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D.S.S.A. NEWS

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Hi-Tech Rifle Range – Target Scoring Goes Digital

by David Crout



Long Range matches at Bridgeville Rifle & Pistol Club in Delaware have gone high tech!

You can't teach an old dog new tricks. So sayeth the adage. And when I first learned about the Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club switching to a new-fangled electronic target and a scoring system for long range matches, I pictured some of the more seasoned veterans of the sport having considerable trouble adapting to the change. I imagined technical problems causing long delays or even outright cancelled matches, and the cries of "I told you so!" coming from the purists. The system is the HEX System, created and manufactured in Australia. The work on developing the system began in 2009 and the first successful trial took place in 2011. Adaptation of electronic target systems has been slow – only three ranges in the United States have adopted HEXTA Systems. First, they are expensive. There is a substantial investment required for a club to upgrade to an all-electronic system, and the payback can be slow. Tens of thousands of dollars in expense is more than most clubs' officers can suggest at a member's meeting without wearing riot gear. But mostly, it is just because it means change. And change is generally considered to be bad. But in Bridgeville, Delaware (one of the three U.S. clubs to own the system) it is looking like change is good - very good.

The scorekeeper is not quite ready to give up paper and pen, but getting used to the digital version is easier than many may think.



The name HEXTA represents the principle design of the target system, which incorporates eight sensors in its acoustical chamber to achieve precision in isolating and pinpointing each shot. The acoustical chamber is created using two rubber membranes, with the target inside. The sound waves of the bullet are pinpointed by the sensors and the shots are marked with stunning precision. But bringing more accurate scoring to the game is not really the big advantage. For starters, real-time scoring is possible and the shooter can glance down at his or her tablet and see the hit from the shot just made. They can also scroll through the system and see the shots just made by their competitors on either side. Score keepers have the ability to do some editing, but of course shooters and spectators cannot.



Shooter and scorekeeper each have their own screen. The scorekeeper can do some amount of editing.

The system is run on a closed Wi-Fi frequency, with the down-range transmitters sending their data to a server that processes the information and then sends the signals to the tablets. Wi-Fi antennas are strategically located on site. Match Directors can make the match viewable on the Internet for remote spectators, which is certainly an advantage that is distinct to electronic target systems.



Wi-Fi signals are sent and received by powerful and durable antennas.

The biggest advantage I observed while watching a 1000 yard match at Bridgeville was the faster pace of the match. I never once heard the radio buzzing with target questions or errant shots, and most importantly – there is no staff down range! No target pullers are needed, and therefore there are no delays for that process – and no expenses for pullers.

It is also beneficial if two or more clubs can work out a partnership arrangement to share the cost and targets. For example, Bridgeville has such a relationship with Reade range near Altoona, PA – loaning extra targets for big matches.

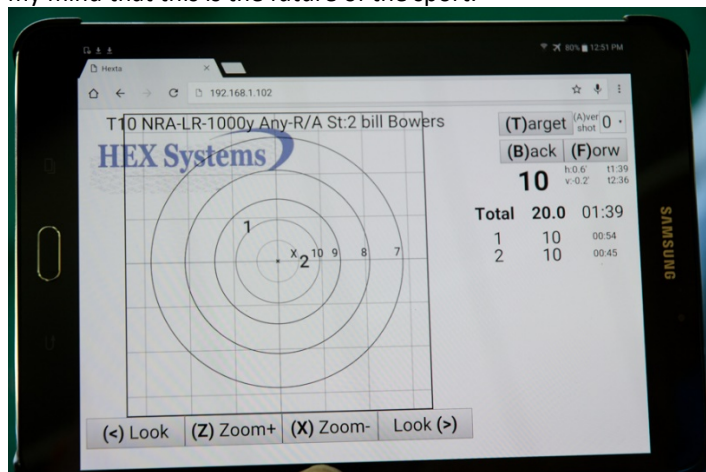


The shooter checks his last shot as he chambers the next round.

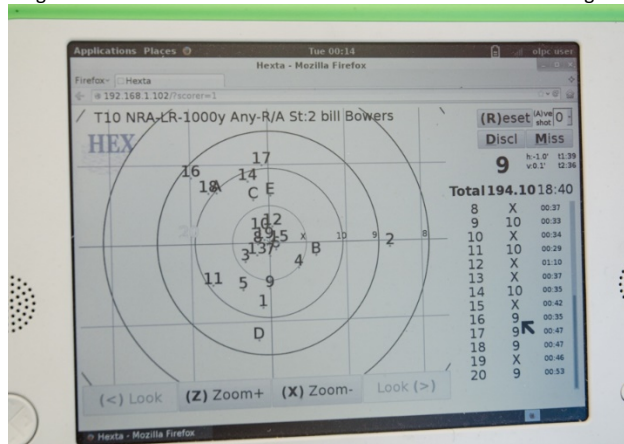


This "new-fangled" technology is just an everyday thing to the younger competitors.

