



# The Cumberland Magazine

## Greetings from The President's Corner

*Jim McGarry, President*



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[www.cumberlandriflemen.com](http://www.cumberlandriflemen.com)

### Club Rules

Member ID badges must be worn and visible. Guests must be signed in and out. Guest badges must be worn visible and returned when leaving.

### Editor... Rob McKenzie

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The Cumberland Riflemen is a member of National Rifle Association; CMP; ANJRPC

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The lead screening equipment on the 600 yard range.

This year of 2020 has been a very turbulent year for all having to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and political issues rocking our country. Here at Cumberland we had a closure of the range due to the COVID-19 regulations imposed by the governor. Not standing still, we did take time during the closure to enhance the safety of the ranges by building and improving the berms on several ranges with bin blocks and earthen extensions. Once we were allowed to open, we had to amend some rules regarding guests in order to comply with the social distancing regulations of the governor. I would like to thank all our members for abiding by these regulations as the fines that could be imposed by the governor are very substantial and something we cannot afford.

We have recently completed a lead remediation project on all ranges, conducted by a nationally recognized company. With ranges across the country being fined and shut down by state and federal regulators for lead contamination, we felt it was prudent to comply with regulations should we be inspected by the DEP. Since the forming of this club in 1964, lead cleanup has never been done. Unfortunately, we had to close the range during the time of this remediation for safety concerns. The project took longer than expected due to weather conditions and a machine breakdown. They were able to remove over ten tons of lead from the impact

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## President's Corner

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berms and surrounding areas on the ranges. The company did a fantastic job at cleaning and the subsequent rebuilding of the berms. I would like to thank all the board members who put this project together, and the few members that assisted in maintaining security during the project.

Our Second Amendment rights will be on the forefront of the new

political administration in Washington in the upcoming years.

We will continue to upgrade and maintain the range complex as we have in the past with the available funds.

Have a wonderful holiday season and God Bless you and your family and The United States of America.

Jim McGarry  
President, CRI



A pile of lead and bullet brass ejected from the screen.

## Black Powder Target Rifle



A photo of the Black Powder Target Rifle Match participants from May of 2000! A number of these intrepid souls are still sending lead down range in 2020. Do you recognize them?

The 2020 Black Powder Target Rifle Match season, like most other disciplines, was adversely affected by the COVID-19 debacle. However, we were blessed with near perfect weather to hold our one and only Sept. 12th BPTR match at Cumberland Riflemen. The temperature was perfect, and the wind was sporty enough to clear the line of smoke and wreak havoc at the 600 yard line. Turnout was great, highlighted by one new competitor to the sport and numerous experienced shooters who were able to come out and enjoy the day. We even had some folks return to the line after many years away, and some competitors from other disciplines, too! The scores were consis-

tent with a typical BPTR match: we had several displays of greatness, several shooters cursing the 600 yard line, and maybe one or two shooters scratching their heads.

By the time the shooters reached the 600 yard line, the wind was blowing fast and switching directions, making reading the mirage near impossible. As often seen at our range, none of the wind flags agreed.

One competitor, Gary Ireland, who seemed to figure out the wind said, "I just shot thru it." With a .45-90 and a 540 gr bullet, he found the winning combination. At 600 yards, Gary delivered a nice 95-3x score out of a possible 100-10x, missing the BPTR 600 yard range record by 2 points.

Looking ahead to what we hope to be a COVID-19 free 2021, Glenn Davis will take the helm as match director. Currently, the plan is to hold four (4) BPTR mid-range matches (200, 300, & 600 yards – prone or position) during the 2021 season. Three of the matches will be 45 shot matches, and the regional/state match will be a 60 shot match.

Additional details can be found in the match bulletin once the schedules are approved and the website is updated.



The pits, all set up and quietly waiting for the Black Powder Target Rifle Match.

Those interested in exploring the world of Black Power Target Rifle competition are encouraged to contact me, Vince DAlessandro, at [vincedalessandro@yahoo.com](mailto:vincedalessandro@yahoo.com), or our new match director for the 2021 season, Glenn Davis, at [gpdavis2@comcast.net](mailto:gpdavis2@comcast.net), for more information.

