



# The Bullet Hole

● October 2020 ●

Next Match November 15, 2020 - Shooters' meeting at 9:30 a.m.  
**TURKEY SHOOT WITH PRIZES**

**SILVER STATE SHOOTISTS OCTOBER MATCH IN GOLD HILL !!!**



## President's Report October 2020

October 18, 2020 match

There was a cool suggestion of fall as the sun rose, but by 9:30 am, it was too warm for a jacket. Nine shooters braved the crisp morning to setup steel and enjoyed a beautiful sunny day on the range. Our new shotgun targets from Comstock performed with excellence. Thanks again Comstock! The club will commission four more shotgun targets from Comstock to replace the challenging cowboy shotgun targets.

The November shoot will be the club's annual Turkey Shoot! At stake are 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prizes of \$50, \$25, and \$10 gift certificates, respectively, at Sportman's Warehouse and bragging rights, of course. The standard match fee is your entry so come out and shoot a (paper) turkey! Two shooters completed the stages clean: Rubicon and Georgia Blue. Congrats!

**DIAMOND DIRK SLADE**



From Jackpot Jerry –

### ***THE SAGA OF “SMILING JACK” DAVIS***

A.J. Davis—“Smiling Jack” or “Big Jack” as he was often called—was an imposing figure of a man: tall, well built, personable, highly intelligent, and reputedly well-educated for his time and place. As did many who ultimately “went bad,” Davis began his frontier career with the best of intentions prospecting in the Sierra Nevada. After finally laying down his pick, he immigrated to the Comstock diggings of Nevada Territory, where he opened a stable. However, shoveling the byproducts of his business while searching for fodder soon lost its fascination, and Smiling Jack entered into a new business.

Davis bought a stamping mill a few miles outside Virginia City, hired men to run the machines, and proceeded to process ore for shipping. In a short time, the affable and industrious Davis was accepted into the company of the region’s governing class, while his open-door hospitality at home won him countless friends among the miners.

Apparently, though, he was shipping considerably more processed ore than he was buying. Many in the community suspected that he was behind a number of stagecoach robberies but, due to his popularity as well as the resentment felt toward Wells Fargo for charging usurious fees, the locals looked the other way. While he and his gang were committing a stagecoach robbery between Reno and Virginia City, a passenger recognized his voice and Jack was subsequently arrested and tried. The jury, however, refused to convict, by which time a chastened Wells Fargo was mounting shotgun guards on its coaches.

Wells Fargo building, Virginia City, 1866. Courtesy Library of Congress



Unwilling to risk an encounter with a 10-gauge shotgun, Davis turned his attention to trains. On the evening of Nov. 4, 1870, in what was the first train robbery to be staged west of the Rockies, he and his cohorts held up the Central Pacific Overland Express between Reno and Verdi, escaping with more than \$40,000 in gold. This time, he and his entire gang were apprehended, and Smiling Jack received a 10-year sentence.

Davis was pardoned for good behavior after five years—and immediately returned to robbing stagecoaches. Although he was successful for a time, perhaps he should have stuck by his earlier resolution not to risk running afoul of the Wells Fargo shotguns. On Oct. 3, 1877, as he and two others attempted to rob a coach some 40 miles south of Eureka, the shotgun messenger emptied his heavy load of buckshot into the outlaw's back. Smiling Jack Davis died the next day, while being transported back to Eureka—by stagecoach.



If you have a problem finding the location, or if you would like more information about the information in this newsletter, call Jackpot Jerry. My cell phone number is: 310-990-6482