Often, a new technology that replaces a long-standing method must overcome some strong opposition from participants, but it seems that embracing the electronic target concept, and the HEX System specifically may be an exception. Bridgeville Club member John Sigler (past NRA President), a traditionalist who was skeptical of the change had this to say after his first match with the new targets: "I thought I'd hate it, and I thought it would be hard to learn. But you catch on to it quickly and by the end of the day you really like it. While I miss the satisfaction of watching the target go down after the shot and I miss seeing the white marker, there is no doubt in my mind that this is the future of the sport."



Targets can be viewed on remote tablets and other devices within signal range.



The scorer's view is a bit different from the shooter, and allows some editing.

THE SECOND AMENDMENT – A BRIEF ESSAY

By Curtis Clements

The Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America is as follows:

“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”

Over the past 100 years, these twenty-seven words have become an ever-increasing source of controversy, and the target of numerous attempts by those not supporting the right enshrined in that amendment, to subject it to revisionist interpretations and obscure its true and straightforward meaning.

The framers of the Constitution of the United States of America were among the most well-educated and learned men of their time. Their use of words was intended to be precise, economical and readily-understandable to a population that included many people without much formal education. That is especially true of the words used to express the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, known collectively as The Bill of Rights. It is important to remember that the Constitution does not grant or confer these rights. Rather, it acknowledges their existence as being fundamental human rights and it protects them from usurpation or infringement by the government.

When viewed in the context of the time in which it was drafted, it is not terribly difficult to decipher the original intent of the words which our founders crafted into the Second Amendment, or to apply them to current times, for they are fundamentally unchanging and timeless.

The introductory dependent clause - *“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, . . .”* - gives insight into the reason why the framers included the amendment as one of the fundamental Bill of Rights. They recognized that freedom was not free and that preservation of the free State created under the Constitution might require protection from those who might seek to subvert it or use political power to suppress our basic freedoms. Who did they expect to provide for the security of a free State? Not discounting that the threat could come from enemies, both foreign and domestic (possibly including a rogue federal government itself), they recognized the need for a militia. At that time, the militia was understood to be a body of men that were part of the general population, that could be called upon to come together for the common defense when circumstances required. The Militia of the Second Amendment is not the standing military, nor the military reserves, nor the states’ National Guard units. Those organizations did not exist at the time of the drafting of the Constitution. The militia, when needed, would come from *“We the people.”* The adjective phrase *“well regulated,”* as commonly understood in the framers’ time, simply

acknowledged that such a force must be properly organized and trained in the use of arms and basic military tactics.

The key portion of the Second Amendment, however, is the independent clause: *“the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.”* As established in multiple prior decisions by the Supreme Court, and as affirmed in the *Heller* decision, the contextual usage of the phrase *“the people”* unquestionably means that every person who is part of *“We the people,”* have this right, individually, and the people have it collectively.

So if *“the people”* have the right to *“keep and bear Arms,”* what sort of weaponry would that include? In the context of the full language of the Second Amendment, common sense would indicate that the founders intended for the people to have the type of arms needed to equip an effective militia, especially including any types of small arms that would be useful in a military sense. In fact, in the case of *U.S. vs. Miller* (1939), the Supreme Court, in finding against Miller, who was charged to be in violation of the National Firearms Act for possession of a sawed-off shotgun, essentially confirmed this in finding that:

“In the absence of any evidence tending to show that possession or use of a “shotgun having a barrel of less than eighteen inches in length” at this time has some reasonable relationship to the preservation or efficiency of a well regulated militia, we cannot say that the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear such an instrument. Certainly it is not within judicial notice that this weapon is any part of the ordinary military equipment or that its use could contribute to the common defense.” [Note: The justices must not have been aware of the widespread use of so-called *“trench-sweeper”* shotguns during the First World War.]

Based on this ruling, it should be abundantly clear that firearms that are useful in a military sense are clearly protected by the Second Amendment. Strict scrutiny, which is the standard by which Bill of Rights cases must be reviewed, would thus lead to the conclusion that state bans on so-called assault weapons, such as the AR-15, AK-47 and a host of other modern sporting rifles (and their standard-capacity magazines), such as those in effect in California, Connecticut, Maryland, New York and other states, are blatantly unconstitutional. It would seem to be clearly obvious, even to those of us without formal legal training.