Have a safe and healthy winter. See you in 2021.

Vince DAlessandro  
Black Powder Chairman

# From The Editor's Pen

## Searching for those wild places



Finishing touches on the 100 yard berm.

By the time you read this, the turbulent, tragic, and politically charged year of 2020 will, finally, be coming to a close. The political strife, the unrest in major cities, and the home quarantining have led to stresses that have manifested themselves in numerous ways, especially in the new, or revived, interest in the great outdoors. Camping and skiing gear is flying off the shelves, mobile campers are rolling off the lots, guns are now in the hands of many new gun owners, and hunting and fishing licenses are being

purchased in surprising numbers. Outdoorsy towns are seeing an unprecedented boom in home sales and soaring prices, as city folks are leaving home in droves. All this will have some silver linings, as long as the great outdoor places aren't "loved to death", and the city folks don't bring their city attitudes to their new homes.

Our Cumberland members have known the love and reverence of the outdoors most of their lives. My Dad instilled that love in us from a very early age, and it has guided much of my life ever since. With the reports of so many more people in the outdoors, it reminds me of an idea that drove me to many wild places throughout my life. I always fantasized that I could find places that

had never been visited by a human, until I stepped foot on that magical spot!! In New Jersey, I have hiked into some very forbidding swamps and rocky terrain, searching for that most improbable of locations, but always knew I was fighting the same impulse in indigenous peoples, colonists, and a myriad of people who wandered the wild places well before I did. That, consequently, leads me to actions like climbing up on the upturned roots of a newly fallen tree, and reveling in the fact that I was the only human to have ever been on that spot. Maybe not the last one, but definitely the first! We could all accomplish moments like that, especially if we applied baseball-like statistics to a newly discovered location. If you watched the recent playoffs and World Series, you were inundated with "firsts" just about every time a player swung the bat or caught a ball. I mean it almost became as ridiculous as: "He is the first player ever to hit a home run and steal a base in the same game, after sleeping in pajamas the night before and eating breakfast at IHOP." I can image that Hall of Famer John Smoltz had to laugh, or cry, every time he had to read one of those tidbits, 'cause he actually accomplished things that didn't need any qualifying actions to go with them !!

So, I searched on for that spot that needed no qualifying actions. I came much closer to my dream when I moved to California and was able to explore many places in the western US. I climbed and crawled to inaccessible and sometimes dangerous places, looking for that spot where I just KNEW I was the first. I had that feeling once in Utah, settling into an almost impossible to access spot, until I looked at the imposing sheer walls on the opposite side of the canyon, and realized that, sometime in prehistory, some intrepid individu-

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# From The Editor's Pen

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al had somehow suspended himself over that cliff and produced colossal sized pictographs !! My hopes of finding my memorable spot took a real hit of reality.

I do think I came close, or maybe even accomplished my fantasy, but, of course, could never be sure. One

we searched and found a small overhead opening, now covered over with branches, grasses, and leaves. It would have allowed the use of a fire, at least for a

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The finished berm at the 600 yard range.

day while doing an archaeological survey on a private ranch in So. California, we came across a very small opening to a cave hidden among the live oaks. Of the three of us, I was the one skinny enough to squeeze my way in, on my back, with my head tilted to the side, rock above me and rock below, realizing I was on the very cusp of being that very first human !! The cave opened up to where I could crouch without hitting the ceiling, and I lingered, waiting for my eyes to adjust, hoping that a bobcat or a spotted skunk wasn't doing the same.

What I found instead was the unmistakable signs of soot on the ceiling, and the remains of a number of animals that had been cooked over that fire! Looks like a small party of the Luiseno peoples had spent a night or two in MY cave, waiting out the weather or a party of not so friendly others. Outside,

short amount of time. Well, at least I had comfort in knowing I had

found myself on a very short list of very skinny company.

*Continued on page 5*



The finished Pistol Range.



The best it's ever looked at the Plinking Range.

