

HOT BRASS



A Publication of The Gun Club of America

VOLUME TWENTY NINE



The American Dream is Alive and Well in Billerica!

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Moving with Firearms and Ammunition

page 12

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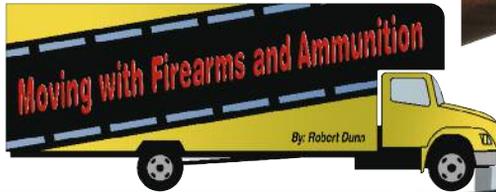
AMERICAN GUNSMITHING INSTITUTE



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**The American Dream is
Alive and Well in Billerica!**

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Offhand Shots from the Editor

By Lenée Landis, Hot Brass Editor



Resilience . . . one of my favorite words.

Remember the Charlie Daniels' song "In America"—"And you never did think that it would ever happen again (in America, did you?) You never did think that we'd ever get together again . . ." I am taking a moment to marvel at how the people in Texas illustrated that, showing that in this country people get along just fine, thanks. Not only did the people make the best of their situations through Hurricane Harvey, they are resilient. Those who could, did. Strangers and neighbors, volunteers and first responders, rescued those in less fortunate circumstances.

To put faces on the rescues, here are just some of the Houston cases I read about which stuck with me: an assisted living home in Dickinson, TX whose owner had been advised to shelter in place, wound up flooded. The residents in wheelchairs and recliners were sitting in water to their waists. They were rescued by the National Guard. The U.S. Army Reserves rescued another 200 at a nursing facility in Port Arthur, TX.

A South Houston farmer rescued 200 people with his John Deere tractor, four at a time. Chance Ward and his son Rowdy are cowboys, and they lent their skills with help from others to free cattle and horses and get them out of floodwaters to safety. At that point, they had helped rescue 600 cattle and 50 horses.



17 year old Rowdy, and father Chance Ward rescuing cattle and horses. Photo courtesy Chance Ward Facebook.

Assisting in rescue efforts, here are just some of the assets: Texas had all 12,000 National Guard Army and airmen deployed; 2,000 Oklahoma National Guard soldiers and airmen; Louisiana sent National Guard, and wildlife and fisheries agents; Indiana sent 80 National Guard, New Jersey sent a couple Chinooks and 11 crew; Colorado sent 45 first responders;

Though the FEMA director said Harvey is probably the worst disaster in Texas history, on September 8, 1900, a Category 4 hurricane hit Galveston, TX with



Pararescuemen from the 48th and 58th Rescue Squadrons gather around a CH-47 Chinook prior to setting up boat rescue operations, Aug. 30, 2017, at Easterwood Airport, College Park, Texas. The 347th and 563d Rescue Groups from Moody Air Force Base, GA., Nellis AFB, NV., and Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ., sent rescue boat teams to Orange County, Texas, and the surrounding areas in support of FEMA during Hurricane Harvey disaster response efforts. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ryan Callaghan)

the loss of life estimated between 6,000-12,000 people. That storm is the worst in US history in terms of souls lost. Harvey may be the costliest, as over 50 counties were affected.

Now, Hurricane Irma, a category 5, and Jose and Katia - whose courses are yet to be determined - are moving in the Atlantic. It makes you remember in a hurry what is really important in life.

GUNS and WATER

Not the best combination, but it happens. AGI and GCA President Gene Kelly wanted to get the word out for people who will return home after a life changing flood to find their firearms submerged. He sent out a video on the topic by email, and Jack Landis and Paul Smeltzer talked about it on the GCA webcast in September.

By the way, the NSSF put out information given by SAAMI right after Gene put out info—one main difference is their info said to coat your firearm with WD40. This is not recommended by AGI as when the liquid dries out, both WD40 and 3 in 1 oil leave behind a varnishy sticky residue.

Paul worked on guns stuck in Katrina water that had been submerged for three years, so don't despair. Of course if your guns are submerged, you have a number of other things you will be taking care of before anything else, but the following will give you a plan of action.

The overall steps you can take in the short term to help preserve your firearms are these:

- Wash the firearms with clear water.
- Strip the metal parts out of the stock, wood or plastic, including screws, swivels, etc.
- Put the wood stocks out to air dry; stack them in squares like 2x4s in a drying shed, or lay across 2x4s so the air will circulate to dry.
- Put the metal parts in kerosene to soak. If you don't have kerosene, soak in something that is oil based, even motor oil if necessary. If you don't have access to a 50 gallon drum, then use a 4x2' plastic clothes container with wheels sold at Lowes, Home Depot, etc.
- To protect the bore from rust and pits, you can fill the barrel with grease.

These steps stop further degradation by stopping the oxidation process:

- When you disassemble the metal parts, attach them back loosely when you can rather than dumping them all in a box. This way you won't wonder where they belong later.
- When you get time, scrub the metal parts with Simple Green and rinse with warm water. Dry with shop air or a hair dryer.
- Spray with Boeshield, Balistol. Break Free, etc.

LOCKING BLOCKS and BREECH BOLTS

In case you haven't had a chance to take a look at the new GCA website, you can access all the videos done by Ken Brooks regarding specific problems that AGI students may wrestle with. From your "My GCA membership" page, look in the middle, under recent articles, and you'll see "In the Classroom" Pro Course segments with Ken Brooks. There are about 56 videos which cover students' questions on handguns, rifles and shotguns—these are the most asked questions with regards to the testing, so it is almost as though you have a tutor. Of course, if you still have other questions, feel free to post your question or email or call Jack.

All in all, it makes me think of another country line... "A little less talk, and a lot more action." If we all keep on our current course: being creative and planning projects, sharing knowledge with others, and choosing the positive things over the negative things, we should stay in good shape.

Send me your projects, your hunting stories, your campfire songs—we can't do it without you!

Dames DOGS & Ducks

By Sheila McKinney | sheila@thewoma.org

Women's Outdoor Media Association was invited to cover the first ever Dames, Dogs, & Ducks event held in Oxford, Mississippi. Luckily, I was available and excited to attend all three days. You see, I am a dame (check), I have dogs (check), and I have always wanted to learn about duck hunting (check)! It was the perfect opportunity and I jumped at it.

In March of 2017, Wildrose Kennels became the host site to the first annual Dames, Dogs, & Ducks event. This three-day event focused on educating ladies of all experience levels in hunting with their dogs, whether it was for dove, quail, ducks, etc. Ladies from all over the nation – Oregon, Louisiana, Idaho, Utah, Indiana, Illinois, Texas, Georgia, Missouri, and Alabama – came to Oxford, Mississippi, to participate. Most of the ladies brought their own dogs (who originated from Wildrose) while a few ladies borrowed some of the very talented dogs being housed/trained at Wildrose.

How it came to be:

Wildrose Kennels Associate Trainers Sarah Barnes and Erin Davis had a conversation with some wives during a double gun event. The wives discussed wanting help in a relaxed environment with working dogs, shooting, duck calling, and information on the proper clothing/attire and where to find it. They were curious about the gundog world and did not necessarily have the best opportunities to learn about it. And so Dames, Dogs, & Ducks came to fruition.



L-r Danielle Drewrey, Sarah Barnes, Erin Davis

Meet the instructors:

Danielle Drewrey – Primary trainer at Wildrose Kennels in Oxford, Mississippi, for the Adventure Dog Program, Obedience Training, Therapy Training, and also runs Wildrose's social media.

Sarah Barnes – Associate trainer located in Alabama who does gundog training with focus on upland hunting. Sarah is also an avid hunter.

Erin Davis – Associate trainer located in Illinois who trains dogs in the Adventure Dog Program as well as gundogs. Erin is also an avid hunter.

Magen Sojourner – Based in Mississippi, Magen is an accomplished competitive duck caller as well as avid hunter.

Magen Sojourner



Ashley Ward –

Located in Tennessee, Ashley is the event marketing manager for Ducks Unlimited and competes in skeet/trap competitions. Ashley is also an avid hunter.

Ashley Ward



Day 1:

The lady participants arrived to receive their generous swag bags filled with magazines, dog water bowls, T-shirts, caps, stickers, duck calls, and a fowl ID guide among other items. The structure of the three-day event was to begin with classroom discussions and then have breakout sessions in the fields which rotated among the instructors throughout the remainder of the day. Day 3 would be reserved for practical scenarios.

Danielle started the classroom portion of Day 1 going over dog behavior and the cyclical training model. She then did leash demonstrations and commands using hand signals and whistles. I feverishly took notes as I was thinking, Boy, do my dogs need some home training. All her tips were first rate, and I knew I wouldn't leave without buying *The Wildrose Way* book from their pro shop.

Next, Magen went into detail on choosing the right duck calls for your hunt or competition right before putting her calls into action. You don't know how difficult it is to duck call until you actually try it yourself. And to think there are so many variations!

Shotgunner extraordinaire Ashley Ward went over firearms safety, stance, positioning, shouldering, lead, and sight before the ladies divided into groups for their breakout sessions.

There were three breakout sessions for Day 1 that I was running between as I didn't want to miss a thing. All the topics were so interesting and taught so a novice like myself could really absorb the information. Danielle taught on dog obedience. She had a list of skills



for the ladies and their dogs to go through using commands through signals and whistles. Ashley was in the next field with a group of ladies and a skeet thrower. She worked on honing the skills of the ladies to make good shots while their dogs sat nearby ready to retrieve. Finally the ladies rotated to Magen's station which was duck calling and when to use



what call. Again, if you've never tried using a duck call, you need to. Yes, there were many laughs and a few questionable sounds coming from some calls, but the ladies were impressive in how quickly they picked up the talent and had fun learning the skill.



Day 1 training came to a close. The event planners had a special outing for the ladies in the historic Oxford Town Square – wine tasting! This was an incredible opportunity for the ladies to bond with each other and tell hunting/dog stories.

Day 2:

I'm so glad I brought a fresh pad of paper to take notes...and, oh, if you could see my pages and pages of chicken scratch notes! The classroom portion was

filled with bounteous detailed instruction on varying topics pertaining to duck/dove/quail/pheasant/chukar/woodcock hunting, decoy placement and visibility, dogs in the field, blinds, chokes, etiquette, safety, various shotguns, gear, layering your clothing, medical emergencies, hunting experiences, finding the right guide, game food sources, dangers, dog safety, and, yes, the "GoGirl." (Say all that with just one breath!)



