



# VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.ORG



Est. 1983

(A Non-Profit Organization)

NRA Affiliate Number G 8162

President and Founder (Emeritus) Ed Johnson Home: 703-368-6560

## Officers:

President	W. Addison Hurst	Office/Home/Fax: 540-882-3543	<a href="mailto:a.hurst@rstarmail.com">a.hurst@rstarmail.com</a>
Vice President	Jim Burgess	Home: 703-754-7800	<a href="mailto:Jim_burgess@NPS.gov">Jim_burgess@NPS.gov</a>
Recording Secretary/Membership	Larry Hare	Home: 703-339-8636	<a href="mailto:Jasperandi@yahoo.com">Jasperandi@yahoo.com</a>
Treasurer	Ed Costello	Home: 703 241-7915	<a href="mailto:edwardcostello@comcast.net">edwardcostello@comcast.net</a>
<b>Board of Directors:</b>	Ernie Lyles	Home: 540-659-6566	<a href="mailto:pris.ernie@verizon.net">pris.ernie@verizon.net</a>
	Rick Nahas	Office: 703-550-8005	<a href="mailto:jet53sw@aol.com">jet53sw@aol.com</a>
	Bill Chronister	Home: 703-361-7409	<a href="mailto:wchronister@cox.net">wchronister@cox.net</a>
<b>Show/Reservations Manager</b>	Rick Nahas	Home: 703-204-0138	<a href="mailto:jet53sw@aol.com">jet53sw@aol.com</a>
<b>Counsel to the Board</b>	Emory Hackman, Esq.	Office: 703-288-2941	<a href="mailto:emory1biz@verizon.net">emory1biz@verizon.net</a>
<b>Webmaster/Security Chief</b>	Larry Hunt	Office: 703-932-1020	<a href="mailto:ldhunt@idsscan.com">ldhunt@idsscan.com</a>
<b>Accountant to the Board:</b>	Charlie Rathell C.P.A.	Office: 1-800-559-6956	<a href="mailto:charles@rathellbard.com">charles@rathellbard.com</a>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Bill Chronister	Home: 703-204-0138	<a href="mailto:VGCAnews@cox.net">VGCAnews@cox.net</a>

## April 2008 VGCA Newsletter

### Thoughts from the President April 2008

- The pizza and chicken wings at the March Meeting seemed to be a real hit. The donation cups produced a considerable offset to the cost of the food. Many thanks to those who donated.
- Phil Schreier has confirmed the dates for the 2008 joint VGCA-NFM presentations. August 28, October 23, and December 4 will be the NFM/VGCA dates. Mark your calendars..., they have been unusual, interesting and we are very fortunate to have opportunities like these. They are not to be missed. A full presentation schedule will be detailed below.
- I got new glasses (very special ones I might add) and it has improved my ability to drive at night by perhaps 40%. Cataract surgery will still have to be done - but not for a year or so. I do not know if that is good news or bad news to the club!!! But I can hang on for a while I guess.
- I will be sending the NRA the advertizing flyer for the VGCA September 2008 Gunshow for the notices in the American Rifleman and the Man at Arms magazines.
- I am sorry to announce that John Ross is very ill with an infection that resulted as an after effect of his leukemia treatment that depresses the immune system. He is in the Duke University Hospital and doing well, when I spoke to him a few days ago. He will be receiving a bone marrow transplant. Keep him in your prayers.

- W. Addison Hurst, Club President

➡ **Notice of a Very Special Presentation for the April 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the VGCA:** It has been a long time (*or so I have been told*) since fellow club member **Gary Holderman** has ascended to the podium and shared his expertise in a formal presentation. Gary Holderman will be covering **Winchester 1894 and Model 94 Rifles and Carbines**. I also have it on good authority that he has a few specimens standing around which might illustrate



some of the finer points of this rifle and carbine series. Members may wish to augment this evening with some of their own Show and Tell items of the Winchester persuasion. Bring 'em in!! I look forward to the April Meeting. We will again have pizza due to popular demand! The food should arrive between 6:30 and 7PM. Be early, since if January

and March meetings were any indication, it was worse than army ants hitting the food table -- nothing remained by meeting start but the empty pizza boxes and chicken wings bones. Hope to see you there. (Go to Page 3)

