

# Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association Newsletter

*SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020*



*A most unusual and confusing year is nearing its end. We have missed so much this year. So many shoots and rendezvous have been canceled. We hardly got to see and visit with anyone.*

*We did hold the Michigan State Muzzle loading shotgun shoot! We enjoyed a good turnout and had a couple of new shooters as well. Good weather helped brighten the mood even more.*

*I dug out my trade gun and demonstrated the proper technique of shooting around the clay pigeons so as to not break them. Thus creating a reusable and therefore recyclable target. Thinking green and cost savings at all times.*

*Occasionally I erred and did break a target but I somehow managed to keep it to a minimum.*

*Dave and Ron kept the shoot running smoothly with lots of helpers stepping up. Camaraderie and sportsmanship were in great supply. We did miss our Canadian friends but look forward to their return in the future.*

*Speaking of the future, Mr. Joe Valentin is building a rifle for our raffle next year. Particulars are still a secret but I am sure it will be beautiful. Due to the abbreviated schedule this year, we turned to social media to sell tickets and had good success. We will do more of that next year but truly hope to see people face to face again.*

*Having a package of accoutrements to go with the gun helps make ticket sales more inviting. Please consider making something to give away also. It is fun and rewarding to see people's reactions to the added prizes with the gun. Every item is appreciated and prized.*

*It's fall now, my favorite time of year. Time to get out to the range and out into the woods. There are many ways to measure a successful day afield. One that is*

often overlooked is the quality of an afternoon nap at the base of a tree. When the squirrels are resting, so do I. Hunting is to be enjoyable not another day at work. So if it looks like I am napping by a tree, just remember that snoring is a type of game call. See you soon

*Lyle*

#### **NOTICE**

I want to send a special thank you to Flintlocks LLC, Spring Brook Trading Co. and GVCNB Jag Shop for your support in prizes for the association. Please keep these folks in mind on your purchases of accouterments etc. for your sport. Your editor: Ron

#### **RUTH PALMER**

#### **THE SPIRIT OF ROY KEELER SOCIETY 2020 INDUCTEE**



The members of the Spirit of Roy Keeler Society are proud to welcome Ruth Palmer as the 2020 inductee! “A wonderful person,” “someone you need to know,” and “a true friend,” all describe Ruth.

Ruth has been involved with a number of clubs around Michigan since she fired her first black powder shot in 1978. She and her late husband, Marv, belonged to Saginaw Field & Stream, Tobacco River, Pine River, and Ruth is a life member at the Manistee Muzzle Loading Club. In the early days, there were not a lot of women shooting, so she shot the men’s matches. “I used to shoot with ‘Pa,’” she said. “He was a great guy, a wonderful person.”

She and Marv started in archery, then met a man from the Pine River Long Riflemen who introduced them to muzzle loading. They traveled to the National Muzzle Loading Rifle Association in Friendship, Indiana, where Marv purchased a barrel, stock and parts to build her first rifle. Her first MSMLA State Shoot was at Ionia.

“When I saw Ruth on the line,” Randy MacInnes said, recalling those early shoots, “I could tell she was a very good shooter. She was a natural at shooting a muzzle-loading rifle. I did not look at her targets or scores, but you knew she was a capable shooter, because at the awards her name kept coming up.

“She always has a smile on her face, and I always notice her having a good time with the people around her,” MacInnes said.

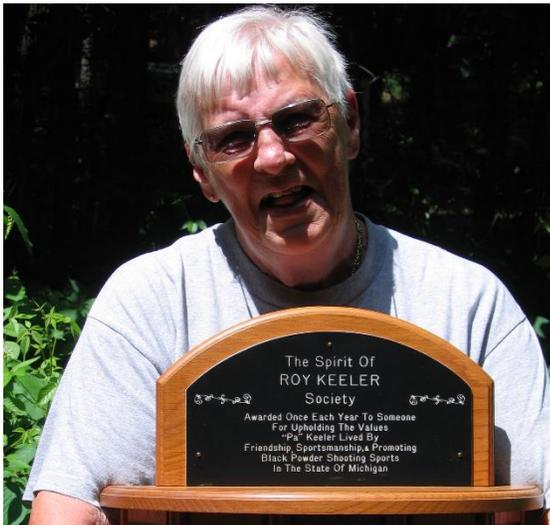
Marv and Ruth owned and operated Palmer Knives. Marv made the French trade knives and Ruth sewed clothing for living historians or wove sashes, leg ties and powder horn straps. Talking with Ruth, it is obvious the people involved in the black powder shooting sports are dear to her heart, as are the young people or newcomers to the sport. She always has a

*smile on her face, and like Pa, Ruth is quick to stop and help a fellow shooter in need.*

