



JULY/AUGUST 2022

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Alan Pichan

The Spirit of Roy Keeler Society 2022 Inductee



Ruth Palmer asked the members of The Spirit of Roy Keeler Society to join her in front of the Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club's clubhouse. In all, eleven Keeler Society members attended the awards ceremony following the Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association's State Rifle and Pistol Championship.

She said she never realized how difficult the yearly choice is until she was inducted into the Keeler Society and learned firsthand. Ruth explained that fellow shooters submit nominations and the potential candidates are reviewed by the

society's members. "Randy (MacInnes) distributes the ballots, we cast our vote and we don't know who won until before the presentation.

"This year's inductee's been an active black powder shooter for over 40 years. He knows the rules and is very helpful and honest with anyone with questions or problems. He's sold thousands of tickets for the state rifle raffle over the years. He acquires prizes for shoots and is very active with the primitive events, either shooting or behind the scenes with planning and setting up matches. There's so much more to say. This year the Keeler Society chose Alan Pichan," Ruth said.

Throughout Palmer's presentation, Alan Pichan shuffled primitive scoring papers as he sat at the far picnic table. He had just finished presenting the awards. When he didn't look up she said, "Alan, come up here." Alan glanced at Ruth, then turned to Lyle McGregor who sat across from him and asked, "Who?" as everyone applauded.

"It was quite a shock," Pichan later said. "I had no idea, no reason to think I

would be selected. I've been going through the back of the trophy. There's a lot to read. It takes a while for it all to sink in.

"I got out of the service in '73. I used to shoot down river at the gun range on Pennsylvania Road in Brownstown Township. There was a guy there, Ray Bakszyk, who was trying to put a black powder match together. I had a musket, an 1863 Remington Zouave in .58 caliber percussion that I bought from Mike Yeck's shop in Dundee. I thought a musket with Minie ball would be less complicated to shoot," Pichan said as he started laughing in hindsight at his own folly.

"After it was all over, Ray took me aside and said, 'You need to shoot round balls in that thing. Here, try these.' He gave me some patches, too. He'd been in muzzle loading for years and shot musket.

"I shot that for a couple years, once a month. Then I branched out. I went to Laingsburg in the early '80s. I bought a round ball rifle, a Lyman Great Plains Rifle, .45-caliber percussion. Cliff Wrigley, Don Schwenke and I started going to other shoots, like Columbiaville.

"We went to the state shoot in Beaverton," Pichan said. "We wanted to shoot a match that required flintlocks so Cliff and I got Pecatonica kits for the poor boy style rifle. All the rage at the time was .40-caliber. I like a plain rifle. Well, we went back to the state shoot the next year with our new flintlocks, but they'd changed the rules and .45-caliber was the minimum. But that got us into flintlocks.

"The last 12 years I started shooting N-SSA (North-South Skirmish Association). Young Bob Elka got me interested in that. Grace, my wife, got me a Whitney rifle, .58-caliber percussion (reproduction) by James River Armory. I've shot N-SSA at the Maybee Sportsman's Club, Laingsburg and I go to the N-SSA home range in Winchester, Virginia, twice a year.

"I met Pa a couple times and got out to his shop," he said and started to chuckle. "We were shooting at Beaverton for the state shoot. Roy saw Grace with her head down on the mat. She was shooting prone for one of the matches, and she stopped to relax her focus. Roy thought she'd passed out. He came up to her and asked 'Are you okay?' She said, 'Just resting.' It was hot. He had a canteen to give her a drink."

Alan Pichan serves on the MSMLA board of directors, a position he's held a number of times. He is a past secretary of the organization and is the Primitive Coordinator for the State Rifle and Pistol Championship matches. He is a tireless promoter of the MSMLA state rifle raffle, and averages selling 250 raffle tickets a year.

The members of The Spirit of Roy Keeler Society believe Roy would be pleased with Alan's 49 years of dedication and tireless service to the black powder shooting sports!