## From The Editor's Pen

Continued from page 4

Roaming some of the desert mountains of the Greater Mojave area took me even closer to my goal, figuring the inhospitable environment really narrowed down the number of people who ventured into those wilds, knowing all the while that gold prospectors had probably walked virtually every inch of ground, and still do to this day. The proof of that was a prospector's find in 1977 of the "Mojave Nugget", which I held in my white-gloved hands at the LA County Museum. I felt I was getting closer, though.

We could hear, and seemed to feel, the throb of the mighty engines that powered the ships which passed 70 feet over our heads, probably less than 300 yards away. We just hoped the next time we saw our boat wasn't in the form of pieces sinking to the bottom, as we realized we were very likely somewhere we shouldn't be!! We had headed out near the shipping lanes that approach Los Angeles Harbor, look-

ing for the buoy which supposedly marked the grave of the *Olympic II*, which had sunk after a collision in September 1940. We never found it, but after wandering a wide area, came across a number of crab pot buoys, so we decided to gear up and check out the area. At the bottom there was nothing but a flat clay bottom, pocked with round holes, looking like Swiss cheese. Really disappointing. However, many creatures under water make noise, and we could make out the sound of a reef off in the distance. Swimming that way we could see the occasional fish come in and out of view, and knew we were getting close. All of a sudden, out of the murk, appeared a rock the size of a house!! I knew, right then, I had found my spot!!! (I did, however, have to share it with my dive buddy. But I had to leave him alive because it was his boat.) The place was simply fantastic, and definitely untouched, covered with rock scallops, swarms of fish, and an 11-pound lobster that I pulled

out of a cave. It was the smaller of the two in there. We were elated and would head home with plenty of tasty seafood and a dolphin skull. Knowing we would sneak back to this place again, we would triangulate, in those days before GPS, our position once we surfaced. We were so excited, knowing we had that coveted, never before seen secret place!! Fortunately, the boat had not been ground to scrap by a tanker, but our enthusiasm was dashed when the only landmark we could see was the west tower of the Vincent Thomas Bridge. Our chance to triangulate was lost!!

We went back several times, over the next few years, searching with a depth finder along the compass line from that bridge tower, never to find anything on the bottom higher than 5 feet. I sadly, but with humble thankfulness, resolved that being the only two humans to ever see that spot will forever remain so. It was a magical place, and the culmination of my search, but not the end of my enjoyment of those wild, hard to reach, places.

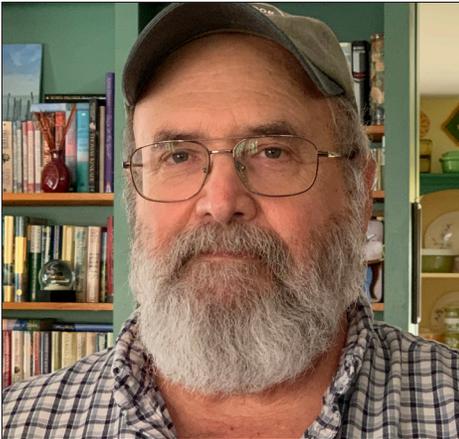
Rob McKenzie  
Editor

## Practical Pistol Range Rule and Safety Notice

Remember, the practical range is only to be utilized by members who have been through the **holster class**. This class is given by the board of directors, and those who complete the class are issued a letter "H", which is then displayed on their Cumberland Riflemen ID card.

ALSO, NO GUESTS ARE PERMITTED TO USE THE PRACTICAL RANGE.

# The Executive Report



Good day all, and hoping that you all are staying safe and well isolated during this COVID-19 pandemic.

As Executive Officer of the Cumberland Rifleman's Club my duties include but are not limited to the following:

- Responsible for all ranges, their maintenance and usage, including safety, and making sure all activities are conducted in a safe and orderly manner.
- Having the authority to appoint and supervise Range Officers, who will act as my assistants, and will have the authority to check personnel using the ranges for current club identification as well as the use of the ranges in a safe manner.
- Upon contacting the Executive Officer first, the assistants (Range Officers) will have the authority to remove personnel from the facility if their infractions are of a serious nature.

