



# VIRGINIA GUN COLLECTORS ASSOC., INC.

WWW.VGCA.ORG

Est. 1983 (A Non-Profit Organization)

NRA Affiliate Number G8162



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

**President**

W. Addison Hurst

Office/Home: 540-882-3543

[a.hurst@rstarmail.com](mailto:a.hurst@rstarmail.com)

**Show/Reservations Manager**

Rick Nahas

Office: 703-361-7409

[jet53sw@aol.com](mailto:jet53sw@aol.com)

**Show Security/Safety**

John Frietsch

Cell: 540-409-1271

[johnfrietsch@peoplepc.com](mailto:johnfrietsch@peoplepc.com)

**Membership**

Larry Hare

Cell: 540-946-2050

[LaurenceHare@gmail.com](mailto:LaurenceHare@gmail.com)

## August 2011 VGCA Newsletter



**The Presentation at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting:** The June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting presentation featured VGCA's own Vice President Ernie Lyles talking about one of the more unusual developments to ever hit the firearms scene – the GyroJet which used small rocket propelled rounds. This series of firearms featured a rocket projectile instead of a traditional cartridge. Starting off Ernie covered the background and gave a short history of Arthur Biehl, who teamed with Robert Mainhardt to form MB Associates, or MBA, in order to develop Biehl's armor-piercing rocket rounds. Robert Mainhardt had worked with small portable research nuclear reactors. They developed some small rockets for the Vietnam War called Finjets, which were 3mm in diameter or roughly just over half the diameter of a .22 round. This led to the Lancejet rocket, a larger .25 caliber finless rocket with an explosive head which was to be used for mine clearing. In 1962 they developed the underwater Lancejet speargun. MBA provided examples for the underwater combat scenes in the James Bond movie, "You Only Live Twice". The first pistol cartridge was a 13mm diameter rocket over one inch long moving at 1200 FPS with no recoil. Close range testing by the military showed that the close range velocity was inadequate for consistent lethality. After non-

adoption of the rounds and arms by the military, Mainhardt left in 1970 to form Trebor Industries specializing in less than lethal weapons like beanbag launchers. (Private Gyrojet pistols were used in Vietnam by the Studies and Observation Group or SOG. Source: John L. Plaster, SOG, Onyx Books, 1997, p.82. Ed.) Moving then to the actual guns, Ernie discussed the first gun, the Mark 1, Model A in 13mm. However, since the GCA of 1969 decreed any cartridge over .50 caliber was a destructive device 13mm = .51 caliber, the round was later reduced to 12mm. MBA made both pistols and carbines. The carbines were offered in both civilian and military versions, and also in a snubby survival variant. The guns had a basic frame of Zemek, a zinc, magnesium, and copper alloy since without a violent combustion like a traditional firearm, the full strength was not required. The 12mm rocket round weighed 185 grains and velocity was 1270 FPS for 700 foot pounds of energy. Much research was conducted to optimize both accuracy and speed and experiments of various numbers and shapes and directions of the rocket nozzles were tried. One development was a wired round that served to launch an emergency radio antenna. This version used a special slotted barrel to accommodate the eyelet to which the wire was attached. All in all, this talk about a "Buck Rogers" rocket gun was highly informative and backed up with great graphics and many rare and pristine examples, including commemoratives and limited editions, from Ernie's collection.

- ⊙ **Upcoming August 25<sup>th</sup> Monthly Presentation:** For the August meeting, we hope to have Sam Hatfield of Hatfields Gunsmithing return to discuss accurizing the AR-15 family of rifles. If you remember his presentation on the Model 1911A1 family of pistols, you know this will be good. **If Mr. Hatfield is available**, the Mess Hall will be open.
- ⊙ **Tentative plans are targeting the September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting for the NRA-NFM/VGCA presentation** that will host noted gun writer **Phil Spangenberg** discussing *Guns of the Old West*. If you saw him a few years ago, you know why this is not to be missed. The date is not finalized, so we will make sure it is well featured

in the September Newsletter when the date is settled. As with all NRA-NFM/VGCA presentations, there will be food.

- ⊙ The October VGCA Meeting will be held on Friday, October 21, and feature *Dave Rivers, Sgt. (ret.), Homicide Bureau, Miami Dade Police Department*, on the 1986 FBI Miami shoot-out. This should be very interesting. **PLEASE NOTE: The date of the October VGCA Meeting will be Friday, October 21, 2011 instead of the following week on the customary 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of October 27.** We will have Pizza, but **we will also need members to help clean up all the trash.** This is **critical** due to a Saturday NRA event in the lecture hall, and we do not want to leave a mess. Show & Tell theme will Law Enforcement firearms.