One particular section of the classroom portion was titled *Fashion by Jen*. Jennifer Magnusson, owner of Blixt & Co in Idaho, was a participant of Dames, Dogs, & Ducks. She also taught on the

proper attire and etiquette for specific hunting events. She brought several articles of clothing in wool and tweeds that a lady would layer (without being bulky) and told the ladies where to find such articles without breaking the bank. Of course, you need to be mindful of the climate of your hunting area in order to know how to use your layers; but you also need to ask for the proper dress code for “picking up.” Before this class I had never heard of such, but it is a British style of picking up game after a hunt. It is a very proper affair and the attire is quite fetching. Articles of clothing in this seminar included boots, vests, hats, scarves, jackets, pants, and accessory bags.

Field work for Day 2 was split up into three groups as on the previous day. The topics were *Decoy Positioning*, *Simulated Walkups*, and *Shooting*. Day 2 training came to a close but the fun continued with a night campfire, food, and spirits.



Day 3:

PRACTICAL SCENARIO

DAY! Everyone was excited . . . and it was raining. I love the rain and I love being outside in the rain so Day 3 was going to be epic watching these ladies



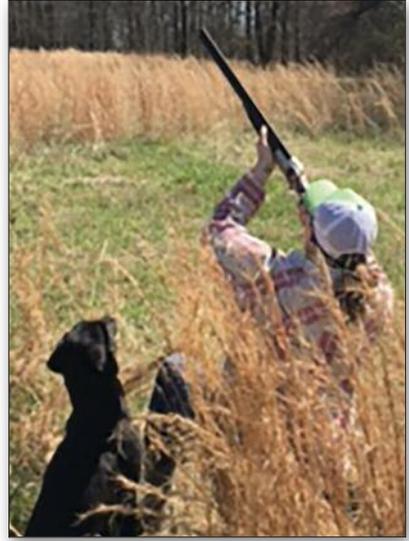
perform all the skills they had acquired the previous two days.

As was the routine, the ladies had classroom first. Erin went over the pre-hunt checklist of items to secure for both the hunter and the dog. Did you know that the best practice for preserving a bird if you’re going to get it mounted is to pack it in pantyhose, dry ice, Walmart bag, and Ziploc? There’s your recycle use for pantyhose, ladies. Erin, being a bona-fide nurse, gave great advice on specific items to bring for yourself as well as your dog – spray bottle of saline for the eyes, Tuff Foot/Pad Heal, and safety kits for both people and dogs.

Danielle reminded the ladies of some key commands and to know your response before a problem occurs, aka knowing your dog. Ashley went over shooting safety a final time, important safety equipment, and to definitely choose a shotgun by the feel of the gun over “pretty.”

Magen ended the classroom portion by showing the ladies the right camo patterns for the different hunting locations: jackets, waders, undergarments, socks, hand warmers, and face paint. But where in the world would you find such items made for a lady's figure? Diva Outfitters, Prois, and She Safari are just a few companies to start checking out.

Once classroom time was completed, the ladies got their gear and dogs. They dressed out and went to their designated location to do their practical scenarios. Keep in mind, it was still raining! In one location the ladies donned supplied waders and entered a water source to put out decoys. In a few other locations they handled their dogs for upland drives and retrieval scenarios. At a second water source location the ladies set out decoys, got in a boat, called their birds in, and, bam, a clay target flew out from another side of the pond they had to shoot. After shooting the flying clay target, they sent their dogs out to pick up previously thrown out bumpers, which are retriever training products.



CliffsNotes/My Thoughts:

The lady participants were extremely encouraging of each other, whether they were already friends or new acquaintances. The instructors were amazing! Not only did they talk the talk, but they absolutely walked the walk. Top-notch professionals who are approachable, encouraging, and want to see you succeed will ultimately make a lasting positive impression on the students which, in turn, will keep them active in outdoor activities.

When I asked Danielle if she had some encouraging words for any ladies looking into these types of outdoor activities, she stated, "Do not be afraid to try. Open up the conversation. You're totally fine to start at the basic level, no pressure, and stay positive." Indeed, Danielle.

I had a chance to speak with Cathy Stewart, co-owner of Wildrose Kennels with her husband Mike Stewart, and asked her if she's seen a huge increase in ladies interested in dog handling. She certainly has! Not only for hunting but also for companionship, which led to the Adventure Dog Program where the dogs are trained to accompany its human and be enjoyable during canoeing, biking, camping, hiking, etc.

Videos from Event:

To see the videos I took from this event, please visit the Women's Outdoor Media Association Facebook page. You will also see several interviews with world-renowned trainer Mike Stewart on how to select a good dog trainer, The Wildrose Way, and the different processes at Wildrose Kennels. You will also see fun inter-

views with the trainers mentioned in this article as well as Q&A with some of the participants. I took hundreds of photos and videos throughout the three-day event. Trust me when I say it was terribly difficult to select only a few to place with this article, because I wanted to capture everything I could to be able to share with you.

About Wildrose Kennels:

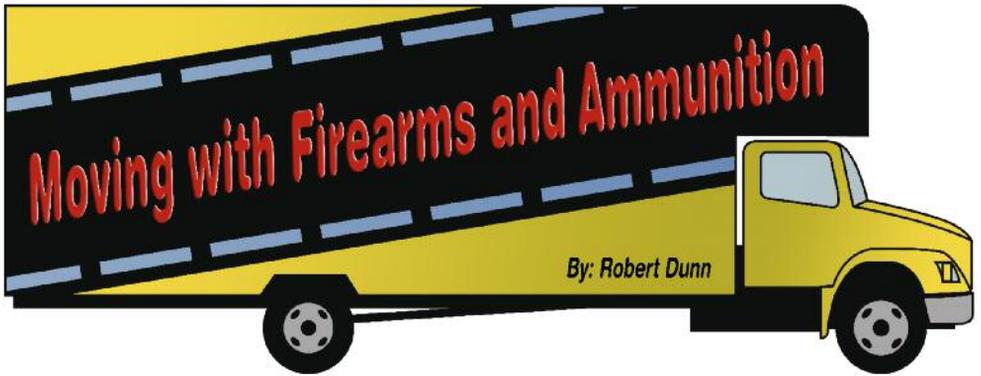
Mike Stewart, retired Ole Miss Chief of Police, and wife Cathy Stewart, retired teacher of both grade school and professor at Ole Miss, bought Wildrose Kennels in 1999 and moved it to Oxford, Mississippi, on their 141 acres with seven water sources. They specialize in breeding and training British Labs the Wildrose Way, which concentrates on positive reinforcement. You may have heard of Drake and Deke, the Ducks Unlimited mascots. Here is where they came from and where they were trained. Cathy estimates Wildrose trains anywhere from 45 to 50 dogs at one time. This place is known around the world for quality dogs and first-class training. They have been featured in numerous publications including *Garden & Gun* Magazine and *Forbes*. They have satellite locations in Arkansas, Colorado, and Idaho and trainers located in Boston, Wisconsin, Illinois, Alabama, Colorado, and West Virginia. Their dogs are found all around the world.

Cathy had a smile on her face when she told me she sees similarities in teaching children and training dogs: Both take consistency, high standards, motivation, and patience. Those are great qualities, Cathy.



To find more information on Wildrose Kennels:

Check them out on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat. You can also check out their websites uklabs.com and wildrosetradingcompany.com. Wildrose Kennels also has a YouTube channel where you can find an abundance of videos on training your dog. They also have a book entitled "*Sporting Dog and Retriever Training: The Wildrose Way*," which I highly recommend.



Moving can be a daunting and emotional task, even if it is just down the street. If you are moving out of state or out of the country, the experience can be even more complicated. When you add firearms and ammunition into the equation, you may be surprised at how difficult and frustrating a move can be. I have moved and lived all around the country and even overseas throughout my lifetime, starting at a mere four years of age. Every move I've made has included both firearms and ammunition.

There are many things to consider when making a move, especially if it is all the way across the country. My latest move from Oregon to Georgia presented some obstacles that required a good deal of logistical strategizing. I attribute this directly to bad politics and it looks like the situation will only continue to get more convoluted and complex. The following scenarios in this article will all be based around the complexities of moving with your firearms and ammunition.

Let's start by addressing a simple move down the street or across town to a different county. You may find it surprising how difficult this can be if you don't think ahead and do some planning. First and foremost, it is best to always take "Murphy's Law" into account, meaning if something bad can happen it probably will. By employing this philosophy, you can plan for the worst and be pleasantly surprised and happy if all things go well!

First, consider all of the things that are being moved, how much they weigh, and the space/area required to transport them to their new location. This will allow you to determine what type of vehicle you will need to get the job done. For example, if you are moving a large fire resistant gun safe with all of the bells and whistles, you are dealing with an object the can weigh from 500 pounds to a ton (2,000) or more, depending on how many firearms it will hold. Some things to consider are:

1. How many people will be needed to help you move the safe?
2. What type of dolly or hydraulic lift will you need to move the safe and get it onto the transport vehicle?
3. When you get to your destination, will the safe fit through all of the entrance ways to allow it to get to its final resting place?

4. Will stairs be involved? If so, rent a dolly that is specifically used for stairs.
5. Will the floors and walkways support the weight of your guns and safe from start to finish?

With all of the above points considered, it would behoove you to create a game plan that addresses the roles that each of your “helpers” will play in the move so nobody gets injured. Before you start to move the safe, make sure you clear a path in the locations you are moving from and going to. When navigating stairs, one wrong move can crush or even kill someone . . . safety first!



Okay, now let's consider where you are moving to. Keep in mind that gun laws can change dramatically from state to state, county to county or even from town to town. Call the Sheriff or local police station to make sure that you are not in

violation of any gun laws that may differ from the location that you are moving from, better safe than sorry.