Which leads to the last words in the Second Amendment: *“Shall not be infringed.”* These four words are unquestionably the clearest language in the sentence. So-called *“common sense regulations”* and *“reasonable restrictions”* are thinly-disguised synonyms for infringements and the Second Amendment flatly prohibits anything that restricts the right to keep and bear arms.

In short, the intent and meaning of the language of the Second Amendment is not malleable. It is not within the discretion of judges to skew, distort or otherwise arbitrarily re-interpret those words, or to say that they mean something

else. Judges, at all levels, who refuse to correctly interpret the Second Amendment and protect the sacred right articulated therein, are not being true to their oath of office or the ethical standards of their position. And in the final analysis, *We the people* do not need them to tell us what the Second Amendment means.

TEAM SASS

By Dave Bell

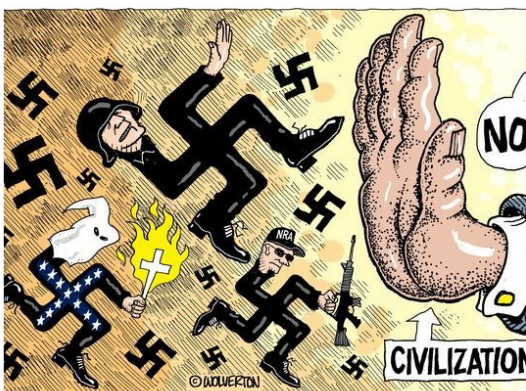
The Single Action Shooting Society is an international organization created to preserve and promote the sport of Cowboy Action Shooting™. SASS endorses regional matches conducted by affiliated clubs, stages END of TRAIL The World Championship of Cowboy Action Shooting, promulgates rules and procedures to ensure safety and consistency in Cowboy Action Shooting matches, and seeks to protect its members' 2nd Amendment rights. SASS members share a common interest in preserving the history of the Old West and competitive shooting.

Enter TEAM SASS. "A well-regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

TEAM SASS was formed to educate, communicate, distribute and exchange knowledge, information and updates as it relate to our 2nd Amendment Rights. We would not be able to enjoy our shooting sports if not for the efforts of organizations standing up our interests. Strength comes in numbers and the Single Action Shooting Society has added it's numbers and weight to the discussion. John Sigler, former President of the NRA and DSSA was instrumental in extending a hand to SASS and has spoken to the SASS Convention and its' members in becoming proactive in this effort. Membership Chairman Dave Bell has just been appointed TEAM SASS Director for Delaware. We are concerned with competitors traveling to and through Delaware while competing with their firearms. SASS has just added it's voice to the debate.

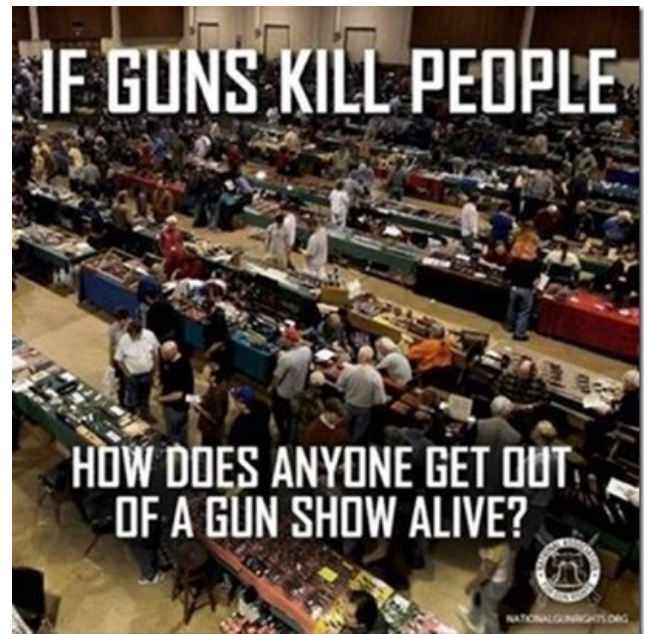
Want to know more... contact Dave Bell (dabll@comcast.net)

News Journal Ignorant and Bigoted Again



One of Many Letters to the News Journal Editor By James W. Bowman, NRA Life Member

The political cartoon published on Aug. 21, portraying the National Rifle Association of America as a Nazi organization demonstrates once again the appalling ignorance and bigotry of the News Journal editorial board regarding guns and gun owners. Since 1871, the NRA has defended the natural right of all **law-abiding** Americans regardless of race, sex, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, etc., to keep and bear arms and defend themselves. The NRA has promoted and taught firearms safety to millions of law-abiding citizens and has trained hundreds of thousands of law enforcement personnel over decades. Unlike the American Civil Liberties Union, which only supports parts of the Constitution that it agrees with, the NRA believes in and supports the entire Constitution, including the News Journal's First Amendment right to publish trash. You owe the NRA and it's millions of law abiding and loyal American members an apology!