## March 2008 Meeting, Swap, and Show and Tell Photos



←1

2→



←3

4→



←5

6→



1. Part of the Swap Meet Tables at the rear of the Auditorium.
2. Ed Costello and Rick Nahas talks about the finances and the upcoming Fall Gunshow.
3. John Morris shows his 3 barreled .80 caliber percussion "hand cannon."
4. Marc Gorelick demonstrates the breech loading action and loading of the 1861/63 Roberts Rifle/Musket Conversion.
5. Chris Smith shows his Finnish M-39 Civil Guard S.K.Y. marked Mosin Nagant.
6. George Kirschbaum explains his Beretta replica of the Colt Lightning pump-action rifle in .45 Colt.

**2008 VGCA Meetings and Presentations Schedule:** **April 24** will feature Gary Holderman on Winchester 1894s; **May 22** we will host Tom Pavelko who will cover the Mannlicher-Schoenauer rifles. On **June 26**, Kelly Cook will do a presentation on Colt autoloading .22 pistols. There will be no meeting in July as is customary. Meetings will resume on **August 28** with the first of the NRA National Firearms Museum Series of presentations. The speaker is to be announced. There will be **no meeting in September due to the VGCA September 2008 Gunshow on September 20 and 21**. The final two meetings, **October 23** and the combined November/December meeting held on **December 4** will feature the Second and Third NRA National Firearms Museum presentations.

***Invitation to all members:*** *If you wish to do a presentation at a meeting, please notify Addison or any of the board members. These sessions do not have to be as detailed or all inclusive as some of the NFM Presentations, and you can team with another member for a joint session. We have had excellent sessions from members talking about what they truly enjoy, like the Civil War rifles talk given by Jim Burgess, and Charlie Rathell's on the Queen Anne pistols, two of my favorites and both very different in how they were presented. There are members who are able to offer pointers and who will bring in pieces from their collections to fill gaps. The purpose is to educate, and share camaraderie and gain knowledge. Please think about it. Slots open in 7 months...*

**March 27<sup>th</sup> Business Meeting:** The meeting began with food and the Club Swap Meet at the rear of the hall. There were a number of interesting items for sale and trade and items did change hands. It was nice to see so many participated by putting items out and also buying. **Addison** kicked off the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. He provided updates on Dorothy Johnson, Ed Johnson's wife, who is out of the hospital and doing better each day, as well as John Wallace who at last news is home and feeling much better each day. Addison mentioned the need for presentations for the April, May and June meetings. (A successful pitch from the results above...) **Jim Burgess** provided a report from a person he knew who was lucky enough to get into the DC Gun Ban case before the Supreme Court of the United States, which was very heavily attended. **Ed Costello** provided a Treasurer's report and touched upon the results from the last show which were positive. He was then joined by **Rick Nahas** who gave an overview of table sales to date, which was a mixed bag, although we are still 6 months out. A number of ideas were floated for increasing table sales, both display and sales, as well as other methods to increase the drawing power of a smaller gun shows, like ours. These ideas are all meritorious, and members are encouraged to engage and submit suggestions and ideas to members of the board and each other. **Larry Hare**, Recording Secretary/Membership Chair conducted a review of pending applications for club membership. After brief introductions by the membership prospect or their sponsors, the following individuals were successfully voted on, and accepted by the membership. Let's welcome, **Lance (Skip) Booth, Bruce Furr, Richard Katos, and Roger Boettcher** into the Virginia Gun Collectors Association. Welcome aboard gentlemen.

