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COLUMNS

- 8** **CROSSFIRE**
Letters To The Editor
GUNS Staff
- 18** **RIFLES**
The Year Was 1955 ...
Dave Anderson
- 20** **MAKE READY**
Keeping Your Skills Sharp
James Queisner

22 **HANDLOADING**
Pet Loads
Dave Workman

24 **SHOTGUNS**
Happy 70th Birthday
Pat Covert

54 **KNIVES**
CRKT Soldotna
Pat Covert

62 **THINK TANK**
Big Al's .45
Jeff "Tank" Hoover

66 **GUNS INSIDER**
Time Capsule
Brent T. Wheat



24



28



22



62



54

DEPARTMENTS

26 **SURPLUS & CLASSIC**
Semmerling LM-4
Payton Miller

55 **QUARTERMASTER**

- Popticals Popzulu Glasses
- Glow Rhino Fobs
- Parabellum Grips
- Riton Optics PRD Series

Brent T. Wheat

56 **2A DEFENSE**
Listen To The Professor
Dave Workman

21 **CUSTOM CORNER**
58 **NEW PRODUCTS**
60 **GUN OF THE MONTH**
64 **ADVERTISER INDEX**

GUNS Magazine (ISSN 1044-6257) Copyright © 2024 by Publishers' Development Corporation, is published monthly by *GUNS Magazine*, 225 W. Valley Parkway, Ste. 100, Escondido, CA 92025. Periodicals postage is paid at Escondido, CA and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *GUNS Magazine*, P.O. Box 460130, Escondido, CA 92046. SUBSCRIPTIONS: Annual subscriptions \$24.95; for Canadian and international subscriptions, remit \$56.95 in U.S. funds. For questions related to your magazine subscription, or to change your address (include old address with new) call (866) 820-4045, email subs@gunsmagazine.com or write *GUNS Magazine*, P.O. Box 460130, Escondido, CA 92046. CONTRIBUTORS submitting manuscripts, photographs or drawings do so at their own risk. Materials cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication and will cover reproductions in any or all *GUNS Magazine* editions. ADVERTISING RATES furnished on request. REPRODUCTION or use of any portion of this magazine in any manner, without written permissions is prohibited. All rights reserved. Title to this publication passes to subscriber only on delivery to his/her address. The opinions and recommendations expressed by individual authors within this magazine are not necessarily those of Publishers' Development Corporation.

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28

GREAT WESTERN REVOLVERS

Celebrating 70 Years

Roy Huntington



FEATURES

12 **CAMPFIRE TALES**
Ruger Single-Actions Part II
John Taffin

16 **AYOOB ON HANDGUNS**
Looking Back
Massad Ayoob

28 **GREAT WESTERN REVOLVERS**
The O.G. Cover Guns
Roy Huntington

36 **ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL:
GUNS THROUGH THE YEARS**

- 1950s — New Classics
- 1960s — Tune In, Turn On
- 1970s — The Golden Years
- 1980s — Changing Times
- 1990s — Black Guns Abound
- 2000s — The Brave New World



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CROSSFIRE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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OOPSIE!

I just got my copy of the November issue of *GUNS* and saw an article that perked me up — “Convertible Redhawk — Tack-driver or Imposter?” but didn't find the article. Please don't put me on the “Whinery” list! Not complaining; we are all human and mistakes happen but just hoping it makes it into the magazine because I own a Ruger Redhawk that I am having issues with. It is a .45 Long Colt / .45 ACP caliber made in 2018 and I had to return it once for the cylinder locking up during dry firing with snap caps to smooth out the rough trigger action. Ruger returned it quickly stating they had to replace the trigger plunger. Things went well until a month or so later when I took it to the range and ran about 200 rounds of .45 LC and 45 ACP through her. Field-stripped it the very first time to remove burn rings around the cylinder and forcing cone, put everything back together *carefully* making sure the trigger and transfer bar pawls were in the correct place and darn ... she did it again! Everything was locked up — hammer, trigger, cylinder and cylinder release. So back she went and again got it back at no charge with yet *another* trigger plunger replacement. Now I am scared to death to even field strip it and was just wondering if this article would touch on any of these issues or



just on accuracy ... and if you or possibly the author of this article ever had any of these issues.

John Slawski

Sorry to disappoint John but we had to pull the article late in the production cycle due to space constraints. We cut it from the Table of Contents but missed the blurb on the cover. I also noticed a second problem I think would have caught — the story uses a New Model Blackhawk as test bed, not the Redhawk. The article will appear soon. — BW

BURN NOT BLOW

I just read your *Handloading* column on reduced .45-70 loads in the November issue of *GUNS*. Great idea! Loads that don't boot ya into last week would be great. BUT, I wonder ...

A bunch of years ago, when revolvers were still popular for target shooting, there was an article in one of the gunzines titled “Blowing Up With 2.7.” At the time a very popular load for the .357 was 2.7 grains of Bullseye and a 148-grain wad-cutter. A few guns were blowing up with that load. The first thought was that someone was careless in reloading.

They all swore they were careful with reloading practices.