On that note, be aware that if you own any NFA firearms (automatic weapons, short barreled rifles, and shotguns) you have to supply proper documentation to ATF when you change your permanent residence from the address that is listed on your ATF Form 4, even if you do not leave the current state you reside in. You must submit a Form 20 application to ATF and receive approval from the agency *before* transporting your NFA firearms to your new permanent residence or going across state lines for both temporary and permanent transfers. You can download the application @ <https://www.atf.gov/file/4781/download>. In most cases, local law enforcement will also need a copy of your Form 20.

The general rule for legal Interstate transportation of firearms is that firearms must be unloaded, in a locked case and inaccessible from a vehicle's passenger compartment. The firearms should also be covered up and cannot be visible from outside of the vehicle. Ammunition must also be stored in a locked box and covered up.

Though the FOPA (Firearms Owners' Protection Act), which is a Federal Law that allows us to transport firearms from our old residence to our new residence, some “gun hating” states like California, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, and New Jersey will contest these laws and our second amendment rights. As we know, gun laws and Concealed Carry Reciprocity restrictions are constantly changing and caution should be applied whenever we travel.

***NOTE: Gun laws constantly change so always double check state and local laws before you move your firearms.
nra.org***

If you would like more information on gun laws and tips for traveling, you can contact the NRA-ILA or visit their website @ <https://www.nraila.org/articles/20150101/guide-to-the-interstate-transportation>

Let's look at another moving scenario, one that closely resembles what I had to deal with on my most recent move across the country. During other moves, I would say I had some firearms and a few boxes of ammunition to move with and it was not a big deal, plus the country wasn't as politically screwed up as it is in its current state.

This move was different because I have more of what most folks would call a "gun collection" and a lot of ammunition. I know if I was pulled over for some reason or was involved in a car crash, you would know my name by now, because it would have been National News that read something like, "right wing conservative nut bag involved in auto collision, found with an arsenal of weapons and a frightening stockpile of ammunition!" Thank goodness I am home safe and sound with no horrific stories to tell, other than what I had to go through to get my guns and ammo to my new home.

My story begins with me making countless phone calls to moving companies both local and domestic. What I experienced was the people I spoke to over the phone were polite and helpful until I mentioned moving my firearms! Several companies flat out told me they would not take my business and they refused to deal with my firearms.

I finally found a local moving company that was kind, patient, professional, and eager to have my business. They were affiliated with a larger moving company that was equally easy to deal with. I was told about the requirements and stipulations of moving my stuff, which was fair enough. At that point I felt lucky that I was not being vilified for being a professional working in the firearms industry!

I found out the movers were not able to transport any of my ammunition or combustible reloading supplies (black powder, percussion caps, propellant and primers). What this meant to me was I had to be very careful driving. Sometimes I even carted all of my "supplies" into my motel room at the end of a long day of driving and loaded it all back into my pickup in the morning for another full day of driving, depending on how secure the parking lot was.

The requirements of the movers were as follows: They needed to do a complete inventory, including serial numbers, and the guns had to be packed on the day of the move so the condition and serial numbers could be verified before being wrapped up. One thing I liked about the company I selected was they used sound logic with regard to how the firearms had to be packed into the truck.

Many of the other movers I talked to DEMANDED the guns only be packed in their “gun boxes” and would not ship them in a gun safe or cabinet. They also told me the firearms had to be packed last in the rear of the truck and would have to come off of the truck first! This type of “anti-logic” was the norm for most of the moving firms.

You may wonder why this was not okay with me and it’s simple: the boxes alone would have cost upwards of \$600 dollars and they would not protect the firearms from damage as much as wrapping them and placing them back into a tightly padded gun safe. Packing the guns last meant they would be the first thing stolen if someone broke into the moving truck!

The moving company I chose flat out told me the firearms would be inventoried first, individually wrapped in thick padded sheets of packing paper and then tightly packed back into the safes and would be the first things loaded on and the last to come off the truck . . . smart thinking!



Packed in the proper material.

Since many of my firearms are family heirlooms and also valuable, I protected my possessions by buying a lot of insurance from the moving company! Some folks might have homeowners insurance that would cover a move, but I did not have that sort of insurance plan. I bought enough insurance for my collection so it could be replaced monetarily if all of my belongings ended up burning in the rocky crags of some treacherous gully in the middle of nowhere.

Here is the process I used to make moving day safe and fairly painless. I first laid out all of my long guns, pistols, and revolvers linearly in one open space so we could all behold the job ahead of us, which was to inventory each gun by verifying the serial number, wrapping the firearm and placing it in a gun safe.

When I laid the guns in a big line, I meticulously checked each firearm individually to make sure it was not loaded and packed all of the magazines (unloaded) into a separate box. The night before the move,



Packed in the safe for safe travels.

I entered the make, model and serial number into the computer and printed a copy for myself and one for the movers. When the movers arrived, I showed them the gun was unloaded, read them the serial number, and made note of any obvious damage to the specific gun. The mover wrote the pertinent information on the bill of lading and we both checked that specific firearm off of the master inventory list.

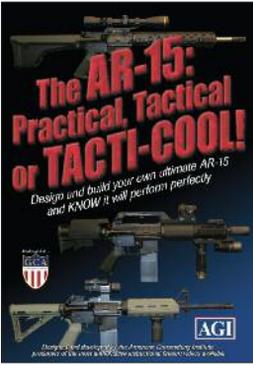
I would then hand the gun to another one of the movers and he would wrap

the firearm up in thick padded paper and then pack it the gun safe. When it was all said and done, I locked the safes and sent a set of the safe keys via UPS to the house in Georgia, so my brother could do inventory and check the guns for damage, just in case I didn't make it across the country before the movers.

There are other ways your firearms collection could be sent across the nation, but all of those ways are extremely expensive and labor intensive. The firearms could be sent via UPS, FedEx or even flown across the country. However, this can be very expensive and I do not have huge protective flight cases for my firearms. You could also bring your firearms to an FFL dealer and he could ship them to another FFL holder in the state/city/town you are moving to, but again this can be very pricey.

I have already spoken about one of the pitfalls of transporting firearms yourself, but it is an option. I chose not to take this route because a U-Haul truck can be easily broken into or stolen and as I mentioned, I did not want to end up on the nine o'clock news or have to camp in my truck in several rest areas on my cross country journey!

All in all I enjoyed my long drive across our great nation. I brought all of my ammunition with me in my truck and got to Georgia in one piece. I was happy to see the firearms all made it here in good shape as well. I guess it's time for me to find some new places to go shooting and hunting!



"How-to" Customize the AR-15

Don't hesitate just because it's hard to be sure which of the myriad of accessories are best for your purpose. Your instructor, Master Gunsmith Sgt. Mark Foster, has over 30 years of gunsmithing experience and is a 20 year veteran of the Sheriff's Department where he is

the Chief Armorer and Training Officer. He shows you many examples of triggers, grips, optics, lights, rails, barrels, stocks, muzzle brakes, compensators, flash-hiders, sights, handguards, gas systems, and more. For each category he discusses what works well, tells you what to avoid and explains why. His daily field experience combined with his armorer experience working on fellow officers' weapons, gives him practical knowledge on the reliability and functionality of each of these options.



After thoroughly reviewing the many available accessories, Mark will show you how

to build a variety of "mission-oriented" ARs and reviews what components he chooses for each and why. He goes through the process of tailoring the AR for: CQB, general hunting, SWAT, 3-gun, varmint hunting, home defense, and plinking, just to name a few. After studying this course you will be able to design and build the ultimate AR for yourself or for your customers. In addition to showing and demonstrating the tools, he demonstrates step-by-step how to change a barrel and install a free-floating hand guard.



Know the AR you build will perform perfectly for your purposes by watching this course first!



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Braised Rabbit in a Georgia Peach Sauce

By: Chef Robert Dunn



Georgia is known as the Peach State, as the fruit grows really well in the hot and humid Southern climate. Another agricultural wonder in Georgia is the sweet Vidalia onion - it was even declared the official state vegetable in 1990.

Rabbits are found throughout the state and have always supplied a good meal for the small game hunter. Four different species of rabbit live in Georgia; the Eastern cottontail, the Swamp rabbit (cane cutters), the Marsh rabbit and the Appalachian cottontail. They are all good critters to hunt for and each offer a different flavor profile, as they eat different types of foods in their individual habitats. Hunting season for rabbits in Georgia starts on November 12 and ends on February 28. The limit is 12 per day.

I have been visiting Georgia since I was a small boy and now I live here. I am very familiar with the state and its rich history. Having been born in Virginia, I grew up on Southern



cooking. This recipe pays homage to my Southern heritage and the local meat and produce found in this area.

Ingredients:

- 1 Rabbit (about 3 pounds)
- 4 Peaches (preferably from Georgia)
- 2 Sweet Onions (I like to use Georgia sweet Vidalia onions)
- 3 or 4 Tablespoons of butter
- 2 or 3 cloves of garlic
- 2 or 3 Cups of white wine (I like to use a decent Chardonnay that is locally sourced)
- 1 teaspoon of Salt (or to taste)
- 1 teaspoon of ground black pepper (or to taste)

Preparation: Preheat Oven to 400°

Start by butchering the rabbit into pieces and set aside. Next, we will roughly chop the onions and peaches. Smash, peel and chop up the garlic.



Now we will salt and pepper the rabbit pieces and then brown/sear the meat on both sides in a couple tablespoons of butter over a medium to high heat in a cast iron skillet or Dutch oven (or any pot that can go from the stove top to the oven). Deglaze the pan with the wine and scrape the bottom of the pan to loosen up all of the "flavor bits".

We can now add the onions, peaches and garlic and a couple more tablespoons of butter. Cook over a medium heat, stirring occasionally for about 10 minutes, allowing the vegetables to cook and the liquid to reduce.

Next, we will cover the skillet (or Dutch oven) and braise in the oven for an hour to an hour and a half. Take out of the oven to cool for several minutes and then plate.

I like to serve this meal with greens (Kale, turnip, mustard and collard greens) stewed with smoked ham hocks. Some toasted and buttered bread or English muffins is really good to soak up some of the sauce. A cold glass of sweet tea goes nicely with this meal too. I hope you enjoy this Southern recipe.