- The Executive Officer will chair the Disciplinary Board, if the infractions so warrant a hearing. Board protocol will be followed if such a case exists.

The Cumberland Rifleman's Executive Board has spent significant dollars in 2020, including the Spring period when the ranges were closed by Governor Murphy's Executive Orders. These projects included the **building up of berms** as well as the **installation of bin blocks to make sure any discharged rounds of ammo stay in the ranges in which they were fired.** Our big project which has come to fruition for 2020 was **Lead Remediation on all ranges**, except the metal plinking pistol range as this is a brand new range for 2020. This job was completed towards the end of October by **MT2, a specialized Lead Remediation Company doing work all over the United States.** The rebuilding of the berms after the remediation has our facility looking absolutely fantastic. **I would also like to give special thanks to Paul Adamowski, Jim McGarry, Frank Karwowski, Kirk Hewitt, and apologize to anyone I might have left out for being on-site during the two weeks this project took to complete.**

We are a self-policing range for the most part when our Range Officers are not on site. However we will be keeping a closer eye on

our shooters in 2021 because of reported damage that occasionally occurs when irresponsible people are shooting. Intentional shooting of target holders, leaving trash on the ranges, and bringing unsuitable targets to the different ranges are just a few of the problems we face. Remember we have eyes on you, even if you don't think so! The Disciplinary Board can dispense punishments up to and including expulsion. **This is your range; don't screw it, or yourself!**

We thank you all for being members of the Cumberland Rifleman's Club and wish that you continue to respect your facility and support our efforts. From shooting leagues, to work parties, **we would love your involvement!!**

John Patten

CRI Executive Officer

CRI Junior Program Administrator

Cell Phone: 609-970-1546

E-Mail: [songmangler52@gmail.com](mailto:songmangler52@gmail.com)

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# Cumberland Riflemen Junior Program

Good day all.

We hope that you all are staying safe and social distancing during this COVID-19 pandemic.

As the Cumberland Riflemen Junior Program Administrator, I wanted to let you all know that our 2021 CRI Junior Program plans are “full speed ahead” for the program in 2021.

We cancelled the CRI Junior Program for 2020 because of COVID-19 and social distancing. Presently, we can only accommodate nine (9) shooters on the line at a time, and we were restricted to a total of twenty five (25) persons on any one range at a time. By the time we counted the junior shooters, parents, instructors, and helpers we were already significantly over the number.

If you're a member already, I will send you a copy of this e-mail as well as a 2021 CRI Junior Pro-

gram Schedule, once approved by the Executive Board. If you have any family or friends, 10 years and over, with an interest in firearms, safety, and fun, please contact me with their e-mail addresses and phone numbers and I'll put them on the list for our Spring Notice's.

I thank you all for putting up with our cancelled program for 2020, but we did not want to take any chances with the health of your children and friends.

**We hope to see you in the Spring of 2021!!**

Thanking you,

John Patten  
 CRI Executive Officer  
 CRI Junior Program Administrator  
 Cell Phone: 609-970-1546  
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- Charles T. Davis

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# High Power Rifle Report

The 2020 High Power shooting season is in the books, though no one was sure in early April if there would even be a season. Unfortunately, a lawsuit had to be filed to change our anti-gun Governor's orders that shut down all outdoor ranges in the state.

The Tuesday night High Power League and the High Power matches finally started one month late, successfully holding five Across-the-Course ( XTC ) matches in 2020 instead of the usual six. The first match ended up being a Cumberland Riflemen only practice match due to the attendance restrictions, with nine members participating. The schedule this year was planned in such a way that



The electronic age is upon us, demonstrated by Jack Neith.

we had two matches in June, as the the normal July date fell on July 4th. Also, the August match had been

removed from the schedule after several years of very low attendance due to Camp Perry Nationals being

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# High Power Rifle Report

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held at the same time. We had ten or more shooters for each match and due to COVID restrictions for distancing we ran three relays for each match. One revelation discovered because of the corona virus, is that Lysol wipes are superior at cleaning the rapid fire white boards !! I had made sure the wipes were available for all matches so that competitors could wipe down the target carriers before using them. Eventually, someone tried using them to clean the white boards we use to display rapid fire scores and made the discovery. They will become a standard in the pits until such time as electronic targets make them obsolete.

