

PRESIDENT'S SIGHTS, AUGUST 25, 2010

Hello and how is everybody? I'm not going to start this Newsletter by praising anyone, though there is a lot to praise to go around. I'm not going to talk about safety, though there are many issues that need to be discussed, and I'm not going to discuss vandalism, though that does continue to be a problem. (For everyone's information the Sherriff's Department does not use our targets, but bring their own. They also police up their own brass).

I would like for everyone to know the Youth Black Powder shoot went smashingly. There was over 100 shooters, and approximately 150 people there. I would like to thank Bob Whelchel for everything he did, and all the volunteers, and especially Boy Scout Troops 119 and 465.

In my promise not to thank anyone, I would like to thank Mike Jambrosic who made some 40 target frames on his own.

I am going to discuss Voting, the By-laws, and the Dues.

First, the vote is coming up in October. The entire elected Executive Council has agreed to stay on. Of course anybody wishing to run for office can be nominated at the September meeting to run against the current officers in October. In addition, the entire non-elected board has agreed to stay on. The fact that these members agreed to stay in their current positions gives the Club continuity in what I consider a pivotal year. Next, is upgrading the Bylaws to make them clearer to understand and more relevant. A copy is attached to this newsletter for you to review. If you feel changes need to be made, please bring your copy to the September meeting and make a proposal to amend.

The third subject I am going to discuss is the dues. Attached to this Newsletter is the copy of the budget that our Treasurer, Karma Whelchel, has made. It's a little confusing, and if you look at the top of the budget you will see that Sporting Clays brings in about \$10,000 to the Club. This is well above and beyond their expenses, and if it wasn't for Sporting Clays, dues would have to be over \$200.00. Karma lists all the expenditures, and comes to the conclusion that dues would have to be approximately \$130.00 a year for the Club to meet all its financial obligations and proposed improvements.

At the last meeting I solicited comments both verbal, and e-mail, in regards to raising dues. The first and foremost request was for more transparency in what monies are used for. This we will do by periodically publishing the budget. Next up, was concern that so many people get free or reduced dues, and of course there was concern about raising the dues. First let me address a concern we had about 5 years ago when we last raised dues. That concern was that we would lose membership. In fact, we gained membership and lost some of the members that were the most "negative" to the Club. There is concern about people getting reduced or free membership for "volunteering." We are going back to the "chit" system. Everyone who volunteers, with the exception of the elected and appointed board members, will receive chits that they will redeem at the end of the year toward their membership. I have had 900 chits in values of \$5.00, \$10.00 and \$15.00 made to be handed out to volunteers by the person leading that work party, program, or task. The chits will be given out in a "subjective" manner, based on that "leader's" observation of how much "work" the volunteer did. (If one person stood around for 3 hours

raking one spot, and another operated his/hers front end loader for three hours, the person who operated the front end loader would get more chits, than the person standing around.) Anyone having a beef with the amount of chits they or someone else received will have to bring their complaint to the Executive Board for resolution.

I am going to start out by giving you what I think is a fair and just dues structure. I had discussed this issue with many members and this is my conclusion (not necessarily the best one, but it's mine).

1. Dues should be \$120.00 a year, fixed for the next 5 years.
2. Torrance County Sheriffs - free.
3. All other law enforcement - ½ dues.
4. Active Duty military - 25% off.
5. Military deployed to a combat zone in the last year - free for one full year after their return.
6. Those members voted in as special "life members" - free (this is for people who have done exemplary duty for the Club).
7. Seniors over the age of 65 receive - 1/3 off (we will do away with the current free memberships of those over age 70. The Executive Board will agree to review any case where a senior, who is currently getting free dues, feels is a hardship for them to pay dues.)

Of course there are other options, one of which is doing nothing; however, I'm going to present other people's ideas below:

Mark Werner suggests that we do raise the dues by \$30.00, but he does suggest that "60% of the problems with our range lay with every day work that needs to be done. Let's give them the option to work it off (volunteerin and getting chits) . . ."

Gene Hart suggests a permanent fixed rate of \$50 to \$75 per year based on what people do for assistance at the range. He also said he agrees that exempt members could increase their share of the dues, as they choose, and give total transparency on every Club expense on every category/class or donation or grant . . . He believes we give too many donations. He would like to see a "value" to "X" for actual hours. He suggests we give only 50% of the actual club dues for credit.

Tony Anicito would like to see a list of mandatory expenses listed, and his big concern is range improvements.

Dan Morrison thinks organizations such as the BSA, 4-H, and others should work off any donations that we give, such as supporting sporting clays, working during the rendezvous and cleaning up the range. He suggests a \$10 donation per each volunteer who works. He thinks the nominal rate for chits should be \$5 an hour, perhaps less. He thinks over 70 should pay half dues with the exception of "life members." He agrees with the structure for law enforcement.

Charles Breckenridge who is over 70 years old says "I did not expect free membership or any other special treatment due to my age. I would gladly pay dues, or give a tax free donation equal to dues." Charles is a disabled vet, and is one of many seniors, and volunteers that said they would pay full days.

Paul Andrews said "I do not believe that anyone should receive 'free' membership to the club. That being said, I am open to the idea of a limited number of members who put in appreciable 'sweat equity'. . . He does not think people should get free membership for age, military deployment, etc. He agrees that Law Enforcement have free access to the Range for "organized training," but not be provided free individual memberships.

Lynn Miller feels the dues need to be raised. He says to keep the 70 plus age group who are currently receiving free dues – free, and to give free dues for 70 years olds who have been in the club for 5 consecutive years. 70 yr olds who are new to the club should get ½ dues till they have five years in the club.

Karma Whelchel believes that "anyone who provides permanent service to the club, no matter how many hours a month they serve, should be given free membership." She doesn't agree that 70 year olds should get free dues, she thinks we should discount their dues by 25%. She does agree on grandfathering the existing free members.

Bob Whelchel thinks 70 year olds should get ½ dues, but the current 70 year olds should get free dues should keep their free membership unless they miss a year of registration, then they would go to ½ dues.

Gary Howard suggests we raise the dues \$10 every year until it reaches \$120. He thinks board members/appointees, heads of groups, local law enforcement, those military employed in the last year and those over 80 should get free dues. He thinks those 70 to 79 should get half dues as well as retired law enforcement and active duty military. He also supports the chit system.

As you can see, we have many different ideas. SO COME TO THIS NEXT MEETING AND LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD. DON'T LET A FEW DECIDE FOR THE MANY, LET'S HAVE AT LEAST AS GOOD A TURN OUT AS WE HAVE AT OUR OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING. WE WILL BE DECIDING AT THE SEPTEMBER MEETING WHAT NEXT YEAR'S, AND PROBABLY WHAT FUTURE YEARS, DUES WILL BE. IF YOU DON'T COME TO THE MEETING, DON'T COMPLAIN. IF YOU HAVE A LEGITIMATE REASON FOR NOT BEING AT THE MEETING, AND I DON'T MEAN THURSDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL, YOU CAN E-MAIL ME THROUGH THE WEBSITE, OR AT edabq@msn.com, AND I WILL PRESENT YOUR E-MAIL AT THE MEETING.

Regards,
Ed Dresner
President, NMBHGC