

In a letter from Pine Tree Pistol Club (PTPC) dated November 19, 2010, the current club officers and some of the current board members reminded all of us of the upcoming Annual meeting on December 7th, 2010 and also pointed out what they called "3 very serious matters" that will come before the membership at this meeting. They also took the opportunity to share their opinions concerning these matters with us. We believe it is only fair that we share other opinions and a few facts with you concerning these matters.

Lead Remediation

What is the real nature of the lead issue at Pine Tree? We applaud the club's efforts at cleaning, painting and sealing the ranges, but since that time, there has been virtually no noticeable range maintenance. (Of course any testing on a dirty range will look like a lead problem).

To what standard does wiping the bullet traps apply? What about wipe samples taken from a floor that has not been vacuumed or for that matter cleaned in any organized way or time frame?

Why does the November 19th letter reference Housing & Urban Development residential standards instead of the OSHA General Industry Lead Standards that applies to shooting ranges?

The HUD standards measure lead from wiping surfaces in a residence. The OSHA standards measure the airborne lead levels and sets acceptable exposure levels on shooting ranges.

Why can't the person tasked with range maintenance be given some kind of plan?

If you believe the Nov. 19th letter and our range maintenance practices have been "very poor", the "very poor" part is a lack of action and direction on the part of the current club officers.

Proposed Bylaw Revisions

The Club has been functioning with ease under the bylaws that have been in force for over ten years, and suddenly a legal firm is hired to rewrite them! Why?

These proposed bylaws changes are the product of 4 people, the current president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. These 4 members took it upon themselves to hire (at the club's expense) the corporate lawyer without input or guidance from the board of directors or more importantly, we, the members. That means that about 1.05% of the club membership, with no input from the other 98.95% of the members, is trying to force feed us the laws that will govern our club for years to come.

The president said these new bylaws were needed to eliminate possible liability that the old bylaws exposed the club to. The vice president said in the Nov. general meeting it was because there is no record of the 1999/2000 bylaws ever being voted on (despite the fact that they are printed and distributed in our club handbook. A club newsletter confirms this).

NOW, the Nov. 19th letter says they are needed to stop the "very real threat" that the club is being taken over by a "vocal minority (10-15%).....as opposed to the current 1.05% that currently is attempting to force policy.

The very real threat story is if you are vocal and not in total agreement you must be taking over the club?

Effort to take over the club

This portion of the Nov. 19th letter needs to be addressed one item at a time. It has so many half truths and outright lies it almost criminal.

1) Neither IPSC nor any other shooting group has ever believed that the lead issue was a lie or overblown. In fact, these shooting groups want the ranges kept clean and have asked at many meetings for the proper equipment and procedures to do so, all to no avail.

2) Its just not IPSC shooters that are questioning the way the club's money is being spent. Everyone should be asking how many thousands of dollars were spent on things like the security camera system that we were told is an insurance company requirement, yet to date, no proof of this statement has ever been provided; The security cages which were needed to lock up... what?

Let's not forget the paved driveway to the back of the building, the \$5000+ vacuum cleaner that doesn't work, and is it not a conflict of interest to have the club pay the president and training director to teach the NRA personal protection classes? All of this with little to no oversight and few if any competitive bids. IPSC understands that they are supported by membership but IPSC also helps support the club and is the 2nd highest revenue source behind membership.

3) That IPSC shooters called the bylaw proposal a "power grab". Sorry, this phrase was coined by a long time member who doesn't shoot IPSC and has held just about every position in the club, including president.

4) That IPSC closes range 2 & 3 for 5 days a month. IPSC actually closes these ranges for 4 hours a week and on 1 Saturday afternoon and 1 Sunday morning a month. And this schedule has been on the calendar since the club open at its present location.

5) Now the biggie...the sneaking in of members at the November meeting. But 1st, a little background info is needed. When the club re-opened after the cleanup, the president decreed that we would no longer teach the bench rest position in the basic pistol class. Not really a big deal, until you realize that PTPC advertises this class as the NRA Basic Pistol Safety class, hands out NRA training materials to the students and give students who complete the class an NRA Basic Pistol Safety completion certificate. By eliminating the bench rest position, the PTPC class no longer met NRA minimum