Submitted by the members of The Spirit of Roy Keeler Society.



Ruth Palmer (left) presented The Spirit of Roy Keeler Society traveling trophy to Alan Pichan (right) at the MSMLA's 2022 State Rifle and Pistol Championships

Epilogue

At the drawing for the MSMLA State Rifle, Lyle McGregor looked away, circulated his hand through the raffle tickets and pulled one out. He extended his arm, avoiding the temptation to glance at the name. Jim Brotherton took the ticket, looked at it and smiled. "You're all gonna love

this," he said, pausing a few moments for dramatic effect. "The winner is Alan Pichan!"

The hooting, hollering and applause lasted for several minutes as Pichan bounded to front and held up the rifle. "I always buy tickets, because I want to win the rifle. Well, this year I won! Thank you all," he said.

The 2022 state rifle was a southern mountain rifle, matching Pichan's personal taste: "I like a plain rifle." The rifle was built by Ted Thelen and featured a 42-inch, .32-caliber Green Mountain barrel inlet in a chestnut stock. The chestnut tree for the stock was harvested from the grounds of the Grand Valley Cap 'n Baller's™ and milled by Larry Horrigan. The gun is iron mounted with an L&R flint lock. The package included a shot bag, horn, balls, accoutrements, range rod, gun sleeve and a patch knife.

"I shot it twice out back and it shoots nice," Pichan later said. "It's like shooting a .22-caliber rifle, no recoil and easy to handle. I'm happy with it, and I can't wait to get to the target range.

Congratulations, Alan!!



75 + YEARS 1942 - 2022
Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club's
2022 Events for the year:
Spring Shoot — June 4th and 5th
Fall Shoot — Sept 3rd & 4th
MSMLA Championships — July 6-10
Primitive Rendezvous — October 14,15, and 16
Winter Woods Walk January 14, 2023
www.lansingmuzzleloadinggunclub.com
[FaceBook @Lansingmuzzleloadinggunclub](https://www.facebook.com/Lansingmuzzleloadinggunclub)

LMLGC's Sciota Station home range consists of sixty acres (40 acres (Main) and 20 acres (Primitive) about a 1/4 mile apart)
 LMLGC Physical address is 8545 Garrison Road, Laingsburg, MI.

***THE GOLDEN OLDIES 2021 FROM
 GVCNB NATIONAL TRAP & SKEET
 WINNERS. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT
 PAT KING 2ND LADY SKEET,
 BONNIE FERNWALT 1ST IN LADY
 TRAP & 3RD IN LADY SKEET,
 ARDITH KNOP 2ND IN LADY TRAP***

Those Rumors are False...We think...

“Do we have enough pins?” started a robust discussion at the Spirit of Roy Keeler Society meeting on a pleasant Friday evening. Ten Keeler Society members gathered under the Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club’s picnic

portico. LMLGC hosted the 2022 Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association's State Rifle and Pistol Championship at their home range located at 8545 Garrison Road, Laingsburg, MI.

The Keeler Society first sponsored a commemorative match in 2017 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Roy "Pa" Keeler's birth. A stamped black moustache reminiscent of Pa's waxed handlebar moustache marked the rifle target or the shotgun score card. A participant dubbed the shoot fest "the moustache match," and the name stuck.

The idea was to have a five shot match just for fun, no scores, no medals—Pa would have liked that. Today, five years later, moms, dads, sons, daughters, grandparents or old friends break clays or punch holes for brownie sundaes, frozen fudge bars or family bragging rights. When a participant turns in a completed rifle/pistol target or shotgun score card that individual receives the latest lapel pin, marked "Carrying on the Tradition"—Roy "Pa" Keeler."

Well...in the midst of the fast-paced pin confab, Ron Fernwalt reminded members there are two Moustache Match opportunities left: at the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association's Michigan Pistol and Rifle Territorial and at the MSMLA's State Shotgun Championships.