Electronic Targets –An Idea Whose Time is NOW.

By Frank Nezda

Please consider the following four scenarios.

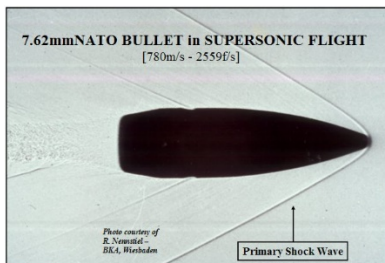
1. A prone shooter, slung-up, face full of concentration –he squeezes the trigger. Bang. The target goes down, and 8 seconds later it comes up signaling an 'X'.
2. A second prone shooter, also slung-up, face full of concentration –squeezes the trigger. Bang. The target goes down, and 58 seconds later he is muttering to himself... GET. IT. IN. THE. AIR. Eventually, the new or inept target puller does get the target back up, and it comes up signaling an 'X'.
3. A third prone shooter, this time a brand new junior – she weighs all of about 84 pounds, and despite her desire to provide good pit service, she just isn't big enough and struggles to do a good job.

4. Another prone shooter, this one showing a little bit of 'wear and tear', talking with a friend "Bob, I don't know if I can keep doing this. Every time I come home from a match, it takes me a while to get over being sore. I'm not a spring chicken anymore. Maybe I ought to take up fishing." "I hear you Mike" replied Bob, "it isn't getting any easier to pull targets –been doing it for nearly fifty years though, and I sure don't want to take up fishing or golf. I wish there was a better way."

Many of us have encountered these scenarios or something similar, or we know someone who has had that experience. It hardly seems fair that one shooter can get awesome pit service, while another is praying just to get his target back up. Worse, shooters of a certain age are sometimes being forced to quit a sport that they have been enjoying for decades.

Well, that situation is changing with the advent of electronic targets.

What are electronic targets? Well, the most basic definition is a target that can signal your score electronically back to your firing position. Most, if not all of these systems work using microphones or some other sensor (optical) and sophisticated problem solving computers to locate your shot via the sonic shockwave or optical signature of your bullet as it passes through the target. In a nutshell, the microphone 'hears' the sonic boom of your bullet as it passes by, and the computer calculates the position of the bullet in space based on the timing of the shockwave as it passes by each microphone.



This primary shock wave triggers an electrical response in the microphone. The timing of that response relative to the response from the same bullet shock wave triggering the other microphones is then used to (quickly) mathematically calculate the location of the bullet. If it sounds complicated, well, it IS! Fortunately for us, there are some really smart people involved in the shooting sports (you thought we were ALL smart, didn't you). Well, these smart guys and gals have worked hard at solving those tough mathematical problems and have given us several options for electronic targets. Wait, I thought the Olympics have been using electronic targets for a while now? Yes, they have, but there are some pretty significant differences between using electronic scoring for pellets and smallbore indoors, and electronic scoring for centerfire rifles and pistols OUT-doors.

At the moment, there are three major/viable suppliers of electronic targets in the US that are suitable for centerfire rifle matches. There are pluses and minuses for all of these, and I will not debate those attributes in this column. The suppliers all have very good websites, and I encourage you to get online and take a look at this technology. It should be noted that some of these manufacturers have been using these targets for several years different parts of the world and have a fairly established track record.

The manufacturers are (in alphabetical order);

Hexta Systems <http://www.hexsystems.com.au/>

Kongsberg Target Systems <http://www.kongsberg-ts.no/en/>

Silver Mountain Targets

<http://www.silvermountaintargets.com/>

Now that you have looked at the manufacturer's websites, and have digested what they had to say, you want to know how they work in the 'real world', right? You, my friend, are in luck. Recently, several members of the Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club shot a Regional Long-Range (1000 yard) match at Reade Range near Altoona, PA on HEXTA targets (the first time for this particular brand of targets in the US). I was one of those that were lucky enough to be in Altoona that weekend. I can tell you from personal experience that the targets worked great! I shot a total of about 150 rounds on these targets and scored about the same number (yes, you still need 'official' scorers), and didn't note a single missing, weird, or unexplained shot.

Of course there were some minor 'issues' with getting things to work properly, but most of those could be blamed on operator error, and folks that just clicked a wrong button somewhere. If you think about it, we had nearly 80 shooters on the line, NONE of whom had used this target system before, and we only had minor issues –I don't care who you are, that is pretty impressive for a new (to us) system! After the match, I heard largely positive feedback from those I talked to. Most were happy not to have to go to the pits, and most were also impressed that the match progressed faster than normal because we didn't have to do pit changes and such –we even had time for a nice lunch!

