



NEWSLETTER



Izaak Walton League of America
Wildlife Achievement Club Chapter

December 97-January 98 Issue P.O. Box 118, Damascus, MD 20872
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Coming Attractions

Date	Event	Time
12/20	Christmas Tree Sales	9:00 am
12/20	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm
12/21	Christmas Tree Sales	9:00 am
12/21	Range Orientation	10:00 am
12/21	R & P Range Maint.	10:00 am
12/21	Archery Range Maint.	10:00 am
12/22	Airgun Shoot	7:00 pm
12/29	Airgun Shoot	7:00 pm
1/3	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm
1/4	Shotgun Range Maint.	10:00 am
1/4	Junior Air Rifle	2:00 pm
1/5	Adult Air Gun Shoot	7:00 pm
1/6	Board of Directors Mtg.	7:30 pm
1/10	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm
1/11	Junior Air Rifle	2:00 pm
1/12	Adult Air Gun Shoot	7:00 pm
1/17	Airgun Field Target Mtch.	7:30 am
1/17	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm
1/18	Junior Air Rifle	2:00 pm
1/19	Adult Air Gun Shoot	7:00 pm
1/23	Membership Meeting	7:30 pm
1/24	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm
1/25	Range Orientation	10:00 am
1/25	R & P Range Maint.	10:00 am
1/25	Archery Range Maint.	10:00 am
1/25	Junior Air Rifle	2:00 pm
1/25	Superbowl Party	4:00 pm
1/26	Adult Air Gun Shoot	7:00 pm
1/31	Turkey Shoot	6:30 pm

Christmas Tree Sales

Please buy your Christmas tree from us this year! All trees (Scotch Pines and a few Firs) are \$15.00. Wreaths will also be available at less cost. Trees will be on sale **December 20 and 21, 1997**. Sales hours are from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. This is an excellent project for those new members who need to fulfill their eight hour work requirement.

General Membership Meetings

The January membership meeting will be on **Friday, January 23**. This is our annual Wild Game Dinner. Five of our members will discuss Cowboy Action Shooting. Social hour is at 6:30 pm and the dinner starts at 7:30 pm. Cost will be \$7.00.

New Members

The following applications for membership have been approved by the Board of Directors. Chapter members can vote to accept these individuals as new members at the membership meeting on **Sunday, December 14**.

Guenther Fichtel, Damascus, MD

Sponsor: Joe Gick

Christopher Francis, Laytonsville, MD.

Sponsor: Joe Gick

James Guthrie, Jr., Damascus, MD.

Sponsor: John Snow

William Hasson, Frederick, MD.

Sponsor: Weldon Humphries

Eric Myers, Damascus, MD.

Sponsor: Earl Dickinson

Simon Oakley, Gaithersburg, MD

Sponsor: Bob Schneider

Oscar Zelaya, Wheaton, MD

Sponsor: Mauricio Arietta

January Shotgun Range Officer Schedule

Day	Date	Names
Sat.	1/3	Nancy Humphries Weldon Humphries Rich Buckingham
Sun.	1/4	Paul Bluteau Cindy Whitehurst
Sat.	1/10	Lewis Allnutt Bill Rahn
Sun.	1/11	Mike Merollini Kevin Manning
Sat.	1/17	David Fichter Burt Mullineaux
Sun.	1/18	Peter Currall Dave Gold Greg Baldwin
Sat.	1/24	Berle Cherney Wayne Sterling
Sun.	1/25	Lee Slavin Mike Boring Scott Garber
Sat.	1/31	Ed Bennett

Skeet and Trap Notes

The last newsletter indicated we will have a series of special promotions on the shotgun ranges during 1998. Our first promotional shoot of 1998 will be a "Valentine's Day" shoot on **Saturday, Feb. 14**. When any member, in good standing, shoots Skeet, Trap, or Five Stand with their spouse or significant other, that spouse or significant other shoots at half price. Just for future planning purposes, the next promotion will be the weekend of May 16/17, when youngsters (under 18) can shoot for FREE when accompanied by their parent (and the parent is a member in good standing). Additional details on these promotional shoots will appear in the newsletter as the dates for the event draws near.

Kevin Manning extends his special thanks to all members of the skeet and trap painting crew. The crew included: **Bill Rahn, Paul Bluteau, Conley Phipps, Ed Lloyd, Lee Slavin, Bill Wright, Chuck Crooks, and Rich Buckingham.** If we missed anyone please accept our thanks for the work and our apologies for not recording your name! They worked hard and freely gave of their time to benefit our Chapter during the painting process. We also appreciate **Mike Boring's** donations of caulk, rollers, tarps, and several other items used for painting the shotgun ranges. Similarly, **Scott Garber** donated trim paint and the use of a spray gun.