If I remember correctly, Skeeter Skelton was the author and he wanted

continued on page 52

GUNS

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FMG PUBLICATIONS

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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER: americanhandgunner.com

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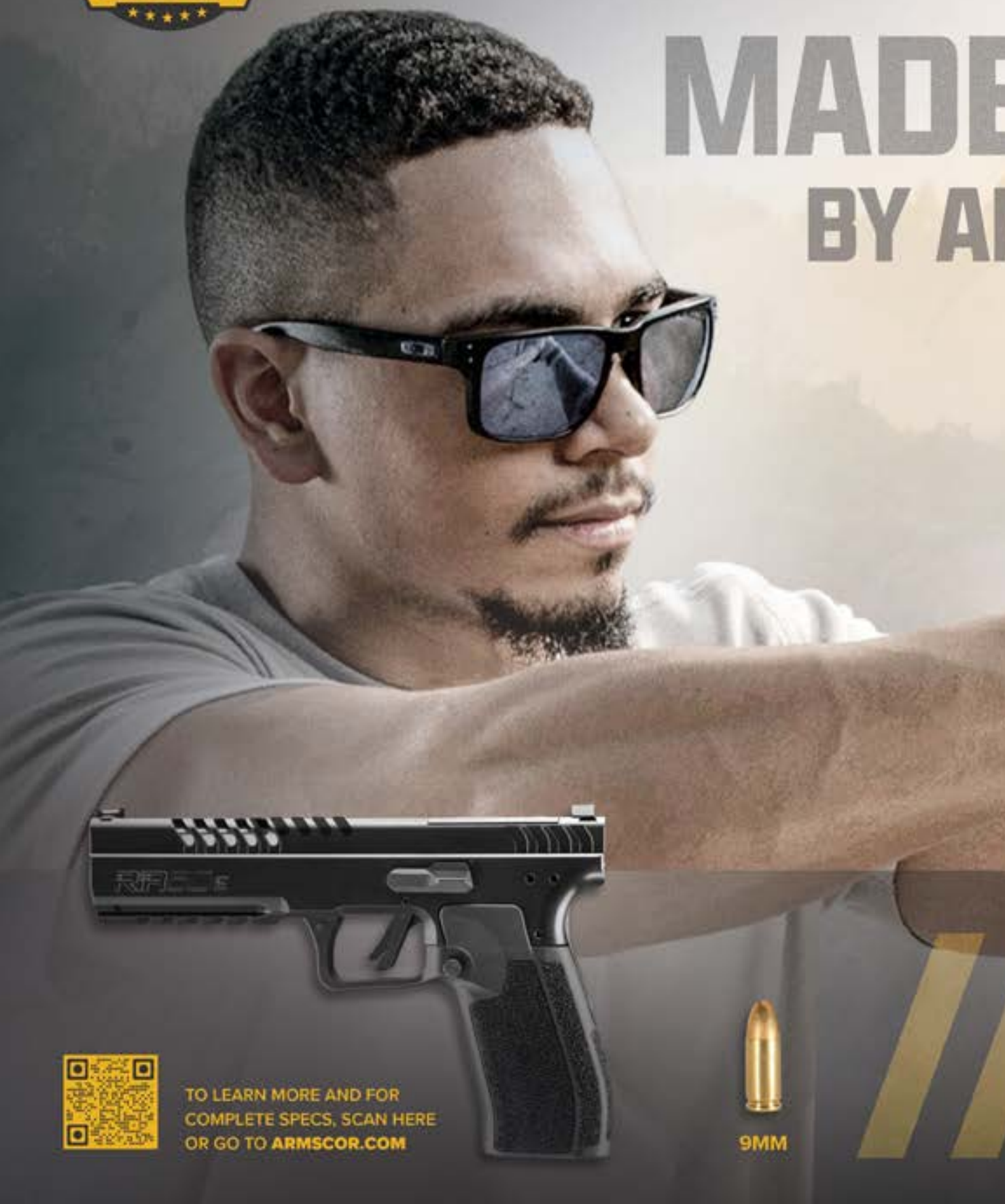


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RUGER SINGLE ACTIONS PART II

EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW (VAQUERO) AGAIN

John Taffin

The New Model Blackhawk now had three-screws in the side of the frame with two pins and a transfer bar safety was added. Now, to charge the Ruger, the loading gate was opened while the hammer was left in its forward position. The cylinder could be rotated and safely loaded with six rounds and then the loading gate closed. There was now a piece of steel between the hammer and the firing pin preventing any negligent discharge. When the hammer on a New Model is cocked, the bar slides down out of the way and, when the hammer drops by pulling the trigger, the cartridge fires. I was not enamored with the New Model at its advent and I still prefer the Three-Screw Rugers. However, in retrospect I realize this was a needed improvement, especially for the newer generation of shooters who were not



A Bisley Vaquero tuned and embellished by Bill Oglesby.

familiar with how a traditional single-action should be safely carried.