**June 23<sup>rd</sup> Business Meeting of the VGCA:** The business meeting was very brief and primarily addressed planning for the Fall gun show.

**Important Issues for Association Members' Consideration:** There are a number of issues which it is not too early to think about.

- ⊙ **The Fall 2011 VGCA Gun Show** will be on November 5-6, 2011 in Manassas, Virginia at the Prince William County Fairgrounds. As usual, we need VGCA gun show members to volunteer for the show table setup, safety and security Teams, as well as some folks to help with the sign detail the morning of the show, and pick them up after the show on Sunday. Please let **John Frietsch, Dave Litchfield** or one of the Association Officers know if you wish to volunteer. Talk to **Larry Hare** if you want to help with signs. Table set-up will be on Thursday, November 3, usually around 1PM, or whenever the tables arrive.
- ⊙ If any member wishes to help out for an hour or so at the show on the Safety and Security Teams, please call **John Frietsch**, Safety and Security Coordinator at 1-540-409-1271. **Volunteering for the Security, Safety, and Setup teams gets a free admission.**
- ⊙ **Fall VGCA Gun Show Sales Tables:** The Association *still has tables remaining for the Fall VGCA Gun Show*. Members who wish to reserve a table for disposing of your unloved or duplicate firearms, accoutrements, collectable accessories, or other gun collecting related items, please contact Rick Nahas, ASAP. If you believe manning a sales table alone would be too demanding and not allow you time to hunt for deals or just talk to other members, get a partner and share the duties and have relief for your time around the show. Show tables cost \$60 each, so sharing splits costs with a colleague.
- ⊙ **VGCA Gun Show Educational and Display Tables:** The club will continue having FREE DISPLAY TABLES for members *on a space available basis* for the Fall show. This is a great opportunity to test the waters if you wanted to do a display table. Display tables may be limited, so contact **Rick Nahas** to get yours.
- ⊙ **Election of VGCA Officers for the 2012-2014 Term:** While it appears to be a ways off, there are only 3 general membership meetings (August, September, and October) until the Annual Association Membership Meeting in early December. This December Annual Membership Meeting is the meeting where nominations are taken from the floor for candidates for the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The election will be in January 2012. Ballots are mailed out in January and must be returned to allow the ballots to be counted and the results announced at February 2012 Meeting. This December meeting is also one of the only opportunities you may have to question potential candidates about their ideas for the direction of the Association, instead of relying on a photo and one paragraph attachment to the ballot. Some of the incumbent Officers have indicated they are not standing for re-election, so we will need to have candidates to fill the vacant positions. Please consider if you would like to run, or if you have someone you would like to nominate to run. This is extremely important. Our recent elections have had increasing numbers of candidates, which is a good sign of increased interest, so if you wish to get involved, now is the time to make you interests known.
- ⊙ **December Annual Membership Meeting:** We have traditionally combined the December and November meeting into one early December meeting due to the Gun Show and the Thanksgiving and December Holiday Seasons. We will have the nomination of officer candidates and other business. This will also be a meeting with food. In addition to the normal feed, this would also be a great opportunity for members who may wish to bring some special food to brighten the meeting and also celebrate the holiday seasons and another year of the Association. Not wishing to make it into a large production, this would be left up to members to decide if they wish to bring something. However, if pizza and wings leaves you flat, this would be a great opportunity to spice up the evening with something new (bought or homemade is OK). Let any of the Association Officers know if you like the idea and also if you would be willing to provide or kick in for some food. Just an idea – let us know what you think.