I urge any member who wants to learn how to shoot High Power XTC ( across the course ) matches to consider joining us on Tuesday afternoons for the High Power league.

We held the State Championship



Rob McKenzie, left, awarded the New Jersey State High Power Rifle Championship by Darrin Montagna.



If it's the brass call, why do you still have to go look for it?

in September with our own Rob McKenzie winning for the first time with a score of 772-18X. Congratulations to Rob.

Mid-Range / F-Class 600 yard competition has become increasingly popular in the last several years. The Mid-Range matches held on the first Sunday of every month have enjoyed great attendance. Mid-range competitions are divided into three separate categories depending on the equipment used. Mid-range shooting is shot solely from 600 yards in the prone position. The first category ( Mid-Range ) uses a target with a 6" x ring and is shot using a sling with no other artificial support. The second category ( F-Open ) is shot using a bipod that is rigidly attached to the front of the rifle and fired from the shoulder with no artificial support in the rear. The width of the target rings are smaller with the X ring being only 3" in diameter. The third category ( F-TR ) is shot with

a front and rear rest with neither being rigidly attached to the rifle.

Our Mid-Range matches did not start up this year until July. The matches had close to, or more than, 30 shooters each match with a total of 124 total competitors in the four matches that were held. The 2021 season will have eight Mid Range matches if the schedule is approved. The September match was the State Championship for Mid Range/F-Class. Joe Fogg won Mid-Range with a score of 597-32x, Joe Pagani won F-Open @ 598-43x, Austin Coiro won F-TR with a 594-24x. Congratulations to the State Championship winners, and thanks to all the participants of our matches at Cumberland Riflemen. The election will have passed by the time this newsletter goes to print. Our vigilance will be required of all of us.

Darrin Montagna  
High Power Chairman



Tom Foster, right, winning the inaugural Iron Man (open sight) Match.

## CMP Program — 2020

That 2020 was a bad year might be an understatement. As you well know, the ranges were closed for the first 3 months or so of the season, and we had to cancel numerous matches. We started shooting again in June and the balance of the season saw very low attendance, which was to be expected but not enjoyed. If it were not for our hard-core regular shooters, we would not have had any matches at all. I am truly appreciative of their attendance! I hope next season will be very different, but we may still be dealing with the COVID life for some time to come.

The season kicked off with our Garand/Springfield/Vintage match on June 14th. High M1 Garand shooter was Jim Jenkins from PA with a 276-4x. Jim bested his son Alex by just one point to take the win. Jim also took the the 1903 Springfield win with a 280-7x. Vintage rifle winner was our own Rob McKenzie, shooting a 275-5x. Kevin Tunney shot a 292-7x to take the Modern Military win.

Next up was an Excellence in Competition (EIC) match. There are no sighter shots in this match, making it difficult to shoot high scores without previously knowing you rifle's zero at each yard line. Rob McKenzie was the match winner with a 479-14X, and Cumberland member Lee Nugent took the "Leg" points as the high non-distinguished shooter, giving him 6 points towards the 30 points required to become a distinguished rifleman.

The next GSV match occurred on July 12th, and M1 Garand winner was Ken Stein from PA. Vince DAlessandro took top spot with the 1903 Springfield. Top shooter in the Vintage category was Rob McKenzie, shooting a 288-5x, setting a new range record for Cumberland with the Vintage rifle! Quite an accomplishment!

On July 19th, we held our first **Stand-up for the Second Amendment** match. This match is 60 total shots for record from the standing position. All proceeds were donated

to pro second amendment organizations: Gun Owners of America, NRA, and NAGR. Winner of the match was Tom Foster shooting a 567-7x. We were able to donate \$270 to the cause.

Another new match, the **Iron-man Match**, took place on July 26th. This match is to award the high shooter using a service rifle with iron sights. Lee Nugent had the high score: 485-12x, but he used a scoped service rifle, so the Iron-man title went to Tom Foster with a 472-6x.