The New Model .45 Colt was offered in the same barrel lengths as the original and was soon joined by the excellent

Bisley Model Blackhawk. The Bisley Ruger grip frame is patterned after the old Colt Bisley somewhat but is actually more like an enlarged version of Elmer Keith's Number Five. For most



Perfect Packin' Pistols
— Ruger .45 Colt Bisley-style.

shooters, the Bisley grip frame, which comes up higher along the backstrap, does a much better job of handling heavy recoil than any other grip frame. Ruger has only offered the .45 Bisley, except for special distributor orders, in a blued 7 ½" version. Normally I prefer the 7 ½" barrel on most single actions, but on the Bisley I prefer the balance of a 5 ½" barrel so mine has been trimmed back by sixgunsmith Ben Forkin and also fancied up a bit with a case hardened frame. It is an absolutely beautiful and great shooting Perfect Packin' Pistol.

In the early 1990s, I visited Bill Ruger and he showed me what was to be the next .45 Colt Ruger. To take advantage of the popularity of Cowboy Action Shooting at the time, Ruger decided to offer a traditionally styled New Model .45 Colt. Starting with the basic New Model Blackhawk, Ruger removed the adjustable sights, reshaped the top strap to the traditional-style with the hog wallow rear sight, replaced the ramp



Targets shot with Ruger's 7 ½" Old Model .45 Colt.

front sight with the traditional blade, and the result was the Ruger Vaquero. Offered in both blue and stainless steel versions as well as barrel lengths of 4 ¾", 5 ½", and 7 ½", the Vaquero became

extremely popular with Cowboy Action Shooters as well as outdoorsmen who wanted a virtually indestructible .45 sixgun for heavy-duty use. The next step was simply to add the Bisley grip



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Ruger's .45 Colt Bisley.

frame to the Vaquero, making it more comfortable with heavy loads.

More than 750,000 Vaqueros were produced before production was stopped in favor of the New Vaquero. Unfortunately, the choice of "New Vaquero" has caused all kinds of confusion, with some now dubbing the Vaquero as the "Old Model Vaquero" — there is no such thing! There is the large-framed Vaquero and the standard-framed New Vaquero. Ruger never did build a .45 Colt on their original Colt-sized Blackhawk but they have now taken a giant forward step backwards to give us a Colt-sized .45 Colt as the New Vaquero. Offered in the same finishes and barrel lengths as the original Vaquero, this one will fit holsters made for the Colt Single Action Army.

One caution: Many reloading manuals have separate .45 Colt sections with heavy loads for the .45 Ruger; these are NOT TO BE USED with the New Vaquero. The latter is for those same loads normally used in a Colt Single Action .45.

The Ruger Vaquero has been a favorite of mine, especially in a 7 ½" stainless steel version, since it first arrived over 30 years ago. It will handle any loads I normally put in a Ruger .45 Colt Blackhawk. I don't use these heavy loads as much anymore so my original Vaqueros have been pretty much supplanted by the New Vaquero. Whether with a 4 ⅝", 5 ½", or 7 ½" barrel, my stainless steel New Vaqueros are regularly fed 260-grain hard cast Keith bullets over 8.0–8.5 grains of Unique or Universal for right around 850–950 fps depending upon barrel length. The New Vaquero is just about as perfect a fixed-sighted single action for outdoor use as can be found. It is safely loaded with six rounds, shoots easily



The .45 New Vaquero is available in three barrel lengths.

and accurately — and just to prove once again gun designers like to go to the edge of perfection and then step back, we have that weird funky New Vaquero hammer. Surely someone was on something when they designed this thing! Apparently it was thought

by lengthening the hammer spur it would be easier to cock; actually just the opposite is true and it is flat out ugly. My New Vaquero hammers have either been shortened or replaced with standard hammers. They look better and are much easier to operate.

The original .357 Magnum Blackhawk was to have been produced in .44 Special; that never happened. However, the New Vaquero in addition to being offered in .45 Colt is also now offered in a special edition chambered in .44 Special. How cool is that? **GUNS**

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SCAN ME

LOOKING BACK

IT'S A LONG WAY FROM THE CORNER PHARMACY

Massad Ayoob

I was a little boy whose bedroom bookshelf's centerpiece was a much-thumbed copy of the 1947 *Stoeger Gun Bible*. I looked at the magazine rack in the Corner Pharmacy in Concord, NH and was

riveted by the sight of a by-God gun magazine, the first of its kind to hit the newsstand. The comic book rack instantly disappeared from my attention. Yes, there was *American Rifleman* but it went only to NRA members and we had none in the family. That would be rectified ...

The magazine was, of course, *GUNS*. Well, actually, "Guns" at the time as you'll see elsewhere in this issue. The January 1955 issue was heavier on Western history than today. The cover guns were a pair of Great Western single actions, homage to the Peacemaker, thanks to cowboy shows riding high on television at that time. John Taffin would later get his hands on those two revolvers and write them up in his usual compelling style.

In the early years, the magazine focused more than it does now on human interest stories: champion shooters, unusually interesting gun owners, that sort of thing. Over the years, reader feedback demanded more gun tests, but *GUNS* never lost its human touch. As I grew older, my dad started taking me to Sprague's Gun Shop in Hooksett, NH where he would buy me my first Colt .45 auto at age 12.