**March 27<sup>th</sup> Show and Tell:** The S&T kicked off with **John Morris** displaying an item NOT requiring a lift, a tri-barreled percussion drilling in .80 caliber. While he is still researching the details, it appears to be a hand cannon of some type. **Bill Chronister** displayed a Baltimore show acquisition, a Swiss 1863/67 Milbank-Amsler conversion InfanterieGewehr in 10.4X38 Rimfire. These gunsmith conversions used a trapdoor mechanism to convert percussion rifled muskets to the Swiss 10.4X38 rimfire cartridge until the US-made Peabody's and new Vetterli's under development could be delivered. **Marc Gorelick** also displayed a conversion, a US Roberts Model 1861/1863 rifled musket in .58 Roberts caliber. 5000 were made. While not adopted by the army, they were adopted by the NY and South Carolina National Guard. Due to heavy use and breakage few survived. The British also used this conversion on Enfield and Tower rifles. **Phil Valentini** provided an update on the sight micrometer he asked about in January. It was for a Krag 1901 Rear Sight for use in match shooting. Great find and research. **George Kirschbaum** displayed his new Beretta made (Uberti) reproduction of a Colt Lightning pump action rifle used on the frontier. His is chambered in .45 Colt. **Chris Smith** brought in his Finnish M39 Mosin Nagant and M39 bayonet. This was a Civil Guard rifle made by SAKO with Sky markings on the barrel and a very rare, Civil Guard marked fabric and leather sling and M39 bayonet. **Emory Hackman** presented a pair of M1911 Colt Pistols that belonged to his father. One was from his father's days at the US Coast Guard Academy, and the other was a 1960's vintage accurized example for match shooting. And another VGCA meeting came to a quiet conclusion.

☀️ **And now, for your consideration – What is really happening here?** Over the past year or so, we all have had many discussions during meetings, at gun shows, with collectors we encounter who attend our shows and other gun shows, as well with fellow members and close friends, about the future of gun ownership and gun shows. However, more often of late, the topic our group is most concerned about is the health of our own VGCA Gunshow. I have heard many reasons offered for the past declines in attendance at our show. I will not hazard a guess what the real reasons are, of which a number may be at work (location for one), but I do believe it is an inter-related number of reasons, many far beyond our abilities to control or even influence. For instance, one hears about the purported effect of the internet auctions and sales on live gun shows. This is undoubtedly true, however there are still many, many members and people in general who do not want to buy the proverbial “pig in a poke” online, be it a gun or a DVD they cannot look at, hold, inspect, manipulate and smell, for condition, workability, and originality. I have been to a number of shows recently that were so crowded as to be unpleasant, so blaming the recent economic situation is not valid since our problems preceded the downturn. I have heard some members say they want a purely collector show. This is meritorious, but has a heavy dependence on having collectible firearms at a variety of price points available from both dealers AND members. I attend a number of collector shows in Pennsylvania that are heavily membership supported, which always result in finding some jewel. They also have dealers, but it is the members with the treasures. There are also gun show aficionados who opine that the inclusion “collector” in the show title means expensive and overpriced, which at times I have found to have merit. Other people advocate more displays. Displays are one of my favorite aspects of our show, one I will always advocate, but a show has to be viable financially, and not having sales items tends to have an impact on people who will pay to come through the door to browse and buy.

We are now facing a number of unsold tables for the Fall show. When I joined this club there was always a waiting list for tables. I remember being on the list and getting a call on Friday evening due to last minute cancellations, saying I could have a table. I now ask, why are not more members coming forward to buy a sales or display table now that we have a number available? It cannot be that every item in a collection is so essential that it cannot be sold (if it is, you are fortunate to have avoided the ‘I just have to have that’ urge), nor does it appear to be the adage of ‘I never sell any of my guns.’ Unfortunately, I am now of the belief that there appears to be an increasing apathy among members which may (just may) be an issue here. Do not get me wrong, there are always members eager to assist in many aspects of the show and meetings. I list them here in the newsletters and they are recognized at meetings. We also get great crowds at some of the more popular presentations, and people want to join the club. What brought me to this conclusion was the recent election, where all of the officers were totally unopposed. Even more, there were no people who even made a nomination of someone or themselves, or even complained about the slate. I would like to infer that as a vote of confidence, but I am a bit too cynical for that. While there are other pressures far beyond our small band of collectors and enthusiasts, and people live far away or are very busy, the paucity of activity in this last election to me was evidence of maybe more is afoot that just lack of table sales.

