



Eau Claire Rod & Gun Club **NEWSLETTER**



MAY 2018

“Wisconsin’s Oldest and Finest Gun Club”

RIFLE/PISTOL RANGE CLOSURE

On April 20, 2018 a member suffered a gunshot wound while on the rifle range. The member was downrange hanging a target on the 50-yard line target holder when they were unintentionally shot in the leg.

Per the police report, the range was called cold so shooters could go retrieve their targets. All shooting stopped. As shooters made it back to the shooting benches the victim, who had just arrived at the range, wanted to hang their target. The victim checked to see if the range was still cold and proceeded downrange.

Meanwhile the shooter, who was not at the shooting bench when the victim arrived, came back to the shooting bench. The shooter noticed others they were shooting with were now back at the bench and not seeing anyone at the 25-yard target they were shooting at, fired two rounds. At the second shot they heard the victim yelling downrange.

Although the shooter was shooting at the 25-yard line target, they were positioned in a way where both the 25-yard and 50-yard targets were in alignment. As they fired at the 25-yard target the bullet passed through and struck the victim at the 50-yard target.

Upon notification, the ECRG Board of Directors closed the rifle/pistol range until further notice.

This is an unfortunate incident which happened unexpectedly and unintentionally. Thankfully the victim’s injuries were not life threatening.

Should this have happened? Could this accident have been prevented?

Current requirements around usage of our range have remained largely unchanged over years with liberal shooting hours, moderate shooting restrictions, and shooting occurring without Range Safety Officers (RSOs) on duty. For many years the range has been able to operate without issue due to our responsible members and great volunteers who put in their free-time to maintain the range.

However, as noted in recent ECRG newsletters, we have experienced various negative issues on the range the past few years. Questions which have come up relating to this are:

- Where these issues the results of our members or were there non-members shooting?
- Was the gate working correctly at all times?
- Would better signage be appropriate? How about security cameras?
- Should there be an RSO on range when shooting is going on?

What have we done about it?

At board meetings over the past year we have discussed what can we do to improve our rifle/pistol range. We have since:

- included the range rules on the 2018 Membership Card (rules in hand at the time of purchase)
- replaced and revamped signage on rules and do's and don'ts
- upgraded/replaced shooting targets
- ensured the range gate is locking properly
- explored RSO training opportunities and have been in contact with RSO trainers

What's next?

The Board has decided the range will remain closed until a proper Range Safety program can be put in place and the range will not be open unless under direct supervision of Certified Range Safety Officers. While the Board recognizes this will greatly reduce the amount of time the range is open for members to use, it is the only way to ensure the safety of our members, neighbors, and the Club in general.

Due to the increased number of incidents and complaints in the recent years, a plan like this has been in the works. The April 20th incident just accelerated the plans.

If any member wishes to cancel their membership to the Club due to closure and forthcoming procedural changes, they can come to the club house during normal trap shooting hours, turn in their membership card, and receive a refund for their dues. Please keep in mind any trapshooting league shooters are still required to have a membership to participate in the leagues.

If there are members who are Certified Range Safety Officers and would like to volunteer for the Club, please let us know (bod@ecrodandgun.com). The more RSO's we can get, the more the rifle and pistol range will be open.

As the Board and other volunteers begin to get the final plans in place for the future operation of the rifle/pistol range, notifications will be posted on our Facebook page and our website (www.ecrodandgun.com).

TRAP SHOOTING COSTS

Just days after the last newsletter was sent out, we received notification from target supplier they were increasing the cost of our targets due to increased raw material costs.

The reason for the current price increase is tied directly to the aluminum market. This market uses pitch to manufacture the carbon electrodes in which are used to smelt the ore. As rapid growth has been seen in our thriving economy the past year, so has the demand for aluminum. Unfortunately, the same industry is consuming the same pitch used in our targets.

We have seen price increases in the past, at least four since 2008, but we have not always increased our shooting cost. We are cognizant of the costs related to trap shooting and our approach has always been to protect the shooters as much as we can. However, due to the level of the recent increase, the Club would be losing money on every round at the previous prices.

The target costs increased \$1.25 per case which translates to a \$0.25 increase per 25 targets (one round of trap). Therefore, the price to shoot a round of trap was increased from \$4.00 per round to \$4.25 per round for adults; \$2.25 to \$2.50 for youth shooters. Additionally, the discounted ticket book sales were eliminated.

The increase was not a decision the Board took lightly. In the end, the Club can not afford to operate its largest revenue source at a loss while continuing to provide quality shooting experiences and facilities.

We will continue to monitor our direct operating costs and along with our volunteers, will continue to work to keep our other operating costs low in an effort to keep our shooting costs as modest as possible.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

We were notified by the Eau Claire County Highway Department road construction will be completed on CTH Q from 75th Avenue to CTH L. The project will begin in May and be completed in September.

During the construction period traffic will be detoured to CTH QS to CTH QQ. Since the Club is along the detour route, we ask you keep your eyes peeled when exiting Club property as traffic will likely be higher than normal due to the construction.

ECRG APPAREL

We sell ECRG hats, sweatshirts, quarter-zips, can koozies, and now t-shirts. Please check out our display at the main counter in the Pro Shop. Please show your support of the Club by wearing some ECRG gear!!!

2017 HIGHLIGHTS

April is the main start of our operating cycle. As the weather starts to improve (although this year that could be taken lightly) people want to come out and shoot. Shooters are getting the cob webs out after a long winter break, league shooters are getting in their banks/shoot-aheads early in the month, and trap leagues start towards the end of the month.

As we get started for 2018, we wanted to provide some quick highlights on 2017:

- We ended the year with net income of \$56K on revenues of \$521K. Overall revenues were up 32% due to one-time events we don't see every year: timber sales (\$40K) and lead mining (\$96K). Without these one-time events, overall revenues were essentially flat. We did incur some larger one-time expenses but the amount of trap rounds shot, lead mining, timber sales, and consistent membership positively impacted our bottom line.
- We have no debt with cash reserves in excess of \$174K at year-end.
- 2,096 total members (down slightly from 2,203 in 2016)
- A total of 30,401 rounds of trap were shot with 760K+ of targets thrown in 2017 – 7% increases over 2016 and the highest seen since 2004.

We thank you for your support and we look forward to a great 2018 shooting season!!!



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