



# THE VIGILANTE



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Editor: Nasty Newt SASS # 7365

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## The Quarterly Chronicle of the Robbers Roost Vigilantes

### From the President

It has been a long, hot summer, but there is relief in sight. We will stay on summer hours through September, and switch to a one-hour-later start time in October.

For quite a while now, Christopher Columbus has been under fire from some quarters, and not totally without justification. Things didn't really go down quite the way I was taught at James Monroe. But it's always hard for me to let go of my boyhood heroes, even the ones with feet of clay. Who knows how long Columbus Day will continue to be celebrated as a holiday? So, I decided to give the old boy a shout-out on the masthead. Whether for good or ill, he changed the course of history.

Speaking of my boyhood heroes, I've mentioned a time or two in this forum that I once spent a few hours with Kelo Henderson, one of the stars of the old western series *26 Men*. Western Writers of America puts out a monthly magazine called "Roundup," and I recently queried the editor, Johnny D. Boggs, and asked if he would be interested in seeing an article about it. He said yes, 600-650 words, a couple of pictures, plus a head shot and 30-word bio of me. So, I wrote it and sent it in, and he accepted it. The bad lick is, it is penciled in for December of 2022. December is their movie issue, and he already has a "The Last Word" article for 2021. It could be used sooner, but that's the current plan.

We got in a lot of shooting this summer, and as of this writing, we're not done yet. We shot Labor Day weekend and had a nice turnout, and we will shoot every Saturday this month: another cowboy match, a muzzle loader trail walk, and a BMM/3 Rifle match. For some time we've had a 22 rimfire category in our cowboy matches, and it is becoming popular due to the scarcity and cost of reloading components.

Some of you know I bragged about my 25-20 a bit prematurely. I can now add "old guns" to the list of things that will make a liar out of you, along with kids and dogs. But, thanks to Cowboy Earl, I ran 60 rounds through it on the 4<sup>th</sup> with nary a hitch. 😊  
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### Reloading for Dummies Actually, Only One Dummy, Me

By Nasty Newt, SASS # 7365

I joined SASS in 1995 and went over to 5 Dogs Creek and shot a match with borrowed guns. I was hooked on the game, but not wanting to do any more borrowing, I set about getting my own equipment—a pair of EMF Hartford 45s, a Stoeger coach gun, and a Rossi Model 92 in 44 Magnum. I wasn't even thinking about reloading at that time. For shotgun ammo I had some cheapie Walmart "mule kick specials" and for the rifle and pistols I had several boxes each of Remington green box 45 and 44 Special with lead bullets. I had done my homework and the 44s and 45s were around 950 FPS, and given the SASS 1000 FPS limit for pistol ammo, I thought I was golden.

Well, as Waylon Jennings used to say, "Wroooooong!" On the first stage, the guy watching me load from those green boxes said, "I bet you'll be glad when those are gone." I didn't know what he meant, so I smiled and shot the first stage without incident. On the second stage, some of the pistol targets were standing in mud puddles. The posse leader, Lucky Smucky, read the scenario and added, "...and, if anybody knocks the targets over with their hot loads, *you're* going to be the one that wades out there and stands them up." He was looking at me, so I figured there must be some jerk standing behind me that was shooting hot loads.

Before too long it dawned on me that (1) I was the jerk, that (2) nobody shot new factory ammunition, and that (3) almost nobody hand-loaded their pistol ammunition to anywhere near 1000 FPS. Those who did were ostracized for it. This was probably 10 years before the dawn of the "mouse fart" era, but even back then everybody was loading relatively mild pistol and rifle ammunition.  
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If you haven't paid your dues yet, and thanks to all who have, it's that time of year. Still \$25 individual, \$30 for a couple, and \$35 for a family including children under 18 living at home. It's been a LONG time since we sold a family membership. Kids under 18 shoot free.

Through September, we will start signups around 7:00, and try to have the meeting by 7:45. **Starting in October, for all matches unless otherwise announced, we'll start an hour later.**

## **Robbers Roost Vigilantes**

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*Reloading for Dummies continued from page 1*

Shotgun targets were evolving, but most were reactive, not knockdowns. Spotters rarely called a shotgun miss. This was the "golden BB" era. If the gun went off, it was a hit. So, Walmart cheapies weren't needed and most shooters used the lightest shells they could buy or load.

For the next year or two, my shooting partner, Gimpy Gus and I sent off brass to be reloaded by vendors like Ten-X. For my first baby step in reloading, I bought a Lee Loader in 45 Colt. They work, as I actually made some ammunition with it, but I was never really comfortable beating on it with a hammer. I was better at setting off primers than anything else. Gus and I settled on a Dillon. He wanted a 550, but I convinced him a Square Deal B for pistol cartridges was all we would ever need. Cue Waylon.

We had a bit of a learning curve on the Square Deal. No, actually it was more like a cloverleaf on the 405. We spent quite a bit of time on the phone with Dillon, whining about how screwed up their machine was. Their reps listened patiently, knowing that the problem(s) we were describing could be fixed with a simple adjustment, and wondering if we had read the manual, or, if we had, whether we were smart enough to comprehend what it said.

