

**MICHIGAN STATE  
MUZZLELOADING ASSOCIATION  
NEWS LETTER  
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017**

**THE PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**



Summer is winding down and fall is coming. It has been a good summer with lots of shooting done. I recently participated at the Michigan State Shotgun shoot. The shoot is currently being hosted at the Grand Valley Cap n Ballers Club. I was there for two of the four days of the event.

Having shot some shotgun in the past I was happy to play again. It had been three years since I had last thrown some shot. My gun of choice was a 20 gauge trade gun that I had recently finished. My expectations were low as I hadn't had a chance to do any load work.

I started with the flint only re-entry match. This is a 10 bird round shot from the ten yard line. Trap is fired from 5 stations in a semi circle at outgoing birds. The trap swings back and forth. This means the targets can come out in a variety of angles.

I was happily surprised when I broke 6

out of the 10 targets. This was much better than I expected. I then shot the trade gun match. This was also from the ten yard line. This time I broke 5 birds. I also shot the Keeler memorial match to collect my commemoration patch.

This was enough shooting for me that day. On Sunday morning I prepared myself to shoot the Novice Championship. This match is a 15 target match fired from the 10 yard line. I proceeded to hit 11 of the 15 birds. I was more than happy with how I had done.

As the shooting concluded I found myself tied for first place in the novice match. Johnathan Wadsworth had also shot an 11. We were going to have a shoot off! I suggested to him that we trade guns for the shoot off. He declined. I offered that we could shoot left-handed. He passed on that idea also.

We loaded up and stepped out to start. Our first shots were from the 14 yard line. We both broke our birds and loaded again. This next shot was from the 18 yard line. Once again we both were on target and the birds broke. After loading up again we stepped up to the 22 yard line.

I know I was more than a little nervous. This was my first shoot off as well as Johnathans. It was now that I started thinking. Bad move. I thought I needed to get on the bird quickly due to the distance we were backing up. I lined up, called for the bird and went after it. I lined up well but hit the trigger before I had fully caught up to it. Sure enough I had shot under it for a miss. Now it was up to my competitor.

Johnathan stepped up to the pad. Called for the bird and kept his nerves under control. He broke his bird solidly.

I was happy with how I shot and new I had been bested by a better shooter. We congratulated each other and enjoyed the moment. At the awards ceremony I was proud to hand the first place trophy to the 14 year old shooter who bested me in the shoot off. I know I will long remember and cherish that shoot off.

I will have to find more time to shoot shotgun. Dave McMurray with the help of several other shooters put on a great program. This is another event that needs to be on your calendar. It's a lot of fun with some great people. They are more than willing to help you learn the game and share the fun.

Hopefully we will see you at a club in the near future. We will save a spot at the campfire for you. Lyle and Diane

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*Betty Carr with son Tim Carr standing in front of trap house the Carr's donated. Tim shot his dad's gun in the volley*



Thank you and the MSMLA for honoring and remembering Clyde. It meant so very much to both Betty and Tim.

Paulette Carr



Keeler Society members who attended the Territorial on Friday. On Saturday, Randy was on hand, which would have made seven

Roy "Pa" Keeler special match and patches in 2017

The year of Pa Keeler's passing marked the formation of the Roy Keeler Society. Originally people that were selected to join the society were picked by the officers of the Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association. Eventually that responsibility was turned over to the members of the

society and each year a worthy person is added to the roster.

With in a year of Pa's death in 1998 the first member of the society was inducted. There was one year when two people were inducted but there has never been a year when no one went in. Ask any member what it felt like to be inducted and they'll tell you it was one of the proudest days of their lives. The reason for the sense of pride is the feeling that you're name should be used in same sentence as Pa Keeler's.

Here we are approaching the twentieth year of the formation of the society and it's sad to say that many people shooting black powder firearms today never had the opportunity to meet the man himself. There are even a few people that didn't know who he was and that's a shame.