I couldn't help but notice later in the first issue of *Guns*, readers learned Wild Bill Hickok acquired his first six-shooter at the same age. Sprague's had a box in the corner where old issues of *Guns* could be had for a dime and I think I bought just about all of them. Sprague's was directly across the street from what would become New Hampshire's most famous gun emporium, Riley's Sport Shop, and that connects with this story in a minute.

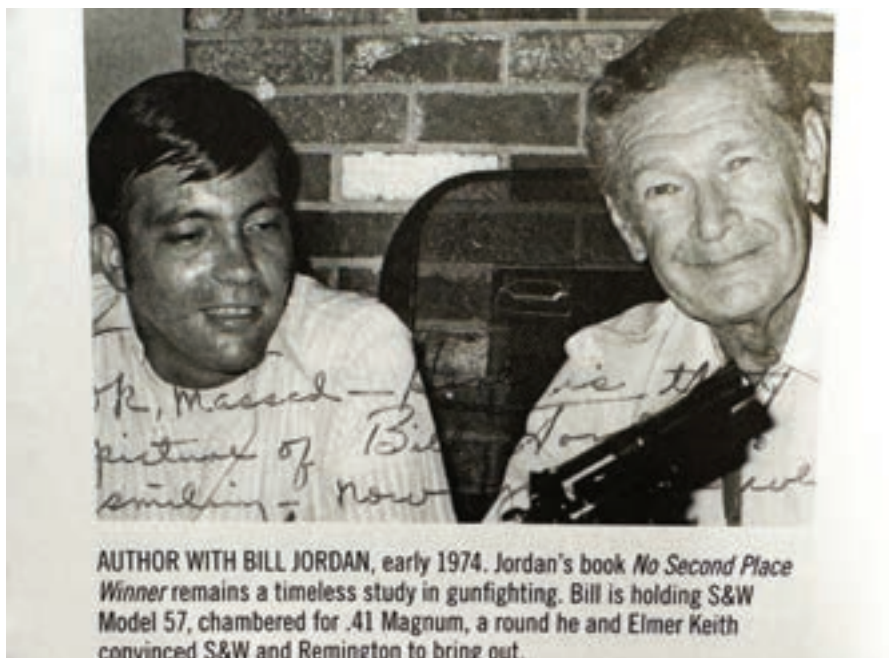
A STABLE OF THOROUGHBREDS

Editors make a magazine and publisher George von Rosen knew it. Over the years, the various helmsmen steered the magazine to excellence. They, in turn, knew the writers made the magazines, too. Over the years *Guns* hosted the work of the men we now consider the great past masters of gun writing — Elmer Keith. Col. Charles Askins, Jr. Major George C. Nonte. Bill Jordan. Under his given name of Charles Skelton, "Skeeter's" first article appeared in *Guns*. Jan Stevenson, whom Nonte himself called "the most erudite of gun writers." Col.



LEARN FROM YOUR PREDECESSORS. Jan Stevenson, left, was handgun editor for *GUNS* magazine before author took the position in the 1970s. Here in 1979, Massad and Bill Jordan shooting Pict 79 in Finland.

Jan Stevenson and Massad (above). Mas and Bill Jordan (below).



AUTHOR WITH BILL JORDAN, early 1974. Jordan's book *No Second Place Winner* remains a timeless study in gunfighting. Bill is holding S&W Model 57, chambered for .41 Magnum, a round he and Elmer Keith convinced S&W and Remington to bring out.

Rex Applegate, John Taffin, Mike Venturino, Mark Hampton, Tiger McKee, Will Dabbs and many others. Being primarily a handgunner, I focused mainly on these writers.

I met all of them eventually. Keith, in a receiving line in the mid-'70s in Chicago where he didn't know me from Adam but gave a crushingly powerful ".44 Magnum" handshake and yes, he had the 10-gallon hat on. Charlie Askins was affable and never withheld an answer from a question. I learned a lot from him. I met Bill Jordan in the mid-'70s at a police training seminar where he picked me to be the victim of his famous quick draw demo, and I took the opportunity to interview him as an introduction to his new position as Shooting Editor at *Guns*. He became a mentor and wrote the foreword for my first book in 1978, *Fundamentals of Modern Police Impact Weapons*, where he made the classic statement "it's easier to convince the court that you didn't shoot your opponent too much than that you didn't hit him too hard."

Nonte was a veritable encyclopedia of the gun and friendly in person. Likewise Col. Applegate: He and I disagreed on point shooting but he could "disagree without being disagreeable." Skelton was a wonderful guy and his stories were even better in person. Venturino was

surprisingly shy and humble when I met him. Mark Hampton and I corresponded but never met face to face; we once tested the same gun for two different magazines and he got better groups than I did. Sadly, none of them are still with us.

At this writing, fortunately, Taffin, Dabbs, Miller, Anderson and Stevenson still are. Taffin in person is the exact same classic gentleman you see in his writing, and Dabbs, the same happy-go-lucky but knowledgeable guy you sense in his work. Anderson and Miller are both all-around gun guys and good guys. Jan Stevenson went on to produce the outstanding *Handgunner* magazine in Great Britain before the anti-gunners killed it there. In person, he is brilliant and a ton of fun to be with. Which leads me to ...

