clay Mann outfit. Mann was one of Texas’ most noted cattle barons, with land holdings in numerous counties in both Texas and New Mexico, as well as near Chihuahua, Mexico.

Webster remained with Mann for fourteen years and became his employer’s right-hand man, often entrusted with thousands of dollars in cash and given responsibility to manage the ranch in Mann’s absence. Many times, Webster risked his own life in his employer’s interest and was so identified with Mann’s ranch that he was called “80 John” after the ranch’s brand, a huge “80” drawn on the side of the cow from backbone to belly. His uncanny ability to accurately estimate the size of a herd won a bet for Mann when he told Mann that a herd was just under five thousand head; a count revealed 4,975.

Webster was a shrewd, intelligent, and far-sighted man. While working for Mann, he drew only a small part of his pay to live on and upon leaving, he was paid off in steers, enough to start his own herd, and was allowed to graze them on Mann’s ranch. He identified his stock with a huge “WALLACE” scrawled on the cow’s side, later changed to a D Triangle.

In 1885, he purchased two sections of land near Loraine, Texas and, farsighted as he was, fenced and maintained the land. He knew the open range and long cattle drives were past and he knew he needed to learn to read and write. So he went to school, not too proud to enroll in second grade, and quickly learned his letters and numbers.

A tall, handsome man, Webster easily won the hand of a pretty young school teacher, Laura Dee Owen. They moved to Mann’s ranch and when Webster’s friend and mentor died in 1898, Webster managed the ranch. His fourteen years with Mann was a rare tenure for a cowboy and he had slowly expanded his own land holdings. Eventually, his Silver Creek Ranch approached 11,000 acres.

Among Webster’s talents was his uncanny ability to “witch” water, which even he could not explain, avoiding the expense of drilling unproductive wells and thus providing

water for his stock. Anticipating changes in stock prices, knowing when to sell and buy, improving his stock, growing his own feed, even moving his stock to better grazing lands during droughts, skills and knowledge gained from his mentors, soon led to Webster being one of Texas’ most successful ranchers at a time when a black rancher was unheard of.

Webster was generous with his wealth, sending his own and several other children to school. He donated land and money for churches and schools, both black and white. Ranchers from all over Texas conferred with him, seeking his advice in both ranching and financial matters. He survived the Great Depression almost unscathed and became wealthy during World War II. A member of the Texas and Southwest Cattle Growers Association for thirty years, he was popular for his great storytelling of Texas’ bygone days. To his dying day, he claimed to always feel more at home in the saddle than anywhere else.

Wallace died a millionaire with his family about him on March 28, 1939 at the age of seventy-nine, sixty-three years and two weeks after he ran away to become a cowboy. His Silver Creek Ranch in Mitchell County, Texas is a family-held operation to this day. The Mitchell County Historical Society erected a granite monument to his memory.

*Author’s note: There is a possibility that Webster’s mother was a daughter of Massachusetts Senator Daniel Webster, famed orator, Secretary of State and Presidential candidate, which may account for Webster’s given name. A photograph of a Robert Webster, slave and prominent citizen of Atlanta, appears in the October, 2014 issue of the Smithsonian Magazine. This Webster claimed to be an illegitimate son of Webster. He was also blessed with uncommon intelligence and was as wealthy as anyone in Atlanta.. The resemblance between Robert Webster and Daniel Webster Wallace is remarkable.*

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# 2014 Scholarship Recipient

## Apache Wolf, SASS #65272



*Edited & Adapted by Justice Lily Kate, SASS #1000*

**C**larkston, MI. My name is Creed Blankenship, or as I have been called on summer weekends for nine years, Apache Wolf, SASS #65272. I shoot with the Butcher Butte Bunch out of Fenton Lakes Sportsman's Club in Fenton, MI. I have been participating in Cowboy Action Shooting™ for nearly half my life, but I have actually been around the sport for a lot longer. I started watching when my father, Nevada Gambler, SASS #10225, started shooting in 1998. I learned how to shoot when I was six, and by the time I was nine, I was ready to start shooting at real events. I am also an

NRA Life member and have just achieved my Distinguished Expert certification in the Junior Rifle program at Fenton Lakes.

I am very proud of the fact that I was able to finish my Distinguished Expert certification, as I am the first in at least eight years to do so from our club. Counting in the time it took me to complete my Expert Marksman certification, it only took me about three years to complete the entire program—that's including the eight months I was

at college and unable to shoot. I am also proud that I have been the Michigan State champion in Gunfighter for two straight years and that I was 19th overall this past year. At the Michigan State Championship last year, I was also inducted into the Jedi Gunfighters as one of their youngest members.

It was great to be at END of TRAIL 2014 this year with my family. Not only because the shooting was fantastic, but also to be there in person for the Scholarship Presentation. I placed 4th in Gunfighter and 68th overall at END of TRAIL.

I currently attend Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant, MI, studying Special Education, specializing in Cognitive Impairments. The reason I am on this career path is because of my younger brother, Soaring Red Hawk, SASS #93843. He has been shooting for the past three years, but there is something that makes him different from anyone on any range we go to: Red Hawk has autism. This would have made starting him in the sport at the same age I started next to impossible. And so he sat back and watched us shoot

*(Continued on next page)*



*Justice Lily Kate, SASS #1000*

# The Controversy of Gun Control

*By Apache Wolf, SASS #66272*

*NRA Life #181336227*

*Edited & Adapted by Justice Lily Kate, SASS #1000*

**T**hough the issue of gun control has faded somewhat over the past year nationally, there are many battles in the states over various restrictions on our Second Amendment rights, one of the most notable being the conflict in Connecticut over the unconstitutional restriction and registration that has taken effect there due to the Sandy Hook shooting just over a year ago. Although many gun control activists will try to convince the public that banning all guns will eliminate any and all crimes committed with guns and

reduce crime in general, a look at other countries who have banned almost all personal ownership of guns and cities and states in our own country with many restrictions on gun ownership reveal this argument to be untruthful.

There are more than a few countries in the world who have all but completely banned civilian gun ownership. The most prominent example of this is England. England banned nearly all gun ownership in 1997, capitalizing on a school

*(Continued on next page)*

## 2014 Scholarship Recipient (Apache Wolf) . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

for years. We could see that he didn't want to be left out. He used to shoot stages with cap guns before or after we were done shooting. Then he decided he really wanted to shoot and my father decided he was ready. It wasn't an easy undertaking to say the least. My father had to make sure that he could handle the responsibility, because Dad knew there would be more scrutiny aimed toward him than other shooters. But as time went on, we saw that not only was Red Hawk one of the safest people on the range, but nearly everyone was very accepting and encouraging him. It's really great to see him prove that his disability does not define him. He is the most influential person in my life and I couldn't imagine my life without him.

Now that I am going to college, the time I spend with my family is cut to one-third what it used to be. It only gets cut down more after you factor in everything else we individually do. Cowboy Action is one of the few things we still do together as a family. As a matter of fact, I can't think of any other time that all four of us get to go somewhere and just spend a day with each other. Cowboy Action Shooting™ is some of the only real family time we get. Also, after END of TRAIL this year we drove up to go through Monument Valley in Arizona and up through Colorado and South Dakota to see the Badlands. If not for my involvement in CAS, who knows if I

would have ever been able to see these beautiful parts of our country and others I have seen while at a match.