A devout rifle marksman, we'll call him "Sam" to protect his identity, asked Ron how he handled the shotgun version of the match. "The score cards are separate from the other match cards and they have the moustache stamp," Ron said. Sam nodded.

Then a wry scribe spoke up and added, "Ron spends his winter months painting moustaches on the clay targets. It's very meticulous, time consuming work." There were a few puzzled looks. Minds whirred, perhaps wondering how the "moustache clays" could be separated from the stacks of ordinary birds in the trap houses.

"Ron, we thank you for your efforts," Sam said in a quick, earnest response. Ron raised his eyebrows and pulled back a bit, glanced at the perpetrator of this hoax, and offered a poker-table smirk.

"Yes, Ron, we thank you," another member said with a big grin. And with that, the discussion moved on.

As a heads up, there might be rumors circulating through Michigan's black powder shooting sports that each Moustache Match clay bird sports a black, hand-painted moustache—compliments of Ron Fernwalt.

To clear the air, those rumors are false...we think... The only way to tell for sure is to register for the MSMLA State Shotgun Championships August 18th to 21st, hosted by the Grand Valley Cap 'n Ballers™ on their shotgun range,

located at 3506 26th Street, Hopkins, MI.

And if you are a devout black powder rifle or pistol competitor, come on out anyway. There are always loaner guns and experienced shotgun instructors available. And if you miss a Moustache Match bird, you might get a glimpse of Ron's handiwork...



An "unconfirmed" image of a Moustache Match clay pigeon from a questionable source...

MSMLA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The membership meeting was held on Saturday night. The secretary and treasurers report were read. Reports were given from committee heads. Election of officers were selected: President Jim Brotherton, Vice President, Matt Magdic, secretary Diane McGregor, Treasurer Dave Maddox. Elected to the board were Erik Hoskinson, Joe Valentin and Wayne Lamson. The gun builder for 2023 is Lyle McGregor and the knife builder Paul Hermes. The black powder club appreciation certificate was awarded to Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club and presented to Mike Schultz, president of the club by Keeler society member Wayne Lamson. A total of 47 competitors registered at the event this year.

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MEDALS

The MSMLA medal recycling program is working very well. This program allows shooters to help promote the sport we enjoy. We can share the medals we have won with fellow shooters this way.

Along with our state medals I have received some of the NMLRA Territorial

medals. The national territorial program has also begun to recycle medals. This cost savings will also help them to promote our sport more.

If you have any Michigan state medals or Territorial medals you wish to share please contact me or one of our state directors. They can get them to me. I will get them back into circulation.

Thank you to everyone who has donated medals to this program. This has been beneficial and enjoyable activity. Lots of fun stories have accompanied these donations.

Lyle McGregor

The Lady Trap Territorial was won by Bonnie Fernwalt, 2nd went to Lacy White.

The Flint Trap and Skeet Territorial was won by Ed Henson, and flint trap went to Jan White for 2nd place.

The Lady Skeet Territorial was won by Pat King and 2nd went to Bonnie Fernwalt.

The 80 target regulation round of skeet went to Kevin Hiemstra, 2nd went to John Turner and 3rd went to David McMurray.

We will know around the first of the year how we placed nationally when all the states are done with their territorial. We also had re-entry matches which was well attended. We also gained one new

member to the NMLRA and Grand Valley Cap N Ballers.

FROM AROUND THE STATE

Been hearing a lot about clubs' memberships are falling in the sport of muzzle loading. I talked with Jim from the Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club and they have 5 or 6 families that have joined this year. Also, Grand Valley Club has 3 new family members and 2 or 3 more that is getting their meetings and work details in to become members.

The secret, promote and get your clubs name out there and when you get tired of doing it, keep doing it. The one that doesn't advertise and promote comes in last.

HOW DO TRAP SHOOTING, SKEET SHOOTING, SPORTING CLAYS AND FIVE STAND DIFFER?

