



SAFETY FIRST - Don Dymond demonstrates the correct way to store a flintlock muzzleloader, not loaded, with its frizzen open and the hammer all the way down. Post photo/Grace R. Dove

Keep your powder dry

Muzzleloader season to open

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

With his or her eye on this year's last chance to bag a deer, the hunter in your life may have asked Santa for a flintlock muzzleloading long gun. And a can of black powder. And a powder flask, ball starter, lead balls, patches, a hunting license with a muzzleloader stamp and a bag to carry it all in.

How will poor Santa remember everything? Will it all fit down the chimney? And why would anyone choose to hunt with an antiquated, scopeless weapon that takes several minutes to reload instead of a nice, modern lever-action .308 Savage rifle with a 3-9x22 scope and a clip of ammo?

"Most black powder shooters hunt for the challenge," explained Bob and Frank Gelsleichter, owners of Hi-Score Gun Shop in Fern Brook. "The maximum accurate black powder shot is less than 100 yards. You have to place the ball exactly in the deer's vital spot; you can't rely on shock power to down him. You have only one shot before you reload, and are not allowed to use a scope. For the modern hunter, black powder hunting is great fun, as well as challenging."

Gelsleichter added that not all black powder hunters are history buffs or mountain men. They're

just hunters wanting to add to their shooting skills and enjoyment of the sport. And if a hunter has not bagged a deer during buck or antlerless season, muzzleloader season provides another opportunity to fill the freezer with tasty venison.

Game Commission statistics indicate that muzzleloader hunting is increasing in popularity. In 1990, the Game Commission sold 1,104,340 general hunting licenses and 102,457 muzzleloader stamps. As of November 30, 1991, the Game Commission has sold 1,062,434 general hunting licenses and 102,989 muzzleloader stamps. These records are incomplete, since the 2-1/2 week muzzleloader season does not begin until December 26 and muzzleloader stamps are available until the end of the season.

"A beginning black powder shooter must put aside all knowledge of modern weapons," explained Frank Gelsleichter. "A muzzleloader operates much differently from a modern rifle. You have to wait for the flint to strike the frizzen, generate a spark to ignite the powder in the pan and set off the powder in the barrel. If you move your gun before all this happens, you'll miss your shot."

Using the old guns can be hazardous. For example, a left-handed

shooter using a right-handed gun can get burned from the pan flash. And the flash from the burning powder can get in the hunter's eyes and do damage.

Using the wrong size charge can be dangerous, too. Too small a charge can crack the barrel because the powder stays in too long and burns too hot. Too much powder usually isn't a problem because the barrels are thick enough to withstand the excess.

Patches and lead shot can be customized to the gun. The Pennsylvania Game Law permits only round shot; cylindrical "mini" and "maxi" balls are prohibited. Only flintlock long guns are permitted in Pennsylvania; pistols and percussion cap guns are not. And hunters must wear at least 250 square inches of fluorescent orange clothing.

So, what happens when a hunter has to go through a time-consuming, complicated ritual in order to be ready to fire? Frank Gelsleichter often jokes about a friend who had a chance for two shots with a muzzleloader at a deer. But by the time he shot once and got the cork off the powder flask to reload, the deer had ambled away.

Most important: remember to hunt safely and have fun. And keep your powder dry.

Toys

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don't have everything that others do. I thought I'd like to make someone happy," agreed Gillian Nallon, Amanda Zerfoss and Valerie Fiore.

Shelby Wandel summed it up best: "All kids are special. No matter how good or how bad they've acted, every kid should get something nice for Christmas."

Principal Bob Kunkle said that a surprisingly large number of his students brought in toys. "I am personally gratified to all the par-

ents and students who participated in this year's Toys for Tots' program. Their generosity will certainly make Christmas a little brighter for the many less fortunate children in our area," he commented.

"The school kids certainly helped out a lot," said Sgt. Funk. "We had a tremendous response. The Marines extend a hearty 'Thank you' to everyone in the community who helped us!"

Borough

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saved the borough approximately \$10,000 in 1991.

Lutsey avoided cash penalties by making sure that all reports were filed on time, purchasing supplies in quantity or on sale, taking advantage of early payments or discounts and adjusting work schedules to eliminate some overtime payments. He also entered into a cost-saving cooperative paving program with Kingston and Dallas Townships and encouraged preventive maintenance programs.