I'd like to thank the kind folks that recommended me for this scholarship: Onyx, SASS #35964, and Faygo Kid, SASS #26408, whom I have known since even before I started shooting; Briscoe Callaghan, SASS #78706, and Colt McCloud, SASS #65003, two of our friendly "neighbors to the North" and always a pleasure to shoot with; and finally my parents, Nevada Gambler and Chiricahua Mama, SASS #40623. They have been with not only me, but also my brother, from the beginning, and they're the reason we are what we are today. My father took a huge risk and time commitment in training my brother, because he believed that everyone should have a chance to do what they love with whom they love. If everyone had the belief and dedication he has, this world would not have many of the problems it does.

I try to get out and shoot when I can, which sadly, is less than it used to be, due to attending college several hours away from home. My first year at college has taught me a lot, but what I was most surprised to learn is that many people I met were quite supportive of gun rights, despite the fact that statistically, most people my age tend to be liberal. Despite what you may think, you're most likely not the only one in the room who believes in what the Second Amendment stands for, so don't be afraid to stand up for it if the issue comes up. And remember, "The Force Will Be With You. Always." 

## The Controversy Of Gun Control . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

shooting in Dunblane to outlaw all handgun ownership except for rare or antique firearms, adding onto an already strict gun control pallet, as all center-fire semi-automatic rifles were banned in 1988, as well as onerous restrictions being placed on shotguns the same year. Gun control proponents will say that the U.S. has more overall crimes than England, however, the U.S. has about six times the population of England, so that is to be expected. A more reliable statistic to use is violent crime rate per 100,000 citizens, and England's violent crime rate is anywhere from 2-4 times that of ours, depending on the source from which you obtain these statistics, and its violent crime rate also makes it one of the most violent countries in Europe.

The riots a couple years ago are another clear example that gun control does not decrease crime. After the police shot a man named Mark Duggan, people were furious and they started five days worth of riots that included crimes like assault, arson, and burglary, and these riots made international headlines. Many shopkeepers lost much of their inventory and money. Had the shopkeepers been able to keep firearms to defend themselves, the riots would not have

gone on for as long as they did. Gun control failed to protect the English people during those riots, and it fails to make England one of the safest countries in Europe.

There are also many cities and states in our own country that place cumbersome restrictions on gun ownership somewhat similar to countries like England. Chicago is the biggest example of a city with extreme restrictions on guns. Until July of 2013, no one in Illinois could obtain a concealed carry permit. Chicago just this past year was finally forced to get rid of a gun registry database that was nearly 45 years old and banned handguns from 1982 until 2010. But despite having some of the most stringent gun laws in the country, Chicago is one of the most dangerous cities in America, having had 415 murders in 2013, the most in the U.S. that year. In fact, Chicago has led the country in murders for at least the past three years, recording 431 murders in 2011 and whopping 500 murders in 2012. It is sad to say that this is actually a downward trend for the Windy City, as there was a point in the early 2000s where Chicago recorded over 600 murders yearly, the highest point being 665 murders in 2001. Interesting isn't it that a city that is sometimes known as the gun control capital of America is also the homicide capital of America.

Gun control is also an issue in Connecticut, having had

*(Continued on page 72)*



## The Controversy Of Gun Control . . .

*(Continued from page 71)*

the second deadliest school shooting in American history occur in their state. They now have some of the most restrictive gun laws in the nation, including the expansion of the list of firearms that are defined as assault weapons and a magazine ban for magazines that hold more than 10 rounds. Those who already own “high capacity” magazines must either surrender them or register them with the state. But there is something they fail to mention. Connecticut already had an assault weapons ban similar to the present ban, that was in effect from 1994-2004. Even if the gun Adam Lanza used in the shooting was not illegal under the ban, he was at least in clear violation of the Gun Free School Zone Act by merely bringing those guns to the school. Guns were banned in that area, just as they were banned in Columbine High School, but that did not stop Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold then, just as that didn’t stop Adam Lanza.

As long as there are people who are crazy enough to want to kill other people, there will always be crime, no

matter how restrictive the laws on guns. The only thing we can really do is try to give innocent people a fighting chance by allowing them to own firearms. Without guns to protect ourselves, school massacres will become more likely, and they will not be limited only to schools, because then everyone will be a target of convenience, with a low risk of the criminal being apprehended, much less being injured during the attack.

The examples of restrictions on gun ownership prove that banning all guns will not reduce crime, and will more likely than not increase it. Without guns, many innocent people will have no effective means of protecting themselves from would-be criminals; the exact opposite of what gun control activists claim is their intended goal—to reduce crime. There are several examples in history and the world today that overwhelmingly point to one conclusion: Gun control does not accomplish the goal of reducing crime. The only goal it does accomplish is a disarmed citizenry that the government no longer has to fear. For this reason, we should be extremely wary of anyone who supports banning civilian firearm ownership. [J](#)

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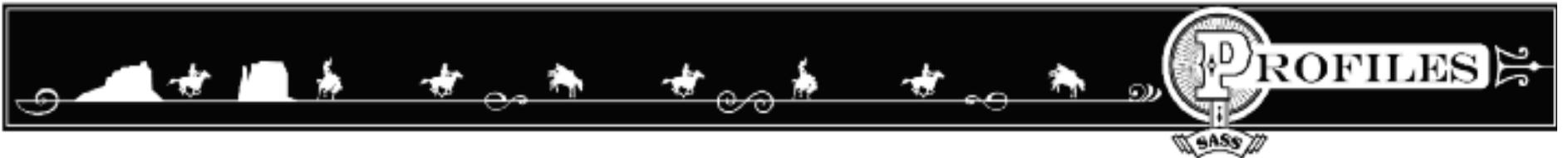
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## 2014 Scholarship Recipient

### Appaloosa Alex, SASS #73401

*Edited & Adapted by Justice Lily Kate, SASS #1000*

**Clover, SC.** My name is Alexandra Golden. I live in a one-story house in a small town, with three dogs and a pesky gray cat. SASS has been a part of my life since third grade when I started attending matches dressed in cowboy regalia with my dad, watching him compete, and more actively since sixth grade when I became Appaloosa Alex (SASS #73401). It's a bonding experience for me, my dad Scruffy Smiley, SASS #17388, and my sister Quaking Aspen, ##73402, plus it gives my mom a chance to lounge around the house without all of us bothering her. Besides all that, SASS and Cowboy Action Shooting™ gives me an excuse to hang out with some FANTASTIC people at the Carolina Roughriders in Charlotte, NC and the Gunpowder Creek Regulators in Lenoir, NC.

I'll be a sophomore biology major at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, in the Honors College. My focus and current source of pride is my research on dragonfly ecology in the nuclear disaster zones *Chernobyl* and *Fukushima*. I've been blessed with some great role models, like my dad, who's always dedicated to the family, and Dr. Heiss, my mentor at GSSM who inspired me to not be afraid of pursuing a research career in vertebrate biology. After my undergraduate career I plan on attending even more school and working towards a PhD in evolutionary biology. I would eventually like to work at a museum or national park as a research ecologist or curator.