Cumberland hosted its second EIC match on August 22nd. Match winner was Lenny Kurtich from NY, with a 486-14x. Rob McKenzie was second with a 483-12x, and high non-distinguished shooter



Tom Foster, right, being awarded the winning Governor's Ten award by CMP Chairman, Joe Burkel.

was Jim Jenkins with a 481-13x, giving Jim 6 more points towards the Distinguished Rifleman Badge. Jim shot a 196-6x at 600 yds to help him earn the win.

The CMP had to cancel the National Matches due to the virus, so in its place they sponsored the **Home Range Appreciation** series.

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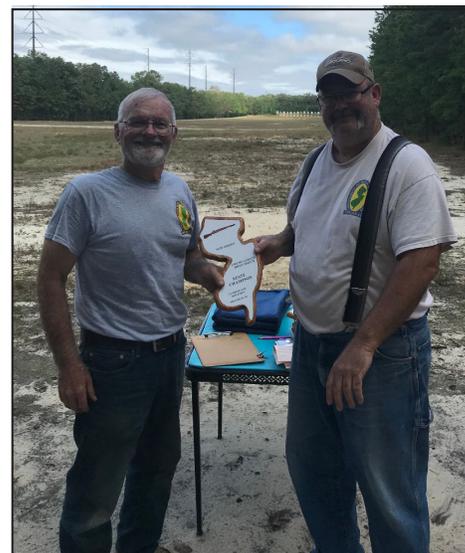
## CMP Program — 2020

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This postal type match, shot at your home range, compiled all the scores nation-wide into one match, and presented the top shooters with awards. Cumberland entered two of these matches under the GSV category. Our first HRA rain-shortened match was held on August 23rd. Some shooters got to shoot 2 rifles, but others only one. High M1 Garand was Joe Burkel with a 272-2x, high 1903 Springfield was Don Zubritsky, Vintage winner was Jim Jenkins with a 280-4x, and Modern Military winner was Lee Nugent firing a 289-12x. Our second HRA match was held on August 29th. Top Garand shooter was Don Zubritsky with a 274-3x, and high Vintage was Rob McKenzie with a 279-8x. Rob earned the top senior in the nation for his score! Another

great accomplishment for Rob! High Modern Military was Lee Nugent firing a 283-6x.

The last EIC match for the year was shot on September 13th. Match winner was Rob McKenzie shooting a 487-17x, a personal best for Rob! Leg points went to our own Lee Nugent shooting a fine score of 480-15x. Lee won these leg points due to his determination, after shooting a sub-par offhand, by shooting a 100-4x in prone rapid and a 197-8x at 600 yards! Just goes to show you that it is never over 'til the last shot is fired. Lee now has 12 points of the 30 needed to earn the badge. Another note worthy performance is Lenny Kurtich shooting a 200-11X at 600 yards, to set another Cumberland range record for the CMP program.



Joe Burkel, right, awarding the GSV Three Gun award to Rob McKenzie.

The Governors Ten match was also fired on September 13th, and match winner was Lenny Kurtich with a 291-9x. The New Jersey Governor's 10 in order were 1. Tom Foster, 2. Lee Nugent, 3. Rob McK-

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## CMP Program — 2020

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enzie, 4. Joe Burkel, 5. Kevin Tunney, 6. Mike DeStefano, 7. Angelo Tufaro, 8. Darrin Montagna, and Junior shooter Curtis Wheatly took 9th.

Our GSV State Championship was held on September 26th. Garand Champ is Rob McKenzie, Springfield match winner is PA shooter Jim Jenkins and state champ is Rob McKenzie. Vintage Champ is Rob McKenzie. Three-gun match winner is Jim Jenkins and 3-gun State Champion is Rob McKenzie once again.

The final match of the season was the M1A/M1 match and Vintage Sniper match. M1A match winner was Jim Jenkins. However, the Vintage Sniper match was cancelled due to lack of entries.