The best part of shooting on these targets though was how quickly you were able to see the result of each and every shot –no more new guy in the pits searching for a paster, or your bullet hole. No slow poke unable to provide great pit service –just shoot, and see your hit, each and every time. All 80 of us on the line had identical pit service, and THAT is something I can get behind!

More recently the Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club has employed 15 of the HEXTA System targets at our regional long range match (June 23-25) and at a Fullbore match last month with great results. We will also be using these targets at an 'Across the Course' match on September 9th. Going forward we expect to use them at all our other highpower matches during the season.

If you want to see the results of how the Hexta system displays shots on target, you can check out this link for the results of the Long Range Regional at Reade Range;

<http://shooting.hexsystems.com.au/club/325>

You need to click on the name of the shooter you want to look at, and then click on the 'eye' on the right hand side to see a plot of their shots. You can also noodle around the website and see results from matches held in Australia –even in 'real time' on Friday nights. How cool is that?

Please 'Pitch In'

By Frank Nedza

If you are not part of the solution, you are probably a part of the precipitate (old chemistry joke).

I was at the range one day recently, and met a gentleman who had a problem with his rifle. After helping him out we got to talking and he mentioned that he sure would love to see Garand and Vintage Rifle matches at our club. When I agreed that it could be a good thing and told him that if he were to volunteer to run them, I was sure that there would be no problem in getting them approved and that folks would be willing to help him get started, he quickly lost interest and looked at me as if I had grown another head.

In a separate incident at another range, we were in the pits and another gentleman pointed out some dead trees that could conceivably fall on the target carriers and opined that "someone should cut those down before they fall down!" And followed up with "–why doesn't that get done". I pointed out that many things don't get done because of a lack of manpower, and that I was sure the club would be supportive if he could volunteer to lead a work crew to take care of that problem. He quickly changed the subject and moved away.

These incidents are fairly typical in my experience, and I am not sure what folks are thinking when they say things like the above. I would like to express my opinion, set the record straight, and urge you to 'pitch in'.

In the first place, much if not all of the work to maintain and improve our local rifle and pistol clubs falls on volunteer labor, much of that labor coming from the individual members of the Boards of Directors. Folks, those directors we elect each year don't receive any pay for their services –it is a labor of love by people who love to shoot and believe in community service –in our case the shooting community!

So, what sorts of things are these intrepid volunteers responsible for? Well, general running of the organization – things like paying real estate taxes, range insurance, utilities, stuff like that. In addition we have maintenance of the facilities, Match Directors running matches, and a whole host of other things that get done without too much fuss, or much notice actually, in fact they look like swimming ducks. On the surface, everything is calm and placid, but underneath, those webbed feet are moving fast! Notice that we haven't even talked about range improvements and upgrades, just carrying on with the day-to-day affairs of the club. We also haven't talked about **SERVING** on the board of directors of our clubs, or our local NRA affiliate, the DSSA.

Folks, I am here to tell you that all of our clubs could use your help, especially if there is something you would like to see offered that isn't currently being done, or if there is something that you think you can do better. Don't be the person that steps over the piece of litter in the middle of the floor –be the person that stoops down, picks it up and throws it away!

OK, you convinced me, but I don't have any skills...
Hogwash.

Our clubs in some ways are like small towns, and have many of the same needs. We need carpenters, plumbers, electricians, lawyers, equipment operators, computer jocks, masons, cooks, painters, landscapers, and a whole host of skilled people. We also can use those that are 'skill deficient' and put them to use as 'strong backs and weak minds' ☺ –but be careful, you just might learn something from the skilled folks! Match days are certainly an opportunity to help out with setup, running the match or tear down. We truly need people who see something that needs doing to then volunteer and 'get 'er done'. Everyone can contribute in some way, and the upshots are that you make your club a little better, and get to make some new friends in the process. Many of the things we take for granted at our individual clubs are the result of a bunch of guys long ago getting together and building and improving the places that we use today. We can do our fore-brothers and sisters no greater honor than by pitching in and helping maintain and improve the facilities that they have given us to use and pass on to the next generation of shooters.

So, in closing, please consider taking on a more active role in your local club to maintain and build upon the facilities and activities that we have. Rest assured, if you have the desire to do something (like host a Garand/Vintage Rifle Match) but don't know how to do it, you will get the help you need to pull it off –we all started somewhere.

To volunteer, just talk to members of your Board of Directors, Match Director, or folks who seem to be at the range doing 'stuff' all the time. I guarantee that you will be welcomed into the fold.

Deputies confiscate a CNY veteran's guns. They were wrong. What happened?

