



# SMOKE SIGNAL

Newsletter of the Alamo Muzzle Loading Gun Club, est. 1964

20

May/June

20



Source: Royal Armouries, UK—Leeds.

Above, a leather shield from the northern Provincias Internas of New Spain called an *adarga*. The arm straps for the left arm are visible, as well as a thumb loop so the hand could control the reins of the horse. Dragoons posted to Texas in the 18<sup>th</sup> century used such shields—derived from the Moorish inheritance of Iberia—to ward off Comanche or Lipan Apache arrows, particularly while fighting from horseback or if providing cover to one of their number reloading the flintlock *escopeta* on foot.

## RANGE NEWS:

We are back! On 7 May the Alamo Muzzle Loading Gun Club range in La Coste, Texas, reopened after a period of closure due to SARS-CoV-2 and Covid-19 issues. In April, a group of volunteers allowed us to reopen on limited schedule, and finally, the range was reopened but subject to members carrying out the Covid-19 safety protocols.

We've added the DSHS page on our website, so people can prepare a range visit accordingly: <https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/#prevent>

To monitor and keep track of the current Covid-19 cases by county:

<https://txdshs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/ed483ecd702b4298ab01e8b9cafc8b83>

The Covid-19 situation in Texas continues to play havoc with schedules. So, for example, the June 27 Civil War skirmish event at La Coste has been cancelled. The Texas Muzzle

Loading Rifle Association Brady State Shoot will happen from 30 Sep. to 6 October. We were able to have a “first Sunday” patched round ball muzzleloader shoot on 7 June, however. AMLGC Club members can bring guests out again, subject to payment of the \$10 range use fee that makes them temporary members for the date that these two non-members are there, and *signing a guest lien release*. Be mindful of the ongoing virus concerns as well.

After the stay-at-home hiatus, it behooves everyone to review our safety rules that have to constantly applied during range sessions:

[https://www.amlgc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AMLGC-General\\_Rules\\_20170116.pdf](https://www.amlgc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AMLGC-General_Rules_20170116.pdf)

**From AMLGC President Bill Knipscher:**

As members of the AMLGC we enjoy the benefits of belonging to a private, members-only gun club where we can come to the La Coste range at any time of year and enjoy shooting in a setting where we know all members understand—and have agreed to abide by—the safety rules, and, that it is seldom crowded. Our yearly membership fee makes us one of the best bargains in the San Antonio area. The AMLGC is a great place to shoot, but there is one requirement that comes with being an all-volunteer, membership-based, private range: **WE MUST SELF POLICE!**

Every AMLGC member has agreed to follow the range rules at all times. First and foremost—without exception: **ALL SHOTS MUST IMPACT THE BERM!**

There was an incident in the middle of May where the homeowner just south of us called the Medina County Sheriff’s Department to report that bullets had left our range and had come close to hitting his house.

By reviewing the security footage at the gate entry, and the video of the firing line at the time of the incident, the Board of Directors were able to determine exactly who it was, and what happened. A semiautomatic rifle was fired so rapidly that the recoil caused the muzzle to lift above the berm and the next rounds flew over the berm towards his house.

An accident? Yes, it appeared so. It did not appear to be a deliberate act. Is that an excuse? Absolutely not. When the bullet leaves the barrel, you own the consequences, accident or not. You are liable for the civil and criminal penalties that may follow—accident or not.

The problem is that the actions of one member reflect on all of us, in that the AMLGC is put in a position of liability as well as the individual who caused the problem.

It is neither right nor fair that we, as a club, could face lawsuits and possible loss of the range because of the actions of one or two members. And even though the Board of Directors has expelled the member who caused the issue, it does not lessen the club’s potential liability for this incident or any future incidents of this type.

The range rules are there for a reason: to keep all of us who use the range safe as well as our neighbors around us. If a member does not feel the rules should apply to them and that they are somehow exempt from having to follow those rules, we would advise him or her to find another gun range that will allow that person to pick and choose the rules that they want to follow. At the June board meeting, the common consensus was that adherence to the range

rules is a top priority and that we will not tolerate those who flaunt the rules and endanger other shooters and our neighbors.

Know the rules. Follow the rules. You are responsible for yourself, the family members under your membership, and your guests. If you need to refresh your memory, you can find the range rules on our website, [amlgc.com](http://amlgc.com).

If you have any questions about the range rules, please contact a Board member.

Let's all play safe out there!

For the AMLGC Board of Directors,  
Bill Knipscher, President

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The April and May shoots were cancelled. As a result, there are no scores. The July "first Sunday" shoot is the watermelon match. An HEB card will be the prize for the top score.

