

GALLATIN SPORTING CLAYS SPRING 2006 NEWSLETTER

Range Opens April 1

The range opens Saturday, April 1. That is also Tom & Huck Day, when all range members show up to assist with range opening and perform the chores necessary to get the range up and running for the year. Please bring your grubby clothes, gloves, appropriate hand tools, and shotguns and ammunition. As soon as the chores are completed, the shooting begins.

Gun Raffle

The gun raffle will be held in the Comfort Inn conference rooms at 6:00 p.m. on March 7. The Comfort Inn is located on North Seventh, and the conference rooms are in the eastern portion of the building accessible from the parking lot on the south side. A list of guns to be raffled is provided below. As always, tickets will be \$120.

\$ Browning / Feather XS 20 ga.
\$ CZ / wood stock bolt action .204 cal
\$ CZ / heavy barrel .17 rem
\$ Benelli / Monefeltro 20 ga.
\$ Ruger / Vaquero .45 cal
\$ Mossberg o/u .410 cal
\$ Traditions / black powder .50 cal
\$ Golden Boy / lever action .17 HMR
\$ Ruger / wood stock bolt action .338 cal
\$ Ruger / ss-gray laminated stock .264 win mag
\$ Verona auto 12 ga.
\$ Remington youth camo pump .20 ga. and Marlin / youth bolt action .22 cal - to be raffled together

Shoot Schedule

A list of shoots for Montana and surrounding states is attached.

Please check all shoot dates before traveling.

May Members Meeting

Three Board slots currently held by Frank Stewart, Russ McElyea and Sam Robinson are open this year. Our annual members meeting will be May 8, 2006, at the Comfort Inn on North 7th at 6:30 p.m. Please plan to attend. These meetings have a major impact on the future of your club.

Shotgun Shells

In past years, we have sporadically ordered shotgun shells for use by club members. Success of this program has been mixed because of difficulty with availability, and with the time spent by club members tracking and accounting for member orders.

This year, Ted at Yellowstone Gateway Sports has stepped forward to solve our problems. Ted has ordered 1,100 cases of 2 3/4 dram 1 oz. target loads. The first shipment of 400 cases should be available in Ted's Four Corners store.

Hours of Operation

Assuming we get enough people to volunteer for range marshall duties, the club will be open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00-6:30 and Saturdays from 10:00-3:00. If you have not served as a range marshall, then you need to step forward for a couple of days this year. Without your

volunteer help, we can't open the range.

Youth Shooting Program

The following information was provided by Dale Spartas, who has worked hard to get a Youth Shooting Program going at our club. Thanks to Dale for his efforts.

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The Gallatin Clays Youth Program came about as a result of my asking our President Russ McElyea how many youth shooters we had using Gallatin Sporting Clays. Russ responded by making the Zero sign. What a sorry state of affairs. We live in the gun totin' state of Montana, in the second largest city in Montana and we have NO young shooters using our facility. Ding Darling's saying, " If you're not Part of the Solution you are part of the Problem!" speaks volumes. With Russ' approval we set out raising funds to sponsor free shooting for 500 rounds (shells & targets) per year for youth between 11 and 22 years of age.

The idea and program was well received by the members. Within two weeks \$1,950.00 and 4500 rounds of ammunition, ear plugs and eye protection were donated to the program. Thanks to all who generously donated to the program. Their names were listed in an earlier communication.

Since the program was not conceived until GSC was well into the 2005 shooting season, we did not get that much participation as no one knew about the program. However, once the word got out we

did get a number of youth shooters out to the club. I know Eric Pierce (who generously donated 15 flats of 12 & 20 ga ammo) had two very enthusiastic boys out several times. The 4H program had a group out and several other shooters including our Trapper and his cousin shot for free.

The Program needs Mentors to take young shooters out as well as a practice area where young shooters can be trained. We also need space to store the youth programs ammo and gear. Mentors and people who will take the time to train and teach youngsters to shoot are vital to this program. **Two individuals are needed to step forward and help with this very rewarding program.**

Ken Eiden won a Benelli at the Pheasants Forever dinner and generously donated it to the Youth Program. I'd like permission to sell or trade it for 2 Remington youth model autos one of which would be a left hand model. I am sure Remington will help us with the program. **Youth hunters and shooters are the future of our sports and conservation movement.**

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This year we want to significantly expand the program to offer more shooting opportunities for youth. For a description of how the program works, or to volunteer your help, please call Dale Spartas at 585-2244.

Instruction

This year's guest instructor will be Jon Kruger, who will be

teaching half day or all day group lessons at our club. Jon will be teaching June 13, 14 and 15. A half day session is 4½ hours and costs \$190.00. Maximum group size is 5 people. Sign up early if you want a slot. There is already a lot of interest, and I expect Jon's schedule to fill up quickly.

Club Challenge 2006

This year's club challenge returns to its birthplace at Gallatin Sporting Clays. Jon Kruger will be setting targets, which will make this year's shoot a world class event. We are pulling out the stops to make this shoot a huge success for our guests, as well as a major fund raiser. And no, we aren't renting a bus to carry you from Bozeman to the club.

Change of Officers

I am retiring, and Bill Hendricks is the new President of our club. Please make Bill feel welcome in his new role.

It has been an honor working for you.

With the acquisition of our property, our club has a bright future. Strong commitment from our members will assure our organization continues to grow and develop even better shooting opportunities for its members and the public. This year marks our 14th anniversary. I can't wait to see where we are in another 10 years.

Sincerely,

Russ McElyea, President
Gallatin Sporting Clays