BEEN HERE A WHILE

1977 was the year I was hired as "handgun editor" for *GUNS*, replacing

Jan: This column first taking shape as *Handguns Today* in the April '77 issue. Earlier in the 1970s I started writing feature articles for *Guns*. Back in Hooksett, NH at Riley's Sport Shop, the resident master gunsmith was Nolan Santy, whom I met there and became friends with.

The moviemakers producing a flick called *Gordon's War* hired Nolan to make their 1911s and Luger and such work with blanks, and my article on that endeavor was among the first and perhaps the very first of my articles for editor Jerry Rakusan. No one was more formative to my career than Nolan Santy, who introduced me to bullseye pistol competition and then PPC. I owe him a lot.

Back in the '70s, I was Features Editor of *Illinois Trooper* magazine and *Guns* was headquartered in a suburb of Chicago. I got to visit Rakusan there regularly. I've occupied the handgun column space since ... and have enjoyed every bit of it. When one 1990 magnum opus I wrote on the GLOCK covered both the high points and the low points, the then-head of GLOCK USA demanded I be fired or they'd pull a million dollars' worth of advertising out of this and its sister magazine. Publisher George von Rosen replied that truth to the readers was more important than advertising dollars. The advertising got pulled, I stayed. GLOCK fixed the problems I wrote about, eventually fired the exec who had given the ultimatum, and later paid me to write articles for their own magazine. Anybody wonder why I'm still loyal to *GUNS* magazine? **GUNS**

Editor's Note: Photos from Massad Ayoob's Combat Shooting book, Gun Digest Publishing.



LEARN FROM THE PAST masters while you can, as author is doing here with Col. Rex Applegate in the early 1990s.

Rex Applegate sharing stories.

TALK AMONG THE GUYS

“HEY, DID YOU HEAR ... ?”

Dave Anderson

December 23, 1954. Pat had rushed outside to adjust the TV antenna without donning coat or gloves and was regretting it. In fact, he regretted making the long drive out to his twin brother's farm to help install the new 21" console TV. Just because Mike's wife and kids were in town doing some last minute shopping. Why did it have to be a surprise anyway?

Mike shouted from the house, “Okay, rotate it clockwise a bit ... bit more ... back just a touch ... that's perfect!” “Easy for him to say,” Pat thought, he wasn't freezing his hands on a 50-foot aluminum pole. Pat hustled to the kitchen and the welcome warmth of the wood fire in the stove. Mike called from the living room, “You have to see this picture! It's so sharp you can recognize people. What technology we have today!”

The gunrack by the door caught Pat's eye. It held three deer rifles — his Winchester 94 .30-30, Mike's Remington 14 .32 Special and their friend Artie's Stevens 325 .30-30. Mike came in the kitchen for a coffee refill, humming the tune *Home for the Holidays*. “You were supposed to take your rifle and Artie's back with you after we made the deer sausage. Don't forget this time! I might need the space.”

FEBRUARY 6, 1955

The two families had been passing a pleasant Sunday out at Mike's farm. The kids tobogganed on a hill, rode in a horse-drawn sled driven by Mike and warmed themselves at the bonfire Pat was maintaining. Mike sat down on a stump near the fire and found a poking stick. Some people can build a fire and leave it alone, others have to be poking it constantly. Mike was one of the latter.

“You like reading stories about guns and shooting?”

“Sure,” Pat replied, “I read the shooting columns in *Outdoor Life* and *Field & Stream* at the barber shop. Always a month late of course but the price is right.”

“Yeah me too. There's a new magazine out with articles only on guns, famous gunmen and shooting tips. The kids got me a subscription for a Christmas gift. Five bucks, can you believe it? They must have picked bottles all summer to come up with that kind of money.”

A magazine about guns? What's it called?”

“*GUNS Magazine*.”

How about: “Pat's sarcasm was legendary.”

“The publisher is a young Illinois fellow named George von Rosen. He's either a dreamer or a certified genius. If the magazine is still being published 20 years from now, we'll know it's the latter. Anyway, I've read



After reading Al Goerg's article in the April 1955 issue of *GUNS Magazine*, the twins decided they needed .22 pistols. Pat got a Ruger Standard but the holster became a bone of contention — both claimed it until Artie put the matter to rest.



With the 1955 deer season approaching, the guys decided to emulate the authors in *GUNS Magazine*: (top-bottom) Artie's Savage 99 .250 with Kollmorgen 4X scope, Mike's Remington 721 .30-06 with Kollmorgen 2 3/4X scope and Pat's Winchester 88 .308 with Lyman All-American 2 1/2X scope.



A few military veterans got into commercial flying after the war. A pal of Mike's got this aerial photo for him. In 1955 an airplane was a rare enough event the family all hurried outside to see it.

the January issue, you can borrow it if you like."