Rifle and Pistol Range Report

Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Sunday, November 16, a team of Ikes moved 240 prospective hunters through the marksmanship qualification process required for them to participate in managed state and local park deer hunts. Our team which ran the range, supervised parking, and assisted in firearms safety checks, consisted of 18 volunteers, 5 of which were first year members. **Ray Halperin**, the principal range officer, who is not known for gushy accolades, was enthusiastic about the way our volunteers worked together and with the shooters. It was a joint effort which left everyone feeling good. In addition to **Mr. Halperin**, the crew included **Bruce Roth, Chris Evrard, David Brunson, Paul Bluteau, Bill Gazdik, Ray Moran, Gene Shaw, James Fort, John Walter, Tom Mills, Bill McGiffin, John Leaman, Mac McCollum, Bob Mabie, Sean Hudgens, Ted Hadfield, and Ray Shaver.** If you helped and your name doesn't appear above, call **Ray Shaver**, (301) 926-0465, who will apologize and make sure that you get credit for your effort! Thanks again to all!!

The skies looked threatening, but luckily the rain held off during range maintenance on Sunday, November 30. Many thanks to the ten Ikes who cleaned up the ranges and constructed a block stairway down the bank on the left side of the rifle range firing line. Participants included **Ray Shaver, Ken Winpisinger, John & Chris Haczewski, Kenneth Denekas, Bill Guzzey, George Caperones, Dave McNeal, Lenny Miller, and Bill Kelly.**

The next rifle/pistol range maintenance session is scheduled for **10 a.m. on Sunday, December 21.** This should be a short session, concentrating mainly on policing the ranges, replacing target backers, and repairing any damaged target frames. Please meet at the equipment shed.

Anticipating the introduction of cowboy action shooting on our ranges during 1998, we need to make space by clearing brush and small trees between the 25 and 75 yard lines on the left side of the rifle range. Please bring chain saws and other brush cutting tools along to range cleanup sessions for the next several months.

Thanks to the miscellaneous donors of plywood during the past month, and to the person who repaired one of the swinging steel rimfire targets and returned it to the pistol range.

Cowboy Action Shooting

To date, feedback from Chapter members on starting a family-oriented Cowboy Action Shooting Program has been quite positive. We established a committee, headed by **Chuck Crooks**, (301) 831-9666, to get the program started. We expect to have a monthly shoot beginning in March, 1998. As the program progresses, we will be looking for household items for props. We have an immediate need for 1 inch, threaded pipe in 3 to 5 foot lengths to be used for target stands. We could also use a saddle. Please give Chuck a call at the above number if you can assist or have any questions. Also, remember that our January meeting will feature a presentation on Cowboy Action Shooting.

Air Pistol Match

Our adult air pistol shooters hosted a group from the IWLA Rockville Chapter for an air pistol match on November 10. There were 12

participants from WACC and 5 from the Rockville Chapter. The top four scores from each Chapter were combined to determine the team score. Happily, WACC shooters came in second but the Rockville shooters came in next to last!!

Scores for WACC were: **Tom Gaylord-349, Jim Piatetski-341, Walt Harris-333, and Ed Burrows-330** for a total score of 1,353. Rockville shooters and scores were: **Terry Popkin-352, Bill Hunter-351, Goaaba-340, and Harry Crow-340** for a total of 1,383.

Youth Training Activities

Three different youth groups have received marksmanship and gun safety training from our Chapter members. **Rich Buckingham, Phil Dean, and John Kwon** taught the groups. The groups included: Webelos Scouts from Damascus, who spent an afternoon on our indoor airgun range; Boy Scouts from New Market learned the fundamentals of skeet shooting and air rifle field target shooting; and another Boy Scout troop from Travilah worked on their rifle shooting merit badge on our rifle range.

Membership Renewal

All members are reminded to pay their annual dues as promptly as possible. In the past, we allowed members to renew as late as March 31; however, this year all dues must be paid by January 31. Effective February 1, all members must display their 1998 membership cards with "Range Approved" stamped in red ink. By now, you should have received your 1998 renewal bill. Please call our Membership Secretary, **Joe Gick**, at (301) 774-9399, for more information on renewal matters.

January Membership Meeting

Please note our January membership meeting is on a **Friday night, January 23** to accommodate our Wild Game Dinner. If you can donate some wild game, please call **George Silva** at (301)258-0377.

The January meeting will feature a discussion of Cowboy Action Shooting. Five of our members, dressed in cowboy attire, will describe these events. You may want to attend this meeting to find out more about these exciting events.

Smoking Policy

The last newsletter indicated the January meeting would include a vote by members on smoking in the Chapter House during Chapter events. Review of our by-laws determined the Board of Directors can establish this policy independently. During the December Board meeting, it was decided that, effective immediately, smoking would no longer be permitted in the Chapter House for two hours prior to, during, or two hours after a Chapter sponsored event. Members are welcome to smoke outside the building during these times. This policy neither applies to the private residences within the Chapter House, nor to groups who may rent or use the Chapter House for private or non-Chapter sponsored events.

In general, members who smoke have been very considerate of those who do not and done their smoking outside. A few members, however, have not done so, causing others with respiratory problems or allergies, or those who prefer a smoke-free environment, to leave Chapter events. We value all our members and sincerely hope that this new policy will put this divisive issue behind us and let us achieve our common purpose of promoting conservation, shooting, and outdoor activities. Thank you for your cooperation!