Reprint of Central NY News by Elizabeth Doran - NRA Alert

DSSA Note: In case you missed it, this article ran in an NRA Alert. Yes, it could happen here.

TABERG, NY - Don Hall was sitting in his living room watching TV with his girlfriend about 9:30 p.m. earlier this year when he was startled by flashing police car lights in his driveway. Hall met the Oneida County sheriff's deputies in the driveway, worried that they were bringing bad news about a family member.

Instead, the deputies produced an official document demanding that Hall, a 70-year-old Vietnam veteran who is a retired pipefitter, turn over his guns to them on the spot. On the document Hall said he was described as "mentally defective."

When Hall told police he'd never had any mental issues, Hall said, deputies told him he must have done something that triggered the order under the New York state's SAFE Act.

The deputies left that night with six guns - two handguns and four long guns.

Hall, who lives in the Oneida County hamlet of Taberg, hired a lawyer and secured affidavits from local hospitals to prove he hadn't been recently treated. At one point, he was told he'd have to get some of his guns back from a gun shop. Eventually, his lawyer convinced a judge that authorities had him confused with someone else who had sought care and that his weapons should never have been seized.

To this day, no one at a hospital or the state and local agencies involved in taking Hall's guns has admitted to Hall that a mistake was made, explained what happened or apologized. A county judge did acknowledge the mistake and helped him get his guns back.

Hall said the ordeal was frustrating.

"I was guilty until I could prove myself innocent," Hall said. "They don't tell you why or what you supposedly did. It was just a bad screw-up."

Under what legal authority Hall's guns were confiscated is in disagreement.

Hall and his lawyer said they are convinced his guns were taken as a result of a report under the NY SAFE Act. The New York Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act was adopted in 2013 after the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre in Newton, Conn.

The law includes, among other things, a provision for health providers to report patients that they believe are a risk to harm others or themselves.

The state Office of Mental Health, however, found Hall's case was reported through a system set up by the federal Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, said James Plastiras, a spokesman for the state mental health office. That law, adopted in 1993, is named after James Brady, who was shot by John Hinckley Jr. during an attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan in 1981.

The federal law includes a provision that requires a hospital or medical facility to report anyone who is involuntarily committed or has been ruled mentally defective by a court or similar legal body.

A hospital reported to the state Office of Mental Health that a person had been involuntarily admitted to a mental facility, Plastiras said. That information was passed onto the FBI for inclusion on the National Instant Criminal Background Check System, he said.

Paloma Capanna, a Rochester-area civil rights lawyer who has handled SAFE Act cases, said "there is a tremendous

amount of confusion" over whether someone is reported through the SAFE Act or under federal law.

The way weapons are seized under either law is similar in New York state.

Once the state Office of Mental Health is alerted through either law, the staff checks records held by the state Department of Criminal Justice Services to see if the person has any guns.

Any matches go to the state police to verify that the identity of the person matches the identity of the gun owner. Once confirmed, the state police takes the case to a local judge who issues an order to confiscate the person's weapons. Local police usually are dispatched to confiscate the weapons.

One thing the state and Hall and his lawyer agree on is the misidentification that lead to Hall's guns being seized appears to have started when Hall was confused with some other patient at risk.

The day after Hall's guns were seized in February, he called the gun licensing office in Oneida County. When he told them his guns were wrongly taken, he was told he could attend a hearing in a few weeks.

Instead, Hall called lawyer John Panzone, who advised him to get depositions from every local hospital stating he had not recently been treated. Panzone hoped the affidavits would prove Hall couldn't be the person initially reported to be at risk.

Hall said he and his girlfriend, Connie Heidenreich, spent the next day visiting three Utica-area hospitals to get the statements.

Hall said the only time he had been a patient at any of the hospitals was four years ago when he had a sleep apnea test at St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

At St. Elizabeth's, Hall said a clerk looked up his name and read him a Social Security number. He said it was slightly different than his. "She turned white as a ghost," Hall recalled.

Panzone believes another patient from Oneida County with Hall's name was treated at the hospital and flagged for a mental health issue. Somehow that man's Social Security number got mixed up with Hall's, thus creating the error, the lawyer said.

When police showed Hall the gun seizure order the night they came for his weapons, Hall remembers seeing a slightly different Social Security number from his own in one spot on the court order and a correct one in another spot.

St. Elizabeth Hospital in Utica has no knowledge of the misidentification error that Hall believes happened, according to Caitlin McCann, a spokeswoman for the Mohawk Valley Health System.

Armed with the information from the hospitals, Panzone wrote to Oneida County Judge Michael Dwyer who ruled Hall should have his firearms returned to him in April. At first, Hall was told he could only have his pistols and his long rifles were going to be turned over to a gun shop. But almost immediately, he got a call saying he could have all his firearms back.