That wrapped up our season. Even though it was short, and attendance was low, there were some outstanding achievements accom-

plished and a couple of CMP range records broken. I would really like to see more club members attend our matches. If you have a Garand, Springfield, Vintage, or modern military rifle, come out and experience one of our matches. There is no reason to feel pressure because we call it competition. We are doing it for the pure enjoyment of the shooting sport, and comradery of good friends. The club offers shooting clinics designed for the new, inexperienced shooters and all our match competitors enjoy navigating new shooters through the learning process. If we do not grow our sport with new shooters, it will surely die. So, come out and have some fun with your rifles. Why leave those rifles languished and unused?!?!

Looking toward next season, we will have our GSV clinic some time in March or early April. The clinic

will teach safe operation of the rifles used, and we spend time going over equipment, match procedures, and position basics. Even well experienced shooters can pick up some valuable information in this clinic.

Hope you all have very happy and healthy holidays and a pleasant winter, all leading to an early spring so we can get back on the range for some fun and friendship. Our CMP schedule for 2021 will mirror that which we had scheduled in 2020. I plan to once again include the new Iron-man and Stand Up for the Second Amendment matches, as I believe they were well received by our competitors.

Anyone with questions or interest can contact me anytime. My contact info can be found on our webpage [cumberlandmatches.com](http://cumberlandmatches.com).

See you on the range.

Joe Burkel  
CMP Match Director



Cumberland member, Kevin Tunney, shining double gold, in the Modern Military Match.



Cumberland member, Lee Nugent, right, being awarded gold for scoring as the highest non-distinguished shooter in the EIC Match, winning another 6 points toward his badge.

# The Medical Aspect

## Do Low Scores Raise your Blood Pressure?

If you're lucky enough never to have had high blood pressure, there's a chance that you might have it today. Just when you thought you knew the rules, somebody changed the book. The same thing happened with cholesterol. What once was a satisfactory cholesterol level is now not. What happened? The answers here depend on one's point of view, one's trust in who is the they in "they say," and one's experience with the topic. Distrust in professed authority is nothing new. Though we are not born this way, we become jaded when we hear a dozen different answers to a simple question that has only one or two practicable solutions. In health care, however, there really may be several

routes to a destination. But changing the numbers to accommodate a dubious agenda is not one of them.

Blood pressure. Optimal values currently stand at lower than 120/80 (mm Hg).

120-129/<80 is deemed mildly high, a situation that tends to get worse over time if ignored. At 130-139/80-89, you're in stage one hypertension; in stage two at  $\geq 140/90$ . Hypertensive crisis arises at 180/120. That one demands a visit to a doctor...or the ER, despite not hurting. The American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, and more than a few

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other health organizations, lowered the numbers for the diagnosis of hypertension to 130/80. It once was 140/90 for people younger than 65, and 150/80 for those who are older. These numbers vary according to the source of information, but you get the idea. Today, more than seventy percent of men over age fifty-five are hypertensive. Thousands of people, having had the same blood pressure numbers for decades, are now candidates for a pharmaceutical intervention. Were the guidelines updated because of new evidence that proved the old numbers inaccurate? Or were they updated for other reasons?

Some risk factors for high blood pressure can't be changed or willed away. Although genetics can account for only about fifteen percent of the incidence of chronic disease, it still plays a role. Some geneticists, however, believe that genes can be switched on and off. Male gender and African ancestry are substantial influences on hypertension that can't be changed, not even in Denmark.

Obesity, alcohol consumption, inactivity and smoking are factors we can manage. It's not as easy as a snap of the fingers, but can be done. Stress is on the cusp of causes. What's stress for one person may be nothing more than motivation for another. Living in a dysfunctional household and/or being economically insecure may be difficult to



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# The Medical Aspect

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handle without drastic measures, which, themselves, can be stressful. Stress is known to cause overeating, drinking, inattentive behaviors and accidents, all unwelcome cardiolog-ical threats.

What do we do to deal with blood pressure? Integrative physicians often look for the most conserva-tive modalities before getting out the prescription pad. Finding and addressing the cause trumps ad-dressing only the symptom. Many practitioners will watch and wait after suggesting lifestyle changes, and then decide the best tack.