STARTING FAST

The new magazine gave them plenty to talk about. The April issue saw a feature on celebrities called "My Favorite Gun." The first column was on Adlai Stevenson, Democratic presidential candidate in the 1954 election. His gun of choice was an Ithaca 37 shotgun. Pat said, "Did you see the story on handgun hunting? It was by Al Goerg — do you pronounce it "Gorg" or "George"? With spring coming on and the gophers out, the farm gun rack now held their new/used .22 rifles — Mike's Remington 550, Pat's Winchester 74, both semiautos, and Artie's bolt-action Winchester 69. "Artie just has to be different," Mike said and Pat nodded agreement.

The May issue really got them going. It had a story on testing for a new military rifle, featuring the T-48 (the FN-FAL) and T-44 (the M14). Pat and Mike were aghast. Replace the M1 Garand that had served so well in WWII and in Korea? "They'll regret this madness, mark my words," Pat said as Mike nodded agreement.

The June issue featured a spirited defense of the Colt Single Action by Mel Torme, popular singer, entertainer and noted collector of Colt revolvers. TV westerns had revived

interest in classic single actions. In July, Colt announced they would reintroduce their single action. The July issue also had a story on Winchester's new rifle, the lever action model 88. Suggested retail was \$123.95, \$3 more than the model 70. July also saw the opening of Disneyland, not that either Pat or Mike cared, but it did give them powerful leverage over their kids.

When Mike gave Pat the October issue, he commented, "I sure like this guy Francis Sell. He writes from personal experience. Be sure to read his story on hunting waterfowl with a 20-gauge. Lucky has a used model 12 20-gauge at his store I might buy."

The December issue told the story of Frank Hamer, famous lawman of the southwest, who passed away in July of 1955. It was one of several police-oriented stories they had passed on to their father, Pat Sr., a peace officer for over 25 years.

December, 1955. Mike was at Pat's house in town helping set up the new console with 23" TV and record player. Over coffee Pat commented, "By the way, I got a hint from my kids they're getting me a *GUNS Magazine* subscription, so your kids won't have to. You can borrow the magazines after I've read them."

"I think this could be the beginning of a beautiful Christmas tradition." **GUNS**

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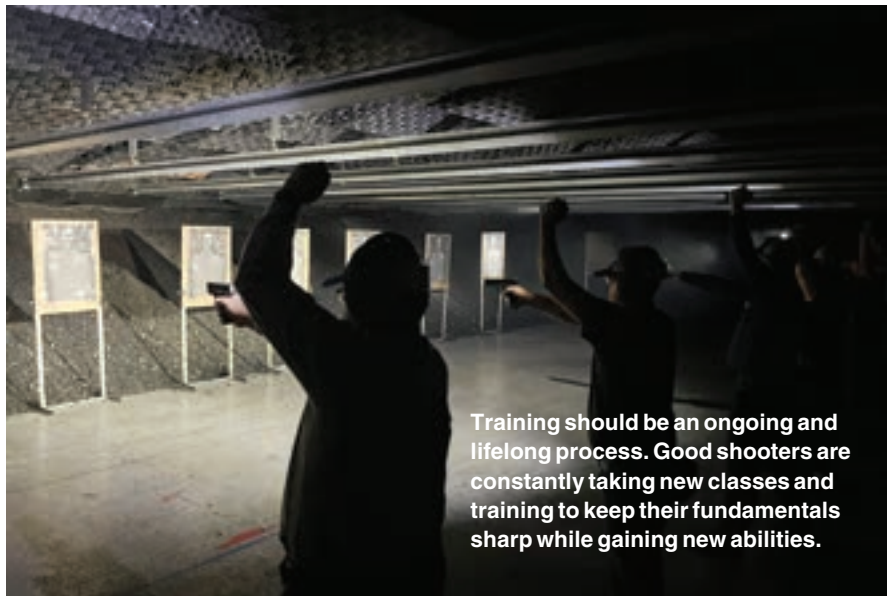
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KEEPING YOUR SKILLS SHARP IT TAKES PRACTICE!

James Queisner
Photos: Gunsite Academy

Many times, while teaching at Gunsite, I get asked how often a person should be training to not only stay sharp, but to build on the skills they just learned. While I wish there was a perfect and easy answer of “shoot this many times and this many rounds and you will always be sharp and ready,” that just is not reality. Skills related to the use of a handgun or rifle are perishable. Just like when you achieve a level of fitness, you must continue working out to keep at that level. Then, if you want to increase your skill level, you have to push yourself even harder.

Let me illustrate this for you. We all remember, way back in high school, when we had to take the dreaded foreign language class of our choice. For me it was Spanish. After taking the class, off into the real world I went, never using it in any meaningful way. To this day, other than the common everyday words, the only words in Spanish I remember are *lechuga* and *cebolla*, which is Spanish for lettuce and onion. I hate these two things on my cheeseburgers, which



Training should be an ongoing and lifelong process. Good shooters are constantly taking new classes and training to keep their fundamentals sharp while gaining new abilities.

probably explains why I remember them. All kidding aside, when you don't use a skill, you lose much, if not all of it. When it comes to the use of a firearm, this is extremely problematic, even more so if you are using this firearm in the defense of yourself or another.