Thanks to all the SASS members who have supported the Scholarship Fund. Without the generosity of so many members, I would not have received this award. 🤠



## Rights That Shall Never Be Infringed

*By Appaloosa Alex, SASS #73401*

*Edited & Adapted by Justice Lily Kate, SASS #1000*

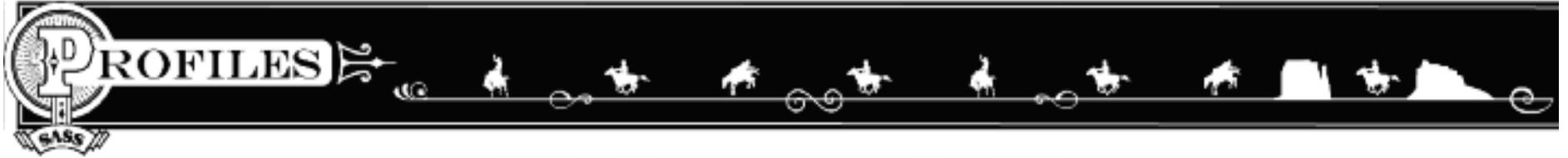
**C**onsidering the wealth of knowledge exhibited by humans, relatively few documents have stood the test of time. Paper degrades easily and many early works, like the Bible and the works of Greco-Roman doctors, philosophers and historians, survive because of Renaissance scholars who eagerly copied and disseminated them. Yet many of the world's governments are based on single documents, preserved lovingly, their ideas exalted, taught in schools from grade one to university—documents like the *United States Constitution*.

The Constitution was ratified nearly twelve years after the United States declared independence, and four years after the end of the Revolutionary War. During that time, much effort was put into drafting, revising and planning the new

government to make it balanced within itself and fair to the people to whom it was responsible. However, once the Constitution was finished, it quickly became apparent that it did not protect every liberty of the people, held so dear now that the Founders knew what it was like to have them taken away. The Bill of Rights was written immediately after.

Most of the Amendments from the Bill of Rights are uncontested in their meaning, but the Second Amendment draws debate from all directions, especially in today's charged political climate. "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." The words seem so simple—just a cou-

*(Continued on page 74)*



## Rights That Shall Never Be Infringed . . .

*(Continued from page 73)*

ple of clauses strung together to form a sentence. The real meaning of the Amendment is hotly contested among political scholars and historians, but plain and simple: the Second Amendment gives American citizens the right to own firearms.

The Founding Fathers knew exactly what they were doing when they wrote the Second Amendment. They installed a safeguard in the Constitution. If the grand, novel scheme of a democratic republic failed, the citizens would have the power to again overthrow a corrupt government and start over. This, to me, is perhaps the grandest application of the Second Amendment. However, due to the simple terms of the Amendment, it endorses hunting, skeet, riflery, biathlons, Cowboy Action Shooting™, and all other shooting sports, which test skill and dexterity. The wording of the Second Amendment also protects a crucial right of “We the People”: defense of our homes, our families and ourselves. In the times of the Constitution’s drafting, that mostly referred to wild animals, brigands and thieves.

Sound familiar? It should, because the needs of the People have not changed. Sure, the weapons have changed. Muzzle-loading rifles turned into high-velocity hunting rifles. Flintlock pistols became blocky semiautomatics. Children’s slingshots even became BB guns shooting pellets at upwards of 1100fps. At its core, however, the Second Amendment retains its focal purpose. There are still thieves who would break into your home and threaten your family. There are shady parking lots a woman may walk through to get to her car, and she would like a little extra protection in her purse. There are twisted souls who would shoot up a university campus, an elementary school or a movie theater for revenge or titillating fame. We have a government that cannot compromise with itself and shuts out opinions of third parties in order to keep a “balance of power,” which deadlocks progress.

Personally, I believe the Second Amendment to be more relevant than ever. The world is a scary place. But knowing that I live in a country that for two hundred years has protected its citizens’ basic rights, and gives them the ability to protect themselves... I sleep well at night. 🐾



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## Detective Dick aka Richard George Murray

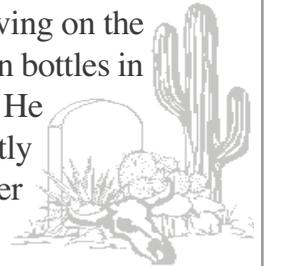
~ September 25, 1937 – September 18, 2014 ~

By Doc Kemm, SASS #52557

One of the Geechee Gunfighters has posse-upped for a final time. Detective Dick, SASS #81352, passed away at Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, SC on September 18, 2014. He had an interesting life; he was born in New Rockelle, NY and was married to the late Helen Long Murray. He served in the US Air Force and traveled through the country during his service in the military. Detective Dick made the low county of South Carolina his home some 20 years ago. He worked in the computer industry as a computer builder and fabricator as well as a trouble-shooter for Borroughs Computer Corporation. After retirement from the computer business, he started a second career as private detective for Pinkerton Security until his second retirement. He graduated from Trident Technical College with a degree in Criminal science. Detective Dick was a

member of the National Rifle Association and the Palmetto Gun Club of Charleston, SC. It was as a member of the Palmetto Gun Club that Detective Dick became involved with the Geechee Gunfighters and Cowboy Action Shooting™. He is survived by his five children and four grandchildren, as well as his sister, Susan Murry—Cereus Sue, SASS #82978—who is also a Cowboy Action Shooter™ with the Geechee Gunfighters.

Detective Dick was a dedicated Cowboy who would come out to both work and shoot even when it became physically challenging for him to do so. And when he couldn't shoot, he would often come out to help out however he could. I can recall him serving on the loading table during a monthly match, with oxygen bottles in trail! He would be cracking jokes with one and all. He certainly did have the Cowboy Spirit! We will greatly miss his presence at our matches; he was a character with a great sense of humor that we all loved. 🤠



## COMIC BOOK CORNER

### Black Diamond Western Pt. 2



### Lev Gleason

Photograph by  
James J. Kriegsmann

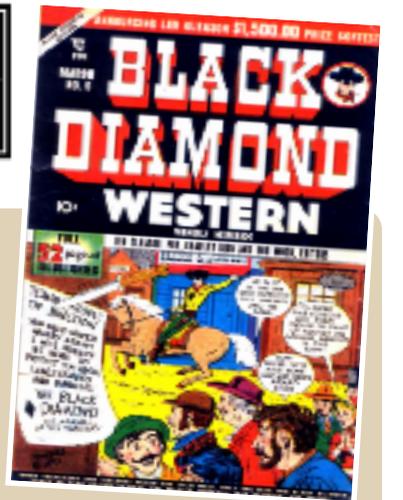
This issue concludes the origin story of the Black Diamond, Lev Gleason Publishing's answer to the Lone Ranger. As was common in the 1940s, the first issue of *Black Diamond Western* was number 9 (March, 1949), the first eight issues having been titled *Desperado*, a crime-western book to fit in with Gleason's other crime titles. Additionally, Gleason published the super-hero books, *Daredevil* (not the current Marvel version) and *Boy Illustories* (featuring Crimebuster), but even they were heavily crime-oriented.