Some research suggests that a few mind-body practices might work—meditation, tai chi, qi gong, and yoga might help. Girl stuff, eh? Of these, meditating on the perfect shot fits the category. And this can be done while waiting to fall asleep

at night...or at work. The Heart As-sociation admits that biofeedback has possibilities, even before con-ventional pharmaceutical interven-tions are initiated.

Nothing here is meant to replace the advice of your favorite physi-cian, in whose office your blood pressure may be taken the wrong way. You need to be in a chair—not an exam table—with feet flat on the floor for five minutes, with a sleeve rolled up. No exercise, caffeine or smoking for thirty minutes before-hand. Willingness to discuss alter-natives with him is important to blood pressure control.

Not all approaches to health are compatible with all people. There is serious, gold-standard research that suggests dietary interventions to be successful at maintaining some degree of normalcy in BP man-

agement. Beware that the internet offers empty promises from ques-tionable remedies.

There are studies showing that potassium is able to lower systolic (top number) and diastolic (bot-tom number) pressures by ten points and six points respectively. Instead of risking overdose with a potassium supplement that could lead to irregular heartbeat, eating potassium-rich foods every day is a safe bet for effectiveness. We know about bananas, tomatoes and orange juice, but berries, avocados, potatoes (white and sweet), mush-rooms, peas, cucumbers, zucchini, pumpkin and leafy greens are good additions. Tuna, halibut and cod also add protein. It's nice to be able to get the recommended 4700 mg of potassium a day, but most Amer-icans don't reach that goal. Check with a health care person before venturing to a supplement, doses of which usually are limited to 100

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# The Medical Aspect

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mg. Potassium reacts adversely with some anti-hypertensive drugs, so don't take the mineral if you already take a BP medicine until checking with a physician...especially if the medication's name ends in -sartan or -pril.

Some foods are rich in nitrate as well as in other materials extracted from the soil. These foods convert nitrate to nitric oxide, a gaseous signaling molecule that tells cells surrounding smooth muscle, like blood vessels, to relax. That dilates blood vessels and reduces blood pressure. Since 2010, there are myriad studies examining the action of beets and beet juice on blood pressure, showing a positive effect. An amino acid known as arginine, or L-arginine, is used by the body to make proteins, but also is a precursor for the body's innate nitric oxide. Meats, dairy and eggs are sound food sources of arginine, as are all kinds of seeds and nuts. Chocolate, pomegranates, watermelon, red wine, cabbage and garlic contribute, too. Arginine supplements are on the market.

A few overly-sturdy guys we know were wary of the side effects of blood pressure medications, some cosmetic, such as falling hair, and some that interrupt lifestyle, such as insomnia, vivid dreams/nightmares, fatigue, sleepiness, impotence and weight gain. Their jobs required alertness and they didn't want to chance being groggy. A couple of them drank a glass of beet juice every day, another ate a small can of beets at the evening meal. None of them takes a drug. We don't know their blood pressure numbers, but they seem to be well enough to satisfy their doctors.

After you and your physician have exhausted all the conservative resources to control your pressure,

medications might be in the future. There are scores of blood pressure medications available. Each doctor has his preferences; some medications work in different ways to accommodate a variety of cardiovascular peculiarities. Ask questions. There are objective, scientifically sound web pages from universities and research institutes to help decipher the medications maze. But be aware that most drugs will deplete one or more nutrients that need to be replaced through diet or supplementation.

We know bullseye pistol shooters who appreciate beta blockers for BP control because these drugs slow the heart beat and allegedly minimize wobble. Exercise, judicious

diet choices, weight management and practicing the shooting arts might be better options. It's a good idea to monitor blood pressure at home. While monitors are not that expensive, they are not a substitute for seeing your doctor regularly. Those devices that fit a wrist or finger are unreliable; use the kind with a cuff. High blood pressure doesn't hurt...until it does.

Dr. Tom Wnorowski  
Research Director  
BodyBio, Inc.



The shooting is almost done for 2020. Have a safe and happy New Year.