training requirements. The president and the rest of the board were notified in September by an IPSC shooter who is also on the board and an NRA Instructor that the club was no longer in compliance. This director also supplied the president and board with documentation from the NRA detailing the non compliance and what needs to be done to correct the situation. From that point until the November Basic class, the president continued to call it an NRA class, give out NRA training material and issue NRA certificates, all in defiance of the NRA and putting the club's affiliation and the instructor's credentials at risk. The president went so far as to tell one instructor he had a waiver from the NRA. In August, a PTPC NRA instructor asked the club's training director if they taught a class at another club, would the students NRA certificates meet the PTPC membership requirements and the club's training director put in print "as long as you can tell the membership that you watched them shoot and they are safe...go for it". Instead of complying with the presidents "no bench rest" rule and putting their credentials at risk, a group of PTPC NRA instructors held a series of NRA Basic Pistol Safety classes at other gun clubs in October. Based on the emails from the club's training director, the students at these classes *were told that the classes* met PTPC training requirements and they were eligible to join the club. The first membership meeting after the classes was the November meeting. None of the officers or directors at this meeting raised any objections and they were voted in. By the way, our club president did not bother to attend this meeting. In essence, the club's president and membership director turned away the only students who actually passed the NRA's Basic Pistol Safety class since the club reopened. The real funny thing is that for years, the president said that everyone who joins the club must take the NRA Basic Pistol Safety class to join; it's a requirement of our insurance carrier. Now, all of the sudden, any and all reference to the NRA is gone and it's replaced by PTPC safety class. Why? Because it suits his needs at this point in time.

So, what does this mean?

The Nov. 19th letter states that "both safe shooting and maintaining a safe shooting environment has always been and remain our overriding commitment." We need to look at a couple of things that show this statement to be misleading at best and an out right lie at worst.

- 1) The current club president, while teaching the NRA's personal protection inside/outside the home classes would stand behind the students on range 2 and fire shots over the student's heads in violation of any and all firearm safety rules. These shooting events were witnessed by the club's vice president and the club's training director, to name a few, yet nothing was ever said about it. An investigation into this matter is in progress by the NRA.
- 2) The club president's unsafe behavior and "above the law" attitude is further demonstrated and described in the included Chicago Tribune article.
- 3) If the current officers were really committed to providing a safe shooting environment, why did it take them over 4 years to do ANYTHING AT ALL about the lead build up in the backstops and on the ranges?

After thumbing their noses at the NRA, the legal system & the law, any & all firearm safety rules and sending misinformation and out right lies out to the membership, using club letterhead and quite possible club funds, they expect us to believe that they are not going to run for re-election. We don't know about you, but we can no longer believe anything they print or say.

We do agree with them on one thing, please come out to the December 7th meeting. This is your club! Ask the current officers about the points laid out in this letter and what exactly they plan for the coming year. Ask them how they plan to replace the lost revenue from the following programs that they have gutted: Open to the Public, Training, Shooting Sports, and the WIIT as shown in the October 2010 financial reports. Ask the treasurer to see the 2009 vs. 2010 profit & loss sheet from the most recent financial report to see for your self just how much revenue we are talking about.

Ask them how they plan to replace the dues that were lost by turning away 15 safe, qualified new members which included a number of current and retired law enforcement officers, the director of firearm training for one of the largest police departments in the area, one NRA Training Counselor, a number of NRA Instructors and almost the entire board of directors from a nearby gun club, just to name a few. How proud the current officers here at PTPC must be for stopping the likes of these from joining our club!!! And what a black eye we, as members must endure for this disgraceful act committed by our club leaders.

December 7th 2010 is our chance not just as members but as club owners to decide which direction our club will take.

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Ex-deputy Guilty In Theft Of Buoys
September 25, 1997

Ex-deputy Accused Of Stealing River Buoys

Marengo-area Man Faces Misconduct Charge

April 30, 1997 | By Charles Mount, Tribune Staff Writer.

In an indictment that shocked Fox Waterway Agency officials, a former boat patrol deputy in the McHenry County Sheriff's Police Marine Division has been charged with stealing two buoys from the Fox River.

Steven J. Stanislaus, 42, of 18302 Garden Valley Rd. in unincorporated Marengo, was named in a sealed indictment charging him with official misconduct and misdemeanor theft, prosecutors said.

The indictment was returned by a McHenry County grand jury last Thursday and was unsealed Tuesday after Stanislaus turned himself in at the McHenry County Jail, where he was freed on \$5,000 bond.

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Stanislaus, who faces a prison sentence of 3 to 7 years if convicted of the official misconduct charge, is accused of stealing the waterway agency's red and green buoys last November.