### Member Announcements and Requests for Assistance:

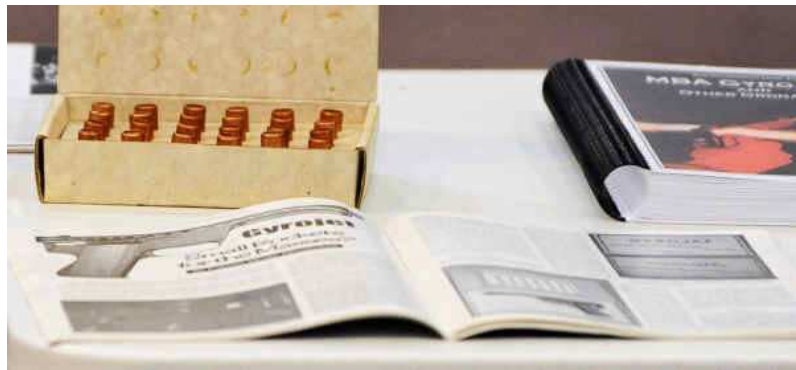
- Member Jack Bokinsky is out of the hospital and doing very well. He did not require a pacemaker.
- For those of you who remember Fred Fees, whose dedication to working with young shooters in 4H Youth Shooting leagues was legendary, we have a request from his family for any copies of the *Ripley's Believe It or Not* article on his being shot through the head, and for the Korean War photos of Fred with his M1903 Springfield Sniper Rifle that were published in the NRA magazine *American Rifleman*. This is a family research project so any info or material would be greatly appreciated.
- Addison received a request for assistance to locate a butt plate for a Model 1865 Sharps civilian rifle with a poured pewter forearm cap. Please contact Addison at his numbers on the masthead if you can assist.
- We still have VGCA Patches for sale. Cost is \$5.00.
- The NRA asked if VGCA could assist for a future *American Rifleman* article on military .22lr ammunition. They are specifically seeking boxes of Remington manufactured T-42 and M-24 subsonic for photographing. Time for the trainer collectors to scour their collections to see if we can assist. Please contact Bob Boyd of the NRA at 703-267-1389.

**Show & Tell for the June 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting:** Show and Tell had an informal subject focus of the Civil War due to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the battle of First Manassas (Southern parlance) or the first battle of Bull Run (Northern usage) in June of 1861. **Sonny Laine** started off the evening with a fine brace of U.S. Marine Corps swords. One had brown handles – a feature that was later banned by Robert McNamara, who mandated that only black handles swords were to be used by the USMC. The second sword, made by famed blade maker Ames, also had a fully intact leather scabbard. These leather scabbards are rare due to the toll that 150 years takes on leather. These were both very nice examples. **Ben Simms** showed his 1816 flintlock smoothbore .67 caliber musket made by Wickham in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Many of these were later converted to percussion by various contractors for further usage and later used in the Civil War. **John Morris** showed a small English cannon made by J W Talley in Birmingham, England. The cannon used 5 sided polygonal rifling with a matched projectile. This example had a bore of just over 1 inch. He also showed a 2¾ inch Whitworth polygonal cannon round made of cast iron. **John Babey** brought 5 civil war handguns: a S&W Second Issue in .22 rimfire, a second S&W in .32 rimfire, a S&W knockoff also in .32 rimfire, and two .36 caliber derivatives of the 1849 Colt Pocket Revolver. He also showed a rare original .36 Colt Pocket Revolver bullet mould for both round ball and conical bullets. **Larry Hare** showed two excellent resource books on “veteran bring back” firearms. This useful book was obtained from Simpson Limited, a reputable online collectible firearms and curio and militaria dealer. Good companion to the old adage of “buy the gun, not the story.” **Jim Burgess** also had an 1816 Wickham converted to the Maynard tape priming system. The conversion parts were manufactured by Remington. These conversions were actually done at the Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia, PA. Of the 19,974 conversions, around 600 were made without rear sights. **Chris Smith** walked members through a discussion about his custom M1A assembled by Smith Enterprises using an LRB receiver and TRW parts. This was a fine looking gun with impeccable detailing and quality workmanship. **Addison Hurst** showed a newly purchased 2<sup>nd</sup> Allin Trapdoor Springfield that he purchased just before the meeting. Conservatively, this was one of the nicest Allin trapdoors in recent memory, and we have seen some nice ones. Great purchase – good deals still exist!

### Photographs from the June Meeting and Show & Tell

L: A box of Gyrojet rounds, and resource material.

R: The Gyrojet family (Source: Wikipedia < <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gyrojet>>).





Upper L: Sonny Laine displays his USMC Civil War sword.  
Upper R: Lock detail of Ben Simms 1816 Springfield Wickham conversion.



R: Ernie Lyles Gyrojet Carbine in front and cased presentation Gyrojet pistol and case behind.

Below: John Morris 2 3/4 inch Whitworth polygonal cannon round made of cast iron.



Right: John Babey's .36 caliber 1849 Colt Pocket Revolver.



Left: Chris Smith talked about his custom M1A assembled by Smith Enterprises.