Like driving a golf ball, shooting a shotgun is a skill you can improve with practice. And clay pigeon shooting is the ideal way to get this practice. Through it, you can master your shooting skills.

There are three major forms of clay pigeon shooting. Each can be found at sporting and shooting clubs around the country. The best clubs offer all three as well as a shooting sport called Five Stand.

Trap Shooting

This is the original type of clay pigeon shooting. It began in the 18th century and for decades used live birds. Artificial targets—glass balls and then clay discs—were introduced in the late 1800s. By the first World War, trap shooting had evolved into the two main ways it's practiced today.

- **American Trap:** Practiced at most shooting facilities in the U.S. It uses a single launcher located in a low trap house to throw clay targets away from shooters standing in a line of five stations. The trap house is in front of this line of shooters. As the game progresses each shooter stands at a station, fires at a series of targets (each presented at different angles), and moves right to the next station.
- **Olympic Trap:** Like American Trap, but instead of using a single launcher, it throws targets from a line of 15 machines, still positioned in front of shooters. Each machine throws a clay at a different, but set, angle.
- **Double Trap, Wobble trap, Down-the-Line, Bunker trap:** Variations of American or Olympic Trap.

Skeet Shooting

Is the second oldest type of clay pigeon shooting. It was created in the early 1920s by a grouse hunter looking to sharpen his skills. In 1926, a shooting magazine introduced the sport to America and offered \$100 to anyone who could come up with a name for it. "Skeet", derived from the Norwegian for "shoot", won.

There are two types of skeet: American and Olympic. Both use a pair launcher set in two different height towers positioned across from

each other. As shooters follow a course from one tower to the other, the launchers throw clay pigeons at a variety of angles designed to simulate the shots upland hunters encounter in the field. Compared to trap, Skeet targets are thrown closer to the shooters and in a wider variety of scenarios.

Sporting Clays

The third major type of clay pigeon shooting and the youngest. [Sporting clays](#) was developed in the U.K. and brought to America in 1980. Since then, it has exploded across the country to become one of the most popular shooting sports in the country.

Sporting clays is shot on a course made of 10-15 stations. These stations are laid out one after another, like holes on a golf course. Some stations feature one, two, or more clay-pigeon launchers, all throwing targets at different heights and angles. There are no official rules regarding how these launchers must be positioned, so no two sporting-clays courses are the same.

Compared to trap and skeet, sporting clays offers the widest variety of hunting-style shots. This makes it great way to sharpen your skills for the season or to keep them sharp all year.

Five Stand

If you were to put trap, skeet, and sporting clays in a blender, Five Stand would pour out. It features a line of five "stands" for shooters and a number of launchers arranged in front of the shooters, to their sides and even behind them. Shooter are presented five targets at each station, 25 targets in all.

Five stand is more exciting than trap and throws a wider variety of patterns than skeet. It's faster and cheaper than sporting clays. For hunters, it's a great game, giving you the chance to work on shots simulating everything

from fleeing rabbits and flushing to quail to ducks dropping into a set of decoys.

Guns For These Games

While you can shoot any of these games—especially five stand—with your favorite bird shotgun, if you want to be competitive in trap, skeet, or sporting clays, you'll want a gun tailored to them. These shotguns offer little differences—like weight and chokes—which equal to big advantages when you pull the trigger.

- **Trap guns:** These are heavy, have one or two long barrels (up to 34"), tight chokes and are almost always twelve gauges. Because of their weight, once you get these guns going, they swing smoothly—and stay swinging. This makes it easier to follow through on shots and soaks up a lot of recoil. Trap guns also have relatively straight stocks. This helps them shoot high so you use a technique known as "floating your target."
- **Skeet guns:** These are also heavy, but their barrels are 26"-30" long and their chokes are very open. Like trap guns, their weight soaks up a lot of recoil and helps you to keep the gun moving on crossing shots. Compared to trap guns, their stocks may have a bit more drop. While twelve is the most common gauge for skeet, people also shoot small bores and .410s.
- **Sporting-clays guns:** These are lighter than trap and skeet guns, have more choke in them skeet guns, and are stocked more like hunting guns. Barrels are usually 28"-32".

