

# FARM Newsletter

AMA Charter 1654

*April 2020*

**FIELD MARSHALL'S CORNER**

**Ernie Padgette**



## **2020 isn't working quite as planned.**

Well, 2019 didn't go quite as planned, as I wrote last time. And guess what? 2020, as least thus far, has been even worse. No, I'm not talking about the Corona Virus thing; at least not so far. Fingers crossed. And I hope all of you are taking all the reasonable precautions, maintaining social distancing, keeping track of which of your neighbors are hoarding toilet paper and filing their names under the heading "People with anti-social traits we could really do without". Okay; I haven't had Corona Virus or Covid-19, whichever is the proper noun, at least not yet; so why has this year gotten off to about the worst start I can remember? Well, grab a refill of your adult beverage of choice and I'll try to explain.

It was January 3<sup>rd</sup>; the year still new and full of hope; and I was hunting deer down near Williamsburg. The hunting season was going pretty well. After letting a few small bucks and does run past me the first few days, I'd shot a nice buck on the third or fourth day of hunting season; a nice nine point; big antlered, nice body and fully fit to take his place alongside the mashed potatoes and green beans. Things during November and December were the normal holiday season, which means rushed, harassed, harried and a lot of family stuff to attend to (If the family really wants me to participate in all this holiday cheer, love and good tidings, then why do they keep putting Thanksgiving and Christmas during deer season??) so I'd only hunted the first week and now I was hunting the last week. I'd managed to add a total of three more deer to the bag so far. Four shots; four deer down; making a total of eight shots and eight deer down over the last three years. And, since several of those were fast moving deer and quick reaction shots, I was feeling pretty pleased with the way things were going. The old guy can still shoot!

So, as I sat in the woods on that fateful morning, I was pretty pleased with the way things were going. Unless something really nice happened by, I wasn't planning on shooting any more deer. I was in my favorite frame of mind while hunting; more observer than hunter, but still open to the idea if a good opportunity presented itself. As I sat in the woods, my mind was already looking forward to January, February and March. Those are the "down" days in my yearly schedule; the time I spend getting my planes ready to fly in the spring; when I get several "new to me, but never flown by me" planes ready to go for when the temperature comes up and the winds die down. So life was looking pretty good. The morning passed slowly and I was bothered by nothing more than a really beautiful hawk looking for his breakfast, a few small birds and a couple of

squirrels, one of which supplied breakfast for the hawk. Around 11:30, I heard the activity start to pick up on the nearby road and knew it was time to head out of the woods to join the others for lunch.

As I headed to the road where a friend would pick me up, I came to the steep embankment next to the road; perhaps four or five feet high; maybe not really 90 degrees, but pretty close to it; certainly more than 80 degrees. Looking left and right, I saw that it was either go straight down the embankment or take a detour of at least 100 yards one direction or another and through some thick brush. Not a big deal; after all I had made my way *up* the same embankment this morning, right? Now, maybe the smart thing to do would have been to put down the hunting stool, coffee thermos and shotgun, slide down the embankment and retrieve my stuff. But I've been doing this sort of stuff my whole life and besides you'll notice I have not once, ever, claimed to be smart. Besides; the ground was still damp from last night's rain, and I wasn't really in a mood to get my hunting clothes or my gear wet. So, I just planted my right heel solidly, stepped down with the left foot and started to plant it.

Right about then, things started to happen very quickly. The left knee buckled; I tried to do the "take a few really quick steps until you get things back under control" thing; the rear legs on the stool caught on the ground and it twisted in front of me, I tripped over the stool and I hit the ground on my left shoulder. Really hard. I lay there for a couple of seconds, making sure my left foot wasn't sticking in my right ear and that sort of thing. Okay; everything seemed to be in its correct place, I couldn't smell any blood and nothing seemed to be broken. So, let's try to get up, Ernie. When I tried to move my left arm, which was under everything else I had inventoried, I couldn't move it. Which probably accounted for the fact that the left shoulder was hurting a bit. Make that hurting a lot. I scrambled my way onto my feet and confirmed the left arm was dead. I couldn't move it at all. I could wiggle my fingers a bit, so I knew things were more or less still attached, or at least roughly in place. The good news was that nothing else seemed to be broken or missing and no one had run over me while I was taking a time out on the road.

It took me a rather short while to confirm there was no way I could hold a shotgun level and swing it with

one arm; so right after everyone else headed back out to hunt I paid a visit to the local hospital. The nice lady doctor confirmed what I pretty much already knew: I had a torn rotator cuff and my hunting was over for this season. You know the difference between a trip and an adventure? When you go on a trip, you usually know how it will turn out. Not so with adventures.

After hunting season closed on the 5<sup>th</sup>, I headed back home to explain to my wife why I hadn't returned immediately after my mishap. She didn't buy the story about my having so much fun getting dressed and tying my shoes by myself using only one hand, that I just had to do it for a couple of days. Oh, well. She already had the appointment with the shoulder doctor scheduled for the next day and he confirmed what the other doctor had said. I needed surgery. A little over two weeks later and the deed was done. So now my left arm wasn't only useless, it was in a huge "abductor sling" (I had to look up the word "abduct", because I thought it meant "take away" and that didn't make sense. Turns out abduct means "move away from the center") which made me about two feet wider than normal. Going through doors sideways took a bit of getting used to; but other than wearing the sling for two months it wasn't all that bad. I wouldn't recommend it for a good time to anyone, but it wasn't all that bad either. Maybe I don't feel pain the same way most people do.

Being in the sling for two months taught me a few things. Wait.... never mind.... Anything I learned isn't worth knowing. Well, maybe "don't be stupid" if that helps any. So most of January was spent with my left arm pretty much useless, and all of February (Happy Birthday, Ernie; want me to feed you that piece of cake?) and most of March was spent doing everything one handed. Except I didn't do very much, truth be told. But, toward the end of March, the sling came off; I had better mobility than any of the medical people expected and I could finally go flying. Wait.... Corona Virus? We all have to stay away from crowds and mainly stay home until after June? Really??? Don't they know I have things that need doing?

Well, as I said earlier, this year has not gone as planned. But at least I can now work on some airplanes and start getting ready for some flying. Yea!! "What do you mean, dear? How can my honey

do list get longer when I've been right here for three months? Yes Dear; I'll get right on that". Sigh... See you at the field, hopefully soon.

*Ernie Padgett*

**EDITOR'S NOTES – Upcoming Events**

**Jeff Killen**

1. (Cancelled), Club Meeting, at Warrenton Community Center, 7:00 PM, 4/28/2019
2. Monroe Pattern Contest @ Monroe, SC, All Day, 5/18-19/2019, CD: Tim Pritchett, [tjpritchett@aol.com](mailto:tjpritchett@aol.com)



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**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**Jeff Killen**

We had planned on having a club meeting on March 24. With the COVID-19 impacts this did not happen. So I don't really have anything to report. We are scheduled to skip the April and May club meetings as well. Nic has already sent you a revised schedule for the events this spring. I hope you are well; keeping building on those winter projects !

The only pictures I have (that are current) come from my recent trip to Florida. One guy has a couple of old Cadillacs (circa 1930s ?), and a more recent Corvette (circa late 1950s).



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Editor Jeff Killen

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**About the only thing flying lately for me, was these black bellied whistlers off the back porch of my uncle's home in Lake Placid, FL.**