## Upcoming Events and Shows

**Please note:** There are sometimes changes in schedules or errors on websites. Members are strongly encouraged to verify before driving to a show. These dates have been published online, but are not guaranteed. **Yellow highlights** = Collector organizations.

### VIRGINIA 2011

- ⇒ August 20-21, 2011 - Roanoke, VA - Roanoke Civic Center – *Showmasters*
- ⇒ August 27-28, 2011 - Richmond, VA - Raceway & Fairgrounds – *Showmasters*
- ⇒ September 4-5, 2011 - Norfolk, VA – Norfolk Scope Arena - *C&E Gun Show*
- ⇒ September 10-11, 2011 – Salem, VA – Salem Civic Center - *C&E Gun Show*
- ⇒ September 17-18, 2011 - Fredericksburg, VA - Expo Center - *SGK, LTD*
- ⇒ September 16-18, 2011 - Woodstock, VA - Shenandoah County Fairgrounds - *Virginia Gun & Knife Shows*
- ⇒ September 24-25, 2011 - Hampton, VA - Convention Center - *SGK, LTD*
- ⇒ September 24-25, 2011 - Fishersville, VA - Augusta Expoland – *C&E Gun Show*
- ⇒ October 1-2, 2011 – Winchester, VA – Winchester Sportsplex – *SGK, LTD*
- ⇒ October 7, 8 & 9, 2011 - Chantilly, VA - Dulles Expo Center - *C&E Gun Show / Showmasters*
- ⇒ October 8-9, 2011 - Dale City, VA - VFW Post 1503 - *Old Dominion Shows*
- ⇒ October 15-16, 2011 - Richmond, VA – Showplace - *C&E Gun Show*
- ⇒ October 22-23, 2011 – Virginia Beach, VA – Convention Center - *SGK, LTD*
- ⇒ **November 5-6, 2011 - Manassas, VA - Prince William County Fairgrounds – Virginia Gun Collectors Association**

### MARYLAND 2011

- ⇒ **September 10-11, 2011 - Frederick, MD - Elks Lodge #684, 289 Willowdale Dr. - Potomac Arms Collectors' Association**
- ⇒ September 17-18, 2011 - Howard County, MD - County Fairgrounds (I-70, Exit 80) – *Silverado Promotions*
- ⇒ October 1-2, 2011 – Timonium, MD - Timonium Fairgrounds - *Appalachian Promotions*

### PENNSYLVANIA 2011

- ⇒ August 13-14, 2011 - Poconos, PA - Split Rock Lodge - *Eagle Arms*
- ⇒ August 13-14, 2011 - Monroeville, PA - Convention Center - *C&E/Showmasters Gun Shows*
- ⇒ August 27-28, 2011 - Philadelphia, PA - National Guard Armory - *Appalachian Promotions*
- ⇒ August 27-28, 2011 – Philadelphia, PA - Greater Philadelphia Expo Center (Oaks) – *Eagle Arms*
- ⇒ September 3-4, 2011 - Gettysburg, PA - Allstar Sports Complex - *Eagle Arms*
- ⇒ September 10-11, 2011 - Tarentum, PA - Pittsburgh Mills Galleria - *Pennsylvania Gun Collectors Association.*
- ⇒ September 10-11, 2011 - Harrisburg, PA - Farm Show Complex – *Mid-Atlantic Arms Collectors*
- ⇒ September 16, 17 & 18, 2011 - King of Prussia, PA - Valley Forge Convention Center - [valleyforgegunshow.com](http://valleyforgegunshow.com)
- ⇒ October 1-2, 2011 – Lebanon, PA - Lebanon Expo Center - *Eagle Arms*
- ⇒ October 22-23, 2011 - Monroeville, PA - Convention Center - *C&E/Showmasters Gun Shows*
- ⇒ **October 15-16, 2011 - Allentown, PA - Agricultural Hall - Forks of the Delaware Historical Arms Society. Contact: FDHAS, 3491 Linden St., Bethlehem, PA 18017. 610-997-8613 after 6pm.**

### OHIO 2011

- ⇒ **September 17-18, 2011 – Wilmington, OH – Roberts Centre - Ohio Gun Collectors Association. OGCA MEMBERS ONLY. <http://www.ogca.com/index.htm>**

### NEW YORK 2011

- ⇒ **September 24-25, 2011 – Freeport, NY - The Freeport Recreation Center - Long Island Antique Historical Arms Society. Contact: Dave Gruner (631) 722-3248, P.O. Box 41, Jamesport, NY 11947**

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.

v/r VGCA Newsletter Editor