This past shooting season the members of the society decided to do something about the memory of Pa Keeler fading into the past. There will come a time when everyone that knew Pa will be gone and we felt it was our obligation to renew an interest in the man and his legacy.

We decided to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pa's birth and we sponsored a Pa Keeler match this year. The match was free of charge to anyone that shot at the Michigan State Shot Gun Championship matches, the State Rifle Championship matches, The shot gun Territorial matches, and the Territorial Rifle matches.

No scores were kept for the match because Pa was never one to worry about the final score. He was there to shoot as good as possible and to have a good time. It is safe to say that everyone that shot the Pa Keeler match this year shot as good as they could and they had a good time.

Every person that shot the match was given a beautiful embroidered patch that is worthy

of putting out on display. The cost of the patches was paid by the society and to offset that expense we auctioned off four posters of Pa Keeler. The proceeds from those auctions covered the cost of having the patches made so in the end it didn't cost anyone any money and everyone came out ahead.

This would have been the sort of thing that Pa would have loved being a part of. What's especially nice is that twenty years after his passing he's still a big part of things. He's urging us on to do the work he got started and even though none of us are worthy we're at least trying.

The society's next goal is to do so similar things in the future. We have no idea what those things will be but we'll come up with something to keep the memory and the legacy of Pa Keeler renewed and alive. Let us never forget.

Respectfully submitted  
The members of the Pa Keeler Society.

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Winner of the 2017 MSMLA Rifle Raffle



Kids Trophy winners of the Lansing Muzzle Loading Gun Club shoot held at Laingsburg this past Labor day weekend. I heard that a fun time was had by all

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## MSMLA SHOTGUN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association Shotgun Championships is now history. The shoot was held at the Grand Valley Cap N Ballers Muzzle Loading Gun Club. We had a total of

*36 competitors attending the championship. They were from Michigan, Canada, Indiana and Texas. There were 34 competitors that shot for the Keeler Centennial Patch.*

*The winner of the Michigan State Trap Championship was **Larry Trantham**, 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **Ken Hobday** and 3<sup>rd</sup> went to **David McMurray**. The Junior State Championship went to **Johnathon Wadsworth** breaking 13 out of 15, 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **Drake Buell**. The Lady State Championship was won by **Bonnie Fernwalt**, 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **Louise Mercer** and 3<sup>rd</sup> went to **Cathleen Taylor**. The Percussion Championship was won by **Ken Hobday**, 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **David Taylor** and 3<sup>rd</sup> went to **Ardith Knop**. The Flint Championship was won by **Missi Taylor** and 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **Nick Melnyk**. The Flint/Percussion Championship was won by **Missi Taylor** and 2<sup>nd</sup> went to **Nick Melnyk**. The State Novice*

*Championship was won by Johnathon Wadsworth, 2<sup>nd</sup> went to Lyle McGregor and 3<sup>rd</sup> went to Brian Hooyer. There were several Re-entry matches for all to compete in from the 10 yard, 16 Yard, 18 yard, 20 Yard and 27 Yard. Components for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> were given out at the awards ceremony.*

*Betty Carr and Tim Carr attended on Saturday for the Volley for Clyde Carr and Mike Watson.*

*A big thank you goes to Bonnie Fernwalt and Daughter Julie Averill of M & J Water wells for the beautiful quilt that was raffled off. A thank you to all that bought tickets was very much appreciated by the association.*

## FUN TYME AT THE RANGE

On Friday afternoon after a long morning of packing clothes, camping equipment, checking on shooting supplies, shooting boxes, and a few Rock Stars to get me through the weekend, I headed south to gather with some old friends and meet a few new ones, as I have for many years now.

Some years back, Janet Tessman called and asked what I thought of an all-women's shoot. Most of us would just dream about it but not Janet she did something. Next thing I know we were all being invited to Grand Valley for a women's only shoot, with guys helping out new comers, even offering up

rifles for them to use, and the NRA gave her a grant to help support it.