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Email recipe and photos to: Lenee@gunclubofamerica.com



911. What is your Emergency?

Arlington, TX, WFAA, Dallasnews.com

May 3, 2017—Shortly before 6:15pm, a 48 year old armed man entered the Zona Caliente sports bar, and immediately began yelling. The manager tried to calm him down, but the armed man pulled out a handgun and shot him. The manager, a 37 year old father who was well liked, was killed.

When a patron with a concealed carry license witnessed the shot, he feared further loss of life and told his wife to take cover. He then shot the armed man, who had begun firing again, killing him. There were over a dozen people plus a few employees in the bar when this occurred.

The police found another loaded handgun with the serial number removed on the perpetrator plus two knives. They have no idea what prompted this man to enter the business and begin yelling and shooting and it appears he had no prior contact with the store manager.

The Good Samaritan was not charged. He had his concealed carry license on him, plus the business is a “blue sign” business which allows concealed carry. The perpetrator had no license.

San Antonio, TX, mysanantonio.com

May 12, 2017—Around 2:00pm, a woman was asleep in her home when a 39 year old man broke a window and entered. She grabbed her gun and shot him twice. He later died at the hospital. Unfortunately, the man brought his 7 year old child and left him in the car while making this criminal attempt. It is unknown what the child saw or heard, however, the police assured the child would be getting help.

Castaic, CA, KHST AM

June 26, 2017—Around 2:00am, a woman in a remote canyon heard a man break into her house through the front door. She left and was able to call 911 though this area has little cell service. When she saw the man leave, she returned to her house and barricaded the front door just in case, awaiting sheriff deputies’ arrival.

However, the suspect returned and broke into the rear of the home. She had armed herself in the meantime. There was a short confrontation and she shot him in the chest. Deputies arrives and gave first aid until the arrival of paramedics. The suspect was hospitalized and also charged with burglary.

The radio station KHTS spoke with neighbors who pointed out that “. . . Sheriff’s deputies response times to the area were not as quick as other areas, and residents are prepared for anything that could happen in that time.”

Spokane County, WA, KHQ TV

July 17, 2017—A 17 year old female was alerted that Spokane deputies had been chasing a man and searching for him for hours in the vicinity by her boyfriend who had seen the KHQ TV station’s Wake Up News segment. She was alone, both her parents and boyfriend were at work. She asked her father if she could get his gun as she would feel safer, and he agreed. She put the revolver under her pillow and went back to sleep.

She told KHQ she was alerted by the opening and closing of the screen door, in this remote area. She retrieved the gun and got behind a make-up vanity in the room. He entered the room, and when she saw his face she stood and pointed the gun at him, yelling. He took off running, and she followed him, firing a shot because she didn’t want him to return. The police responded in a manner that seemed they were relieved and proud of her.

****Note:** in most cases, it is not a good idea to shoot at someone who had fled your home as the moment of fearing for your life has passed. In this instance, it likely seemed understandable to the deputies because she was a young girl alone with no one in the vicinity to help her.

Her Dad was proud of her too-he had taught her how to handle a firearm responsibly, and was no doubt relieved his daughter was unharmed.

San Antonio, TX, News4SA.com

July 21, 2017—Around 9:45am, a man in his 40s attempted to enter the house of an elderly couple. They yelled at him to stop and called 911. As the suspect broke off the front door handle to gain entry, the male homeowner shot him once in the chest. The suspect died at the scene. The elderly couple, described by neighbors as “quiet and friendly” were unharmed and will not face charges.

Harris County, TX, foxnews.com

August 21, 2017—Around 11:30am, a 60 year old woman was confronted with two armed intruders who broke into her home via an open garage door. When she heard them, she grabbed her pistol and shot one of them in the chest. He collapsed and died in her yard while the other suspect got away. He was described as being in his 20s, wearing “dark clothing with red underwear peeking out of his pants.”

A neighbor who was interviewed said "It's the state of Texas. If you're going to go into someone's home, you're going to get shot."

Baltimore County, MD, Baltimore Sun

August 29, 2017—And here is an incident where no one fired a firearm . . . but could have. Around 5:30pm, two masked and armed young men, 21 and 22 years old entered Monaghan's Pub, a known police officer hangout situated across the street from a precinct station. Apparently this fact was not known to the armed robbers who weren't too observant either as police cars tend to go in and out of the precinct.

On this date, Monaghan's was the venue for a police sergeant's well-attended retirement party. After the suspects took off with cash from the till, the employee in the takeout section which had been robbed alerted the police guests in another area who took off after the robbers and arrested them.

These instances happen to have a number of women involved. We hate to use the word "victim" because although the main definition is being the injured party in a bad situation, it more and more takes on its secondary meaning which is having been tricked or duped. These people are anything but.

The anti-gun lobby has had a push for a long time where the narrative goes like this: a woman will not be safer with a gun because a man will take it away. Here's one of the more erroneous statements made on the subject in an article by Emily Prang and the editors of marieclaire.com: At the same time, our findings show that it is exceptionally rare for a woman to need to actually use a gun to protect herself—less than 1 percent of women report having used a gun in self-defense.

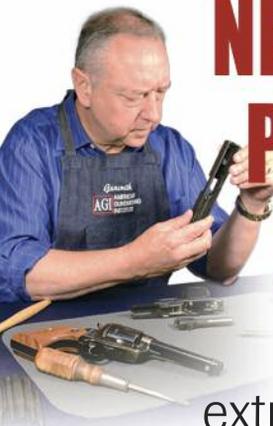
Number one, rarity to need a gun to protect yourself is definitely not based on how many times someone else reported they used one. How many crime victims would actually be the successful defender if they had known how to use a gun?

It is true that not everyone should own a gun. It is also true that if you own one, you should be trained to use it whether that training came at the knees of your grandpa, or you have invested in urban defense classes.

The point in these stories is that yes, firearms are used to protect life in these United States. The news snippets above could have turned out very differently had these people not been able to defend themselves.

It is also true that generally when people need the police in seconds, they're minutes away. I, like you, probably know several police officers who would rather respond to a situation where the innocent person was the one who lived to talk about it.

On the end of it all, be aware of your surroundings. No, you don't have to use a firearm to defend yourself, but you should have an idea of how you're going to do it. The other guy is not going to play fair and the good guys usually need travel time. Whatever you decide, invest in the proper training.



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The American Dream is Alive and Well in Billerica!



On the Hot Brass cover, we have Vinny Cedrone, one of those “good guys with a gun.” Well, wait, he definitely has more than one. In fact, he has a whole gunshop full of them—Vinny is a man with a mission, determined and committed.

Vinny Cedrone, owner/operator of Shawsheen Firearms with sidekick Ruger.

Vinny is the founder and owner of Shawsheen Firearms in Billerica,

Massachusetts. He grew up in this town, incorporated in 1655, about 25 miles north of Boston. The Shawsheen River, the name means Great Spring, runs through. He is the oldest son of two and has worked with his Dad in the construction business for the past 16 years, since he was a junior in high school. This town has history, and Vinny’s history is here.

According to Massachusetts-Demographics.com, modern Billerica’s 42,683 population has a median age of 40.9 years and a median income of \$96,316. It seems to be the perfect place to operate a gun store though it was serendipity rather than choice since it is Vinny’s hometown.

Vinny’s entry into the firearms world was basically self-propelled. His Dad hunted but hid the guns from him. Vinny noted “It’s a Massachusetts thing. Guns are taboo in this state. My parents were obviously worried that I would talk about it in school.” He must have seen enough to pique his interest, as he joined the Billerica Rod and Gun Club when he graduated high school.

“That’s where it all began...” he said. “I needed to do more than construction. I have been obsessed with guns my whole life and I just wanted to take the chance to do something I love to do.” Around the age of 20, he began buying junk guns and “ripping them apart to see how they work.” It came naturally to him, and his gun collection grew.

He saw an AGI ad and thought “this is better than going out to Colorado or California and taking a job out there.” He couldn’t afford to go out to Lassen as he had a wife and a life. He finds it difficult to stay focused on someone lecturing in a classroom anyway. What better way to become a professional than to continue his life and still get the benefit of Bob Dunlap, who put together the

Vinny behind the well stocked counter at Shawsheen Firearms.

curriculum at Lassen? He tackled his lifelong dream by starting the AGI Master Gunsmithing Course in 2015, at the age of 29.

He stopped by the AGI/GCA booth at NRA in Atlanta this year to give us a heads up on how he was doing. He laughed and said he was pretty slow, but he watches over and over again because he likes to get the detail right. Vinny said “Seeing the guns up close in the camera shots you guys do is awesome. If you sit in the classroom, you wouldn’t be able to see what the instructor is showing.”



He has finished the intro, pistol, and shotgun sections, for which he had a very good score, and is working on rifles. He was also good with his decision: “I couldn’t afford to go to Lassen so I decided to take the AGI course and I’m glad I did because it’s 10 times better than any college.”

We figure he probably isn’t that slow—he is busy! In February, 2016, he opened up Shawsheen Firearms. He continues to work for his Dad doing water main replacement from 6:00am - 12:30pm, then heads to the shop where he works from 1:00-6:00pm. He works five days a week with Dad from October – June, and four days a week in the summer.



In the meantime, he has his own business, reputation, and store to grow. He runs a shop on the ground floor of a commercial building that is clean, well lit, and organized. He has a substantial investment in inventory from Rossi, SIG Sauer, Tri-Star, Weatherby, Winchester, Smith & Wesson, Savage Arms, Ruger, Remington, and Mossberg. He not only carries new stock but buys guns in need and restores them as well.

Firearms are displayed behind the counter and he puts handguns away nightly. He makes use of

Vinny fills all the roles. He’s the on-site gunsmith and does all the custom work himself.

Ruger waiting patiently for direction.

trigger locks to prevent anyone from slipping a live round in a gun. He is very cognizant of safety and legal requirements. Massachusetts wants you to have an FID, a Firearms Identification Card, for purchase or possession of long guns and ammo. and an LTC, License To Carry, for pistols. Vinny will ask you for your card before handing one of the firearms over for you to handle.