**Now the pitch!!!** The club needs to sell tables and attract buyers for the show to be successful. If the first does not occur, we lose money. If the second does not occur, dealers who are also draws for the public at shows say there is not enough traffic and do not come, thereby creating a downward spiral. Now is the time for members to step up, to get rid of the albatrosses, the duplicates, the ‘I just gotta have this’ items, and outdated or orphaned items in your collections or accumulations, as the case may be. Accoutrements for firearms, especially military items, are always popular. If we, the membership, are too apathetic, or unwilling to do our part when needed, we cannot continue to have a successful show. **Buy a Sales Table!** Having a sales table is not difficult. Better yet, go in with another member and have a richer range of goods, and someone to sit while the other browses, plus the cost per person is halved. I also know there are a ton of small treasures in this club. **I echo this for display tables.** Displays are a lot of work the first time, but they do not have to be elaborate, just well organized. It is easy to get behind in preparations, but if you buy now, there are six months to plan and build as the case may be. Keep in mind that it has NOT all been done before. Think of a new angle for that old gun or subject and go for it. Members will offer advice and compliments and suggestions. When I did my first display we received a lot of great advice and suggestions which made the second easier. So enough for now, give this some thought, give your thoughts, and if no one tells me I am either correct or all wet, I will know apathy has won.

-- Sincerely, Bill Chronister, Editor/Board Member

## Upcoming Events and Shows

Words to the Wise: *Lately there have been some changes in scheduling by promoters or errors on websites. Members are strongly encouraged to check before driving long distances for a show. These dates have been published as of this writing, but are not guaranteed. If you have a show you would like to tell other members about, please email the Editor with a short review, including the items displayed, i.e., modern, new, or antique, and I will include it if room permits.*

### VIRGINIA

- ☞ April 19-20, 2008 - Dale City, VA - VFW Post 1503, 14631 Minnieville Rd. – *Old Dominion Shows*
- ☞ April 19-20, 2008 - Salem, VA - Salem Civic Center - *C&E Gun Show*
- ☞ May 17-18, 2008 - Richmond, VA - The Showplace - *C&E Gun Show*

### MARYLAND

- ☞ May 17-18, 2008 - Baltimore, MD - Antique Arms, Militaria, Armory - *Scott Condello, 215-699-8064*

### PENNSYLVANIA

- ☞ April 19-20, 2008 – Hamburg, PA – Hamburg Field House - *The Pennsylvania Antique Gun Collectors Association*, Contact: PAGCA Treasurer, P.O. Box 63, Media, PA 19063.
- ☞ April 25-27, 2008 – Allentown, PA - Days Inn - *Eagle Arms*
- ☞ May 3-4, 2008 - York, PA - York Fairgrounds - *Appalachian Promotions*
- ☞ May 10-11, 2008 - Allentown, PA - Agricultural Hall - *Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society*. Contact: FDHAS, 3491 Linden St., Bethlehem, PA 18017. 610-997-8613 after 6pm.
- ☞ May 17-18, 2008 - Reading, PA - Greater Reading Expo Center - *Mid-Atlantic Arms Collectors*

### OHIO

- ☞ May 10-11, 2008 – Wilmington, OH – Roberts Centre - *Ohio Gun Collectors Association*. **OGCA MEMBERS ONLY.** For membership information contact Laura Knotts (330) 467-5733.

### NEW YORK

- ☞ April 19-20, 2008 – Syracuse, NY – State Fairgrounds - *New York State Arms Collectors Association*, Contact: Sandy Ackerman Klinger, 346 Paul Street, Endicott, NY 13760. (607) 748-1010.

**“To ensure peace, security, and happiness, the rifle and pistol are equally indispensable. The very atmosphere of firearms everywhere restrains evil interference - they deserve a place of honor with all that is good.”**

**-- George Washington, The Federalist No. 53**

Address for any Newsletter related matters or submissions is [VGCAnews@cox.net](mailto:VGCAnews@cox.net). Feel free to email items for inclusion in the newsletter. For changes of address or non-receipt of the newsletter, either via email or the mailed hard-copy, please contact Larry Hare at the numbers on page one.

-- V/R Bill Chronister, Newsletter Editor