Lev Gleason began his publishing career in 1931,

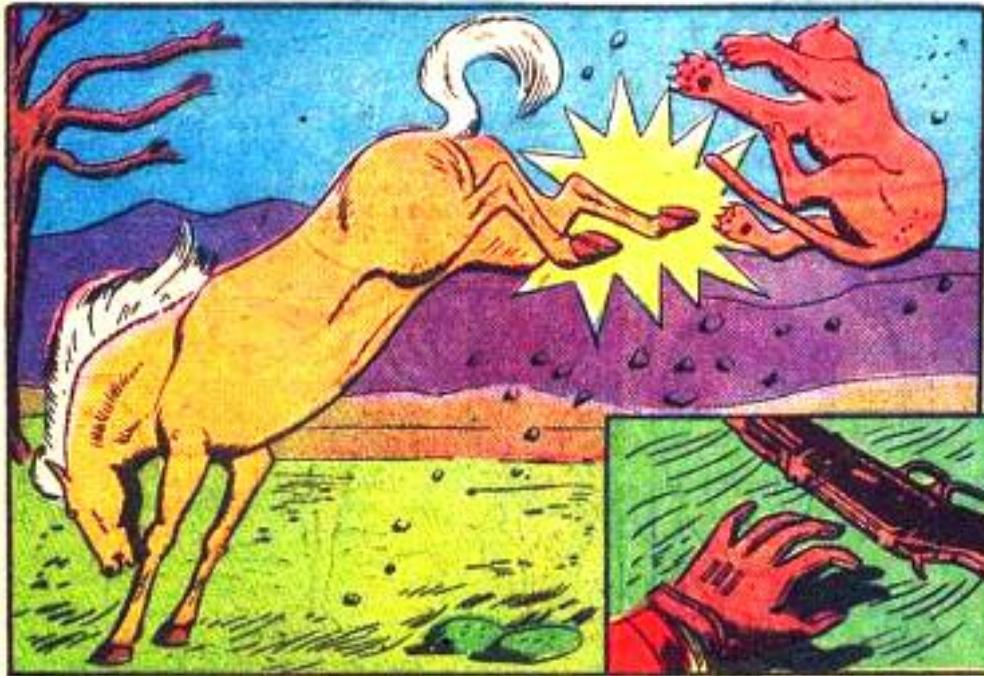
working for *Open Road For Boys* magazine. He worked his way through a variety of publishing jobs before finally starting his own comic book company circa 1942. His flagship title, *Crime Does Not Pay*, was the first and most successful crime comic book and gave rise to many imitators, leading eventually to a Senate subcommittee hearing on comic books and their relationship to juvenile delinquency in the 1950s. *Black Diamond* was his only plunge into the Western action/adventure genre.

Illustrator William Overgard provided the artwork for this and many other Black Diamond stories. After World War II, Overgard assisted Milton Caniff on the *Steve Canyon* newspaper strip, before embarking on a career in the comic book industry. After Overgard left Lev Gleason Publications he took over the *Steve Roper* comic strip in 1954.

The page images used in Comic Book Corner are courtesy of the website, <http://comicbookplus.com>. Their free site features more than 28,000 public domain comic books of all genres, not just Westerns. 🤠



# ARTICLES



SON, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

HE SAVED MY LIFE AGAIN! DIDN'T I TELL YOU HE COULD TELL WHEN I WAS IN TROUBLE?

I'VE NEVER SEEN AN ANIMAL WITH SUCH AN ATTACHMENT FOR A HUMAN AS HE HAS FOR YOU! THAT HORSE WILL NEVER LET YOU DOWN!

AND I WON'T LET YOU DOWN EITHER, DAD-FROM NOW ON I WON'T GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT YOU! GOSH, DAD, DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH A WONDERFUL HORSE?

NO, AND THAT'S A FACT, BUT WHEN MOM FINDS OUT YOU WENT LION HUNTING WITHOUT HER PERMISSION SHE'S GOING TO PADDLE THE STUFFING OUT OF YOU!

PA, WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER NOT TO TELL HER ABOUT ALL THIS? THIS COULD BE OUR SECRET- YOU KNOW, MAN TO MAN! THEN WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY HER!

MAN TO MAN, EH? MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT- IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR TO WORRY MOM, BUT THEN IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR FOR A MAN TO KEEP DOING BOY'S WORK! AS SOON AS YOUR LEG HEALS, YOU'LL DO MANS WORK!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU, HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR BOB, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

SPEECH!

A FEW YEARS HAVE PASSED AND NOW AT TWENTY-ONE, BOB HAS REACHED MANHOOD!



I WANT TO TELL YOU HOW GLAD I AM TO HAVE A MOTHER AND FATHER WHO LOVE ME SO MUCH, AND ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THEY PICKED ME OUT OF ALL THE OTHER ORPHANS, AND WANTED ME ENOUGH TO ADOPT ME! I WANT TO TELL PAT HOW PROUD I AM OF HER AND THAT WE'RE GOING TO GET MARRIED SOME DAY! SHE'S THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN THE WHOLE WORLD!



HEY! THIS IS MY PARTY, NOT YOURS!

BIRTHDAYS OR ENGAGEMENTS-I DECLARE, SON, THAT HORSE OF YOURS WON'T LEAVE YOU ALONE LONG ENOUGH TO LET YOU EAT YOUR MEALS! HE'S PART OF THE FAMILY!

ARTICLES

I COULDN'T GIVE YOU THIS RING DOWNSTAIRS, BOB, BUT NOW YOU'RE A MAN, I FEEL THAT YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW! I GOT THIS BLACK DIAMOND RING FROM THE HAND OF THE MAN WHO MASSACRED YOUR PARENTS! I TRIED FOR YEARS TO FIND A CLUE TO ITS OWNER, BUT I'VE FAILED - NOW IT'S UP TO YOU - IT'S YOUR FIGHT, SON!

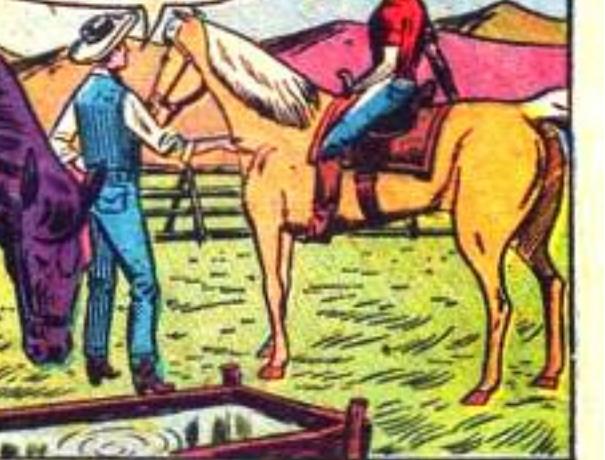


A BLACK DIAMOND RING! SO THIS IS THE CLUE TO THE KILLER! ALL RIGHT, DAD, I'LL LEAVE TOMORROW... I'LL LOOK EVERYWHERE... IF HE'S STILL ALIVE, I'LL FIND HIM! I WON'T BE BACK UNTIL I DO!



MR. MARKS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE BANK, WAS JUST HERE! IT'S A LONG STORY BUT, IN SHORT, THEY REFUSED MY REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION! EITHER I MEET THE NOTE NOW OR LOSE THE RANCH! I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO PUT OFF THE TRIP FOR AWHILE!