*A respected competitor, Ruth recently donated her MSMLA medals back to the association. "I look at the trophy and the people listed on it," Palmer said, "and I've shot will all of them. It is good to look back over the years at all the silly stuff that was done, safety always came first, but we sure had fun!"*

*Guiding the next generation is her passion. She mentored her own children, then her grandchildren and now the friends her grandchildren bring to the shoots. Ruth shot alongside her youngest granddaughter, who is a college senior, at the 2020 MSMLA Rifle and Pistol Championship. "We had a great time," she said.*

*"My poor gun takes a beating, but it's for the kids." Then she laughed and continued, "Marv had Joe Valentin make a new gun for me for our 50th wedding anniversary. It's percussion, a .40-caliber with a swamped Rice barrel. My daughter Linda's comment was, 'Only my mother would take a gun over diamonds!'"*



*Like Roy Keeler, Ruth personifies sportsmanship, friendship and a deep*

*devotion to preserving our rich American shooting heritage.*

*Submitted by the members of the Spirit of Roy Keeler Society*

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## ***KEELER SOCIETY NOMINATION***

**WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF NAMES FOR THE KEELER SOCIETY.** *If you know of someone that has promoted the sport of muzzle loading get his or her name on the ballot. Go to [www.msmla.org](http://www.msmla.org) and the ballot is there.*



## ***MUSTACHE MATCH (2020)***

*Every year the Keeler Society sponsors a match in remembrance of "Pa Keeler". The match is shot at the State Rifle championship, State Shotgun Championship, Michigan Rifle Territorial and Michigan Shotgun Territorial's. However, because of the covid pandemic some of the matches were canceled. The target that the shooters use varies from year to year but there is a stamp used to identify the target is a mustache 🍷, so the mustache has become the identifier for the Keeler Match. This match has become known as the "Mustache Match". So I got a call in August 2020 from Tim Sanford, Blackswamp Muzzleloaders (Ohio Gang) wanting to setup a remote shoot for "Pa Keeler". Being from Ohio the Blackswamp Muzzleloaders did not know a lot about Pa Keeler and his importance to Michigan's Black Powder history. I agreed to send Tim enough pins for the match and explained the rules, just have fun.*

***The following paragraph submitted by Tim Sanford.***

*We had 12 shooters made up of the Toledo Muzzle Loaders and our club the Blackswamp Muzzle Loaders A.K.A. the Ohio Gang. We ended up with a beautiful day (September 11, 2020) to be out on the range shooting. We started shoot with our safety rules and then told them about Roy Pa Keeler. We used the Buffalo target for the Roy Pa Keeler shoot and even though it was just a fun target, members took it as a challenge to have the highest score. We had our monthly shoot as well with the turkey head and a target that looked like a rack of pool balls at 25 yards, the standing rabbit and standing bear at 50 yds. Then 5 bowling pins spaced from 30 to 80 yards suspended by rope with some hanging on their sides. Kevin Silveus can really make things interesting, with the bowling pins and standing rabbit targets it was a fun and challenging shoot. Really appreciate you providing the Keeler pins and info about Pa Roy Keeler. I also googled him and the Keeler Society. I knew the Tobacco River Club really thought a lot of him but did not realize how much of an impact he had for Black powder Shooting and Hunting for the state of Michigan.*

*I would have say Mike Thompson (one of the Toledo boys) should have bragging rights. He was shooting a 36-caliber flintlock and it was giving him a challenge. He just laughed it off and said "Well it is September, time to change the flint". Still ended the day with a nicely placed group on the target. We did not officially score the targets but from looking those over it probably had the highest average score for the targets shot that day.*

*Submitted By David Maddox  
For the Keeler Society*

*Harry Haunch Sr. 1999, Bill Shellhorn 2000, Robert Elka 2001, Clyde Carr 2002, Harry Foster 2002, M. Chuck Langworthy 2003, Bernard Trantham 2004, Wayne Lamson 2005, Ron Fernwalt 2006, Joseph Valentin 2007, Cotton Volrath 2008, Scott Langworthy 2009, Dennis Neely 2010, Guy R. Smith 2011, Randy L. MacInnes 2012, Art Pomranky 2013, David Maddox 2014, Anson Morgan 2015, Ira Thumma 2016, Wesley O'Dell 2017, Eric Hoskinson 2018, James Brotherton 2019, Ruth Palmer 2020.*



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### ***EASIER THAN A PERSON MIGHT THINK***

*Good communication is a two way street. Relationships flourish or fall by the wayside, depending on the quality of communications.*

*The same holds true for muzzleloading organizations, on the national, state and local level. In most cases, each entity has a mission statement as a guide for officers, directors and members. For black powder groups, two key words show up in most mission statements: "promote" and "preserve."*

