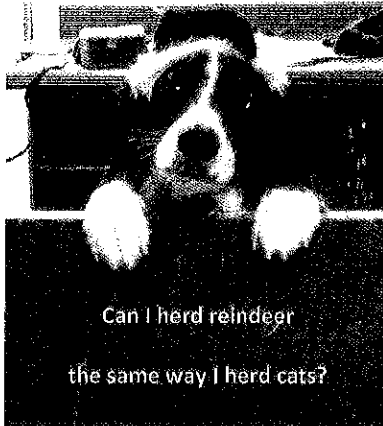


ATA Article for December 2014

Greetings from Ontario, Canada and best of the season from my family (and extended canine friends like Griggsy) to you and yours.



When at the 2012 Grand at Sparta we attended a cattle farm near Chester, Illinois. Two pups were available from a litter. The mother, an Australian Shepherd, and most of her pups over the years, were working dogs, herding cattle at the Griggs Ranch. One of these pups, "Griggsy", wanted to come to Canada. She herds everything she can including our cats.

As I look back over the results of the shooting year which ended August 31, I observe that there were some amazing accomplishments by Ontario shooters. Congratulations.

I also want to recognize and thank over two dozen Ontario ATA shooters who on short notice pulled off an event that put clay target shooting on the map for about ninety (90) Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) staff from the Montreal and Toronto offices. Here is what happened: The Shooting Federation of Canada (SFC) is the National Sport Governing Body in Canada for the Olympic shooting sports (which includes Olympic trap, double trap and skeet). COC staff were having a retreat at the Nottawasaga Inn which is where the 2015 Pan Am Games shooting athletes, coaches, trainers etc. will be housed as a Pan Am satellite village. This is only 15 minutes or so from the shooting event site, Toronto International Trap & Skeet. Sue Verdier of the SFC was contacted by the COC and asked if it would be possible for the COC staff to try "shooting".

We put our minds together and half the group stayed at the Inn and shot airgun under the direction of SFC High Performance V.P. Patrick Haynes and a team of volunteers. This group had multiple stations set up to measure various shooting aptitudes. This included several SCATT machines which track on a screen, and a printout is available, tracking a shooter's minute gun sight movements for several seconds prior to the shot and also tracks where the projectile would hit the bull. Actual airgun shooting also occurred. The COC folks loved it.

The COC group was subdivided into two equal groups. We at the trap range got 45 of them for about 2 ½ hours and then swapped for the new group.

Although we had some club helpers the majority of the volunteers were seasoned ATA shooters. We had literally dozens of shotguns for use and as the law requires, we ensured direct and immediate supervision for all. We also controlled the ammunition. About 90% or more had never shot a gun in their life before. The majority of the COC staff were ladies. After preliminary safety and dominant eye determinations, volunteers helped fit a shotgun to each COC guy or gal. We put the targets on regular ATA straightaways and rotated shooters through the stations. To our utter surprise, every single person hit at least one target. Some did very well. Both COC folks and our volunteers loved it. We had a competition and used modified ATA and Olympic shoot-off rules and awarded prizes.

One volunteer reported that a young COC staff lady hit a target, immediately passed the shotgun to her handler and did a jig and fist punch. Another was overheard telling a colleague that she now knew what she wanted for Christmas – a “gun”. This event could not have been hosted without all our ATA volunteers. All of us did a great service to our sport. We now have up to 90 advocates of the shooting sports. These folks will in years to come have influence in many sectors, not just elite sport. They experienced firsthand one of our best kept secrets – that clay target shooting is safe, fun and challenging.

Have a great holiday season.

Paul Shaw

Ontario Delegate

[Note: Barbara Sheldon may have pictures of this event elsewhere in this magazine.]