Although it took Hall several months to get his guns back, he's happy to have the ordeal behind him.

Hall said he does believe what happened to him points out a legal flaw. People should have the right to know why they were flagged, he said.

How exactly this kind of mistake can happen remains unclear. Syracuse.com |The Post Standard contacted the county and state agencies involved and were told either they couldn't say what happened or they don't know. The State Police did not respond to several phone calls.

SUMMER ADVENTURES IN CANADA

By John C. Sigler

As our children and grandchildren return to school, many will be required to write essays on their summer adventures – too bad I'm so old, I would have loved to write about our summer adventures in Canada this year, if for no other reason than to antagonize some anti-gun, left-wing elementary school teacher – what fun that would be. But alas, I'm far too old to be writing for my third grade teacher, so I will write for you, instead.

Ingrid and I have just recently returned from two glorious weeks at Cannaught Range located just outside of Ottawa, near the town of Kanata. We were “up there” representing the United States as members of the U.S. F-Open Rifle Team, participating in both the 2017 Canadian F-Class National Championships and the 2017 World F-Class Championships against shooters and teams from 16 other nations. I was shooting and Ingrid was cheering us on - and making sure I didn't hurt myself, again.

Unlike last year when we shot in the 2016 Canadian F-Class National Championships when temperatures were so unbearably hot, this year's temperatures were what you would expect for August in Canada with cool mornings requiring long sleeves and light jackets and afternoon temperatures in the mid-to-high 70's and sometimes the very low 80's. With the exception of one afternoon when a rather nasty storm caused the cancellation of two entire matches, we avoided rain and enjoyed plentiful sunshine and Canadian wind, lots of wind – please notice that I did not call those winds “fair winds” for they were anything but fair – tricky, yes; shifty, yes; variable, yes; sometimes impossible to read, yes; but fair? Probably not – at least not for me. And to make matters worse, those shooting on late afternoon relays experienced something I had never seen before – plentiful sunshine at the 900-meter line with moderate and variable winds with absolutely no visible mirage – lots of fun, and very challenging indeed.

For those of you who are wondering about taking rifles and ammunition into Canada, I am happy to report that I took both my “back-up rifle” and my “team rifle” with lots of ammo for each into Canada with no problems whatsoever. And returning to “The States” was even easier. It helps to have all the proper paperwork completed and ready for presentation upon arrival – and if you are going to Canada these days, you definitely need your up-to-date Passport with you when you

cross “The Border” – and be sure to remember that the speed limits are posted in kilometers-per-hour, not miles per hour – the difference could cost you a pretty penny or two if you are not careful – we were lucky, but some others from the “Lower 48” were not.

Ok – enough of this – who won?

It is with a great deal of pride and satisfaction that I now provide you with a partial accounting of our accomplishments during both the Canadian Nationals and the World Championships. Below please find a photograph of the team. Please note that every member of the US F-Open Rifle Team returned to the United States with at least one World Championship Medal.



Canadian National Championships:

US F-Open Team member Rhys Ireland was the overall winner of the Canadian F-Open National Championship. He was also the top “Under 25” shooter in F-Open.



Six (6) individual members of the US F-Open Rifle Team placed in the overall “Top Twenty”.

We fielded a total of six (6) four-person teams for the Lum Matches. All six U.S. F-Open Teams finished in the “Top Ten”, with one team finishing 1st and another finishing 3rd. The “Under 25's” represented the United States in the 8-person

International Team Match. This was a combined team consisting of four (4) F-T/R shooters and four F-Open Shooters. This team did very well against some very difficult international (adult) competition, finishing 5th overall.

2017 World F-Class Rifle Championships:

In the overall individual aggregates, eight (8) individual members of the US F-Open Rifle Team finished in the “Top Twenty”, with two of our members winning Bronze medals for their respective 4th and 5th place finishes.

Rhys Ireland won Gold in the Individual “Under 25” category followed by our own Madison “Maddy” Bramley who won the Bronze.

Far too many individual members of our team achieved individual successes in the various individual matches that make up the overall championship aggregate to list them all here. But just to give you a flavor of the some of those successes please consider the following:

Young Madison “Maddy” Bramley won Gold as an “Under 25” shooter in the 700-meter match on Saturday, Gold in the 800-meter match on Sunday and Gold in the final 900-meter match of the tournament. Her dad, who won numerous medals himself, was more proud of her than we were happy with his own outstanding performance.

In the last 900-meter match of the tournament our team members Jim Murphy, Bob Sebold and Erik Cortina took Gold, Silver & Bronze, respectively.