LOSE THE RANCH? BUT WHAT ABOUT THE STOCK? YOU COULD SELL IT! YOU OWN THE FINEST HORSE-FLESH IN THE WEST! IT'LL BRING A HIGH PRICE!



I'VE ALREADY MADE ARRANGEMENTS WITH A TRAVELING HORSE BUYER TO SELL EVERY HEAD! I'M EVEN SELLIN' MINE! I'D RATHER CUT OFF MY ARM THAN HAVE TO DO THIS, SON, BUT I'VE GOT TO ASK YOU TO SACRIFICE YOURS!

SELL MY HORSE! BUT HE'S LIKE PART OF ME! WHY, HE EVEN SAVED MY LIFE!

ALL RIGHT, DAD, YOU KNOW BEST!



I KNEW YOU'D SAY THAT, SON, SO I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF SELLIN' HIM! YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE THE HERD INTO TOWN! I NEVER MET THIS MR. HAWKINS, I ONLY KNOW HIS FOREMAN! HE'S STAYING AT THE HOTEL! THE TOTAL COMES TO \$5,000... WHICH IS HALF OF WHAT WE NEED!

THE ONLY ONE WE'RE KEEPING IS A STRONG WORKHORSE!



COME IN, KID, COME IN - SO YOU'RE VALE'S SON, EH? DON'T BE BASHFUL! WE'LL HAVE A DRINK AND THEN SIGN THE PAPERS... SPIDER, GET SOME GLASSES!



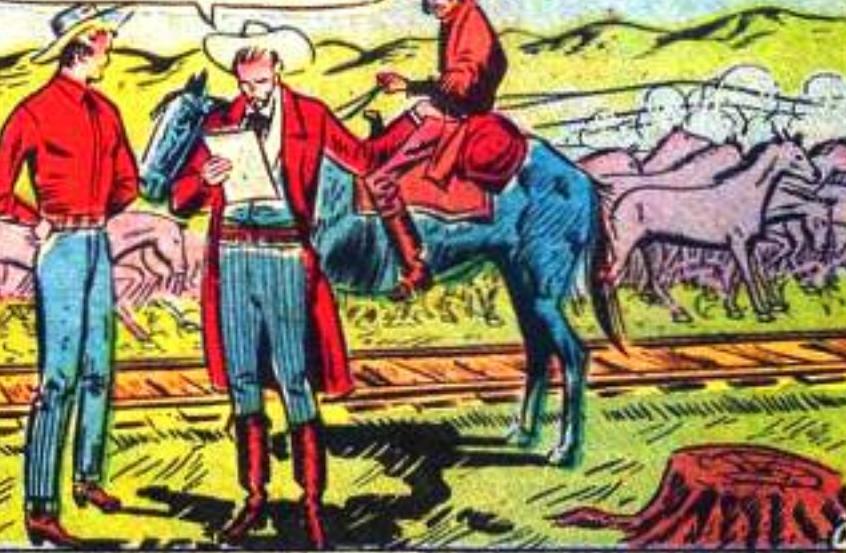
NO, THANKS, MR. HAWKINS, I DON'T DRINK! I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND CLOSING THE DEAL IN A HURRY! I MUST GET BACK IMMEDIATELY! I'VE GOT THE HERD CORRALLED BY THE TRACKS - YOU CAN HAVE A LOOK AT THEM THERE!

A REAL QUICK BUSINESSMAN, EH? WELL, SUIT YOURSELF, KID! SPIDER, GET MY JACKET!



EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER, KID, SO IF YOU'LL JUST SIGN THIS BILL OF SALE, I'LL GIVE YOU THE MONEY... SPIDER, HAND ME MY PEN!

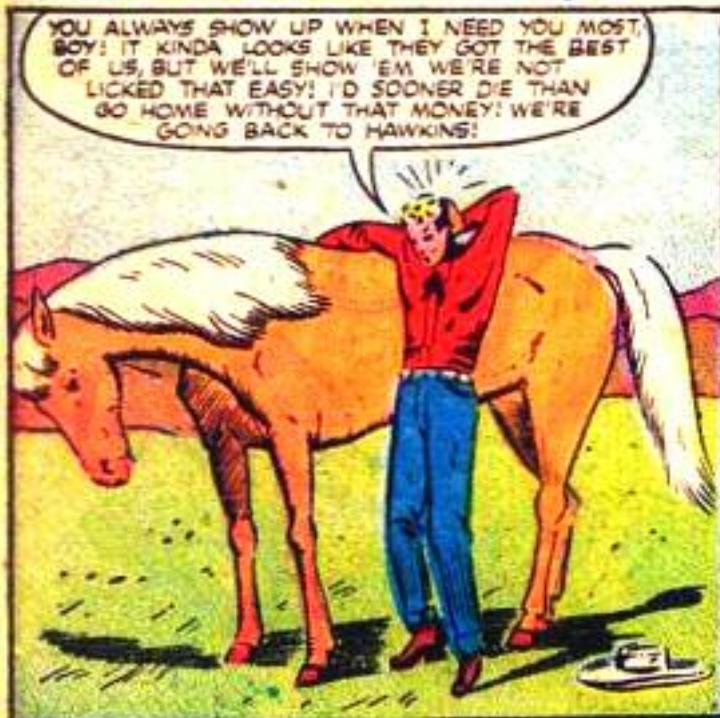
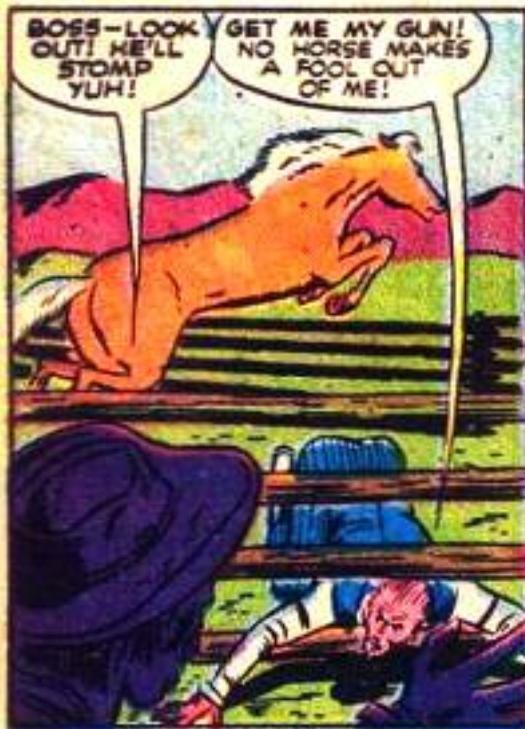
YEAH, SURE, BOSS!



