

## **Women Are Better Shots Than Men**

All Saints campus ministry is always trying to find ways to expand our outreach to college students. We are so pleased when we can provide them with activities which they will enjoy and which will help them grow in Christian faith.

I still can hardly believe that taking college students from Grove City College, Slippery Rock University, and Westminster College to a local sportsmen's club to rent their gun range and skeet shooting facility would be such a marvelous opportunity. People were a bit skeptical with our plan, but it turned out to be well worth the effort to bring students to the shooting range.

The idea for a trip to the gun range came before COVID-19 and had to be canceled last year. Happily, church members Peter Rigney, Ed Geidner and vacancy pastor Jacob Deal decided to bring back this event which had originally been suggested by former campus pastor Rev. Larry Loree. They worked hard to arrange for all the pistols, rifles, shotguns, and ammunition as well as transportation and food to serve the students. Campus ministry called many students to invite them to enjoy a day of fun in the outdoors.

The invitations definitely included women as well as men! After excellent instruction by Rev. Deal on how to use the guns safely, even the women and men who had not ever fired a weapon were willing to participate in firing the shotguns and pistols. The most fun for everyone was firing the famous Magnum pistol that Clint Eastwood used in a famous movie. The Magnum pistol was huge and sounded like a cannon when fired; it kicked like a mule too. One student immediately sent a video to her father after firing it.

When All Saints returns to the range next spring, we will arrange to have a skeet (clay pigeon) shooting competition between the men and women. A coach at the range told us that women are better shots than men. He should know since his wife is a national champion skeet shooter. It should be interesting to see if he is correct.

As you can imagine, the goal of the time to shoot rifles and pistols and clay pigeons was to have fun, but especially to provide fellowship, which it did. Christians from both colleges got to know each other. They had a good time talking about the places they had lived like California, Colorado, and Eastern Pennsylvania. Some spoke about their interest in historical reenactment, and some talked about the families they had grown up in. Some talked about the plans they have for marriage. The students still glow about the time they had.

The event was scheduled for 1-3 PM, but we stayed until 6 PM, which says a lot about how successful the event was. No one wanted to leave.

The range event was extra special because a college-age couple who are not in college accepted an invitation to join us at the range. Since the young man is passionate about collecting antique guns and because he had formerly attended worship regularly, he and his girlfriend came to our event. They felt so included and had a wonderful time meeting Rev. Jacob Deal. We invited them to come back to church. They realize that although they work 24-7, fellowship and worship need to be priorities. Imagine our joy when this couple came to worship the next Sunday.

Scheduling the event was a good idea. College students work hard. They endure constant stress trying to earn good grades. Their lives are not always carefree. They want to make right decisions, especially decisions about their faith. The day at the range was relaxing for them. It gave them the chance to know other Christians who face the same challenges they do. We can hardly wait to follow up with more range events in the future. We will see if the coach is right. Will the women be better shots than the men?

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Ed Geidner instructs students at the gun range.

Bethany, Samantha, Erin, Morgan, Caroline, Alex, Spencer, Bergen, Sam, Ed Geidner



Rev. Deal shows Mrs. Mennell how to hold a gun.



At the range. Jim Mennell, Pastor, Erin, Spencer, Sam, Bethany, Alex, Morgan, Samantha, Caroline, Peter Rigney