Misdemeanor theft carries a sentence of a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The incident allegedly occurred while Stanislaus was in uniform and on duty in a sheriff's patrol boat about a half-mile south of Rawson Bridge Road in Fox River Valley Gardens, the indictment charges.

"We lose 150 to 200 buoys a year because people run into them with their boats, but this is the first time I've ever heard of somebody stealing them--and I hope it's the last," said Dr. William C. Dam, chairman of the waterway agency.

"I couldn't believe it when I heard it was a part-time policeman," Dam said. "I was very shocked. We want the theft prosecuted to the fullest extent because safety is so important. We try to let boaters know the areas that are safe for them to drive boats through."

Stanislaus was the highest-ranking deputy in the sheriff's volunteer auxiliary police, which is used mainly for supplemental traffic control. He also was a paid, seasonal deputy with the marine unit.

The red and green buoys, which are placed about 40 yards apart in the water, mark the outer limits of the safe boating area, particularly for large boats that could run aground in shallow water. The agency also has white buoys that mark no-wake and shallow water areas.

Dam said each buoy costs about \$150 and weighs about 50 pounds.

The buoys were found April 15 in a shed next to Stanislaus' house, prosecutors said. A search warrant was issued after a witness came forward in January and told prosecutors about the thefts, which occurred after dark while Stanislaus was patrolling the river, prosecutors said.

Stanislaus used a pole to lift the buoys, which are tied to anchors, into the boat and used tools to unfasten the anchors, prosecutors said. He then is accused of covering the buoys with a blanket so that the blinking lights on top of the buoys would not be visible from shore.

Stanislaus put the buoys in his personal utility vehicle, which was parked near a patrol boat docking site on the river, prosecutors said. An unidentified witness was with Stanislaus when the alleged thefts occurred last fall, about two weeks before boat patrols ended for the year, authorities said.

Sheriff Keith Nygren, who was sworn in as sheriff the day the search warrant was executed, said Stanislaus was suspended that day by Nygren's predecessor, William Mullen, and resigned on April 18. The alleged criminal acts occurred under Mullen.

"What's important is that we do the right thing here--and we've done the right thing," said Nygren.

James Miliello III, Stanislaus's attorney, declined comment.

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Ex-deputy Guilty In Theft Of Buoys

Court Sentences Him To Supervision, Fine

September 25, 1997 | By Mark R. Madler. Special to the Tribune.

A man who has resigned from his part-time post as a deputy in the marine division of the McHenry County sheriff's office pleaded guilty Wednesday to the theft of two buoys from the Fox River last November.

Steven J. Stanislaus, 42, was sentenced to two years of supervision and ordered to pay a \$1,000 fine during a hearing on a negotiated plea before McHenry County Circuit Judge Ward S. Arnold. A second charge of official misconduct was dropped.

Stanislaus, of 18302 Garden Valley Rd. in unincorporated Marengo, also must pay \$350 restitution and perform 250 hours of community service. He resigned from the department April 18.

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Fox Waterway Agency Chairman Dr. William Dam said he hoped the publicity given to Stanislaus' thefts will serve as an example to others not to try something similar.

"A \$1,000 fine is one of the steeper fines I've seen for a boating violation," Dam said. "I'm not pleased or displeased, I just hope it never happens again."

Stanislaus was indicted in April for the theft, which occurred while Stanislaus was in uniform and on duty in a sheriff's patrol boat about a half-mile south of Rawson Bridge Road in Fox River Valley Gardens.

Stanislaus was the highest-ranking deputy in the sheriff's volunteer auxiliary police, which is used mainly for supplemental traffic control. He also was a paid, seasonal deputy with the marine unit.

The red and green buoys, which are placed about 40 yards apart in the water, mark the areas for safe boating, particularly for larger craft that could run aground in shallow water.

The agency maintains between 100 and 150 buoys on the river at a cost of \$150 apiece, with each weighing about 50 pounds. "I think the 26,000 boaters depend on those to guide them to the safe parts of the water," Dam said.

The buoys were found April 15 in a shed next to Stanislaus' house. A search warrant was issued after a witness came forward in January and told prosecutors about the thefts, which occurred after dark while Stanislaus patrolled the river, prosecutors said.

Stanislaus used a pole to lift the buoys, which are tied to anchors, into the boat and used tools to unfasten the anchors, prosecutors said. He then allegedly covered the buoys with a blanket so that the blinking lights on top of the buoys would not be visible from shore.

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