*The Michigan State Muzzle Loading Association was formed to oversee and host the State Muzzle Loading Championship Matches each year. Over time, that mission has changed and expanded to include the Michigan State Shoot Schedule and the MSMLA Club Directory. Among other activities, the MSMLA Newsletter and the MSMLA website are key elements in the association's communication program intended to promote and preserve our rich muzzleloading heritage.*

*In late August, Ron Fernwalt, editor of the MSMLA Newsletter, sent out an email. "Let's hear from your club and what you have done...Remember that this is your newsletter..."*

*So where is the other half of this communication, the response from the listener/Michigan black powder club? The MSMLA Newsletter shares what's going on at the state level. So what is your club doing on the local level? The solution is easier than a person might think.*

*First, the club, or at least its officers and directors, must make a commitment to tell their story. Do you not want new members? Do you not want more shooters showing up to your events? The answers to those questions start with a willingness to tell others about your club, to take action and make a conscious choice to move forward. Maintaining the status quo is not a long-term solution.*



*Second, someone has to be in charge of club communications, both incoming and outgoing. The duties of this club communications coordinator, MSMLA liaison or corresponding secretary should be spelled out in writing. The title is irrelevant, as long as the tasks are completed.*

*At the least, this individual should make copies of the MSMLA Newsletter and post them in the clubhouse. A copy of the MSMLA State Shoot Schedule would be helpful, too. Oh, and don't forget to send in your shoot dates for the state schedule. You*

*won't get new shooters showing up if they don't know you are hosting an event.*

*This person might oversee the production and distribution of shoot flyers, and the posting of the flyers received from other clubs. But first and foremost, this communications coordinator must oversee the production of articles and photographs about the club and make sure they are sent to the MSMLA newsletter editor in a timely manner.*

*The write up starts with the basic information: Who? What? When? Where? And sometimes Why? Simply answer the questions:*

*The River Raisin Regulators [who] held their fall shoot [what] on Saturday, September 19, 2020 [when] at the club grounds located at 1234 Elm Road, two miles east of Oak Grove, Michigan, off Acorn Road [where]. The proceeds from this year's shoot were earmarked for the club's new Ladies Rifle Frolic, scheduled for Saturday, April 10, 2021 [why]. Ladies, mark your calendars! [promote]*

*Now is a good time to expand on the "What?" Tell about the shoot. Describe what happened or explain a new addition to the event. Focus on a specific target or aspect of the event that will build interest and might entice other shooters to attend next time your club hosts an open shoot:*

*That sunny Saturday started with the club's famed Back Swamp Woods Walk, which featured 20 challenging steel clangors, placed at 25 to 120 yards. Twenty-eight registered shooters were platooned at nine locations along the wooded course, so no one waited to shoot. The RRR supplied*

bottled water at station #10 and at the end of the course.

We added three new steel targets this year: Dino, a 4-foot purple dinosaur at 100 yards, Wilbur the woodchuck that popped out of the woodpile at 40 yards, and Sam the squirrel that ran from tree to tree. The Golden bear took eight hits at 120 yards, and all but one shooter hit Ma's frying pan—sorry about your luck, Dennis.

Tom and Sue Smith ran the grill at lunchtime. Hamburgers, hotdogs and brats with bagged chips, a pop and a jumbo chocolate chip cookie were \$5.00. Will Jones won the noon 50/50 drawing, which paid \$28.50, more than enough to cover his \$20.00 entry fee.

This year, the six afternoon line matches used NMLRA Haffner targets: the running fox, squirrel and deer, standing buffalo, bear and groundhog. Sue Williams, a first time black powder shooter, scored 28-1X on the running deer. Welcome Sue!



A \$2.00, three-shot re-entry novelty target designed by "Salamander" paid five

places and raised \$22.00 for the Ladies Rifle Frolic [another promo]. And yes, those -5 point areas drew some naughty words, which added cash to the "Cuss Jar."

Top three scores in all matches won a choice at the prize table. Jim Wilson won the Back Swamp Woods Walk with 18 hits. He picked the engraved powder horn. Great shooting Jim!

Paragraph by paragraph, either the communications coordinator or the club writer (even a spouse that does not shoot) should walk through the shoot program—two or three sentences here, two or three sentences there. And the closing should include an invite to the next open shoot, such as:

Next up for the River Raisin Regulators is the Icy River Turkey Trot on Saturday November 7, 2020. Signup starts at 8:30 am at the clubhouse. Everyone goes home with a meat prize! Maybe you'll take a frozen Thanksgiving turkey home.



And remember, "It didn't happen if there aren't pictures!" Here again, someone in your club takes photos. Find that person or persons. Most smart phones take good

quality images suitable for an online newsletter.

The best rule of thumb is to follow the "National Geographic" model for photos. Begin orienting the reader with an overall view of the club grounds, then focus on moving in closer until the photos end up with a real close image, such as Sue William's finger pointing to the "X" on her running deer or Jason King's three holes in the -5 point area in Salamander's novelty target.