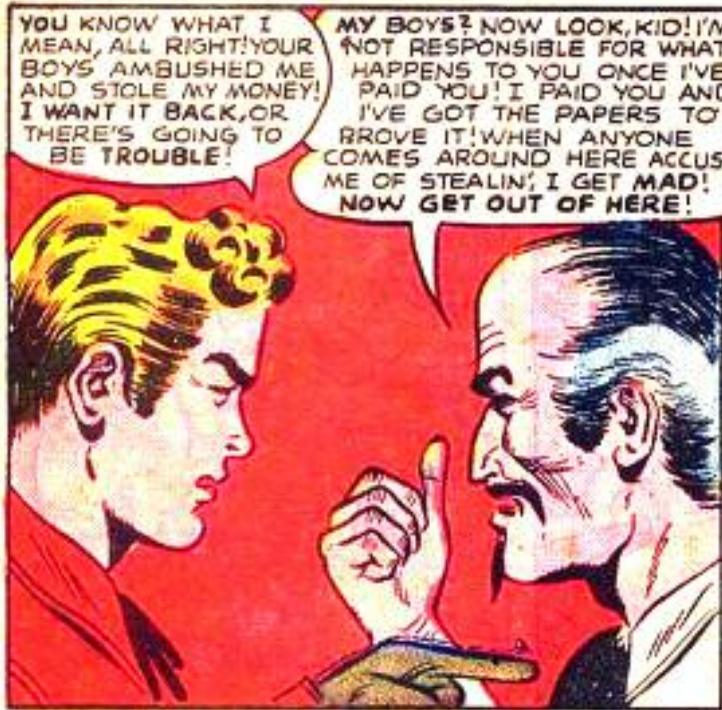
# ARTICLES



ARTICLES



# ARTICLES



# ARTICLES



YOUR FACE IS VERY FAMILIAR... JUST WHAT IS YOUR GAME, HAWKINS? IF MY BOY HAD STOLEN MONEY FROM YOU WHY WOULDN'T YOU HAVE GONE TO THE SHERIFF INSTEAD OF COMING HERE? THERE'S SOMETHING AWFULLY FISHY ABOUT YOU! I BETTER GO SEE THE SHERIFF AND...



...JUST WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'LL LET YOU TALK TO THE SHERIFF?



DARLING, WILL YOU AND YOUR GUEST HAVE SOME COFFEE?... BEIIIIIE! YOU'VE KILLED HIM!



MOM, WHAT'S ALL THE SHOOTING ABOUT? WHAT HAPPENED?

THEY KILLED YOUR FATHER!

OH, THANK HEAVENS YOU'RE HERE! IT WAS AWFUL! THAT BUYER, MR. HAWKINS, CAME HERE WITH HIS MEN! HE HAD A ROW WITH DAD AND SHOT HIM!



MR. HAWKINS? THEN DAD MUST HAVE RECOGNIZED HIM AS THE MAN WHO LED THE INDIANS DURING THE JUNCTION MASSACRE! HE TRIED TO ROB ME, TOO! PAT, LOOK AFTER MOM! I'M GOING TO TOWN TO SWEAR OUT A WARRANT FOR THEIR ARREST! BEFORE I'M THROUGH, THEY'LL ALL BE HANGING FOR MURDER!



THERE HE IS NOW, SHERIFF... PROBABLY CAME HERE TO TELL YOU A PACK OF LIES... BUT WE SAW HIM, DIDN'T WE BOYS? HE SHOT HIS OWN FATHER AND THEN HE ROBBED HIM... SEARCH HIM IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE US! HE'S GOT THE \$5,000 I GAVE HIS FATHER FOR THE HERD!

YOU CAN SEE THE BULGE IN HIS SHIRT!

WE'LL SOON SEE!



HEY, SHERIFF! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? OH, SO YOU'RE HERE! WHAT KIND OF LIES HAVE THEY BEEN HANDING YOU, SHERIFF? THEY'RE KILLERS, ALL OF 'EM! THEY KILLED MY FATHER!

JUST HOLD STILL, SON, AND I'LL SOON FIND OUT WHO'S LYING! WHAT'S THAT IN YOUR SHIRT?



THAT'S THE MONEY, ALL RIGHT! WHAT DID I TELL YOU, SHERIFF?

OF COURSE IT'S THE MONEY! BUT I DIDN'T STEAL IT! THESE CROOKS TRIED TO ROB ME! THEY SHOT MY DAD! YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME! THEY'RE MURDERERS!

I'VE GOT TO BELIEVE MY EYES, AN' THIS DUST MAKES YOU LOOK PLENTY GUILTY TO ME! I'M GOIN' TO LOCK YOU UP TILL I CAN GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS!

# ARTICLES



HAVE ANOTHER DRINK, SHERIFF! YOU DESERVE 'EM AFTER GRABBIN' THAT KID MURDERER!

I DON'T MIND IF I DO! BUT IT STILL BEATS ME WHY THAT KID CAME OVER TO MY OFFICE! PLUMB FOOLISH, WASN'T HE?

HA, HA—YOU KNOW THESE YOUNG KIDS, SHERIFF—GETTING WILDER ALL THE TIME! HE PROBABLY THOUGHT IT WAS A BANK AND CAME TO ROB IT! IT'S LIKELY HE CAN'T READ NONE! HA, HA!



GOOD BOY! I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T LET ME DOWN! TAKE THE ROPE OFF YOUR SADDLE! ATTA BOY—NOW BRING IT TO ME! JUST A LITTLE CLOSER, BOY... THAT'S RIGHT!



**CRASH!**

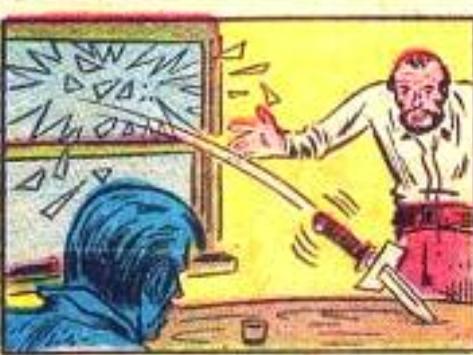
BUT HOW COULD THE SHERIFF ARREST YOU AND BELIEVE THOSE MEN'S MOTHER AND I WILL RIDE INTO TOWN TOMORROW AND TELL HIM THAT THEY KILLED DAD!

NO—THEY'RE DESPERATE MEN, PAT! THEY KILLED DAD, AND THEY MIGHT HARM YOU! BESIDES, THEY'VE GOT THE SHERIFF FOOLED! I'LL HAVE TO SEE THIS THROUGH MYSELF! THAT'S WHY I BROKE OUT OF JAIL! BUT NOW I'VE GOT TO GO! THIS IS THE FIRST PLACE THEY'LL LOOK FOR ME!



TAKE CARE OF MOM—I WON'T BE BACK UNTIL HAWKINS AND HIS GANG ARE WIPED OUT AND I PROVE MY INNOCENCE! GOODBYE, PAT!

BE CAREFUL, DARLING!



ARE YOU FINISHED WITH THAT BELL YET, SPIDER?

YEAH, BOSS, BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT GOT YOU SO UPSET! THAT KID'S PROBABLY BEEN HITTIN' LEATHER FOR CALIFORNIA SINCE HE BUSTED LOOSE! NOTE OR NO NOTE, HE WOULDN'T DARE SHOW HIS NOSE AROUND HERE WITH ME AND THE BOYS PROTECTIN' YUH!

IT AIN'T THE KID HE'S SCARED OF—IT'S THE BLACK DIAMOND! I NEVER SEEN THE BOSS SO SCARED! EVER SINCE HE RECEIVED THAT WARNING NOTE HE'S BEEN WEARIN' HIS HARDWARE TO BED!

