



*San Francisco Archers Inc.*

# ARROW

October 2008

This month's newsletter brings a very special contribution from Mike Ruspil, a Life Member of San Francisco Archers who lives in Colorado. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

## **THE SPIRIT OF BILL**

Bill Poggi was a member of the San Francisco Archers. We met shortly after he started shooting a bow. Already in his 50s, he was not a young man when he decided to become a bowhunter. He was a novice bowhunter, but I soon learned that he was not new to hunting. His well-used 270, the stories he told, and the photos and racks in his garage were fond reminders of decades of successful hunting in the mountains of California and Nevada.

From the beginning, shooting a bow with Bill was like witnessing a train wreck. His gear was mismatched or jury-rigged at best. No two arrows the same weight or length (some might have been bowhunter straight), bow riser by one company, limbs by another, and a stabilizer that was made in someone's garage. With Bill's gear, you were as likely to see duct tape and bungee cords as cable and strings.

A mechanic for many years, Bill was always changing or fixing stuff, and sometimes it even worked. As for his shooting, his first archery instructor must have been an English shotgun maker. He would step up to the line, shoot one over, shoot one under, one to the left side, followed by one to the right side. Every now and then, one arrow would fly true and hit the spot. He would turn away from the target with a gleam in his eye and a smile on his face. Amazed, we would shake our heads and chalk it up to divine intervention. He loved to watch the flight of the arrow on its way to the target.

A few years passed and our friendship grew. We decided it was time to chase elk in the high country of Colorado. Near Meeker a group of us set up camp at Three Point Mountain. We chased elk over the mountain, across Sleepy Cat and down Coal Creek. The mountain and weather took their toll and the guys decided to stay in camp one day.

I forced myself out of bed that morning and hunted alone that day. After dark I returned to camp wet, exhausted and ready to quit. Sitting in that old canvas tent that smelled of Bill's hearty pasta sauce, fried eggs, steak, and the perfect helping of potatoes, I snapped at Bill, "Why don't you let me cook?" He took my camo fedora off my head, placed it on his head and said, "We all have jobs." He then explained to me that the others had jobs to do,



like dishwashing and starting a fire. His job was to cook. Mine was to find us an elk. I replied, "I can't even do that." He handed me a plate of food and a glass of wine, saying, "You will." The faith of a good friend renewed my tired body and broken spirit. Attacking my food and maps, I got to work. I had a job.

In 2007 Bill had his first heart attack. On April 9th, 2008, he passed away. A friend told me that Bill was wearing his camos and his gear was packed on the morning he died. I'm sure there was a smile on his face as he prepared for the hunt.

As the news spread, preparations began for the celebration of Bill's life. The San Francisco Archery Club has a tradition called the Spirit Arrow Ceremony to celebrate the life of an archer. Spirit arrows are made with the colors that the archer used, and then launched into the air. Friends and family share many stories, laughter, tears and good food. Sadly, I would not be able to attend that gathering. A few days before the ceremony, Bill's daughter Susan called me to discuss what her family thought was a strange request. Bill's wife Lu sent me a note and a package later that week. She explained that Bill had saved \$1,000 in a coffee can for one more hunt in Colorado. The thought of chasing elk in the high country was the hope that strengthened Bill's spirit.

In June the tag results were posted. I had drawn the unit that Bill and I had hoped to hunt together. Through that summer, I tried to prepare my gear, body and spirit for the coming hunt—but my heart wasn't in it. One thing I devoted a lot of attention to was creating a quiver full of "Bill Poggi Spirit Arrows." They spun true and flew straight.

By August everything was ready, but was I up to the task? My heart was heavy as I hunted, and my thoughts were filled with Bill. Sitting under a tree in the pouring rain, my mind drifted to past hunts—fond memories like Bill’s Bungie Bow, Soup Kitchen Elk Hunt, Piceance Basin Waterhole Project, 5-inch Brow Tines & a Lap Around the Fire, and Being Chased Out of the Tent for Dipping Into the Sauce. Some of the memories even included elk like Where is He?, 6-pt Trail, Shock, Awe & Why Didn’t You Shoot?, and of course, A Cow and the Don’t Push Bear. We always got close, but were never able to close the deal for Bill. My phone buzzing brought me back to the present . . . a message from my wife telling me to keep talking to Bill, he can hear you. A timely reminder to get back to my job.

