

**PLEASANT RIVER FISH & GAME CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION**  
**PO BOX 261, COLUMBIA, ME 04623**  
**www.prfgca.org**

## 2024 NEWSLETTER

Friends and members,

The '23-'24 membership year was a busy one as always. There were some big facility improvements, perhaps the most visible being the ongoing and almost completed work on the 200 yard range. We'll have something we can all be proud of when it's done. Meanwhile our membership continues to grow, and as always we're broadening our range of activities.



*Pres. Robin Burns thanking Jeanne Herman.*

### A CHANGE ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

After several years serving as Treasurer, Jeanne Herman is stepping down, as she and husband Fred prepare to move to Florida. We are all grateful for her dedication and attention to detail in handling our finances, and we wish her and Fred all the best in their new home. We'll miss them both. Filling the vacancy will be longtime member and former Vice President Mike Warnock who brings decades of institutional knowledge to the table.

### FROM THE RANGES

**Action Pistol:** This pursuit continues to increase in popularity, with strong showings at every event. Recently we reorganized our staffing, assigning specific duties to individuals to increase efficiency, provide back up personnel in the event of a staffing absence, and lastly to relieve Skip Sprague of some of the burden of managing things largely on his own and giving him a chance to enjoy the fruits of his labor. A plan was developed for our future,



*Action pistol at PRF&GCA.*



*New Treasurer Mike Warnock on the range.*

which includes higher round counts and more sophisticated stages,

which are what makes our shoots attractive to members from as far afield as Augusta, and to that end utilizing the robust infrastructure we've built up over the years. Participants are all very excited about what the new year will bring to this first class program. Shoots are generally held the last Sunday of the month. For more information, please contact Skip Sprague at 207-610-9109.



*Five stand clays.*

**Clays shooting:** Shooting clay targets is one of the most popular programs offered at Pleasant River Fish & Game. A game called 5-stand remains our most popular shotgun sport.

On Friday mornings (during standard time) or afternoons (daylight savings time), our shotgunners meet at the 200-yard range to shoot 5-stand. And these guys shoot all year; only the most inclement weather stops them on Friday, but they quickly agree to a makeup day. In 5-stand, traps are set around the field to throw targets at a variety of challenging angles; we even have a trap that tosses a target across the ground to simulate a fleeing rabbit. More challenging than skeet, 5-stand is the perfect way to get ready for the bird and duck hunting (and rabbit!) hunting seasons.

The major news for the clays program is the purchase of three new traps to replace older machines that could no longer be repaired. The traps have been installed and are in perfect working order. For more information about our clays program, contact Joe DePasquale at engraver25@gmail.com, or call (207) 963-2525.

**.22 Benchrest matches:** Benchrest is one of the most interesting and challenging activities offered at Pleasant River Fish & Game. Our 2023 benchrest season, which lasted from April through October, was lead by Brian and Patty Dorzuk, and they did a truly outstanding job.

One Saturday a month, a group comprising about eight to a dozen shooters gathered on the 50-yard range to shoot 22lr benchrest. While this sounds simple, these folks go for pinpoint accuracy. A single round consists of 25 targets, and most participants shoot three and sometimes four rounds.

Benchrest is a fun place to see a range of firearms from modern custom-built rigs to beautiful vintage rifles. So, if you have a rifle (scoped or open sights) that shoots .22 long rifle, you can participate! Just bring your rifle and ammo. You may borrow one of the club's rifle rests. Don't have a rifle? No problem we have loaners!

David Klausmeyer will lead benchrest for 2024. For more information, contact him at davidrklausmeyer@gmail.com, or call (207) 546-6600.



*.22 benchrest match.*



*Steel challenge course.*

**Steel Challenge:** Our newest program will begin in earnest this summer. Competitors will fire one round at five targets five times at five separate arrays (total 125 rounds) for their fastest times. This is a great event for folks with limited mobility who still want to participate in a fast paced course of fire and it's a ton of fun. It is open to any firearm ranging in power from .22lr to centerfire (non-magnum) pistol calibers. For information, please contact Mike Warnock, 207-497-5621



## EVENTS

We kicked off the 2023 membership year with our second Blackfly Blitz shoot. It was well attended and everyone had a good time. We inaugurated this event as a placeholder for Frozen Mosin during the pandemic, and now that things are back to “normal” we’ll be going back to just Frozen Mosin as two shoots of that size in a short span of time are more than our volunteer staff can handle.

The 2023 Puckerbrush Primitive Gathering was a great success once again, this despite doom and gloom weather forecasts which turned out to be way overblown. Attendance was strong, our volunteer staff, presenters, and guests were great, making for a safe and fun time, thanks to all. It was in all likelihood the last time Stim and Betty Jean Wilcox will attend

as they moved to California to be near family. They helped found Puckerbrush and were strong contributors to its success. We’ll miss them and wish them the best in their new endeavors. The 2024 Gathering is scheduled for the weekend of July 19-21. Questions? Contact Larry, 207-497-5621 or [puckerbrush@prfgca.org](mailto:puckerbrush@prfgca.org)



*Happy bowmakers at Puckerbrush.*

Rick Henion led a late summer traditional Blackpowder Shoot. It featured not only shooting, but a small period encampment and a display of Rick’s beautifully crafted reproductions of historic firearms. In all a really interesting event, and we hope to see more of its caliber in the future.