STOP THE ROT

So how do you prevent this from happening? First get a good solid base for your first organized training.

The first training you get is what you remember the most and it provides the foundation on what all other training is layered on. Now, when you are building the initial base, make sure the training is constructed on the fundamentals of marksmanship. Those fundamentals are really what make your foundation strong for you to build upon. I was so blessed my first formal training was the police academy, which had been based on the modern pistol technique established by Colonel Jeff Cooper.

Keeping the base you have built and keeping it sharp can be done in several ways. Making yourself get to the range consistently is the biggest part but only part — once there, it is important to get in good quality repetitions to build on the shooting skills you have learned.

It is also important to work on the skills you struggle with and not just the ones you're good at. Shooting head shots at three yards may impress ourselves and can be done consistently with little effort or practice. However, you need to practice the not-so-fun skills so you can be a well-balanced shooter.

When you ponder “what could I possibly need to work on,” when did you last practice malfunctions or support-hand-only shooting? The skills we



Formal training from a reputable source such as Gunsite Academy is a critical first step to shooting success regardless of the discipline.



When practicing on your own, focus on the things you don't do well such as support-hand shooting or reloading. Of course, take it slow at first and keep it safe!

struggle with are what we don't want to do because it's hard and we have to work at it, which makes it even more important to push those items to the top of our training plan.

THE NEXT STEP

How — if you are regularly maintaining your skills, making it to the range as much as you can and working on those not-so-good techniques — can you take it further and get even sharper? The first suggestion is to take the next level class from your trusted training academy. Upper-level courses will challenge you with things like tighter time restrictions, multiple targets and maybe even force-on-force training where you can apply your shooting skills against another human who can move, react and force you to engage your brain, not just your trigger finger.

Another way to make your skills even sharper is by participating in shooting sports/competitions and club events. There is something that clicks inside all of us when we add a timer and competition against others, giving us that added stress that forces us to get better. Keep in mind that competition shooting is a different skill set than defensive shooting, but the added stress helps keep you and your skills honed.

So, unlike Grandma's cookies, there is no secret recipe to staying sharp. It comes down to consistently getting to the range for good-quality practice time. Then, find ways to challenge yourself as a shooter, pushing yourself out of your comfort zone to get even better.

Stay sharp and when are you coming to Gunsite?



Gunsite Instructor James Queisner



ABOUT JAMES

A Gunsite instructor since 2020, James Queisner is a retired 23-year police officer who held various assignments including SWAT, Riot Control and teaching firearms for the police academy. Since retiring, James continues to work in the firearms industry and writes for several firearms-related publications. **GUNS**

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SETTLING ON YOUR PET LOAD

PICKING AND STICKING

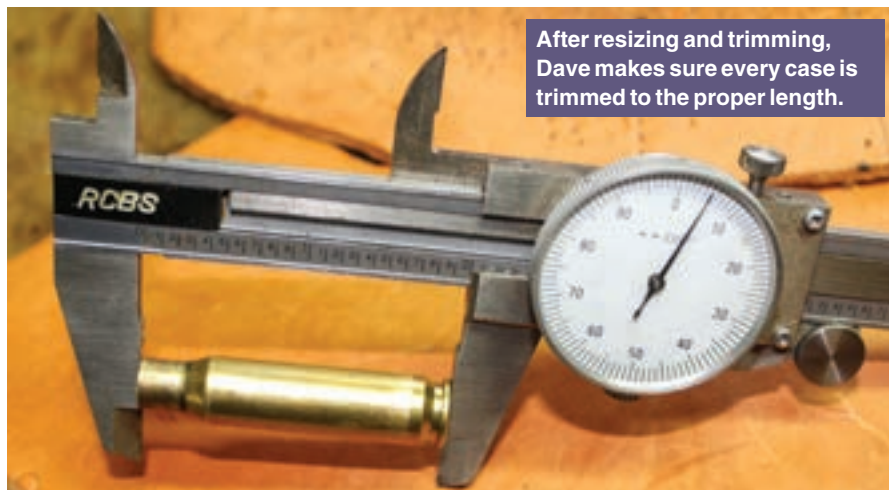
Dave Workman

Two of the most popular calibers among rifle cartridge handloaders are the .30-06 Springfield and .308 Winchester.

I own at least one of each and have notched tags with both, using handloads I settled upon after trying different load recommendations in manuals from Hodgdon, Nosler, Hornady, Speer and Sierra. The process involved only a few different propellants, several different powder charges and bullet weights and types.

DAVE'S PICK

In the end, I've settled on a 180-grain Nosler AccuBond or Ballistic Tip ahead of 56 grains of Hodgdon Hybrid 100V and a 165-grain AccuBond or Ballistic Tip over 39 grains of IMR 4895 for the .308. With the former '06 load, I've shot three Snake River mule deer bucks, all at ranges exceeding 300 yards and all



After resizing and trimming, Dave makes sure every case is trimmed to the proper length.

one-shot kills. All rounds are loaded with CCI Large Rifle primers.

In addition, I've notched tags with the same rifle — a Marlin MR-7 bolt action — in Wyoming and Utah.