After the shoot, whoever is charged with photographing the event should download all of the photos, then choose the best four or five to send to the newsletter editor, who makes the final decision of allotted space. Don't be discouraged if your favorite photo isn't printed. If you feel you have to have an image used, then tell the editor your preference when you submit the article as a MS Word document.

The communications coordinator should establish a database of all photos taken for future use on the club's website,

Facebook page or for inclusion on future shoot flyers. Remember, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Bank those images for future withdrawals. Club members will be amazed at how often they dip into the club's photo library. And don't forget to select a few photos, have them printed and posted on the clubhouse bulletin board. Part of your goal is to encourage more of your existing members to attend shoots, too.

So how about it, will your club answer Ron's request: "Let's hear from your club and what you have done..." Putting together a short article about your club's shoot, even a monthly get together, is easier than a person might think. With a little effort, Ron should have more articles than space.

*Denny*

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**NOTICE**

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## ***FUN TIME AT THE RANGE OR AS I LIKE TO CALL IT LAUGHING AT THE RANGE***

*We had 10 competitors who had more fun shooting this year than anyone that shot any other shoots in the State! If you are female and missed this shoot, please come next year. If you are worried about the competition forget it, we are here to have a great time and help each other!*

*When Janet Tessman started the shoot 10 years ago, she wanted to give the women a fun learning experience for pros and newbies. I have learned something every year and we get at least one or two newbies a year. After Bonnie and I each dry balled twice, I think adding us, we had four. Lori Miles won the Novice Match, first time shooting a muzzleloader. We may have her hooked on it. Barb McAllister won overall, I think she had it last year too. She's a good shot!*

*After the shooting was done, we had the lawn games. Bonnie insisted on hogging the rolling pin toss again this year, she practiced on Ron, and added first in the hawk throw. (Run Ron!) Jeanie Tranthum did her magic at the beanbag toss,*

*Barb McAllister mentioned that everyone won a prize this year. Wasn't that something?*

*Thank you to all the men who helped to make this shoot such a success and too much fun. From setting up, figuring out what we would shoot, games we would play, range officers, scorers, you name it they did it. The guys even served up two great meals that are part of the \$15.00 signup fee. Try and get two meals for \$15.00 any place these days!*

*I want to thank Dennis Neely for the great article in Woods N Water News on last year's shoot; you can find it in the August 2020 magazine. I hope it will give more women the idea to come play, shoot and have fun on the range here at Grand Valley next year.*

*See you at the shoot!*

*Paulette Maxson*

### ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

- SEP 19 SPORTING CLAYS (modern Shotgun)  
GRAND VALLEY CAP N BALLERS™
- SEP 26 .22 RIFLE WOODS WALK CLINTON RIVER  
MUZZLE LOADERS (DETROIT SPORTSMAN CONGRESS)
- SEP 6 NOV 1 FALL AGGREGATE  
BENZIE SPORTSMAN CLUB
- OCT 3 & 4 MEAT SHOOT  
GRAND VALLEY CAP n BALLERS™
- OCT 10 SPORTING CLAYS (modern Shotgun)  
GRAND VALLEY CAP N BALLERS™
- OCT 11 MEMORIAL SHOOT Clinton  
River Muzzle Loaders, Detroit Sportsman Congress
- OCT 17 – 18 FALL RENDEVOUS  
LANSING MUZZLE LOADING GUN CLUB
- OCT 24 LEVER ACTION WOODS WALK CLINTON  
RIVER MUZZLE LOADERS (DETROIT SPORTSMAN CONGRESS) BC
- OCT 24 TURKEY SHOOT  
COLUMBIAVILLE SPORTSMAN CLUB
- OCT 24 TURKEY SHOOT  
BENZIE SPORTSMAN CLUB
- NOV 6 - 8 TURKEY SHOOT  
SAUK TRAIL LONG RIFLES (TECUMSEH)
- NOV 15 WOODS WALK Clinton  
River Muzzle Loaders, Detroit Sportsman Congress
- DEC 13 WOODS WALK Clinton River  
Muzzle Loaders, Detroit Sportsman Congress
- DEC 31 "LAST BLAST OF THE YEAR"  
BLUE WATER SPORTSMAN ASSN

## ***MEAT SHOOT***

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***OCTOBER 3, 4, 2020***

***\$5.00 REGISTRATION, INCLUDES BOTH DAYS  
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\$3.00/ 10 BIRD MATCH. PRIZES PAID FOR EACH  
MATCH AT THE END OF DAY***

***RIFLE: SILHOUETTE, WOODS WALK, NOVELTY, LADY'S,  
TRADE GUN SUNDAY, BOW ON SATURDAY***

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***SUNDAY 12 - 2***

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