Chaplain's Note

If any member knows of another member who is seriously ill or has recently passed away, our Chaplain, **John Leaman**, would like to know. He will send our prayers for a speedy recovery to those who are ill or our condolences to surviving family members of those who passed away. Call John at (301) 972-1572.

Editor's Column

As we all know, the IWLA was founded by a group of avid outdoors men, especially fishermen. We were even named in honor of Izaak Walton, a famed angler. If he were alive today, I would nominate a little known American named Thomas Mills, Sr., as an honorary member of our Chapter. Tom Mills, Sr., lived on the Ohio River frontier in 1782 near the area now known as Wheeling, WV. His son, Thomas Mills, Jr., had been killed by Indians while searching for a horse he had left in Ohio.

I think Tom Mills, Sr. possesses the following qualities for honorary membership in our chapter: he was an avid angler, he devised his own tackle to bring in his fish, he went to a lot of trouble to scout out likely fishing spots and he tried different tactics to bring in his prey. He was also willing to face numerous obstacles in successfully landing his fish. Here is his true story. See if you agree with my nomination:

"Now the elder Tom Mills, having lost his son, his horse and his fine saddle, remained plagued by a depression that wouldn't let go.

Realizing he needed to do something to get his mind off the tragedy, Mills turned to his favorite pastime, fishing. An inveterate angler, he fished the Ohio River and its tributaries with great frequency, usually did very well and often sold his catch of bass, pike, muskellunge and catfish to other residents of the Wheeling area. Lately, he had been pitting himself against a huge catfish that on three occasions had thwarted him over the past two months.

Mills had first become aware of the big yellow catfish...when he paddled his canoe into the mouth of Glen's Run, four miles above Wheeling on the Ohio side of the river. The water was clear, and he had baited his hook with a walnut-size hunk of rancid deer liver and flipped it with his cane

fishing pole into the water beside a large submerged log just a short distance up from the stream's mouth. He had watched, amazed, as what seemed to be a section of the log disengaged itself from the shadows and swam to the bait...Nonchalantly, the catfish had opened its mouth and virtually inhaled the bait.

Tom Mills had jerked on his pole to set the hook and momentarily felt the awesome power of the fish before the pole shattered at midpoint... A week or so later Mills had gone back with a sturdier line and pole, and virtually the same scenario was repeated. About a month ago...he had tried again, this time relinquishing the use of a pole and tying the line to his canoe, but he lost the fish again, when, after being hooked, it thrashed and fought so hard against the weight of the boat that the hook straightened and jerked free.

So now, just after dawn on this beautifully clear day, (July 30, 1782) Tom Mills was heading for Glen's Run again...armed this time with a gig he fashioned from a three-tined pitch-fork, the tines straightened and strong sharp barbs forged at their tips.

The whole Wheeling community knew by now of Mills's contest with the big fish...a few were concerned about his setting out on the river when so many Indians were still hovering about. Tom Mills, a big, self-confident man...did agree to take a couple of young men along with him, though more for help in getting the big catfish than as defenders...The two young men, both 18, were Henry Smith and Hamilton Carr...All three had their flintlocks...

...With Mills standing in the bow and Smith crouched close behind, the canoe slid quietly toward the submerged log. Abruptly, Mills lunged, thrusting the gig with all his strength and making a perfect strike, all three barbs penetrating deeply into the fish... The water erupted in violent splashing, and the three men shouted triumphantly and yelled advice to one another as the fight was waged... In a few moments more,

... Mills and Smith got their quarry to the side of the boat and, ... slid the huge...fish over the gunwale and into the bottom of the canoe, where it continued to flop and slosh about weakly in the accumulated two or three inches of water. All three of their rifles, now useless, were also in that water.

The men were still laughing and congratulating one another when the shots broke out. A party of 30 Wyandots, attracted by the splashing and excited yelling, had crept up and fired from hiding at a distance of 40 yards. Both Mills and Smith were hit. (Mills), bleeding from multiple wounds, fell into the bottom of the canoe, groaning and trying to keep his nose and mouth out of the water.

...Carr managed to get them out into deeper water and swifter current...

Wheeling was undergoing a flurry of activity when they got there... A crowd met them on shore and carried the semi-conscious Tom Mills, ...to the quarters of Elizabeth Zane... She ordered Mills stripped and then, one by one, tended his bullet wounds--17 of them, plus two slight grazes...Bullets had pierced both arms...both legs had been hit several times...He had been struck in both hips...both buttocks... in the right side, the right shoulder twice and the inner thigh.

...Fortunately for him, he fell unconscious as she probed and cleansed the wounds, used a straight razor to remove the misshapen lead balls,...applied medicated salves and poultices... and then bandaged each wound. Mills did not regain his senses until an hour after she was

finished. She thought his first question when he aroused would be whether he was going to live. It was not... "Mrs. Zane," he asked, "how much did that damned catfish weigh?"

Elizabeth burst into a hearty peal of laughter and admitted she didn't know... She left and returned ten minutes later, smiling broadly... "Eighty-seven pounds."

"Almost makes it worth it all," he murmured, lapsing again into unconsciousness."

From *That Dark and Bloody River*, by Allan W. Eckert, Bantam Books, New York, 1995, pp. 409-412.

Now there's a fisherman!!