



**100 Goffstown Road  
Hooksett, NH 03106**

**Spring 2018 Edition**

*(Spring can never come too soon, right?)*

## **SHOOTING THE BREEZE**

*The Official Newsletter of The 20<sup>th</sup>*

Welcome fellow members of 20<sup>th</sup> Skeet and Clays to the inaugural edition of our new newsletter. I wanted to begin by saying what a splendid and noteworthy job has been done in presenting this newsletter these past many years by our new President Dan Dal Pra. Like many great men of the past, Dan has been the victim of his own success. You do a difficult job well and they thank you by giving you an even more demanding job until you finally plead for mercy. But the Board of Directors and the Membership have every reason to have great confidence in President Dal Pra, and the future of our club looks bright with promise. Which leads me to the next matter, that of our now Immediate Past President, Greg Welch. He deserves a proper tribute and I am about to give him one. As for the new format, I decided to make some changes and for a simple reason. I can. I am the Editor. I hope it is a pleasure to read and I plan on sending one out four times a year. As for the title I think that we all like to shoot the breeze with one another. It is, after, all a club of people with common interests. But beyond that, each of us, in an earnest attempt to smash a clay target with our shotgun, have on occasion, only managed to shoot the breeze.

### **A Brief History of the Presidency in America from Mount Vernon to Mount Quimby**

As any schoolboy knows, George Washington was the first American President. He will long be recalled by how great he looked on a horse, but even more so for his heroic crossing of the Delaware River at Trenton, making him the

first man in the colonies to go to New Jersey without being forced to do it. In 1789, the Founders of the new nation decided that he should be named King, but then Washington asked if he was correct in thinking that he had just fought a very long and nasty war to get rid of a King named George?? The other Founding Fathers had forgotten about that. But then what to call the Father of the new nation if Washington refused to be King?

Someone with a powdered wig suggested they call him President. He was not so sure he was happy about any of it as he had not seen Martha for a mule's age, something he knew because he had actually invented the mule. Still, he served for two terms, finally announcing his retirement back to Mount Vernon in 1797 by saying, "I could really use a nap". Washington also had other things at Mount Vernon that assured him of a pleasant and well-deserved retirement. He had three hundred and seventeen slaves to look after him, *and* one of the biggest whiskey distilleries in the thirteen colonies. He did not have a flat screen TV at Mount Vernon, but he did not know that.

He was followed by our second President, a man named John Adams, who really *wanted* to be King but came up short. Adams has been largely forgotten by history but for the fact that he was considered to be the most crabby of our Presidents. Much more fondly remembered, especially in New England, is his cousin Sam, who would, many years after his death, eventually be considered the actual King of New England for his invention of a thing called "the microbrewery".

Despite the fact that there were no such things as term limits, for more than one hundred years it seemed that the office of the President was pretty much a two-term hitch (unless you were assassinated, died in office, or were named Franklin Pierce). Fast forward to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He pulled America out of The Great Depression and he won the Second World War. When he needed a rest, he knew just where to go, to his summer place at Campobello.... in Canada. It seems Roosevelt was really hated by a lot of people who called him a Commie, but there were enough that liked him to get him elected President a record four times. By the fourth term FDR was a mess. Polio, cigarettes, and drinking with Churchill and Stalin finally did him in, and he did not live to achieve a fifth term. He was followed by a long list of Presidents who were so forgettable that they did not even have full names. Harry, Ike, JFK, LBJ, Tricky Dick, Jerry, Jimmy, Ronnie, George H., Bubba, W, and an Irishman named O'Bama.

But then, the great lightning bolt of history struck on a bump in the Earth they called Quimby Mountain in the pastoral New Hampshire hamlet of Hooksett, where lived a man who would surpass all former Presidents, each and every. He was a man of indescribable stature who ruled the countryside with a special scepter called a ".410". So great was he that he did not need a white horse, three

hundred seventeen slaves, or a whiskey still. (He also never had to pay for a haircut).