AND PUTTIN' ALARMS ALL OVER THE PLACE! I TELL YA—HE'S CRACKIN' UP!

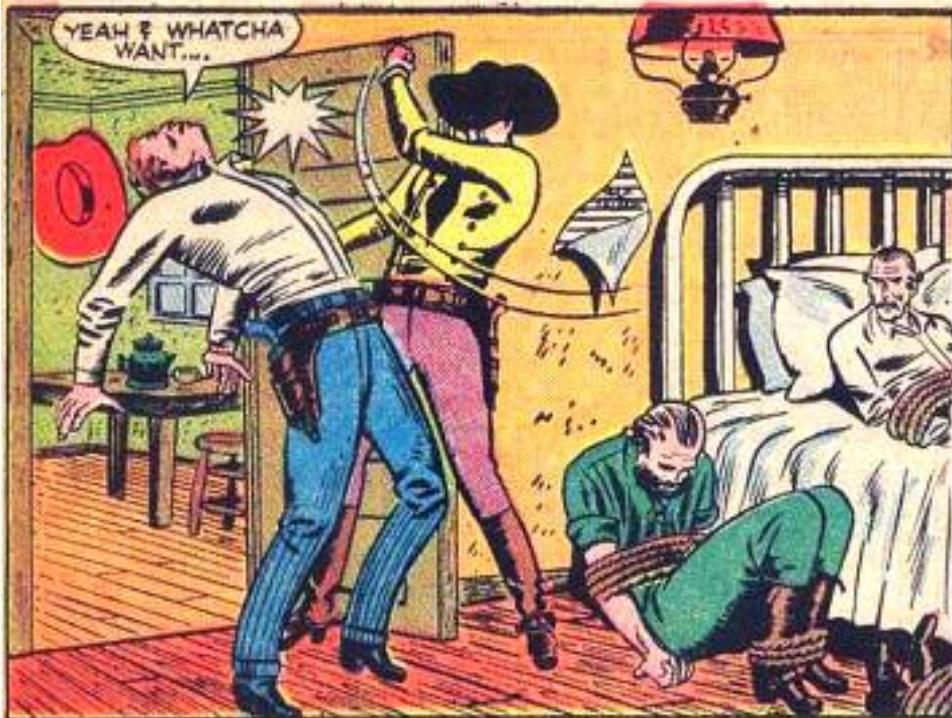


Your hours are numbered Hawkins  
The Black Diamond!





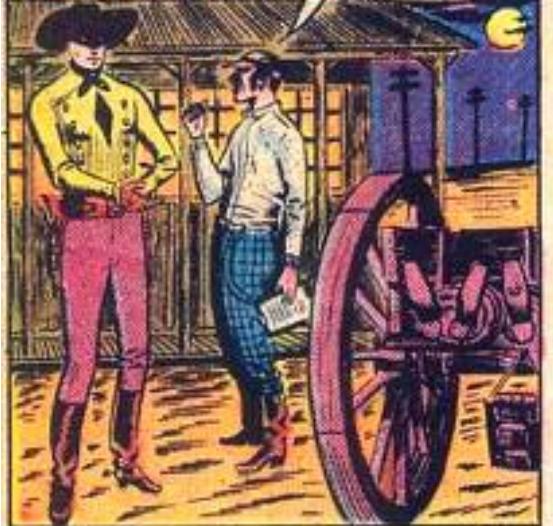
# ARTICLES



YEAH & WHATCHA WANT...

THESE ARE THE HOG-TIED OUTLAWS I WANT YOU TO SEND THE MESSAGE ABOUT!

I STILL DON'T SAVVY WHY YOU DON'T SHOW YOUR FACE, MISTER, BUT SINCE IT'S THE UNITED STATES MARSHAL YOU'RE SENDIN' FOR, I GUESS IT'S ALL RIGHT! BETTER COME IN AND DICTATE!

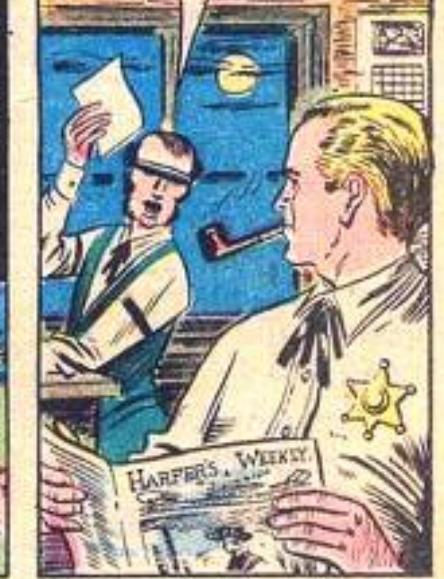


WESTERN UNION

**HAVE CAPTURED RENEGADE LEADER OF JUNCTION MASSACRE OF APRIL 13, 1869... DESCRIPTION FOLLOWS.**



WOW! MARSHAL, LISTEN TO THIS! IT JUST CAME OVER THE WIRE! IF IT'S TRUE, YOUR SEARCH FOR JEFF HAWKINS IS OVER... HERE, YOU READ IT!



THERE HE IS, MARSHAL BONNER! JEFF HAWKINS, TRAITOR AND MURDERER! WITH A LITTLE PERSUASION HE SIGNED A CONFESSION WHILE YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY HERE!

THAT'S MY MAN, ALL RIGHT! THE GOVERNMENT HAS HUNTED HIM FOR TWELVE YEARS SINCE WE SIGNED THAT TREATY WITH CHIEF THUNDERCLOUD AND FOUND OUT WHO THE RENEGADE WAS! IT'LL BE A PLEASURE TO TAKE HIM OFF YOUR HANDS!

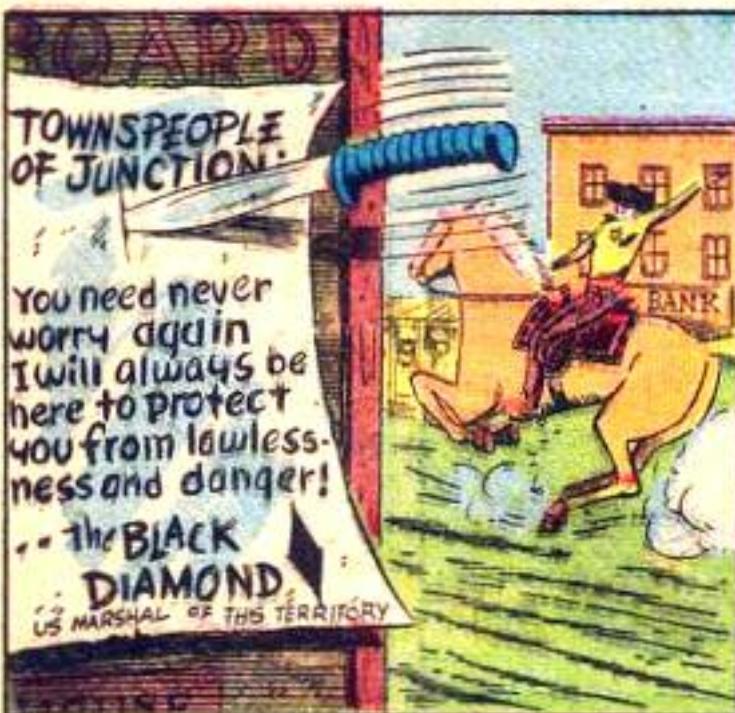


GET IN THERE, YOU VARMINTS! YOUR GUNNING DAYS ARE OVER!