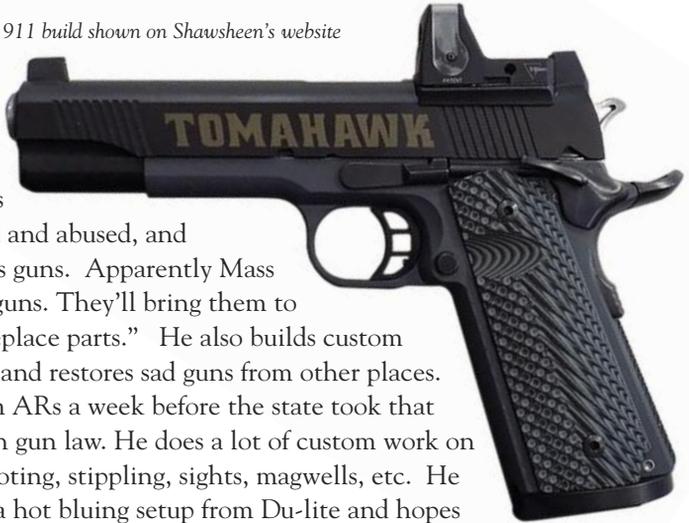


He is the only person on staff at this store: he does the gunsmithing, paperwork, ordering, and background checks. He does have a volunteer who assists him, but with Vinny what you see is what you get. He also has a store sidekick and faithful companion - Ruger, a three year old Yorkie who also tags along to the gun club.

A custom 1911 build shown on Shawsheen's website

What kind of gunsmithing work comes in? "I get pistols, lever actions

that have been used and abused, and Grandpa's or father's guns. Apparently Mass has a lot of broken guns. They'll bring them to me, I clean them, replace parts." He also builds custom guns, mostly 1911s, and restores sad guns from other places. He built two custom ARs a week before the state took that away in July through gun law. He does a lot of custom work on triggers, does Cerakoting, stippling, sights, magwells, etc. He recently purchased a hot bluing setup from Du-lite and hopes that will become big business. He likes working on old guns the most, circa 1900s-1950s. He says "I like it because most guys my age hate it and I do like seeing walnut stocks on guns." He has a talent for finding that underserved niche that is rewarding for a business.



Vinny started the business from scratch. He said "I did a radio ad, a lot of people heard it." Northeast Shooters saw his work, then word of mouth traveled. There are a lot of gun clubs in the area and word of mouth makes it around pretty fast. Started off doing gun raffles, that got people in the store. They came in and then would tell the next guy. Social media. Instagram, Facebook." He gets 5 star Google and Yelp ratings – he knows many people now make decisions based on a snapshot of social media.

There are hunters in these parts--the week before hunting season, there is a definite uptick in guns needing to be checked, ammo purchases, and naturally they'd like to have the work done now. He makes an effort to stay caught up, no backlog. He used to do the live fire portion of the license to carry training, but now refers people to a customer who has that ability. There's only so much time in the day!

Vinny at the bench - love the "Tool Rules."

He says "The key to a successful business is being honest with yourself and the customer. Don't take on what you can't handle and learn from your mistakes." He acknowledges he got a good start, probably better than most. "The shop definitely paid for itself but it took over a year." That is remarkable in almost any business, especially if you have a six figure inventory. He is confident his customer base will grow and sales and repair work will be consistent.



What does he do in his off time?

He shoots. He put together a team for the 22KILL charity shoot which was held at the Maynard Rod and Gun Club, and competed with Lexington police officers. 22KILL is a 501c (3) charity whose name originated from the VA statistic that 22 veterans are killed by suicide daily, often as a result of unresolved situations like PTSD and TBI. Vinny described it as a tough competition. "You had to do a gauntlet of PT – push-ups, tire flips, log carry, low crawl, climb a wall- before you did any shooting, stuff like they do in basic training."

He is also a USPSA member and has some time for competition, but Vinny has a lot of concrete dreams to pursue and they take work, time, and determination.

We asked him for his business advice:

Work, do it the right way, smile and say hi, ask how you can help them.

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Contributed by
GCA
Charter Member
Tony Wilson

East Texas BEAVER SCARE

Born in East Texas and living in Texas and South Eastern Oklahoma for most of my life, Beaver was just an animal seen on TV and read about trapping to make hats from. Never did I expect to see beaver in my own neighborhood.

Living in the country near a small Texas town, many animals show up in the yard or end up on the highway out front. We see deer (whitetail), feral hogs, coyotes, skunks, raccoons, opossums, lots of copperheads, rarely rattlesnakes, but beaver, no way!

My next door neighbor called me, very excited by a strange animal chewing on her favorite tree on the bank of their small lake. My golf cart took me to the lake in a few minutes, and sure enough a tree had chewing marks on it near the base. Now I will tell you that he was a very ambitious beaver for that tree had a diameter of nearly 3 feet. We wrapped it with a couple of turns of chicken wire expecting that would be the final blow to the beaver. Well, that thought didn't last long.

There was a stream of water pouring out of a dam near the large tree. He had built his home among the roots of the tree and the water ran through his den.

My backhoe was running well for a change so I brought it to the lake and the den



dugout. Some of the lake had drained, but 10 bags of ready mix and a couple of scoops of clay stopped that. The beaver was spotted swimming on the lake a few times and shot at until he got the idea that he was not wanted. We think he moved to a more private area and left us with a new animal experience.



A couple of months later my neighbor two miles West asked me to help him get rid of a pair of beavers. It was an emergency. He was losing 2 to 3 trees a night to this pair. Buying spring traps seemed a little futile for neither he or I have ever trapped beaver or anything else for that matter. My suggestion was to get a couple of those plastic chairs and sit on the bank near the dam where all the damage was. We tried that first:

The first night was a dark of the moon night. My fire power was an old 12 gauge Stevens model 5100 from the 1940s. The barrels had been shortened for quail hunting many years ago and my efforts at jug choking were only partially successful. Still, it had a good short range pattern. That night number 8 shot was the only 12 gauge in the cabinet, it would have to do.

Setting the plastic chairs in a slightly muddy place caused us to move locations twice before the chairs sunk in the mud. A couple of powerful and bright lights were on hand for this night's outing. It was very dark and settling down in comfort was making us both a little sleepy. My buddy asked what loads I was using and he told me that he would give me a couple of #4s. Sounded good to me so the 8s were slipped into my pocket and the 4s chambered in the old Stevens.

After an hour or so the moon was gracious enough to give us a little light, just enough light to see something swimming across the lake. The spotlights revealed a large beaver swimming in front of us.

Raising the double up to a shooting position and expecting dove loads in the chamber, I fired. The beaver looked as if he was lifted out of the water a foot or more and sunk immediately. Recoil was unexpectedly heavy, the trigger guard was driven back into my arthritic hand and pain shot up my arm. Nothing was said and the pain was kept to myself. My neighbor was given the unused #4 shell and the empty was left in the chamber for later inspection. Later that night the empty was removed and checked. It was a #4 alright but also a 12 gauge magnum! Sometimes my friend knows a .22 LR will do the job but a .416 will do it better. I like heavy recoil but I like to know when it is coming and I sure don't like detached retinas.



Since the Beaver scare was over, he caught the other one in a trap a couple of nights later. Things seemed to return to normal, almost. My next door neighbor to the East called me screaming that skunks were living under her house and were fighting. The smell was so bad that if I couldn't do something they were going to leave town until things smoothed down some.

Taking my live trap and a few pounds of dry cat food (which I knew skunks liked) the golf cart hurried to the neighbors. It did stink badly! The neighbor's son was going to help so he was taught how to reset the live trap and bait it with the cat food and to call me when there was something in the trap. He called the next day.

My Stevens single shot .22 with a 1 inch scope went with me this time. The son was told that I would defuse the skunk with a head shot so he would not spray but he would have to dispose of him and reset the trap. The range was only about 35 yards so it was an easy shot. Sometimes the skunk was not turned so I could get a head shot. The son was told to walk toward the trap and get his attention so I could get my shot. He never did question me about what would happen if he got too close.

It was decidedly mating season for the stinky creatures for we got rid of 11 of them in two weeks. If this keeps up I think I will go to West Texas for hog hunting, or just run away from home!





*Self-defense is an instinct, it's natural,
it should be the most basic right we can all agree on.*

A couple years ago, the NRA-ILA ran a piece titled *UK Police tell Subjects Not to Harm Their Attackers, Get a Rape Alarm*. The gist of the article was that the UK's position was this: "The only fully legal self defence product at the moment is a rape alarm." Yes, take that in for a moment—emphasis on the word legal.

First of all, what is a rape alarm? It turns out it is a small device you wear on your person which, when activated, sets off a siren or alarm at roughly 110-140 decibels. There is also one in the UK called the Personal Guardian, developed by a young woman as a result of being attacked and having no one come to her aid: this device, when activated by pushing two buttons, bluetooths to your phone which then calls a monitoring station who after verifying an attack is taking place notifies the police and gives them your GPS location. This comes with a monthly charge for the monitoring station, similar to burglar alarms.

I see a hitch in the giddyup right there...have you ever sat in your car, staring at your dying cellphone when talking to Triple AAA, in the middle of nowhere and they can't quite figure out where you are? And it takes two hours? (Let me say right here, I love Triple AAA—they have been very, very good to me for years but that does not erase the times where they could not figure out what state I was in.)

And why, exactly, is the onus on me? —I have to pay a monthly fee? Perhaps criminals should pay a monthly fee for the rest of their lives to pay for the monitoring. All of them, forever. Why are plain old law abiding citizens the ones who pay the price for the misdeeds of others? Ever have to take out your ID and sign a register to buy what was an over the counter allergy medication because now apparently meth users have figured out a way to use the ingredients? It is maddening.

Second of all, what if you're just being attacked in a garden variety way? If you're a guy, are you supposed to use one of these though the odds are the attack would be more than likely something along the lines of a punch to the face, a knife to the chest, or other non-specific type of assault?

Third, raise your hand if you have had one of your electronic devices go belly up at the most unexpected and inopportune time. Staking your life on plastic housing chips provided by the low bidder, and having no way to ensure it is functioning properly or being able to improve it, seems dim.

Most importantly, how does this stop the attack? Well, it doesn't, but I forgot to mention . . . the Personal Guardian will record the attack so it can be used against the perpetrator in court. Yay! I am not diminishing the young inventor's product at all—it may be great for the first moment of the attack, but wouldn't you like to have something substantial to deter the attacker?

