

## **Young Shooters Challenge 2020 is Canceled**

I am saddened to inform club members and interested parties that the River Bend Gun Club Young Shooters Challenge (YSC) scheduled on October 31, 2020 is canceled due to COVID-19 concerns and ongoing social unrest. YSC has fallen victim to the virus just as the Annual Picnic did.

After two months of stay at home orders from state governments, businesses being shutdown and peoples' lives being upended in reaction to the COVID-19 virus, here in Georgia, people are venturing out and business are opening up. Even so, almost everyone's behavior has been changed in many ways. Many are wearing masks, social distancing has become the norm for most, many are reluctant to shake hands or eat in restaurants and movie theaters remain closed. The virus still rages in many states and the infection rates in Georgia are only slightly below their peak in mid-May.

For the past two months, there has also been ongoing social unrest, protesting and violent riots and destruction of property in almost every major US city including Atlanta. First, there were mostly peaceful protests in a few cities about virus related restrictions. Several weeks ago, protests about racism, discrimination and policing began and have been widespread throughout the country and in many other parts of the world. These protests have often devolved into violent riots and have caused widespread damage to private property and businesses. Although recent protests in Cumming and Alpharetta were peaceful, no one knows how long this will last or if the people responsible for the violent riots in Atlanta will come this way.

The Board of Directors (BoD) and I canceled YSC 2020 for the following reasons:

- No one knows what the virus situation will be in late October and many parents may be reluctant to attend the YSC event with their children.
- It takes 50 to 60 volunteers to run the YSC event in a manner that is safe, fun and efficient for attendees and staff. Many of our regular volunteers are of an age that is most at risk from virus exposure and they may be reluctant to volunteer to help this year. We can't run a safe YSC event without enough volunteers.
- No one knows if the social unrest will have diminished, remained the same or will have increased in late October. With the National Presidential Election just a few days after the date for YSC, we are concerned that increased social unrest could also reduce attendance.

There are just too many things happening in our society right now to predict if the club can provide the volunteers to staff the YSC event or to predict if there will be enough attendees to make it worthwhile. In January, no one could have predicted what would be happening in Georgia today and no one can predict what will be happening here in four months. There are too many unknowns for us to ask club members and parents to put themselves and their children at potential risk in October.

River Bend Gun Club has hosted a YSC event for local children ages 8 to 18 since 2004 and I am sorry that the club will not host this event in 2020. We do plan to host a YSC event in 2021 and it is tentatively scheduled on October 30, 2021. Online, pre-registration for YSC 2021 is tentatively scheduled to be available on August 1, 2021. Details for YSC 2021 will be posted on the River Bend Gun Club web site at <http://www.rbgc.org/> in mid-summer 2021.

Will Owensby  
Club President