



Shongum Sportsmen's Association

P.O. BOX 431
Hackettstown, NJ 07840
www.shongum.org
Monthly Newsletter
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Member:
NRA: #CO-469
CMP: 015111
ANRPC
ATA
USPSA/IPSC
NJSTA

19 November 2025

7:30 PM

Officers

President:

Rich Gajda 908-892-5422

Vice President:

John Gumann 973-933-2764

Treasurer:

Mike Fortunato 973-927-3088

Secretary:

Phil Engert 908-309-6676

Shotgun:

Don Mercovich 908-319-4478

Rifle:

Bill Murphy 973-713-1600

Pistol:

Jim Owings 973-383-3208

Membership:

Greg Forte 201-376-0182

Range Safety:

Gregory Lynch 908-619-9601

Events, Good and Welfare:

Robert Miranda 908-798-0315

Operations:

Wayne Jarvis 908-256-1588

Hunting & Archery:

Tom Hill 908-637-4665

NRA Training:

Adam Mauer 973-255-0018

Immediate Past-President:

John Gumann 973-933-2764

Committee Chairpersons

Cowboy Action:

John Seal 973-601-0397

USPSA/IPSC:

Ron Gumann 973-478-7018

Pistol League:

Jim Owings 973-383-3208

Woman's League:

Elizabeth Mackee 973-303-3207

By Laws:

Pete Hefferan 973-702-0904

Newsletter Editor:

Phil Engert 908-309-6676

Juniors:

Bill Murphy 973-713-1600

Black Powder:

Steve Serna 973-601-3779

Phone Numbers

Clubhouse: 908-637-9813

President Rich Gajda started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. He then led our club in a moment of silence for all of our departed members.

Rich asked all regular and life members to remain standing for a quorum count, and asked all applicants, pledges, and probationary members to sit down. A visual count confirmed that quorum of 23 members was easily present this month in order to conduct official business.

Rich also reminded those in attendance, that our meetings are governed by Roberts Rules of Order; and that only regular members may vote or present motions

The minutes for the October meeting were deemed to be correct by the attending membership.

Officers & Committee Reports:

Treasurer's Report: Mike Fortunato read the Treasurer's Report aloud:

Bank Balance (as of Oct 15, 2025): \$35,997.19

Receipts: \$30,968.88

Disbursements: \$30,556.02

Excess Receipts Over Disbursements : \$412.84

Bank Balance (as of Nov 19, 2025) : \$36,410.05

Money Market Fund:

Available for use: \$45,740.76

Restricted for Contingencies: \$105,705.00

Balance (as of Oct 31, 2025) : \$151,445.76

George Rutkowski/Jack Bowden Fund Balance (as of Oct 31, 2025) : \$7,089.43

President— Rich Gajda

Rich asked to move the official business of the annual meeting before the Officer Reports, so as to maintain the quorum and ensure proper voting.

Annual Meeting Business (postponed from October Mtg)

Rich reported that the officer and trustee ballot from the nomination committee has not changed, and that existing officers and trustees will be presented for another term. Rich asked Secretary Phil to read the names.

Phil read the ballot: for President Rich Gajda, Vice President John Gumman, Treasurer Mike Fortunato, Secretary Phil Engert, Rifle Activities, Bill Murphy, Pistol Activities, Jim Owings, Shotgun Activities, Don Mercovich, Membership, Greg Forte, Chief Range Safety, Gregory Lynch. Building and Grounds, Wayne Jarvis, Hunting & Archery Activities, Tom Hill, Events & Activities Bob Miranda, Training Activities, Adam Maurer

Phil also presented the three trustees up for reelection. We have six trustees in total, three that get reelected each year for a two year term. So this year, for reelection, we have a 2 year term through 2027 for Will Jones, Mark Vandling, and Tom Stapleton

Rich reported that nominations for officers and trustees needed to be submitted through the nomination committee two weeks prior to the election, but there were none, so that is why the existing list of officers and trustees are being presented on the official ballot. He indicated that the club would accept write

ins at this point, and opened the floor to discussion about the candidates. He asked the membership in attendance if there were any new nominations to be made.

Upon hearing none, he directed Secretary Phil to cast a single vote to approve the official ballot re-electing the existing officers and trustees.

Rich then moved on to present the 3 main decisions to be voted on by the membership—meeting place & time, dues, and membership cap. Rich recommended keeping all of the same as the previous year.

For meeting place & time, a motion was made and seconded to keep the meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 730pm at the Elks Lodge in Lake Hopatcong. All were in favor, none-opposed. Motion passed.

For dues, a motion was made and seconded to keep the annual dues at \$220+taxes. All were in favor, none-opposed. Motion passed.