The source of information was the Ask the Police website in Britain, so we took a look at the current state of affairs—had they come to their senses?

The short answer is nope. <https://www.askthe.police.uk/content/Q589.htm>

For those who believe Britain is our civilized ally, thinking much like we do, you will likely be astounded on their position regarding self defense. The answer still reads:

The only fully legal self defence product at the moment is a rape alarm.

And they say this:

- You must not get a product which is made or adapted to cause a person injury. Possession of such a product in public (and in private in specific circumstances) is against the law.
- There are products which squirt a relatively safe, brightly coloured dye (as opposed to a pepper spray). A properly designed product of this nature, used in the way it is intended, should not be able to cause an injury.
- However, be aware that even a seemingly safe product, deliberately aimed and sprayed in someone's eyes, would become an offensive weapon because it would be used in a way that was intended to cause injury.

Oh boy. What about in your own house, you might ask. We go to the website:

Q85: What lengths can I go to, to protect myself and my home if an intruder breaks in? And here's your answer:

It is very rare for a person to be confronted by an intruder in their home.

Yes, that's right. The paragraph goes on to say that advice from the Crown Prosecution Service and the National Police Chiefs is contained in a pamphlet addressing what constitutes reasonable force, and it is available at the police stations. I read further for the brief summary of what's allowed, and honestly, this is the next sentence:

In all cases if possible you should call the police.

Yes, but . . .

how can I legally defend myself in the meantime before they arrive?

The discussion ensues on using reasonable force, and the pamphlet you can obtain from the local police. Then it says "Even if the intruder dies, provided you have used

reasonable force in the circumstances described then you will not necessarily be prosecuted.” Not *necessarily* be prosecuted.

I continued researching, also looking at Canadian law on the subject. I came across an article that agreed this was a natural right, and stated that contrary to popular belief, even among Canadian citizens that they had no right to defend themselves, it was indeed right there in the Canadian law that they did- Criminal Code of Canada, sections 34 and 35, specifically outline self-defense and defense of property. And yet, in the middle of the article, stated was the fact that IF you defended yourself with deadly force, you would be charged with a serious crime.



I could not wrap my brain around the fact that you are going to be arrested if you defend yourself, given the situation to be aboveboard and explainable by evidence. The law says you are not guilty of an offense if you are defending your or another's life with reasonable force, and yet they charge you if you do it. So now you have been charged like a criminal, you're not going to be able to sleep for at least a year, and you can spend your life savings defending yourself. How does this square with your right to self defense?

Here are just a smattering of eye rolling statements on the subject:

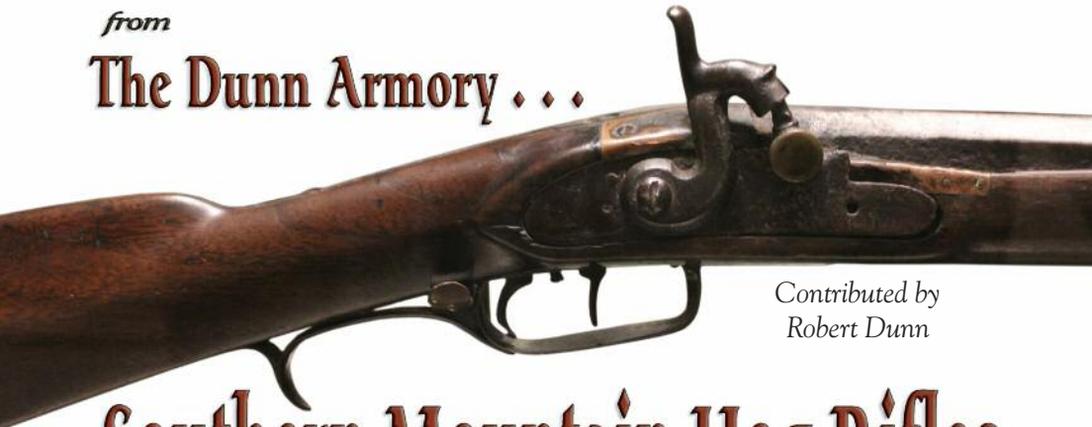
- You can make a citizen's arrest and hold the perpetrator for the police.
- If you buy bear pepper spray and use it on an attacker, you have now used an illegal weapon.
- If your dog is in the house and an attacker comes in, you may get charged if your dog bites the attacker under the Dangerous Dog Act.

IF YOU WERE A CROOK, WHICH AREA WOULD YOU WANT TO AVOID?



from

The Dunn Armory . . .



*Contributed by
Robert Dunn*

Southern Mountain Hog Rifles

The Southern Mountain Hog rifle is also known as an Appalachian Rifle or a Mountain Rifle. The hog rifle is so named because it is quite often used to dispatch hogs from a distance, as many of the hogs that are harvested for food in this area of the country are “free range,” and you need an accurate rifle for such a chore. The hog rifle is an interesting firearm to study as it speaks volumes about the utilitarian disposition and culture of the people who live, and have lived, in the Appalachian Mountains. The mountain rifle and the tools the Appalachian gunsmiths used to build these practical firearms, reflect the values and lifestyle of these mountain men and women. I have always said these country folks won’t really notice a difference in their lives when a financial crisis or any other sort of societal breakdown occurs throughout the United States.

The mountain rifle is a descendent of the fancier and more elaborate Pennsylvania and Kentucky rifles that were being built during the same time period, around the 19th and early 20th centuries. The muzzle loading hog rifles were built for purpose and were used for hunting as well as self-defense. Though these firearms were not ornately designed, their value, usefulness and the love the mountain folks had for their guns is not measurable. You simply could not survive without a reliable and accurate rifle and these firearms are cherished by their owners. Even after cartridge guns were available, the Appalachian people chose to use their black powder weapons because they could always make black powder and projectiles. Their tried and true guns could be repaired easier than the more complex designs and parts found in a more modern gun. Though the gun makers/gunsmiths in these parts primarily built rifles, they also made pistols and fowling pieces (shotguns).

After the explorer and frontiersman Daniel Boone forged deeper into the thick forests of the Appalachian Mountains in the mid-1700s, many pioneers of Scotch-Irish descent followed and settled the land and mountain regions in what is now Kentucky and Tennessee. These settlers traveled through the rugged land with very few possessions and, when they picked a spot for homesteading, they made and built what they needed from the resources found around their new homes in

the backwoods. The firearms these determined mountain people built and used had to defend their homesteads from Indians and be able to bring wild game home to the table for sustenance.

During the 1700s the flintlock rifle was in use and the techniques for building and shooting such a weapon had been perfected. The American rifle was used to great effect by the time the Revolutionary War took place. The gun makers and gunsmiths during this time period were master craftsmen employing the skill sets from various tradesmen like blacksmiths, woodworkers, silversmiths, carvers, engravers, machinists and tool makers. Throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries the Appalachian gun makers needed to apply the same skill sets to build an accurate and reliable firearm. The skills and tools the mountain gunsmith needed to build a percussion lock firearm were essentially the same as those for building a flintlock as the American rifle evolved.

The mountain folks were so self-reliant and multi-faceted that, more often than not, the gun maker was also busy making cabins and furniture, blacksmithing, farming, raising livestock, farriering, distilling, hunting, and making his own tools! Many Appalachians set up homes around streams, creeks and rivers so that they could harness the power of water to operate grist mills, grinders and machine shops. Thus, many times the miller was also a blacksmith and a gun maker.

Most of the Appalachian rifles have stocks made of Black Walnut rather than fancy curly maple and the furniture (trigger, trigger guard and buttplate) was made of iron rather than brass. Most Hog Rifles did not have patch boxes but they did have holes drilled into the buttstock area for tallow.

The mountain barrels were forge welded from a long tapered skelp of wrought iron. A gun anvil/swage block, a fuller, and a sledge hammer were used to bend the skelp into a U shape. The bending would continue until both sides of the



Pictured above is a display at the Atlanta History Center of a "Hog rifle," various gunsmithing tools and a spiraled rifling guide.

skelp touched one another. The iron was then heated in the forge to red hot and forge welded with flux (fine sand or borax) to join both sides of the skelp to one another to form the round barrel. After spooning on the flux, that section of the barrel was heated to a yellow-white color and a tapered mandrel was placed into the bore and the tube was fused together by the pounding from a hammer. This process was continued down the length of the barrel to form the center hole/bore. A concave hammer/top swage and the grooves on the gun anvil were used to form the two half circle shapes down the length of the barrel.

Once the barrel was forged and rounded, it could be pounded on a flat anvil to create the octagon shape. Then, the center hole was bored, reamed, and trued up with long boring and reaming bits that graduated in size. The reaming is always done from the breech to the muzzle.

The gun anvil usually had various sized grooves on it. The large grooves were used for bending the skelp to forge the barrel and the smaller grooves were used for making the long reaming and rifling rods of differing sizes. The various dished out indentations found on the gun anvils were used to make spoons and ladles.

After the center hole in the barrel was bored and reamed, the spiraled grooves or rifling was cut in the barrel with a rifling machine. The rifling machine consisted of a wooden guide pole that had spiraled grooves carved into it. A revolving wooden handle was placed on one end of the guide pole and on the other end was a long rod with saw teeth that would do the actual cutting of the rifling grooves into the barrel.

These mountain rifles were an indispensable tool of the Appalachian people. The gunsmiths who built these rifles also made their own tools and in turn hunted for their own protein. The Appalachian people led a sustainable lifestyle and the Southern Mountain Hog Rifles helped them to do it.



36 *The mountain rifles were built in various calibers to hunt for everything from a deer to a squirrel.*

Advice from a Wise Old Man . . .

This advice was put together by an anonymous philosopher, a wise old man we're guessing, and has floated around in cyberspace a while. Gene Burch passed it on to Gene Kelly, and we're passing it on to you . . .



- Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.
- Keep skunks and bankers at a distance.
- Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
- A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
- Words that soak into your ears are whispered . . . not yelled.
- Meanness don't jes' happen overnight.
- Forgive your enemies; it messes up their heads.
- Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
- It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.
- You cannot unsay a cruel word.
- Every path has a few puddles.
- When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
- The best sermons are lived, not preached.
- Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
- Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
- Live a good, honorable life . . . then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
- Don't interfere with somethin' that ain't bothering you none.
- Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a rain dance.
- If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.
- Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.
- The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every mornin'.
- Always drink upstream from the herd.
- Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.
- Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.
- If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around..
- Don't pick a fight with an old man. If he is too old to fight, he'll just kill you.
- Most times, it comes down to common sense.

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2017 NRA Annual Meetings & Exhibits

*Contributed by
GCA Member Dennis Sandoz*

The 146th National Rifle Association Annual Meetings and Exhibits was another huge success, a jam packed event filled with activities, lectures, meetings, workshops, and a 15 acre exhibit hall with over 800 exhibitors. It was impossible to see and do everything on my list during the three days the exhibits were open so priority choices were necessary.

*Overlooking the
exhibit hall.*

Exhibitors offered their most popular products for viewing and I really enjoy the opportunity to touch and feel the many products on display. This is a great opportunity to pick up the latest catalogs from the many vendors, although by the end of each day my arms were tired from carrying all the material back to the hotel room



for packing to send home in my luggage. I always bring an empty suitcase to accommodate all of the important

Team Miculek: Jerry, Kay and Lena Miculek. All members of Team Miculek are avid shooters and have collectively won over 126 national and world shooting titles. Jerry holds 20 world records with pistols, revolvers, rifles and shotguns.



Lt. Colonel Oliver North (Ret.) autographing his latest book "American Heroes, Heroes Proved".

items I pick up during the annual meeting. The catalogs, free hats, souvenirs, DVDs, autographed books and free samples completely filled my extra suitcase.

In addition to the exhibit area, the annual meeting included many other activities.

Among these were the National NRA Foundation Banquet; A Night of Christian Music with Matthew West; 11th Annual Women's Leadership Forum Luncheon & Auction; NRA-ILA Leadership Forum; NRA-ILA Dinner and Auction; NRA Country Jam: Story Behind the Song Featuring Chris Janson, Josh Thompson, Lindsay Ell and Cary Barlowe; NRA Annual Meeting of Members; NRA Presents Hank Williams Jr. and Friends with Special Guest Lee Brice; 2017 National Prayer Breakfast; and the 4th Annual NRA Women's New Energy Breakfast. These are the main events that occurred over the four day period.

In addition to the Pyramyd Air Gun Range and the NRA Store, open throughout the meetings, over 6 workshops, 16 seminars, and 12 special presentations were held during the three days the exhibits were open.

The NRA Foundation Banquet was attended by nearly 1,500 patriots gathered to raise money for the future of the shooting sports. The evening was filled with live and silent auctions, special remarks by Wayne LaPierre and event sponsors, fun, food, firearms and fellowship among like minded individuals. The highlights of the evening were the auctions and raffles of ammunition, firearms, gear, hunting trips and general merchandise.

Tom Selleck made a guest appearance when he donated six of his Smith and Wesson revolvers for auction and wowed the sold-out crowd of almost 1000 with his answers to many questions about his life as a TV and movie personality in "a living room chat" setting moderated by Susan Howard of the TV show "Dallas" fame. Tom Selleck has been an NRA member since he was eight years old and along with Susan Howard, is a member of the NRA Board of Directors.



Alan Gottlieb with his wife, Julianne Versnel. Alan is the Founder and Executive Vice President and Julianne is Director of Operations for the Second Amendment Foundation.

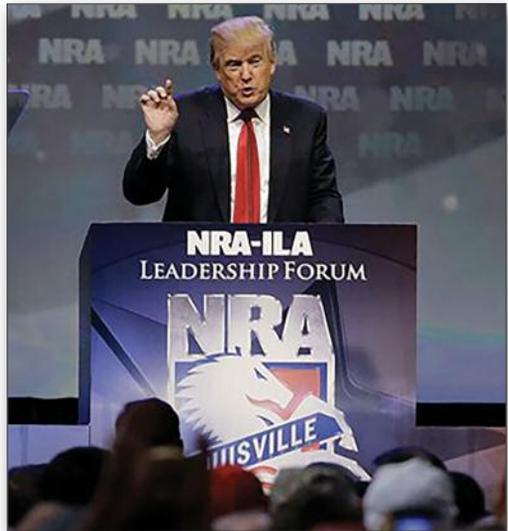
The Second Amendment Foundation is dedicated to promoting a better understanding of our Constitutional heritage to privately own and possess firearms. The Foundation is involved in many educational and legal action programs designed to better inform the public about the gun control debate.



White House Counsel Kellyanne Conway and Susan LaPierre, head of the NRA's Women's Leadership Forum, participate in a living room chat-type event about life on the campaign trail and in the White House.

The 11th Annual Women's Leadership Forum Luncheon and Auction featured Kellyanne Conway as the key note speaker. The NRA-ILA Leadership Forum featured President Donald J. Trump as the key note speaker where he received an enthusiastic response from the sold-out crowd of almost 9,000. President Trump received NRA's endorsement for President at the 2016 Annual Meetings and Exhibits in Louisville and NRA members provided unwavering support during the tumultuous election campaign.

This is the first time a sitting US President has addressed the NRA since President Ronald Reagan's remarks at the Annual Meetings in Phoenix in 1983. In addition, many other national figures spoke during the almost four hour meeting including Wayne LaPierre, Chris Cox, Sheriff David Clark Jr., Secretary of Interior Ryan Zinke, Senator Ted Cruz and Governor Rick Scott.



President Trump spoke to an enthusiastic sold out crowd of almost 9,000 at the NRA-ILA Leadership Forum. Photo courtesy of the NRA.

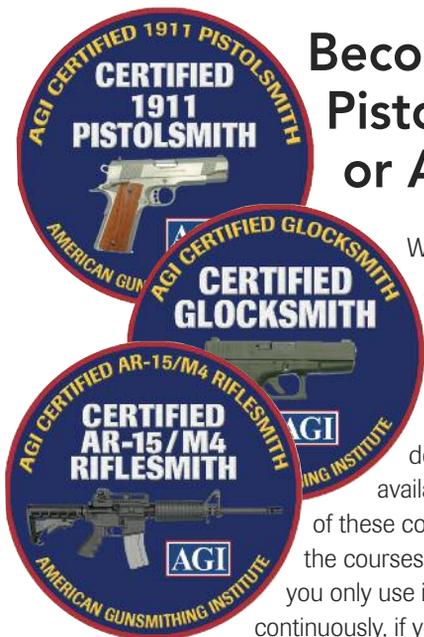
The 147th NRA Annual Meetings and Exhibits will be held May 4-6, 2018 in Dallas, Texas. I strongly encourage all NRA members to attend this most enjoyable and memorable event whenever possible.



In the next edition of Hot Brass Dennis Sandoz writes about the Collector's Row, a great resource he identified at the NRA show.

Sergeant Sammy L. Davis, United States Army, Medal of Honor Recipient with Dennis Sandoz at the 2017 NRA Annual Meetings in Atlanta, Georgia. Sergeant Davis' heroism was loosely portrayed in the movie "Forrest Gump" starring Tom Hanks.

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Just Another “Bag-O-Gun”

Contributed by GCA Member Robert Garr

GCA Members can access member projects on the GCA website at gunclubofamerica.com – this article originated there, and it makes us smile . . .

There is so much to be said for “a little knowledge is dangerous,” or even better the consummate Dirty Harry line, “A man’s got to know his limitations.” Well, that’s what I always think when I see the ubiquitous gun in a bag, a small bag I might add!

This time the bag held a Savage Model 64, .22 LR semi-auto rifle. The story was laughably the usual: “my friend took it apart and couldn’t get it back together, so he sold it to me”. The story went that “I could do it, but I’m busy. But I bought some replacement parts.” Of course you did, judging by the condition of some of them, most notably the fire control unit, you would have to. It looked like a pry bar and vise grips were used to wrestle it off the receiver!

Well I like a challenge, so let’s have at it. The synthetic black stock was in pretty darn good shape. That was the only thing in the plus column. The barrel and receiver were going to have to be refinished, nothing a good job of DuraCoat couldn’t handle. But the internals, were they chewed up! But even so, removed as a single component they did not function. Huumm?

It’s never a good idea to point out mistakes made by someone, and even if they are huge glaring ones, it’s best to just refer to them as “the issue with the (part being discussed) had to be taken care of in order to proceed.” Considering that, I was at a loss as I held the not only mangled fire control unit in my hand but stymied as to how one could even assemble it so incorrectly.

