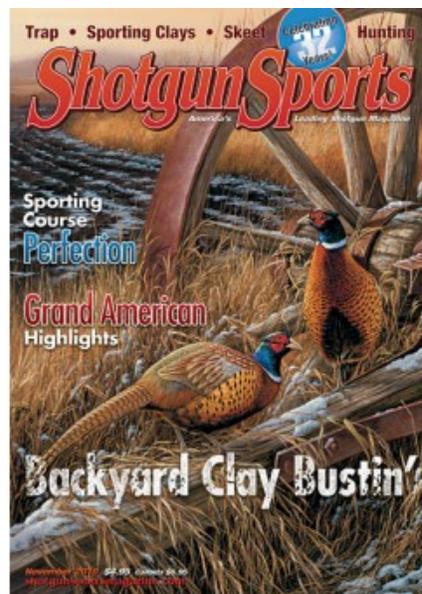


Ed's Mail

www.shotgunsportsmagazine.com

George Murphy wrote regarding my recent column "Mistakes Gun Clubs Make" (see August 2010) and related a few of his experiences. I thought they, as well as some of the people who contributed to them, were worth sharing, so here is his email:

Your column in the August 2010 issue should really touch a lot of individuals connected to a shooting range. Having been a member of the Jacksonville Sportsman Club in west central Illinois for over 45 years, I have witnessed some of your experiences and been in the same situation as you described.



Our business is built on regular shooters, new shooters, membership, donations, club rental and what little the food sales bring in. We believe not welcoming a new shooter or any interested individual as a potential member lost.

Our goal is to make everyone feel like they belong and in many cases we get a new member by taking the time to make conversation and let them know we appreciate them stopping by. A good example of this occurred a few years ago when a shooter attended one of our shoots and informed us his own club had a shoot the same day but he enjoyed ours more. It was a one and half hour trip he made, so courtesy pays off.

I had the pleasure of being in Brookings, Oregon, this summer and inquired about a place to shoot. My great-nephew Jeff did the leg work and found a club within nine miles and even purchased a Remington 870 for me to shoot.

We travelled to Del Norte Rod and Gun Club just south of Brookings one Sunday, the only day of the week they were open. It is a unique club with five trap fields, a skeet range, club house, all powered supplied by two diesel generators. Three of the trap fields even have lights for night shooting. We were greeted by a member who treated us like we were regulars. He explained the rules, wrote our names down and said to enjoy ourselves and, when finished, come in and pay for the rounds shot. How many clubs have a honor system?

Jeff had never shot trap before, so I asked if it would be okay to go to an end trap without shooters and let Jeff shoot by himself and I would be his instructor. "By all means", was the reply I received. After a couple of rounds Jeff was hooked! We went in to pay for our six rounds and Jeff joined the club. I will certainly return to Del Norte when I'm in the area again. Jeff returned in early August for their registered shoot to observe and help out if needed. Jeff's wife has indicated she would like to try trapshooting, and one of the members said they would teach her and let her try some skeet also.

I might also mention Del Norte charges \$5 for nonmembers and \$4 for members that is for 25 targets. Who says you can't still get a bargain?

I hope the managers/owners of gun clubs across the country take your comments to heart because the future of shooting and our guns rely on new shooters we introduce to the sport. Gun owners better pay attention and get involved and contact their elected officials whenever anti-gun legislation comes up. Let me also tell you, Shotgun Sports is a great magazine and I always look forward to each month's copy.

George Murphy
Jacksonville, IL