We started out with Unique powder and 250 grain bullets. We wound up using 200 grain bullets and other powders including Clays and Accurate #2. I'm using Trail Boss right now, and when I run out, I will have to try something different. I've gotten past shortages before, and I will get past this one. I think.

My pard Gimpy Gus, aka Gary Whitnack, has quit shooting and wasn't around to see it a few years later when he was proven right and I decided I needed to start reloading rifle ammunition.

*Continued below*

He was blown out of a tank in Viet Nam, as the Bellamy Brothers put it, "on his senior trip," and he is physically unable to shoot anymore.

The rifle reloading requirement came at me from several angles. I don't hunt, but I have a M1 and a M1 carbine I like to shoot. Like just about every other red-blooded American boy, I have a Model 94 30-30. I used it in SASS long range events, along with a Springfield Trap Door 45-70. I could deal with that; I just sent off the brass to be reloaded. What did me in, though, was my mid-life crisis: I fell head over heels in love with surplus bolt action military rifles. It was partly opportunistic, since they were being imported by the millions from all over the world, and they didn't cost much. It was also part sentimental. I had bought a mail order No.1 Mk.III Enfield 303 from Radio Shack at the age of twelve or thirteen for about twelve bucks. You could do that in those days. I then proceeded to sporterize it, which was the thing to do with a milsurp rifle at the time. I've always regretted doing that. Although the term "Bubba" hadn't been invented back then, I now know the sad truth. "Hi. My name is Kenny, and I was a teenage Bubba." So, my first bolt action buy as a grown man was an emotional replacement for that hacked up Enfield battle rifle of long ago. My recovery is ongoing.

My Enfield was soon joined in the safe by others, friend and foe alike from the battlefields of

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## Business Card



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## How to Join the Robbers Roost Vigilantes...

Come out to a RRV match, held the third (and sometimes first) Saturday of every month, or call Nasty Newt at 760-375-7618, or MC Ryder at 760-384-2321, or mail it in. Our membership application is here [RRV Membership Application](#) Annual membership dues for the RRV are: single membership \$25, member and spouse \$30, family membership (including children under 18 living at home) \$35. First time shooters will be able to take their FIRST (1) NEW SHOOTERS CLASS for \$10, any subsequent new shooters class or RRV match shoot will be \$10 members, \$15 nonmembers. Donations for shooting regular monthly RRV matches will be \$10 members, \$15 non-members. Memberships run from September 1 - August 31. New memberships purchased after September will be prorated depending on the number of months remaining and the type of membership. **RRV members are encouraged to become Single Action Shooting Society (SASS) members.** Please call SASS at 877-411-SASS. SASS membership information can be found here:

<http://www.sassnet.com/Membership-Main-001A.php>

SASS membership is not required for membership in RRV, or participation in RRV regular monthly matches. **RRV encourages all shooters to join and support the NRA and the NRA Foundation, and Ridgecrest Gun Range Association.** For further information visit our website at [www.robbersroostvigilantes.com](http://www.robbersroostvigilantes.com).

**KZGN TV**

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**Schedule of Monthly Matches**  
Matches are announced on the web site and via email to all club members. **Cowboy matches are first and third Saturday. Usually, Trail Walks are second Saturday, and BAMM and Cowboy Rifle are fourth Saturday, when scheduled.**  
**Winter Hours: Sign up starting ~ 8:00, Safety Meeting ~ 8:45.**

*Reloading for Dummies continued from page 2*

yesteryear. Most nations tended to think they were smarter than everybody else, so if they had the wherewithal, they designed their own rifles and cartridges. That still goes on today, but back around 1900 or so it had been elevated to an art form. Most of those cartridges are long since obsolete. Surplus ammunition and new hunting ammunition were available for some of my bolt actions, but nobody routinely loaded the sort of low velocity lead bullet ammunition we could use in a BAMM match at the RRV range. It was time to gear up and load it myself.

For a guy who thought he would never do it, I now have a single stage Lee press and the dies necessary to load eleven rifle calibers. I don't cast bullets, and have no plans to start (somebody dig up Waylon and get him ready), so I have ordered bullets from lots of vendors. Some were a couple of thousandths too small to shoot accurately, or a little too fat to chamber easily. Some were too short or too long, or had a profile that my rifle didn't want to feed. Reloading for my old bolt actions has been a learning experience in just about every case. And I'm still learning. I haven't learned every step in the process the hard way. Just most of them.

These days, cranking out hundreds of pistol rounds on my Dillon progressive press feels more like a job than a hobby. It's a satisfying job, though, and it feels good when I'm done and have all those boxes stacked in the cabinet. But making rifle cartridges on my single stage press is still fun. Gimpy Gus and I eventually got that Square Deal B running like a sewing machine, but learning the ropes on a single stage press would have been much easier.