For membership cap, a motion was made and seconded to keep the membership cap at 1,000 total members. All were in favor, none-opposed. Motion passed.

Rich also made some other announcements pertinent to the Annual Meeting as follows: Club meetings will be governed by Roberts Rules of Order, newly revised 12th edition. He also indicated that there would be no changes to committee chairmen and members (such as for Bylaws) would remain the same; but indicated the club is open to changes and for those interested in volunteering their time to come forward.

Rich then resumed the regular monthly agenda and started the Officer reports, below.

Vice President— John Gumann No report.

Secretary – Phil Engert No report.

Shotgun - Don Mercovich No report.

Rifle—Bill Murphy reported the next High Power rifle match will be Sunday, November 23rd.

High power is the 4th Sunday of the month. Please arrive by 9:30 for sign in. The match starts at 10:00. Ends 11:30 – 11:45. Bring something to lay on concrete is rough. Even a light recoiling rifle will cut you up. Remember to bring Eye protection, Ear protection, Chamber flag/Open bolt indicator, 50 rounds for match, plus sighters. Spotting scope is helpful. (Very Helpful). Sling is very helpful. \$7 members \$10 non-members.

Juniors League—Bill Murphy Bill reported that Juniors routinely gets 5-6 junior shooters every other week, typically aged 10+. The league is open to both members and the public at large. Bill indicated that they recently hosted some 4H shooters and their coaches, some of whom were a former state champion and Olympic trials participants.

If you know of anyone with children who may be interested, please reach out to Bill Murphy at rifle@shongum.org

Pistol – Jim Owings reminded members that the indoor range is not warmer unless shooting at the full 50-foot distance, so dress appropriately for cold conditions.

Before shooting, the ventilation system must be turned on. The timer switch is located in the gray box just inside the door on the left.

After activation, fans will begin running after about 45–50 seconds and must remain on while shooting. When finished, turn the timer switch off. Shooting without ventilation is not permitted.

Additionally, empty chamber indicators (ECIs) are mandatory and must be clearly visible on all firearms on the bench. ECIs are available for \$1 from the vending machine or for purchase at club meetings.

Pistol League – Nick Dewar

The Pistol Team, a subgroup of the Pistol League, competed in its annual match held in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in September. The event ran over the weekend, with Friday as a warm-up day and matches on Saturday and Sunday.

The team performed exceptionally well, earning several major awards:

- 1st Place – .22 Caliber (Class A)
- 2nd Place – .22 Caliber (Class B)
- 1st Place – Center Fire (Class B)

SSA entered three .22 caliber teams and three center-fire (38, 9mm and 45) teams, continuing a long-standing tradition of participating in this match each year. This match also served as the SSA annual pistol champion qualifier, with Phyllis Bitow named this year's champion.

Team members included: DR. Nick Abrishamian, Phyllis Bitow, John Cooke, Mike DeLisi, Nick Dewar, Rob Litkenhaus, Bob Miranda, Mark Grimes, Jim Owings, John Salegna, Steve Smith, Tom Stapleton and Bruce Williams.

In addition to the competition, DR. Nick Abrishamian once again hosted the team's traditional Saturday evening cookout, providing food and hospitality. Thank you Dr Nick

Congratulations to the entire team on a strong performance and continued success

Events—Bob Miranda. Rich Gajda reminded the membership to please check the SSA calendar for current updates regarding range closures and special events.

Rich ESPECIALLY reminded members to check the calendar during these Winter months as weather is often quite different in Mansfield, with snow and facility issues affecting operations; and that you don't want to drive all the way to find the facility closed.

Safety—Greg Lynch. No report.

Operations—Wayne Jarvis reported that maintenance is ongoing, and that if members notice anything to contact him directly..

Hunting—Tom Hill. No report.

Cowboy Action—John Seal reported the season is winding down, but matches will continue in December, January, and February if weather permits. The range is reserved, and shooting will take place as long as temperatures reach above 40°F at some point in the morning and the ground is not frozen or icy.

Matches are held on the third Sunday of the month. Setup begins around 8:00 AM, shooting starts at 10:00 AM, and all participants must attend the 9:30 AM safety meeting.

Those interested in Cowboy Action Shooting are encouraged to visit the club online under "The Wily Coyotes", where additional

information and contact details are available.

A website note stating that Cowboy Action is “by invite only” is outdated and incorrect. No invitation is required, and non-members are welcome to attend. While advance notice is appreciated for first-time participants, it is not required.

Cowboy Action holds a regular event every third Sunday of the month as long as weather permits. They shoot pistols and rifles from the 1800’s, use leather holsters, shotgun shell belts, and cowboy hats and boots. Participants are \$10/member, \$15/non-member. Everyone is welcome to come and just watch if you’d like.