Team member Danny Biggs took Gold in the 4th 900-meter match of the tournament; Murphy and Cortina won Gold and Silver, respectively in the Saturday 700-meter match and Eric Cortina took Gold in Monday’s match aggregate.

In the team matches, US F-Open Teams took 1st and 3rd in the Four-Person Rutland Cup Matches while the US F-Open took home the Bronze in the International Team Match, following Australia and Canada – please note that competition in this 3600-point match was very tight, indeed, with the overall point spread between 1st and 3rd being a mere 9 points.

THE FUTURE:

The close of the 2017 World F-Class Championships marks the beginning of preparations for the next Team and the ultimate selection of the next team captain. I believe that the US F-Open Rifle Team has every reason to look forward to a very bright future, indeed. This was the first year that the International Confederation of Fullbore Associations (ICFRA) allowed for “Under 25” participation in World F-Class competition. Our “Under 25” shooters proved to the world that they are ready, willing, and able to step up and represent the United States in the years to come.

Unlike many of the U.S. teams of the past, this 2017 World Championship Team was a mixture of “old hands” and “new blood”. The next captain will undoubtedly lose many of the “old hands” upon whom this year’s captain frequently relied, but will undoubtedly enjoy the benefits of the younger, highly qualified adult and junior shooters who recently proved themselves in the crucible of international competition and

who will undoubtedly serve as the nucleus for the next US F-Open Rifle Team that will eventually represent the United States and the National Rifle Association of America at the next F-Class World Championships that will be held in South Africa in 2021.

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

My how the time flies. The spring and summer seems to have lasted but a few moments. I hope everyone was able to get out this summer and do some “shootin” at the range or in various competitions. From the articles in this issue one can see that the Bridgeville club was busy, as was our past president, John Sigler, up in Canada.

I will be the first to admit that I am a bit prejudice when it comes to what shooting discipline I favor. I have been a High Power rifle competitor since 1978. I have shot service rifle, yes the real service rifles, the M1 and the M14. But, I have also shot the AR-15 and its variants. Currently I primarily participate in long range competition, distances past 600 yards. It is safe to say that I have seen it all over the past 39 years or so.

What I am leading up to is that in my other job, that of being the lobbyist for the DSSA in the General Assembly, I see which way the winds are blowing in Dover, when it comes to our issue, our right to keep and bear arms, both on a state level and a federal level.

When no legislation passes that infringes on our rights we declare victory, since both the House and Senate and the Governorship are held by Democrats, most of whom do not believe in our cause. That was the case this past session. However, the second part of the session begins in January.

I can say that the current governor, John Carney, is nothing like his predecessor. I attended the 4th Annual Governor’s Sporting Clay Shoot at Owens Station back on August 13th. The Governor attended the entire day, shot a round and joined all of us for a great meal. The Boys and Girls Clubs were the beneficiaries of the shoot. I also had the opportunity to sit and talk to the Governor about many issues and came away with the feeling that he is somebody that we may be able to work with. I hope I am not wrong. He also attended a DU shoot a couple of weeks later. Maybe we can get some things done next year. Stay tuned.

I would like to remind the members of DSSA that it is only by your participation in the political process, by making phone calls when needed, writing thoughtful letters to the newspaper and you Representative and Senate, that our voices are heard.

When I speak on behalf of DSSA I make a point of stating that I represent over 5000 members of clubs and the DSSA. Add to that the over 15,000 NRA members, some of whom are also DSSA members, and that has their attention. Numbers mean everything in Dover.

Jeff Hague

**MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DONATIONS,
PLEASE TAKE NOTE:**

Our Organization exists and is sustained by the membership fees and donations we receive annually. Please note that we appreciate and need your support more than ever. Our membership has virtually doubled in the past few months and with this infusion of support DSSA can and plans to move forward in areas and ways we have not been able to do before. We ask that when making donations to DSSA or DFLA that you use a separate check for each organization. This will ensure that the monies will be used as you the member/donator would have us use it. To help in this area, DSSA has set out to allow online payments and registration for membership. As you read this, provisions are being made to facilitate credit card usage in a secure manner to make payments and to donate. THANK YOU

DSSA NEWS

The DSSA NEWS is a bi-monthly publication of the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association. It is distributed to each member as a benefit of membership. Additional copies are provided to elected officials and other NRA state associations. If you would like to contribute to the DSSA NEWS please submit your material to jeff.hague@dssa.us. Questions or concerns may be sent to the same address.

Mail Delivery Option

If you have paid dues at the full rate of \$25.00 per year you may elect to receive your newsletter through the USPS. To make a change please contact DSSA Membership Secretary, William D. Bell at:

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