

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year! I trust your Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays with you and yours was memorable and that the New Year will be better than ever. As we close 2005 and begin 2006, it is appropriate that I take a few moments to review where we came from, where we are and where we are planning to go.

When I took over as President in early 2002, I was optimistic about our future, though the road was a little bumpy. Then I learned of the range closure by the Corps of Engineers, which we later discovered was based on incorrect information. Your Board of Directors did not give up on Addicks and after several discussions with the COE, we were able to reach an agreement by which the range could reopen. The agreement included adding the RSO program and a lead harvesting account & a lead remediation account. Your BOD developed a plan, bids were received and a contract was awarded. Surface and underground water samples were taken as soil samples, to verify that no lead pollution was occurring beyond acceptable levels. The planned work was completed, which led to the Grand Reopening in late summer, 2003. The BOD then turned their focus to Juliff and the range development program there. After lengthy discussions, a plan was developed, bids were received and contracts were awarded. Though this project took more time than anticipated, as did Addicks due to daily rains over clay soils, Juliff range saw its grand reopening in August 2004. Funds for these two projects came from club savings for more than 40 years intended for future range development as well as a loan from two BRI members. With those two major projects behind us, the BOD focused on increasing membership by working with the NRA to communicate to non-BRI members in the greater Houston area, advising them that we exist and that membership was available. It was a successful endeavor. Taking advantage of the 2005 NRA Annual Convention being in Houston, BRI secured a booth manned by members, which received a lot of attention as well as a number of new member applications.

Our Treasury is in good shape, says our Treasurer Dave Winkelman. Dave has done an excellent job and is fastidious in timely paying our bills, making deposits and keeping our financial records in order. He advises that BRI has had recent success in reducing our Brazoria County appraised value, thanks to some tenacious work by a BRI member who volunteered his efforts. Dave has reported to the BOD that your additional annual payments of \$35 and \$25 have been put to work, as promised when our annual dues were increased in 2003. Two accounts have been opened at Fidelity: the first, to be used to remediate the Addicks range at some time in the future when it is no longer used as a shooting range, is invested in U. S. Treasury Notes yielding 4.25% having a face value of \$127,000; the second, which totals nearly \$38,000, which will be used to periodically harvest lead from the impact berms as well as to lessen the impact of lead in the soil, is invested in a Certificate of Deposit, yielding 4.5%.

Your BOD has a number of other significant contributors who don't receive a lot of fanfare but deserve your kudos; they have already received kudos from me. Tom Schlotzhauer has served as Secretary and has performed his job flawlessly. In addition to his board duties, Tom volunteers for more than his share of RSO duties at Addicks. Tom also works behind the scenes, making significant contributions without seeking the fanfare he is due. Next time you see this mild mannered gentleman smoking an "old stogie" at Addicks, let him know you appreciate his contributions. Ed Webster heads our Range Safety Officer program and has done a fine job, though he tells me that he has had some difficulty filling all of the RSO slots and ensuring that RSO's who sign up, perform their duties. He could use a few more volunteer RSO's. If interested, please contact Ed. Oran Woody is a member of your BOD, serving as High Power Chairman. He has been instrumental in increasing match shooting at Juliff as well as the introduction of "Garand Matches". Oran can usually be found "calling" the matches at Juliff including "Across-the-course, All Prone, Any/Any, 1000 yd prone and Garand". His fellow competitors honored Oran by asking him to fire the first shot on the 1,000-yard range. Oran's contribution goes beyond Juliff as he can often be found serving as RSO at Addicks. I have personally observed Oran at Addicks work parties, volunteering to help his club and fellow members. Though not large in stature, Oran has heart and spirit larger than most, as demonstrated in 1993 when he worked with me on concrete ramps at Addicks for the physically challenged. Oran has been nicknamed "BRI's Iron Man", a very fitting description. Oh, did I fail to mention that he is also the editor of the Alibi. One of my difficult tasks has been to avoid recognizing Oran's raised hand as he volunteers for still another task at our monthly BOD meeting. And for those of you who complain about our ranges being too far to drive, Oran lives in Spring!

The New Year at Bayou Rifles Inc. will begin at the January BOD meeting with the counting of ballots for the new slate of Officers and Directors, the results of which will be reported to you in the next Alibi. I am confident that you will elect Bruce Mahan, President and will give him the support that he needs to lead BRI forward. Bruce has been a steadfast resource for me, especially during the early days after learning of the Addicks range closure. Bruce was there at the COE meetings and every day for the construction work at Addicks. He has provided the BOD and me with wise counsel and has repeatedly demonstrated his leadership. In addition to his unassuming contributions at BOD meetings, Bruce has been the Chairman of Bullseye Division, has actively served RSO duties, has performed range maintenance at Addicks and has volunteered for work parties at Juliff and Addicks.

Looking ahead, BRI's BOD is evaluating fencing improvements at Juliff, which will necessitate a significant financial expenditure and the need for another volunteer opportunity as a result of real estate being developed in close proximity to our range. Be on the lookout for a notice or phone call asking for your help. BRI has already placed new "No Trespassing – NRA Shooting Range" signs along our entire perimeter. The wooden 16' fence on the west side of our Addicks range is in need of major repair, following a recent windstorm. The shotgun thrower at Juliff will again be relocated, I trust for the final time. It will be placed in the parking area just west of the 600-yard firing line. When the 600/1000-yard range is not in use, the casual shotgun shooter should have a great place to "break a few clays". The plaque listing the names of BRI members donating to the Juliff Range Development Fund has been received and will be mounted for prominent display at one of the Juliff ranges. By the way, a BRI member came forward to voluntarily pay the entire cost for the plaque. Way to go! "Adding new members" is high on the list of tasks to be revisited in 2006. Your new BOD will be working diligently to communicate our benefits to perspective members and welcome them aboard. Of course, if you know someone interested in joining, please contact our membership director or see our new member information on our web site.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your President for the last four years. The time has come to pass the baton and I will do so at the January BOD meeting. [My thanks to the current and past boards that have worked with me to accomplish the many tasks we have encountered.](#) I have been impressed by the number of members who volunteer to make this club one of the best in the Country. I have been humbled by BRI's knowledgeable and skilled shooters, hunters and gun enthusiasts. And for the final time, I ask you to "Stand up and be counted" by volunteering your time and effort to BRI.

In the meantime, good shooting and keep them in the X-ring.

Joe Bhonn
President