Moving through dark timber, I discovered a muddy, stinky, well-used wallow. Just the kind of place Bill would love. Glancing uphill, I spotted a bit of tan on a trail 40 yards away. The 6x6 bull was heading toward the wallow. As he approached, I drew my bow, waiting for the shot. I released, and the Bill Poggi Spirit Arrow arched through the air. A few seconds later, the bull’s head came to rest at the base of a tree. With a gleam in my eye and a smile on my face, I said, “Thanks, Bill.” I’d like to think I made the shot, but I suspect it was divine intervention.

After photos were taken, friends helped care for the meat and we loaded it into packs. Now it was time for me to honor Lu and Susan’s request. With tears in my eyes, I pulled the old camo fedora and the little package from my pack. Saying a prayer, I stuck a Bill Poggi Spirit Arrow in the ground, screwed the hat into the tree and spread Bill’s ashes where the elk bugle.

If you come across this site, know that you are in the presence of a successful elk hunter. His camps were filled with good friends, a warm fire, tasty wine, excellent meals and much laughter.

Bill, we closed the deal. Save a place by the campfire for me. May the wind be in your face . . .

Mike



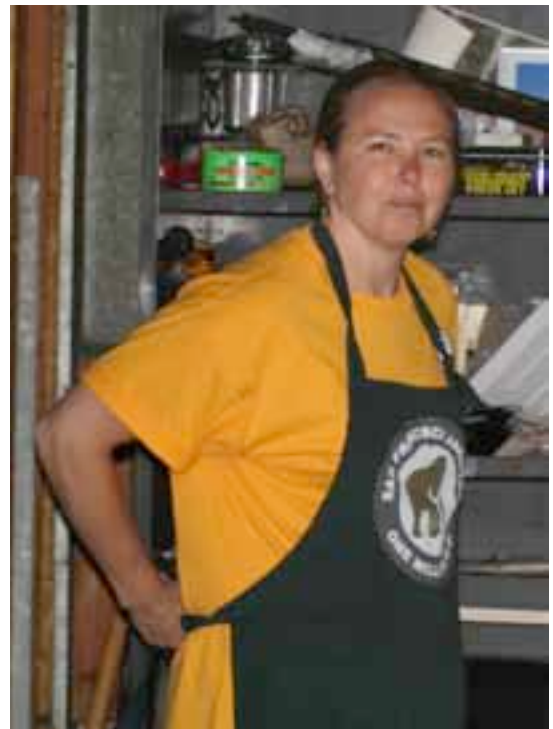
## STATE FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Congratulations to Jim Long who shot on his home turf and won the 2008 State Field Championship in A Class Senior Bowhunter Freestyle with an aggregate score of 812.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SCOREKEEPER

Just a reminder to our members that **November 1** will be the last day to turn in your three scores for the regular club shoot. The final club 3D went well and there will be awards given at the dinner for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. The Sunday potlucks are still going on year round and all members are welcome. Bring a dish and come enjoy the company of your fellow archers! All of the shoots that have been held this year were successful and I would like to thank all of the members who helped out at the work parties and during the shoots. This place would not be the same without all the members who volunteer their time to make this a great club to be a part of. With the club elections coming up please remember that SF Archers belongs to us all and think about running for a position or coming out for work parties or helping out with one of the shoots during the year.



## CLUB ELECTIONS

Elections for officer and board positions are coming up. The ballots will be mailed out around the first of the month. There are 14 positions to be filled—President, Vice President, 2nd Vice President-Hunting, Secretary, Treasurer, Publications Officer (Editor), Scorekeeper, Range Captain and 6 general members. If you want to throw your hat in the ring and be included on the ballot, let me know by October 31. Note that the Publications Officer (Editor) position is unfilled (hint to those with journalistic tendencies, bloggers, etc.). Listed below are this year's nominees.

President: Matt Farley  
VP: Tim Hamack  
VP Hunting: Donnie Connell  
Secretary: Candice Lew  
Range Captain: Mike Lew  
Treasurer: John Brusco  
Shawn Rayl  
Scorekeeper: Marina Hamack  
Editor: (your name here?)  
Board Member: Mark Velligan  
Herb Leong  
Jack Rauch  
Jim Long  
Pat Heimsoth  
Floyd Conn  
April Schneider  
Jeanine Hamack  
John Nitenson



## SEPTEMBER 2008 RANCHO NEBLINA TRADITIONAL SHOOT RECAP

Despite the broken and lost arrows, a fun time was had by all! For those of us who attended the Western State Rendezvous a few months ago, Saturday's hot weather was quite the change from the rain we shot in last May! It was a warm evening too, with most of us still in short sleeves after sunset (most of us, other than Jim, are usually in our jackets by then).

