

Indiana Youth Shooting Sports Foundation History: Jim Dunn, President

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Because of these concerns, I became involved as a 4H shotgun sports leader. This led to becoming an NRA certified shotgun instructor, a Hunter Ed instructor, and a Crossroads Council BSA merit badge councilor. During these endeavors, I often saw fellow volunteers, to their credit, paying for rounds of shooting and shells for kids in the program out of their own pocket.

The thought occurred to me one day that if someone came out of the woodwork and said, "I want to make a substantial donation to support youth shooting in Indiana" they would not have anywhere to go. This motivated me to found the Indiana Youth Shooting Sports Foundation. I went to my attorney and funded the work and effort to start my own 501(C) 3 foundation. This was very time and money consuming, but we got it done about six years ago.

Since then, we have been very limited, spending just a few thousand dollars on equipment like shells for sub-juniors and juniors shooters at the Indiana Sporting Clays Association State Shoot. Other things have been paying for targets for a day at the range for a Voyager Scout crew at Crooked Creek gun club. Also, we have subsidized some 4H shooting expenses.

So, during the last six years, I have paid to maintain the foundation filing taxes etc. I was about to collapse the thing and close when one day I got **THE PHONE CALL**. Enter John Crone, Bill Jordan and the ISRPA. John knows about IYSSF and figures he would match us up with ISRPA because he knows that Bill was talking to a potentially large donor, but they would only donate to a 501(C) 3 organization. Also, he would only donate to a NRA affiliate entity. ISRPA is not a 501(c) 3. At this point John asked if IYSSF would be willing to become associated with the ISRPA, and together we could qualify for a potential donation.

Long story short, I went to the ISRPA annual meeting, liked what I saw and said yes. As President of the IYSSF, I worked with my attorney to amend the bylaws to achieve the

goals of the donor. Then Dennis Reynolds and I had a board meeting of the existing IYSSF. We voted in the Executive Board of the ISRPA onto the board of the IYSSF along with six other shooters to make a total of 13 board members. This was also done to satisfy the donor who wanted additional board members to guide the foundation.

Then enter Jerry Wehner. The potential donor was going to be at the annual NRA convention in Charlotte. Jerry was already going, so I flew down, met with Jerry and we met with the individual who runs their foundation and the donor himself. We had prepared a presentation for them about some of our proposals, and we talked for about an hour. Upon arriving home, Jerry and I worked with two Boy Scout councils gathering written proposals from them as to how they wanted to improve their shooting programs and expand it to include more new shooters, which is the donor's primary goal. We also traveled to their camps to survey their needs. Since then, we have been informed we qualified for a grant and have received funding.

IYSSF has a meeting scheduled January 22nd, to consider these proposals and begin the process of accomplishing our goal of recruiting more new shooters.



We have been feeling our way along in this process because it is new to all of us, and the people who are going to receive the funds. The donor is very numbers oriented, and we are going to be judged by how many new shooters we bring to the sport and how much it costs per shooter. We started with the Scout organizations because they have existing infrastructure and leadership we can expand on in a very efficient manner.

There are seven councils in Indiana, and we have proposal from just two so far for this year. In the future if we receive more funding, we may talk to other Scout councils. In addition, we intend to talk to some 4H shooting sports groups; however, we are open to other ideas about how to expand the shooting sports in Indiana.