

President's Letter

July 2015

It has been JULY hot around here, but not completely unbearable. The mornings are nice and endurable until early afternoon, just about right for a good old fashioned Cowboy Action shooting match. But do be prepared for some dust. With the gravel on the range, dust is almost non existent but when you get into the bare dirt areas, it can be a little dusty. Thankfully we don't have many areas like that on the range. The heavy spring rains have made the grass grow in places that were dirt in years past, so the range is in real good shape.

By the time of the August shoot, we could be under a burn ban if we do not get some rain soon. If so, please be careful if smoking and/or making a campfire. If you are a smoker, remember not to throw butts on the ground for others to pick up, use the butt cans that are on the range.

Life is not always dull and tranquil here on the range. Just the other day while Tx. Alline and I were picking up limbs that had fallen from the trees and putting them on a burn pile, I happened to look at all the water weeds that are growing in the stock tanks on the property when I saw a couple of eyes staring back at me. On looking closer, I also saw a long head and snout of an Alligator. My first reaction was of surprise, and then disbelief. Then I thought of getting my gun and dispatching it immediately. I called it to the attention of Tx. Alline, and her first reaction was to tell me to shoot it. Then we decided to go to the neighbors house and get them so they would not think we were nuts, The first thing they said when they saw it was Shoot it before it eats one of our small dogs. Then we went to get the Cowboy Bandit, It was about 10 o'clock and we had to get him out of bed, and the first thing he said was, do you want me to go get it? I said yah, but he replied, NO WAY. Then I decided to call the Parks and Wildlife to get their recommendation, and they said it is illegal to shoot it without a permit, which is what I thought. They then gave me the names of three Animal Control people to call to have them come out and get it. I did, and found out that it would cost me \$75 and I said OK. Two gentlemen came out from Athens and proceeded to capture the hapless Alligator and later said that they had found it a new home in a refuge. It was not large, but it was not small either coming at 52 inches in length. Boy was he determined not to be caught. The capture of that critter is another story all of it's own. Perhaps I will tell it at another time since space is getting short, and my fingers are getting tired.

Don't forget to drink plenty of water, keep cool, and shoot straight.

Justa Hand