Which Game Is Best For Hunters?

Live birds, unlike clay pigeons, have minds of their own. Every time one flushes, you don't know where it's going to go: Straight away, to the left, or back towards you. The best way to prepare for all these scenarios is to do a few things.

First, shoot a lot of skeet, sporting clays or five stand. Either one will prepare for a busting pheasant or a bursting covey of quail. More importantly, when you shoot these games, use your hunting gun. While a competitive target gun can improve your score on the range, it's not the gun you'll carry in the field.

Finally, when you shoot, try to mimic the stance and posture of a hunter approaching a pointed bird or anticipating a flush. Hold the gun low (not mounted). Keep your eyes on the sky and a little weight on each foot. And think about how you're going to smash that clay when it flies into view.

*This applies to muzzle loading shotguns also. A lot of competitors use the same gun and do very well. (*your editor)

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AUGUST 13 RONDEVUE
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AUGUST 13 MEMORIAL SHOOT – LINE MATCHES
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AUGUST 14 WOODS WALK
 DETROIT SPORTSMAN CONGRESS

AUGUST 18, 19, 21 MSMLA STATE SHOTGUN
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AUG 19, 20, 21 MICHIGAN RIFLE/PISTOL
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SEP 11 WOODS WALK
DETROIT SPORTSMAN CONGRESS
SEP 16, 17, 18 HOWARD CITY
HOWARD CITY CONSERVATION CLUB
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SEPTEMBER 4 TO NOVEMBER 16 FALL AGG

The Jag shop received their shipment of powder. Give Jeff, Ron or Larry a call for appointment. See add above for phone numbers.



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NEWS FROM GRAND VALLEYCAP N
BALLERS tm

Heard rumor that we were using sporting clay targets on our skeet and trap field. This is an untrue statement. I checked the boxes and also the supplier and we are purchasing regulation skeet and trap targets. Sporting clay targets are a little heavier and harder to break. We are

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using the white flyer skeet and trap targets.

Our frontier shoot will be coming up the first full weekend of August and there will be meals available in the kitchen at the event. We have a have a full program for everyone.

The third weekend will be the MSMLA Shotgun Trap Championship. There will be re-entry skeet and trap matches with components for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place.

The fourth weekend will be Fun Tyme at the Range for the lady's. Go to www.gvcnb.org for the full programs of the events.

Ron GVCNB

Thumma, Jim Brotherton, Ron Fernwalt, Ruth Palmer (with plaque) Dave Maddox, Wayne Lamson, Randy MacInnes, Joe Valentin, Dennis Neeley, and Eric Hoskinson getting ready to welcome Alan Pichan into the society.

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Members of the Keeler Society that were present at the Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun club to welcome the new recipient into the society. From left to right Richard (Guy) Smith, Ira

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Just sitting here thinking of three different thoughts that came to my mind.

1. Why aren't we getting news articles from the 30 different clubs we have in the state? This newsletter goes out to over 200 recipients and to the nationals and we only hear about 2 or 3 clubs in the state. I have had people say to me, why don't you get articles from other clubs.

2. *The other one is why aren't other clubs sponsoring rifle and shotgun matches. I don't know, they get 1 – 2 letters a year asking for their support plus it is in the MSMLA newsletter.*

3. *All members if they can afford it should belong to the NMLRA and the NRA to help support our gun rights.*

If you can send me an e-mail on the answers of the first two of my thoughts it would be appreciated and I can publish them in the newsletter, or you can send me an article from your club to put n the newsletter, rbfern@triton.net or MSMLA, 16808 Peach Ridge, Kent City, Mi. 49330.

Sponsorships can also be sent to the same address.

Ron