THERE'S A SLIGHT MATTER OF A REWARD, STRANGER! FROM THE DESCRIPTION, I WAS PRETTY SURE YOU HAD THE RIGHT MAN SO I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF HAVING THIS CHECK DRAWN! IT'S FOR \$10,000!

# ARTICLES

SASS





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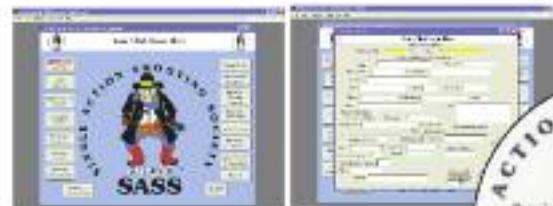
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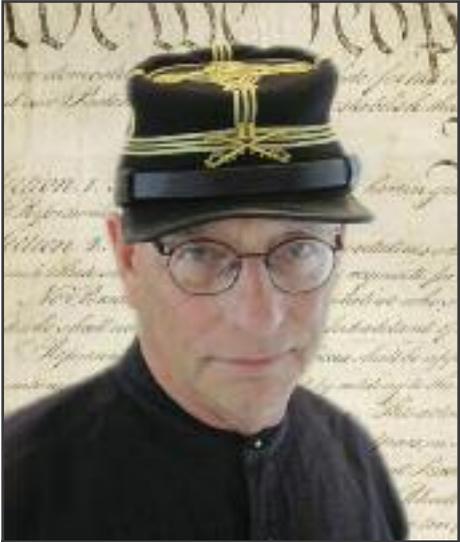
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# Hanging Up My Spurs



By Colonel Dan, SASS #24025, Life/Regulator

There's an old cavalry custom that when an officer retired, he reverently hung his spurs on the wall—he was said to be “Hanging up the spurs.” He was moving on—just as I am now. This will be my last regular column.

Why am I doing this? I've been politically active since 1964 when I worked for the Barry Goldwater campaign as a young energetic 16-year-old...50 years ago! My writing has been politically oriented in some form since that time. Even during my 24-year Army career when I couldn't write commentary, all my research papers, to include several masters theses, at the various military schools and civilian universities were devoted to the military political relationship. When I retired from the Army, I began writing weekly political commentary for an international news organization and in 2002 started writing exclusively for *The Cowboy Chronicle*. It's been a long and rewarding trail for sure but its time to simplify and scale back somewhat at this point in my life—just as that time comes in everyone's life at some point. It's really just that simple.

Over those 50 years, the view from my perspective has been a most memorable one. What I remember best about that part of life is the relationship I had with those who read my ramblings. The notes I've gotten from people who took time to comment were inspiring, enlightening, frustrating, infuriating and sometimes comical, but never boring and never unappreciated.

Had it not been for the gracious response I received from people like you, my SASS family, that era in my life would have been measured in weeks rather than decades,

I'm sure. Just as individual soldiers were the greatest part of my life as an Army officer, the readers and the kind way they received and treated me has been the greatest part of my life as a political pundit. The notes of encouragement, praise, disagreement, and even anger all served to add spice to my life—a spice I'll always look back on with immeasurable gratitude—a spice that helped fuel the engine of my simple cavalry mind. You were the steam that fired me up and kept me going. I can honestly say I looked forward to each and every comment and enjoyed sticking to my original commitment of answering every one of those notes.

As I enter the far side of my 60s and reflect back over those years, I can only hope I've done what I could to help preserve, protect and defend to the best of my God-given ability. The time has now come to pass that flag to someone else who will enjoy the same inspiring relationship I've had with you most wonderful American patriots for SO many years—patriots who care deeply for this country, what it's based on, where it's been and where it's going. Americans that have the courage to stand up and speak out, willing to defend the same ideals that motivated our forefathers to risk all they had in order to achieve the dream of God-given freedom.

I've found there are millions upon millions of such patriots—more than left wing liberty thieves would like you to know. I can assure you that you are far from being alone and far from a minority.

I've also found that *real* Americans will unhesitatingly rise in defense of traditional ideals and when threatened, come together in an admirable way.

I saw too that the most passionate of all are the readers of independent publications like this one and belong to independently-minded political entities like the Tea Party that holds

*(Continued on next page)*





## Hanging Up My Spurs . . .

*(Continued from previous page)*

firm to our founding principles and to our God above all else.

Such independent thinkers serve this country well and willingly defend our freedom, our dream and our life, without any hint of politically correct apology—an honorable characteristic of colonial America that drew me to the world of political commentary in the first place.

To you on the socialist left, I have but one final thought to convey. It will be the patriots I've described above that will prevent you from dominating and destroying the traditional American spirit of our forefathers. You may own and control the center of government for a time, but you'll never own, control or destroy the indomitable spirit of American patriots for they are indeed the living sons and daughters of liberty and true descendents of our divinely inspired founders. Of that you can bet your last bullet and someday you may just have to place that bet.

Have I given up writing altogether? No, I will still write periodically, I'm sure, and avidly support those causes in which I have a firm philosophical conviction. Will I never write another regular column? I'm not one to say "never" but until the time for change comes in my life again, this is the path I'll follow for now.

For all the years I've had the opportunity to "spout off" I owe a great debt of gratitude to many, many more than I can ever name individually. Having said that, I want to sincerely thank Tex and Cat for all their editorial work and being such good friends and a true joy for me to work with, to U.S. Grant, the Judge, Justice Lily Kate, Hipshot and Misty for their fire, support and genuine friendship over these many years—especially as we launched the Team SASS initiative. Let there be no doubt, the Wild Bunch was there at every turn and I sincerely appreciate that more than they'll ever know. To all the ladies that run SASS HQs and who, for most, are friendly voices on the phone, I want to pass along my great appreciation for all you do to keep the SASS ship of state on track. To Adobe, the magician behind *The Cowboy Chronicle* and to Skinny, our new Editor-in-Chief, I wish you only the very best. I want to express my admiration for the very professional work they've done for us all! I could not have asked for better support from every corner of Founders Ranch, SASS HQs and all my friends throughout this great country.

Finally, I want to reserve a heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you, my readers and fellow SASS members for being a most memorable part of my life and graciously reading, responding to, supporting and generally putting up with the view from this simple old soldier's foxhole.

Although I'm retiring my column, I will still lead the Team SASS effort for now and make use of the Team SASS forum for any gun-related political commentary as well as my blog that is graciously and professionally provided by Waimea. Our Founders pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in giving birth to a uniquely free America. Shouldn't we all do our best to preserve what they gave us and carry on the legacy? I believe we should all do what we can to pass along this divine heritage of freedom to those that follow us onto the battlefield. May God's blessings be with you all. Soldier on my good friends.

Contact Colonel Dan: [coloneldan@bellsouth.net](mailto:coloneldan@bellsouth.net)

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