

Trapshooting mom wins five trophies

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ST. JAMES -- Back in 2004, Roberta Pappayliou, along with all the other wives, sat in the stands at trapshooting events and watched her husband compete. That is, until the day she decided that she had had enough of being a spectator.

"I can do that," she thought. And after winning five trophies in last month's N.C. State Trap Championships, she has clearly proven to herself and everyone else that she certainly can do that. And do it very well.



Roberta Pappayliou prepares to shoot at an open meet held by the St. James Rifle and Pistol Association in Southport. CAROLYN BOWERS/FOR THE STARNEWS

These most recent five trophies will be added to her sizable collection from previous competitions in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Michigan. But this last event was her most successful tournament so far. Four out of five of her new trophies are for First Place, one of which was for High Lady All Around.

"We're a family of trapshooters," Pappayliou said. Her husband George shoots as does their son, Steve, and daughter, Katie.

According to her proud mother, Katie is the best of all of them, but she has had to take some time off from shooting while she is in medical school.

"I won't ever have to compete against her," Pappayliou said, "because I am a Lady II. That is the group for women 55 and older. Katie is a Lady I, and by the time she is a Lady II, I will be 90!"

The Pappaylious are members of Ye Olde Gun Club in Southport and belong to the St. James Rifle and Pistol Association, which holds its practices and competitions at the Ye Olde Gun Club shooting range. The St. James Rifle and Pistol Association name is misleading. The club has many non-St. James members, and welcomes anyone who is interested to join them.

They make it easy. You don't need to own a gun or know how to shoot one. They will provide you with a firearm and instruction; however, you must attend their safety training program first and agree to obey their safety rules, which are posted at the firing range. And you must provide your own eye and ear protection.

The St. James Rifle and Pistol Association holds rifle and pistol practices at 10 a.m. every Tuesday. The trap shooters practice at 9 a.m. every Thursday. All practice sessions end up at Bella Cucina Restaurant in Southport for lunch.

There is no charge to belong to the St. James Rifle and Pistol Association, however, the Range at Ye Olde Gun Club is a separate entity and the owner charges for its use. The cost is \$300 for the first year for a family membership, which allows spouses and children under 18 to shoot any time at no additional cost. After the first year, the resigning fee drops to \$160. Non-members can shoot for \$25 per day.

For more information on the St. James Rifle and Pistol Association, check out www.stjamesrifleandpistol.com. The website for Ye Olde Gun Club is www.yeoldegunclub.com.

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