NRA Training – Adam Maurer No report

USPSA—Ron Gumann reported that USPSA matches are the first Saturday of the month weather permitting. He indicated that a Introductory class to USPSA is scheduled for this coming May 30th 2026. Anyone interested in USPSA should contact him directly with questions.

USPSA matches at Shongum are typically capped at 60, which is four squads of 15. Once full we establish a wait list for those who contact us. We have exceeded 60 at times.

We have also instituted a policy to prioritize registration. We have reserved slots for certified USPSA RO's who want to work the match. We prefer to have two per squad or at least one, with other experienced folks. Then folks who show up early and help set up. Third is Shongum members. We do not want to turn away any Shongum member and will always accommodate them even if they just walk on match day. Last is all others. We generally work the wait list in as some folks drop during the week between registration and match. To date, we have not turned anyone away, but just in case, we have set up a priority for us to follow. We posted this on the Shongum USPSA FB page:

If the match is full, you can reach out to info@shongumuspsa.org to claim your spot.

As an FYI, when folks register on line they can identify as RO or Shongum member so we know. We know the set up crew/ volunteers from experience.

Women’s League—Elizabeth Mackee Elizabeth noted that the Womens League has stopped for the Winter and will resume in March.

The league runs March–October, last Wednesday of each month from ~630-930pm. The league is open to all women (family, friends, and non-members are welcome) and costs \$10 each with 50 rounds of 22LR ammunition supplied along with personal instruction. Minors 13 year old and up are welcome, when supervised by a parent. Elizabeth is always looking for instructor volunteers (Males are OK, especially those with 22LR pistols that can be utilized for the event. Please contact Elizabeth to RSVP at 973-303-3207.

Black Powder—Steve Serna Steve reported that Black Powder shoots the Second Sunday of every month at the 100-yard line. The BS usually starts at around 9:30 AM, and the BP usually starts at around 10:00 AM. Turnout last month was light due to regular participant vacations, but the few of us there, had a great day. Atmosphere is always relaxed so feel free to come by even if just to observe. So come on out and give it a try. As always, Smoke 'em if you got 'em. And be sure to Keep Your Powder Dry

Membership —Greg Forte read the following Probationary to Regular members Roy Nelson, Frank Spina. Rich Gajda then asked the membership of any had questions for these new regular mem-

bers. Seeing none, these new members were voted into full membership: all in favor, none-opposed.

Next, Greg offered the following candidates for their Second Reading and to be Approved as Probationary Members: Abdul Bahadi, Gerard Daly, Robert Coutrell, Eric Cohen, Tom Quinlan, William Son, Matt Dolan, Jeff Holstick, Jeremy Reid, Jim Breddon, Rich Sleuter, Diane Pryor, Mark Stevens, Nicole Caparo, Bob Fernandez, Nancy Absalon

Rich Gajda then asked the membership of any had questions for these new probationary members. Seeing none, these new members were voted into full membership: all in favor, none-opposed

Lastly, Greg introduced the following candidates for the First Reading Introduced: Neil Brier, Brandon Noblick, Tyler Mercurio, Michael Cerde, Michael Lania, Chris Wojo, Robert Hines

COMMITTEE REPORTS: No reports from the By-Laws or Range Rules Committees

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Rich Gajda made a request for any new business the club should consider.

GOOD & WELFARE:

Steve Serna raised about renewed efforts by anti-gun groups affecting veterans’ firearm rights, particularly related to VA reporting and mental competency designations. Efforts are underway to make protections permanent. He also indicated that Pennsylvania has advanced a firearms registration bill out of committee, raising concerns about potential regional policy impacts. Lastly, he mentioned the NRA has filed a legal challenge against New Jersey regarding the state’s one-gun-per-month law.

Will Jones were informed the membership about upcoming and recent regional gun shows, including the Delaware show scheduled for December 6–7, and a smaller, well-attended show recently held at the Palmer Firehouse. Attendance details and timing were shared for those planning to attend.

Will also made an announcement regarding meetings of a New Jersey firearms history group, which holds brief business meetings followed by educational presentations. This month’s presentation will focus on historical small arms and conditions in Germany during World War I, with antique firearms on display.

Additionally Will shared personal updates and expertise related to antique firearms, including rare Winchester and Marlin rifles. He noted his experience in handloading ammunition for obsolete and antique calibers and offered assistance to members seeking hard-to-find cartridges or specialized loading advice.

Meeting adjourned @ 845 PM
Next Members Mtg on 12/17/25 a@ 7:30 PM