In 2001, to begin the New Millennium, he ascended to his place of glory, establishing a new standard for the Presidency in America. Here was the man they called Gregory Aloysius Welch. Aside from ruling over one of the most prestigious organizations in the Great State of New Hampshire, the legendary 20<sup>th</sup> Skeet and Clays, for his remarkable accomplishments, and for ably making sure that the beer cooler was always full of Bud Light, Welch was elected by his devoted subjects to an incredible, and unprecedented, sixteen terms as President. In 2017 he ended his reign uttering for the ages the now immortal words, "I am worn the %&@# out". The members of 20<sup>th</sup> Skeet and Clays owe a great debt to their exalted and celebrated President Greg Welch. Let it be known far and wide that we hereby grant to him that which he so rightly desires, that we no longer give him any pains in his ass. Long Live His Excellency, Greg Welch! By the way, who's now in charge of the beer cooler?

## **Winter League News**

As you might have expected, the Winter League is progressing nicely with the participation of many of our members. I could say that this is the greatest winter league in the history of our club, maybe in the history of shotgun sports, with record participation by millions of shooters, and that everybody is saying that nothing like it has ever been seen before in America. But I won't say that. What I will say is that everyone is having fun and posting their scores and watching the tallies. Present 12g World Champion Mark Vaillancourt could be making big news in The Winter League but he is not. Big news would be his having to post a 49 somewhere along the line. Instead he strings 50s together like strands of pearls. But it is clear by the scores that there are a lot of very fine shooters at **The 20<sup>th</sup>**. Remember that all of your scores must be completed and posted by April 13<sup>th</sup>, so if you have been dawdling along, time to snap out of it and get shooting. Soon we will be complaining about the heat. Special thanks go to Gary Fernald and Melissa Foley-Riley who are Co-Chairs of the Winter League and have been coming down to register and post the scores on the Big Board and doing a splendid job. Melissa is also famous for being the Mom of up and coming shooting legend Hailey Riley. Go Hailey!

## **Important Winter League Dates!!**

**Sunday April 1<sup>st</sup> is Easter and there will be no breakfast served at the club.**

**Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> will be the final Winter League Breakfast of 2018 and the General Membership Meeting.**

**Saturday April 14<sup>th</sup> will be the final day to post scores for Winter League.**

**Saturday April 28<sup>th</sup> is the tentative date for the Winter League Banquet.**

### **Little Help? (continued.....)**

I said to the Board when I was elected Secretary that I did it for a simple reason. I have been having a great time learning to Shoot Skeet, Sporting Clays, and even 5 Stand for the last three years and something dawned on me. But for the incredible efforts of many people for the last 60 years, many of who are still hard at it, I would never have been afforded the privilege of enjoying these shotgun sports at **The 20<sup>th</sup>**. People built this place and cared for this place all those years, not only so they could enjoy being here, but so that one day people they did not even know could come here and enjoy it. I quickly realized that I too had a part in that long history and that I owed it to my fellow members, all the members of the past, and even more so the members to come, to do what I could to contribute to the vitality and the happy functioning of this place. This is a **volunteer club**. This is what you do and why you do it. Find a way to contribute, and then contribute. It is not only good but it feels good. It is also the right thing to do.

### **The Historic Accomplishments of The 20<sup>th</sup>'s own Mark Vaillancourt**

I have researched lists of the greatest athletes in New Hampshire History and we have a bunch of them. Many were participants in team sports. Only a few were individual competitors. How many of them were World Champions? Jenny Thompson did it in swimming. Lynn Jennings did it in Cross Country Running. Then there was skier Bodie Miller and the favorite to win some Gold Medals in skiing at this year's Olympics, Mikaela Shiffrin. Both were World Champions. How remarkable is it then that another is a member at **The 20<sup>th</sup>**? It would take too much space to list all of the accomplishments of our own **World Champion, AAA Class Shooter Mark Vaillancourt**. In fact it would take a lot of space to give you just his accomplishments for this past Skeet season of 2017. In Skeet there are gun champions in each of the four guns, a competitor has to shoot 12g, 20g, 28g, and .410. Doubles are scored separately. The shooter with the highest average of all four guns in a given shoot is the Champion for the shoot. Here is the short version of only Mark's most major 2017 wins:

**Krieghoff Masters- Champion**  
**Sleeping Giant Open-Champion**  
**Long Island Championships-Champion**  
**Rhode Island State Championship-Champion**  
**Mini World Skeet Championship-Runner Up**  
**World Skeet Championships-12g Champion**  
**National Skeet Shooting Association World Champion Honors-**  
**Highest High Overall Average-99.05**  
**Highest .410 Average- 98.73**

\*\* This list does not include all runner-ups, 3<sup>rd</sup> Places or any of the gun champ titles in individual tournaments. There were many. In addition, to get a chance to win, one has to shoot a perfect score and then win a shoot-off against any number of other great shooters. At the World Championship there were dozens of people who shot a perfect 150/150 in the 12g. Mark survived a shoot-off against all of them.