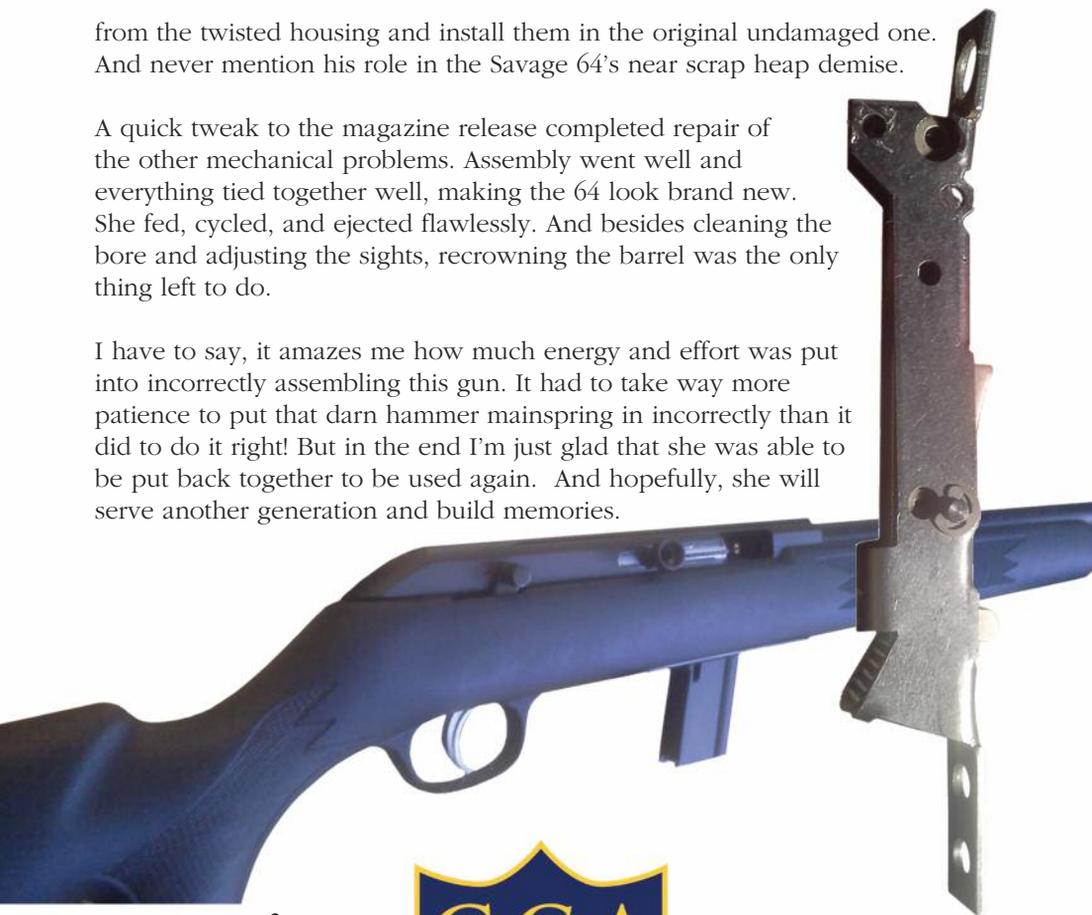
So this is what I had in front of me: The original fire control unit assembled incorrectly, which now had a damaged safety and ruined hammer spring. And the customer’s ebay purchased unit which had good springs and parts, but a bent and twisted housing. So the logical course of action was to NOT tell the owner that the problem with the original was caused by him, but take the parts



from the twisted housing and install them in the original undamaged one. And never mention his role in the Savage 64's near scrap heap demise.

A quick tweak to the magazine release completed repair of the other mechanical problems. Assembly went well and everything tied together well, making the 64 look brand new. She fed, cycled, and ejected flawlessly. And besides cleaning the bore and adjusting the sights, recrowning the barrel was the only thing left to do.

I have to say, it amazes me how much energy and effort was put into incorrectly assembling this gun. It had to take way more patience to put that darn hammer mainspring in incorrectly than it did to do it right! But in the end I'm just glad that she was able to be put back together to be used again. And hopefully, she will serve another generation and build memories.



More

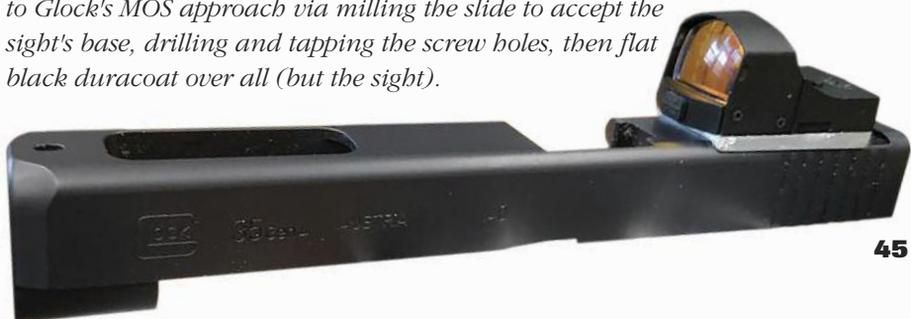


Member Projects

Browsing the other members projects on the website, we noticed there are so many talented people out there customizing guns for customers, family, and themselves. We wanted to highlight some of them. Fair warning! This may give you some ideas ... we hope you upload and share your projects with your fellow GCA members!

Glock Slide Mod for Optic – John Weaver

Recently completed a mini red dot install on a Glock slide. Yes, similar to Glock's MOS approach via milling the slide to accept the sight's base, drilling and tapping the screw holes, then flat black duracoat over all (but the sight).





G17 – Joseph LaJoy

The slide is hydrographic dipped in "live free" and frame in lightning bolts



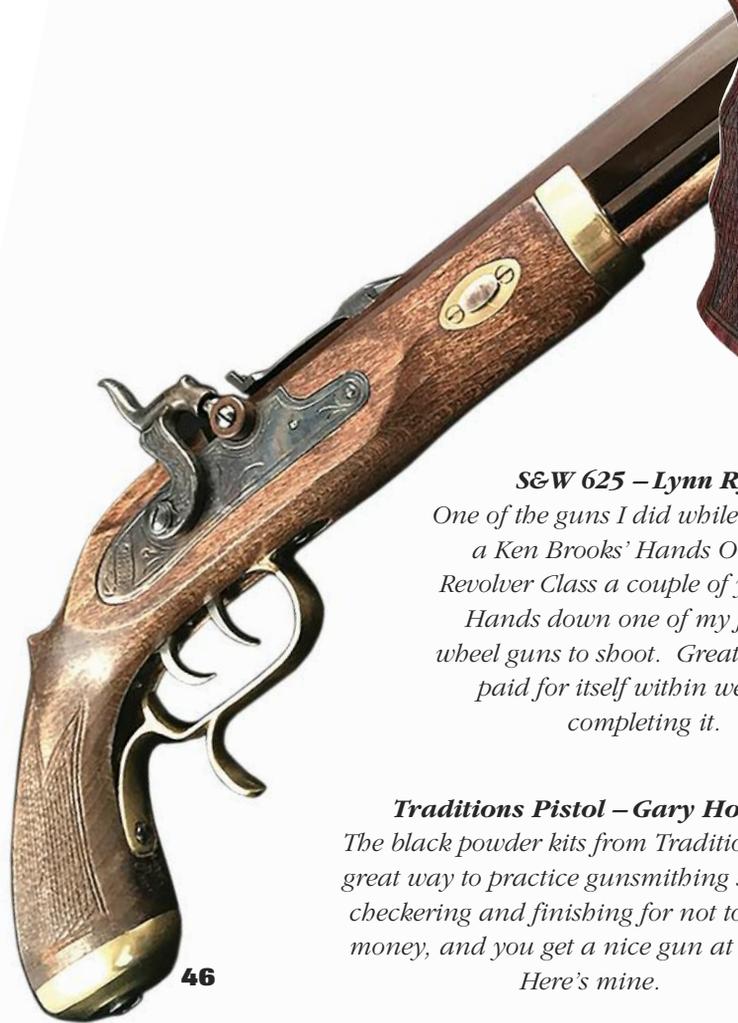
S&W 625 – Lynn Ryle

One of the guns I did while attending a Ken Brooks' Hands On S&W Revolver Class a couple of years ago. Hands down one of my favorite wheel guns to shoot. Great class that paid for itself within weeks of completing it.

Traditions Pistol – Gary Howes

The black powder kits from Traditions are a great way to practice gunsmithing skills like checkering and finishing for not too much money, and you get a nice gun at the end.

Here's mine.



SwopeRuger – Michael Swope
*My Ruger 10/22 with Archangel
Marauder Stock and Duracoat Riptile
Camouflage! This is one of my favorite
builds and everyone loves to shoot it.*

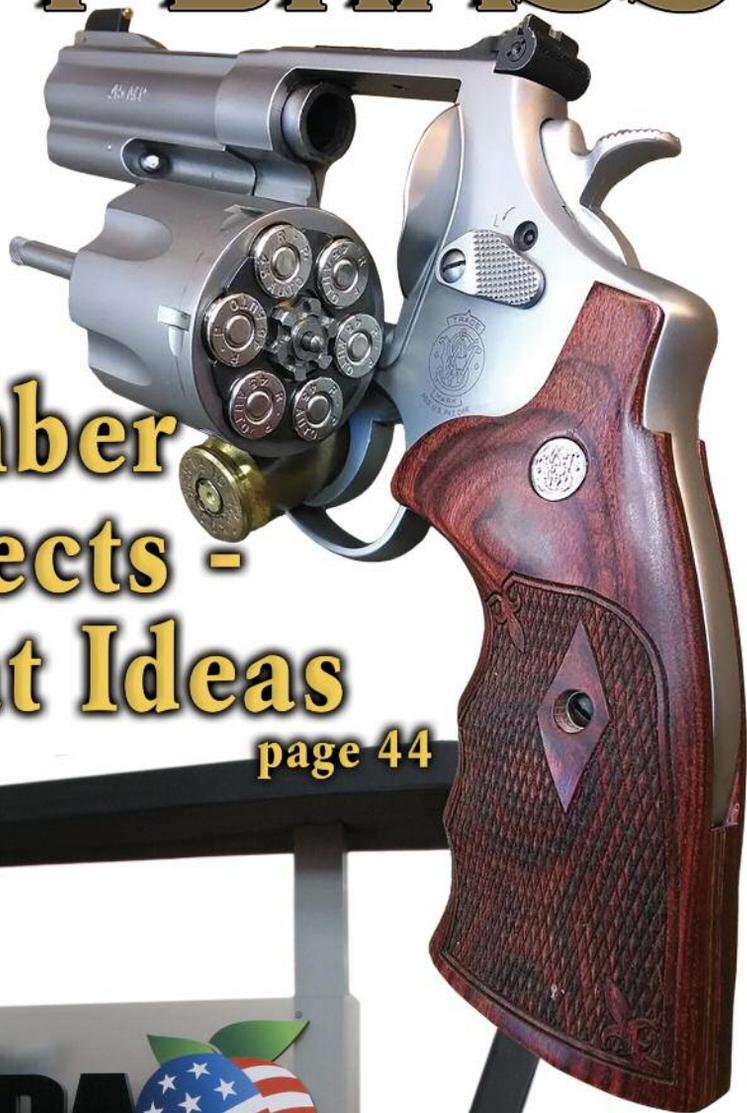


Jolene's AR15 – Joey Parton
*Built this AR15 for my wife,
80% lower, fluted upper, fluted
18", .223 Wylde barrel, nickel
boron bolt group, POF trigger
and other accessories.*



in this issue of . . .

HOT BRASS



Member Projects - Great Ideas

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