



Thanks for joining us for Junior Blasts. We hope you enjoy this quarterly column. Stay tuned for some great stuff!



by Alan Garbers

*Peskunck Larrabee, illustrator*

# The New Junior Blasts

George was born in South Oxford, Massachusetts on December 2, 1821. He was the oldest of seven brothers and three sisters. We can assume life was not easy for George and his family. His father was a shoemaker, but it was hard to feed twelve mouths on a cobbler's pay. As the oldest child it would have been George's responsibility to help care for his younger brothers and sisters. There would have been a huge garden to plow and pick rocks from each spring, plants to water, weeds to pull all summer, and if everything went well, food to last all winter. There would have been piles of wood to cut and split for cooking and heating. There were buckets of water to haul from the creek or well to drink and clean with. As was the custom, the boys would have shared a bed, huddling together for warmth on cold winter nights as the wind rattled the windows and blew through cracks in the walls.

While we don't know what first got George into the local forests, we do know what he found – a friend. When George was young, a local Narragansett boy, named Nessmuk, befriended George. They would while away the hours exploring what remained of the wilderness of Massachusetts. Nessmuk took George under his wing and taught the young lad how to fish, hunt with a muzzleloader, and survive on his own in the forest. It was during these adventures that George started a lifelong love of the wild places.

Since George's family wasn't wealthy, he could not attend school. Instead, at the young age of eight, he went to work in a local cotton mill. It was a dark and dangerous place, but his family needed the money to buy



food and clothing. George worked from dawn to dusk in the mill, but he longed for the wild places. Every time the mill would shut down he would

find his friend Nessmuk and off they would go having adventures.

When George was twelve he moved to his grandmother's home



near Cape Cod. Being so near the sea, George yearned to be a sailor and he would take off alone in an old boat to cruise the coastal waters. Before long he shipped out for the Pacific Ocean on a whaler.

As George grew older he kept going on adventure after adventure. After a time he started writing and selling stories about his experiences of camping, fishing, and hunting. George's stories were a hit in magazines in the later 1800s and count-

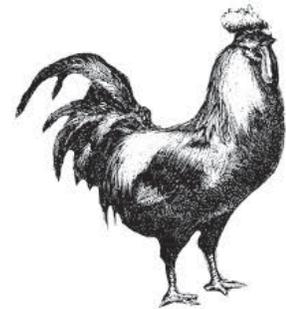
less people reconnected with the wild places following his guidance.

It isn't known if George ever saw his Narragansett Indian friend again, but he did honor him by using "Nessmuk" as his pen-name, a name known by countless outdoorsmen. To this day, 150 years after they were published, articles by George Washington Sears, or "Nessmuk" to his fans, are widely read by those wanting to canoe, camp, or fish in the wild with minimal and primitive gear.

## Game of the Month:

**Rooster Hop** – Two players enter a ring drawn on the ground six feet in diameter. Each player must stoop and grasp his or her own ankles. When the signal is given the players try to knock each other out of the ring, using their shoulders.

The first to fall down, leave the ring, or lose grip of their ankles loses.



## What's That?

Here are some terms you might hear around a shooting range. You pick out the correct definitions.

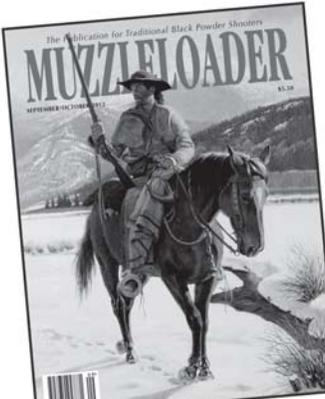
**Lug** – 1. To carry or pull something. 2. A term of endearment from the 20th century that indicated that the person was lovable but acted stupidly. 3. The place that a bayonet attaches to a firearm.

**Length of Pull** – 1. The distance that a person "lugs" something. 2. The distance that one must pull a door open to go through it safely. 3. The distance from the trigger to the butt end of the stock on a rifle or smoothbore.

**Shooting Sticks** – 1. Another term for archery. 2. A bipod-like device that is not attached to the firearm. 3. An early to mid-20th century game similar to pick-up sticks but a marble is used to knock game pieces off the pile.

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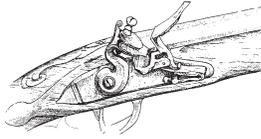


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## Range Safety

Here are the four rules  
of firearm safety.

1. All guns are always loaded.
2. Never point the gun at anything you are not willing to destroy.
3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on target (and you have made the decision to shoot).
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it.

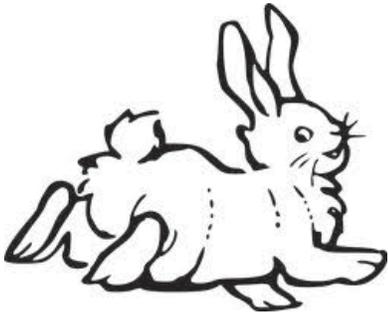


## Riddles of the Month

1. What does the Easter Bunny do when it rains?
2. What type of music does the Easter Bunny like?
3. What happens when the Easter Bunny gets upset?

### Answers:

1. He gets wet.
2. Hip Hop
3. He gets hopping mad!



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Puzzle answer  
on page 69

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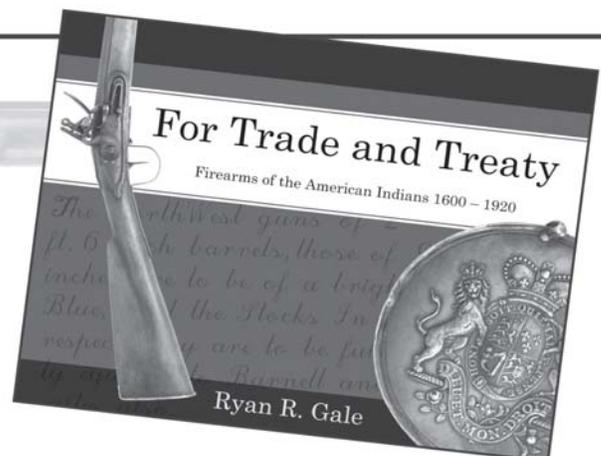
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