In other business, the council adopted resolutions to reenact all other taxes levied during 1992 without subsequent changes and to approve the salary and wage schedules for borough employees. Borough Manager Lutsey was appointed Zoning Officer, to be paid 50% of the receipts from each month's zoning permits.

Council noted that several borough residents complimented the road crew on the excellent condition of the roads after the recent snowfall.

Borough Solicitor Ted Krohn reported on the status of two legal matters. The first, involving a question of interpretation of the police wage scale, was resolved with Robert Jolley, a former part-time patrolman. Jolley received \$650 back pay. On the second issue, the ongoing situation with the deteriorated Hearstone Pub building, Krohn recommended that the borough see that the building is demolished as soon as possible.

Cooper presented a plaque to Jerry Machell in thanks for 20 years of service to Dallas Borough. Machell's term on council expires at the end of this month. Harold Brobst, who served as councilman for 36 years, was not present to receive his plaque. Both chose not to run for re-election in November.

Council plans a reorganization meeting January 6, 1992. The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 21.

DAMA

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The majority of the people who have not paid, have ignored both \$47 quarterly bills, Bagley said. The third quarter bill will be due in February.

"Eventually, to protect everyone else, liens will be filed for delinquents," said Bagley. However, he refused to say at one point the liens would be filed.

Hunting with a flintlock takes some patience

In order to safely load a flintlock long gun, follow these steps. Although you're not trying to set any speed records for reloading, these approximate times can give you an idea of how long it takes.

1. Open powder flask and measure powder charge into the barrel: 5 seconds.
 2. Set a lubricated patch and ball in the barrel. Gently tap into place with the ball starter: 5 seconds.
 3. Using the handle of the ball starter, push the ball in as far as it will go: 5 seconds.
 4. Finish firmly seating the patch and ball against the charge with the ramrod: 10 seconds.
 5. Carefully pour a small amount of powder into the frizzen and close it: 5 seconds.
 6. To shoot: aim, pull the flint back and squeeze the trigger: 5 seconds. (Remember to wait for the powder to ignite. It will take approximately 1.5 seconds after you pull the trigger before the gun actually goes off.)
- Total time to load and fire: approximately 35 seconds.
Remember: Safety and accuracy count more than speed.



THE RIGHT STUFF—These items should be part of every black powder shooter's basic equipment kit: clockwise from right: black powder, powder flask, a pin to clean the torch hole, cleaning brush for the barrel, ball starter, lubricated patch and round lead shot. (Post photo/Grace R. Dove)

No overnight parking in Dallas Township

Dallas Township Police Chief Carl Miers reminds residents that parking on township streets between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. is strictly prohibited, no matter what the weather.

Miers explained that the streets must be kept clear of vehicles so that they can be cleaned by snowplow trucks. No warnings or exceptions will be made, Miers said.

Violators must pay a \$5.00 fine within 72 hours of being ticketed; the late penalty is \$15.00.

Police report

DALLAS TOWNSHIP

TWO RIGS FROM SAME COMPANY IN ACCIDENT

According to Dallas Township police, a 1985 Freightliner tractor-trailer operated by Alan L. Fortenberry, 38, of RR2 Meshoppen and owned by Campo's Express of Tunkhannock was involved in a rear-end accident Sunday, December 15, with a 1990 Mack tractor-trailer operated by William King Newport, 43, of Scranton, and also owned by Campo's Express. Police said that both vehicles were travel-

ing south on Route 309 in the vicinity of the Beaumont Inn when Newport slowed his rig in order to avoid an unknown vehicle ahead of him which had slowed for a herd of deer on the roadway. Fortenberry stated to police that his brakes locked up and he was unable to stop his rig in time to avoid striking the rear end of Newport's truck. Fortenberry was cited for following too closely. Fortenberry's truck was towed from the scene. Dallas Township Patrolman Doug Higgins investigated the accident.

POLICE INVESTIGATE MISSING VEHICLE

Dallas Township police are investigating a missing vehicle report filed by Robert Oller of Harveys Lake. Police said that Oller stated that his 1980 Cadillac Eldorado was missing from Cousin Bill's Bar shortly before midnight Friday, December 13. The vehicle is white and has a 3/4 stainless steel roof, according to the report. Anyone with any information on this vehicle is asked to contact Dallas Township police. Dallas Township Patrolman Doug Higgins is investigating the incident.

THE DALLAS POST

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