**According to the NSSA, here are Mark's Final Averages for 2017:**

**12g---99.64**  
**20g---99.6**  
**28g---99.2**  
**.410--98.6**  
**Doubles---97.6**

## **Welcome New Members!!**

Johnathan Reardon of Auburn, Joseph Sarna of Concord, Michael Merrill of Manchester, Will Schulz of Concord, and Ken Johnson of Hooksett. Feel free to ask questions and enlist the help of your fellow members. We like being asked and, at one time, we all knew as little as you do. That will change fast! By the way, we now have **275 Members!**

**There are still 42 of you nice people who do not have an email address. Should that change, or if any of you you have a new email address, or if you begin to feel sorry for my having to mail out 42 copies of this newsletter please send it to me at [dan@danielthomasmoran.net](mailto:dan@danielthomasmoran.net). Thanks!**

## **Things to note:**

We are frozen, light deprived and sick of winter. Good news....Thursday Night Clays will start up again on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Gary Fernald also reports that, following a

great success in its inaugural year, Sunday Morning Clays, will kick off for year #2 the following Sunday, April 30<sup>th</sup>.

In general, we try hard to keep the website up to date. Should you have questions about what is going on and when they often can be answered by having a look at the schedule posted on our website.

**Your 2018 Board of Directors:** These folks are here to help and if they don't have an answer, they probably know where to find it. Get to know them if you don't already.

Dan Dal Pra-President

Dave Larivee-Vice President

Paul Bohan-Treasurer

Dan Moran-Secretary

Greg Welch-Immediate Past President

Jim Demaio

Andy Bouchard

Tracy Newell

Stan Dudka

Mike Roberge

John MacKenzie

Max Funderburk, Trustee

Pete Duriga, Trustee

### **Fun Facts:**

Did you know that **Skeet** was invented in 1920 by two guys from Andover, MA named Charles Davis and William Foster? In 1926, a woman with the unfortunate moniker of Gertrude Hurlbutt won a contest and a \$100 prize for coming up with a name for the new sport. She chose the Norwegian word **skyte** which means **shoot**. To this day, no one knows if she could hit a High #2 on a windy afternoon.

**Sporting Clays** was first conceived in England around 1925 but was not introduced in The United States until 1980! That September, the first registered shoot occurred at Remington's Lordship Gun Club in Stratford, CT Connecticut.

I am told, but cannot verify, that **5 -Stand** was invented by Paul Bohan and Jack Daniels.

There are 135 clays in a case of standard White Flyers. There are 63 cases in a pallet of targets which means that there are 8505 clays. The Club pays about 7

cents per target. Despite that, should you miss a target, do not run out to fetch it and return it to the trap machine!

The optimal place to hit a skeet target is at 21 yards, the point where the shot string has its maximum chance of breaking the clay. That is the exact distance from each station to the center pole. At approximately 47 mph, it takes about three quarters of a second for the clay to get from the window to the post. Ya gotta be quick! More to come about Sporting Clays and 5 Stand in future issues.

### **Be a Sponsor of This Newsletter! (Please?)**

If you would like to place your business ad in this newsletter for the season, please send camera ready art, or a business card and a check for \$100.00 for a years publication made out to **20<sup>th</sup> Skeet & Clays, Inc.** and mail it to:

Dan Moran  
141 Dustin Road  
Webster, NH 03303

### **NOTEWORTHY NUMBERS:**

Clubhouse -	603-485-5414
Dan Dal Pra – President	603-774-7201
Dave Larivee - Vice. Pres.	603-497-3850
Dan Moran – Secretary	603-746-2017
Paul Bohan - Treasurer	603-483-8541
Sal's Pizza Hooksett-	603 622-5151

### **Next General Membership Meeting:**

**Wed. March 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.**

**For Crying Out Loud! Please attend, find out what's going on, and have your voice heard!**

**THIS IS YOUR CLUB !!**