JULY WATERMELON SHOOT: Clif, our match chair, informs that it will be a cross-stick match on metal silhouettes at 50 and 100 yards. Should be fun! The silhouette match in April got cancelled, so here's an alternative of sorts. It is a lot of fun to shoot at steel every now and then instead of paper targets. Especially the infernal "nightmare target" about which, see the scores for June below.

The RIFLE RAFFLE for the .22 rf lever-action Henry "Golden Boy" will be held at the July Board of Directors meeting, with the winner to be contacted and posted in the July *Smoke Signal* newsletter. To improve your chances of winning this snazzy and very fun lever-action small-bore repeater, get some raffle tickets from a member of the Board.

GRASS: We had another wet couple of weeks in May, and that resulted in a lot of new growth of grass and brush. Some volunteers took care of mowing, but as always, the grass and brush sometimes seem to be quicker. Call Gary Quandt about the grass and he can summon some volunteer help, or, bring your own weed whacker to clear some of it way.

GRAVEL: Gary Quandt has laid down a lot more gravel on the surface of the road and the parking spaces out to about the 100-yard line. Additional gravel will ameliorate the mud and potholes a bit farther out along the line soon.

VOLUNTEERS: A very big THANK YOU to all the volunteers who helped our "soft reopening" in April!

**SAFETY ALERT:** In addition to the unfortunate incident mentioned by President Bill Knipscher, certain people continue to flout the requirement that all shots fired be made from the firing line. People are going forward of the line on the 25-yard range to use pistols, revolvers, handguns closer in. A pistol is welcome on the 25-yard line, but the shots have to be made at 25-yards, from the concrete floor of the firing line. If a member or guest intends to shoot a handgun at closer range, then please do so from the pistol range, which has the range lines marked. That is the only range with variable positions. The 25-yard and 50-yard ranges are to be used at those ranges.

A scorpion was sighted running around on the cement. Perhaps the editor of the newsletter is having a Texan joke played on him, but it is my understanding that these things can crawl up inside your pant leg? So I've been told anyway. No one wants to get stung by a scorpion, wasps, hornets, bees, and fire ants, so exercise caution about these insect pests, and do report a nest if you see one so we can get to it at a work party.

FAMILY PICNIC—In *mid-October* when the weather is pleasant, but not super-summer-hot, we will have a family picnic. Gary will shoot the club's cannon, and in addition to a potluck, we will have a BB gun match for the kiddos, and a .22 lr silhouette shoot for adults.

7 JUNE SCORES:

Class A

Name	25-yd. "nightmare"	25-yard Squirrel	50-yd. Deer	50-yd. Bear
	1. Clif Denny 35	1. Dennis Rich 30	1. John Burke, Jr. 38	1. Dennis Rich 45
	2. Dennis Rich 26	2. John Burke, Jr. 21	2. Clif Denny 31	2. John Burke, Jr. 38 2x
	3. Rich Beardsley 25	3. Rich Beardsley 17	3. Dennis Rich 27	3. Gary Quandt 21

Class B

1. John Burke, Sr. 22	1. John Burke, Sr. 31	1. John Burke, Sr. 14	1. John Burke, Sr. 9
2. Ian Straus 1	2. Ian Straus 5		2. Ian Straus 7

Class A rifle agg: 1. Dennis Rich 128 2. John Burke, Jr. 115 2x 3. Clif Denny 98 x

Class B rifle agg: 1. John Burke, Sr. 76 2. Ian Straus 13

Class A pistol: 1. Clif Denny 86 2. Wes Lerma 67 3. John Burke, Sr. 58

Class B pistol: 1. Gary Quandt 63 2. Ian Straus 47



Above: Again from the Royal Armouries in Leeds, UK—examples of Spanish colonial-era muskets. While the French adopted standardized “sealed patterns” for smoothbore, flintlock muskets starting in 1717, and Great Britain followed suit with the long land pattern “Brown Bess” by 1728, Spain adopted a “llave francesa” or French-style flintlock in 1757.

The “escopeta” second from the bottom with the Catalan-style Ripoll stock shaped somewhat like a boot, with a literal toe to the stock has a Miguelet lock. Long-term readers of the *Smoke Signal* may recall that this type was preferred in Texas and elsewhere on the frontier. Since the main spring is on the exterior of the lock plate, there is comparatively more wood in the stock wrist, making it sturdier. In addition, it can use non-standard gunflints, and the vertical incisions on the face of the steel or battery improved sparking of the lock when the trigger pull released the cock to fire.