I don't think I have missed a one, since. This year we tried a few new targets and games, and had a great time as always, and yes, we had a few new shooters introduced to the sport, hopefully they will join us again next year or better yet compete at their local muzzle loading gun club's monthly matches.

When I arrived, as always, I am flooded with memories of all the fun times we had while members there, and was greeted at the shot gun range by my ol' shooting partner Bonnie Fernwalt. I think we started out together in 1985 or somewhere in that time frame.

The two of us went to register, and pick up targets at the club house. I was pleasantly surprised to be handed powder, patches, and caps to use on the line at the shoot. And the best present was our shooter number, it was on a glass bird, that when you put water in it you could whistle just like a bird singing!

We bought raffle tickets on a lot of nice merchandise, including a quilt donated by Bonnie. She also did the embroidery for the yearly blanket given away for registration each year.

We waited for my Granddaughter Jenny and her shooting partner Ashley to show up and we'd get camp set up. Were they all surprised when I got the tote out that I thought had the tent, as it turned out I brought everything but... so we all piled in Ron and Bonnie's trailer for the duration of the shoot.

Saturday morning found us shooting traditional matches of our choice, after Jeff gave us a safety training class. He said it was like preaching to the choir, but you always need a reminder.

We kept the range officers and a few morning coffee drinking bystanders very busy, it seems I started an epidemic of dry balls. At one time, I turned around after my flinter went off and they were lined up three deep waiting for the CO2 to blow the balls out so they could try again.

We had a great time comparing shots, and giving advise as to how many shots each of us had in the target. I think the girls missed Janet giving them tips on getting the best shot off.

Afternoon found us shooting novelty targets. What a hoot! After explaining what we were aiming for a few times, we all lined up and shot in squatted matches. The only target I remember shooting before was a big bull at 25 yards but it was a team match. Two of us to a bull, ten shots total. Not sure who won but the team of Jackie and Ashley took the best "selfies!" We shot clay pigeons at twenty-five yards and I have no idea how we missed some of them that close, we use to shoot them at 50 yards in Manistee. Must have looked too easy. The new comers enjoyed watching them explode. They were all fun and challenging and took some of the edgy feeling out of the competition.

After four the range was closed and we started the fierce field games. Jeff had built us the funniest looking old man running

away for us to aim our rolling pins at. One gal even hit him in the foot. He looked scared!

Next it was on to bean bag tossing. It ended up a family rivalry between mother Lee and daughter Jackie. As a good mom would do, Lee “let” Jackie win the final match up.

Bonnie won the tomahawk and knife throw, but she owed it all to Leann who loaned her the knife and hawk and coached her to her victory! They were both pleasantly surprised with the out come

We were served two great meals Saturday by Sheryl and John. Jeff’s daughter Pam sent us dessert for each meal, and we all rolled away from the picnic tables!

The weather cooperated and we even had a few campfires around the camp grounds. We were early to bed totally exhausted from all the shooting, games and eating!

We finished up Sunday morning shooting “clangor” targets on a line woods walk. It was a great way to cheer each other on to victory over those metal animals. Also, was a fast way to get everyone through the line, we were done shooting by 11:30 and were set up for awards around 12:30- 1:00.

Barb McCallister showed us all how it should be done! She was the most gracious winner I have ever seen at awards. After she took first in the first match, she passed her first prize from then on to someone else that may not have received any awards. Let me tell you she could have cleaned up on black powder if she had kept them for herself,

taught us all that winning is only part of the fun, sharing can be even more rewarding.

What Janet started for us many years back, is a legacy she can be proud of, we thank the NRA for their continued support for women shooters, and as always Grand Valley Cap & Ballers were great hosts. Most of us will return again next year and I invite all women in our state and beyond to join us to share in the fun and maybe learn a few tips from those who have been in the sport for a long time. It is a sport I have been a part of for thirty odd years and still enjoy every time I point the Pear Gun down range.

See you at the shoot!

Paulette Maxson