As usual our first event of the new year was the Frozen Mosin shoot, which for 2024 broke all previous records with 113 shooters registered for the 100 yard match. As usual, Greg Gilka ran the gong match, Skip Sprague ran the rapidfire match, Greg Molatch was Range Boss on the 100, and Joe Bragg ran the novelty matches in the afternoon, only closing down when we ran into the range closing time. Special thanks to all of the too many to list volunteer members who made the event safe and successful.



*Record crowd at Frozen Mosin '24!*

Arthur Langley and Rick Henion hosted “Snowshoes and Muzzleloaders” which featured a biathlon type of event requiring participants to travel a foot course around the property and shoot, the winner being determined by a factor of hits and time. It was great fun, in spite of there not being so much as a spot of snow on the ground.

Late March saw the first of what will be the annual “Catchmore Fishing Workshops”, a day long event hosted by Al West and Mike Elkavitch in cooperation with the Downeast Salmon Federation, Maine Blade Runners, Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, and Maine Warden Service. Presentation topics ranged from fly tying to fish biology and beyond (including where to catch them).

Saturday, April 27 will see the return of the “Late for Lunch River Race”, held in conjunction with the Downeast Salmon Federation’s Smelt Fry in Columbia Falls. Please see our website for an event description with times.



Mike Elkavitch tying flies at “Catchmore”.



Pres. Robin Burns presents scholarship to Madison Warnock.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND EDUCATION

Our Community Service Fund once again provided financial support for Maine Search and Rescue Dogs, the Epping Volunteer Fire District, and the Machias Christmas Giving Tree. This year’s Harland Hitchings Conservation Scholarship was awarded to Madison Warnock, who is attending the University of New Hampshire. A local youth was awarded a scholarship to Trout Unlimited’s “Trout Camp” and will be returning there as a counselor this summer. Members voted to donate a handgun to the Trident Armory “Standby to Fly” pistol match, which will be auctioned at that event,



Applesseed firing line.



SOLO Wilderness First Aid scenario.

with the proceeds going to support Maine veteran’s programs. The majority of money raised for the fund last year was through the very generous donation of a Thomas Bazzolo knife with a Chris Kravitt Treestump Leather sheath, both handmade and one of a kind. You can support the Fund by adding a donation with your membership renewal.

Educational programs hosted in 2023 included a Maine Guide Course with Fins and Furs Adventures, Wilderness First Aid with SOLO Wilderness Medicine, Fly Fishing with Al West, Project Appleseed, and Trapper Education with Paul and Pat Favolise. Volunteer staff also presented an archery class for a local homeschool group. Please keep an eye on our calendar for upcoming educational opportunities.



*Happy Homeschool archery group.*

## **FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

The total membership of the Pleasant River Fish & Game Conservation Association remains strong and continues to grow. As of April 13, 2024, we have 247 members. Please note that the combinations to the gate and club house will change June 1, so be sure to renew your membership in a timely manner to avoid interruptions in access. Please direct your membership questions to David Klausmeyer, our membership secretary, at (207) 546-6600, or send an email [davidrklausmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:davidrklausmeyer@gmail.com).



## **A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT**

We are already on our way to a great 2024 PRF&GCA season. We are extremely lucky to have members willing to put the time and effort into constantly improving club facilities and activities. Our volunteer staff are what makes the difference in every regard, they carry the weight of the club. We can always use more volunteers who help us hold the line against dues inflation while offering the best outdoor programs. Get involved, it's not only the right thing to do, it's fun! We fully realize that not everyone has the time available to volunteer, if that's the case please consider a donation to either the Community Service or Capital fund, the latter being funds earmarked for the improvement of club facilities. Let's all have another safe year, please be careful and take a few minutes to reread the Safety Rules now that the ranges will see more use.

Robin Burns, President

## CLUB INFORMATION

**Officers:** President, Robin Burns  
Vice President, Alton "Al" West  
Secretary, Rick Henion,  
Treasurer, Michael Warnock  
Membership Secretary, David Klausmeyer  
Chief Range Safety Officer, Skip Sprague

**Executive Officers:** George Openshaw  
Bob Jones  
Andy Hutnik

**President Emeritus  
and Chief Fly Swatter:** Larry Balchen

**Governance advisor:** Greg Campbell

**Health Safety Officer:** Joe Bragg

**Environmental Stewardship Officers:** Greg Campbell, Andy Hutnik

**Scholarship Committee:** Greg Campbell, Bobby Hukki, Fred Urban, Larry Balchen

**Swamp dweller:** Tom "Gator Bait" Bazzolo

**Technical wizard:** Fred Urban

**Facebook Administrator:** Rick Heller

**Building and Grounds:** Josh Warnock

**NRA Representative and Recruiting:** Joe Bragg

**Klondike Bar Czar:** Bob Jones

### Contacts:

Robin Burns: info@prfgca.org, 546-0368  
Membership: Davis Klausmeyer, membership@prfgca.org  
Hunter Safety: Larry Balchen, 497-5621 huntersafety@prfgca.org  
Trapper Safety: Paul Favolise, 483-4779  
Range Scheduling: Bob Jones, 483-4348  
Special Events: Larry Balchen, 497-5621 events@prfgca.org

**Pleasant River Fish & Game Conservation Association is a 501c3 non-profit corporation.  
The facility is located at 1597 Tibbettstown Rd. Columbia, ME 04623**