Overall, we probably had around 30 SFA members attend one or both days of the shoot. As usual, the camp was set-up on Friday and our camp 'moms', Rina and Candy, prepared dinners, lunches and breakfasts for all. Once again, a heartfelt thanks go out to

them for all the preparation and cooking they did for all us hungry archers! And thanks also to those who brought food and drinks to share.

It was a great shoot – lots of climbing up and down California’s ‘golden’ hills, avoiding cow patties, watching our arrows fly past the animals and into the trees...or, hitting the branches/rocks in front of the animals and watching our wood arrows shatter or see the new bends in our aluminum ones. Explains why many of us start with a rather full quiver and spend time in the arrow shack through-out the year making more!

As usual, TAC (along with some SFA and Sonoma archery club members) did a great job setting up the shoot (despite some awkward shots for us short folks....). Thanks go to Marilyn and Steve Dutra for hosting one of our favorite shoots of the year.

According to Marilyn, there were about 175 shooters in all, and SFA took home many of the awards. I can’t remember them all, but I can proudly say that the SFA women did a great job! 1st and 3rd in primitive longbow (April & Estel); 1st in senior longbow (Nancy); 1st, 2nd and 3rd in recurve (Trish, Andrea, Rina). The kids and young adults took home prizes and our recurve guys, Josh and Matt, took 1st and 2nd. Apologies if I forgot anyone (it has been a few weeks since the shoot).

We are lucky to live in an area where we can attend such great shoots and have an archery range we can go to year round to practice and hang out with friends.

Beatrice Gambony

Board member

**Thursday, November**

**20th** is the date for our  
**Annual Awards Dinner.**

Same place as last year, the  
**Sizzler** in Daly City. New  
officers will be sworn in and  
our club champions will be  
given their due honors. There  
will be door prizes as well.

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** 372 Gellert Blvd  
Daly City

**Phone:** (650) 992-1028



## BOARD CONTACT INFORMATION

<i>Office</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>E-Mail</i>
President	Jim Robison	650-922-2681	mrmoetv@aol.com
Vice President	Matt Farley	650-355-4004	cowgirlsurf@juno.com
Vice President of Hunting	Vacant		
Secretary	Candice Lew	650-359-5520	pookars@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer	John Brusco	650-588-0924	
Scorekeeper	Marina Hamack	650-359-5717	boatdock2@sbcglobal.net
Range Captain	Tim Hamack	650-359-5717	
Editor	Darlene Flynn	650-355-0346/415-278-9079	editor@sfarchers.com
Past President	Jack Rauch	650-355-1442	jncr2@aol.com
Board Member	Harri Javolaara	650-359-8225	hkjalovaara@yahoo.com
Board Member	King Lamadora	650-878-0632	kinglamadora@yahoo.com
Board Member	Bea Gambony	650-593-3214	beagambony@hotmail.com
Board Member	April Schneider	650-355-4004	cowgirlsurf@juno.com
Board Member	Mike Lew	650-359-5520	pookars@sbcglobal.net
Board Member	Shawn Rayl	650-583-6109	crayl@pacbell.net

## CALENDAR

### *October*

Sunday 10/26                      Diablo Bowmen Boo Shoot, 42 Targets

### *November*

**Sunday 11/2                      SFA Outreach Program, 9:00-noon**

Sunday 11/2                      Maya Archers: Awesome Stickbow Classic

**Monday 11/3                      Board Meeting (7:00 p.m.)**

Saturday/Sunday 11/8-9        Gene Foster Memorial Traditional Rendezvous - Fresno

**Saturday 11/8                      Work Party**

**Sunday 11/9                      Club Shoot**

Saturday 11/15                    Bowhunters Unlimited, Turkey Shoot - Cupertino  
(www.bhuarchers.org)

**Sunday 11/16                      SFA Outreach Program, 9:00-noon**

Sunday 11/16                      Yahi Bowmen Fall Fling, Modesto (209) 524-2437

Sunday 11/16                      Nevada County Sportsmen: Turkey Shoot

Saturday 22                        Salinas Bowmen Turkey Shoot, flighted, half marked, half unmarked  
(831)674-3204

Sunday 11/23                      Redwood Bowmen 24th Annual Turkey Shoot, 28 Cartoon Targets -  
3 Arrows, 510-530-0400

Sunday 11/30                      Northwood's Bowmen, Toys for Tots Shoot