Turning to the .308 Winchester, one of my biggest bucks — also taken in a canyon on the northeast side of the Snake River in far southeast Washington — fell to the load detailed

above, fired downhill from a Savage bolt-action at more than 200 yards. A couple of years later, while hunting out in the Columbia Basin in the vast bottom of Moses Coulee, I put a bullet into a nice buck at about 175 yards with the same rifle and load.

Long story short: I found something that works and stopped fiddling around with it. Many years ago, I



Dave has settled on 39.0 grains of IMR 4895 for his .308 Winchester loads, topped by a 165-grain boattail. It took a bit of experimenting with various charge weights before deciding on a pet load.

reached the conclusion there is no such thing as the “perfect” load, and one can waste a lifetime looking for it. I’ve settled on two combinations for two rifles that come as close to perfect as possible ... and I define “perfect” to include a notched tag and a freezer full of venison.

If there’s a different criteria, I’ve never heard of it.

Of course, there is more to this than just cleaning empty brass and reloading it. Here’s where the fun begins, and it is important. Let’s begin with the .30-06.

PICK OH-SIX

A little history. The ’06 is more than a century old, introduced as a military cartridge originally with a 150-grain projectile but the popular range in bullet weights goes as high as 220 grains. My choice of the 180-grainer might be called a delightful compromise. I’ve loaded the ’06 in all kinds of brass including Winchester, Federal, Remington and Nosler.

Importantly, my first step is to resize the case and then trim to 2.484”, checked with a caliper. I’ll chamfer the neck inside and out, then throw each empty into a wet tumbler for up to three hours. They come out good-as-new shiny and after they dry out, I load up. Before priming each case, I’ll make sure the primer pocket is absolutely clean so each primer seats properly.

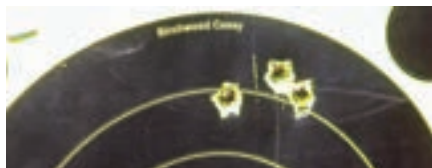
Each powder charge is individually weighed on an electric scale so my finished cartridges are as uniform as possible. The 180-grain Nosler bullets have identical ballistic coefficients of 0.507 and sectional densities of 0.271. Clocking above 2,700 fps with my chronograph 30” ahead of the muzzle, they hit what I aim at.

THE CLASSIC

I bought the .308 Savage Model 114 American Classic because I wanted a rifle in that caliber for the short action, manageable recoil and proven performance of the cartridge. I tried different combinations with bullet weights of 150 to 168 grains and settled on the 165-grainers. After using loads with up



Over the chronograph (above), Dave’s .308 loads come in right where they’re supposed to, averaging just over 2,400 fps — pretty much dead-on at 200–225 yards! This 3-shot group (below) fired from his Savage rifle in .308 Winchester at roughly 100 yards shows Dave’s rounds striking 3” high.



to 43.0 grains of IMR 4895, I backed down to 39 grains and found it to be consistently accurate, zeroing it to shoot about 2 ½” high at 100 to be pretty much dead-on at 200–225 yards. Over my chronograph, I get just over 2,400 fps from this load combination and recoil is easy on my shoulder.

Trim length is 2.005” and I seat bullets so the overall case length is just below the maximum SAAMI specified 2.810”. The Nosler manual says my choice of bullet weight and powder charge proved the most accurate with the combination and I have no reason to question that designation, having dined on the results.

As a testament to sighting a .308 rifle using this load to strike high at 100 yards, I was helping zero my brother’s Ruger in the same caliber. Off a sandbag rest, I spotted a clay target at the 200-yard line. With the cross-hairs centered on the disk, I pressed the trigger. The clay disintegrated.

I’ve never wanted to fix what isn’t broken and because these loads have definitely served me well over the years, I’ve stuck with them. Others like to constantly experiment but for my money and time, I’d rather spend it in the field than at the loading bench. My recipes may not be perfect but they’ve definitely become my pets. **GUNS**

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HAPPY 70TH BIRTHDAY!

MEMORIES OF MILESTONES

Tom Keer

Growing up in the middle of the Connecticut River “Gun Valley” meant I was always surrounded by Winchester, Marlin, Mossberg, Hi Standard, Parker, Colt and the like. Sometimes when I got to thinking, I wondered if their influence shaped me into a hunter/shooter or if I was born that way. I started a straw poll to see if Michiganders felt similarly about their muscle cars. They were surrounded by all of the classics — Mustang, Super Bee, GTO, Road Runners and Camaro. I never found an answer but figure people appreciate quality and innovation like those firearms

and vehicles. It doesn't matter where they're from.

IT'S IN THE WATER

Many of my friends had a family member who at one time or another worked at one of those firearm companies. Fathers and mothers worked for these storied firearms manufacturers and their affiliation made them proud. Some made barrels, others were engravers, while still others worked in shipping or managed the books. There wasn't a whole lot of job-hopping as there is today and for the most part, they were “company” men and women.

After a career spanning decades if not a half century, they retired and became the company's alumni. They

were thrown a retirement party and given a gold watch. I attended some as a kid and I always thought it odd to be given a watch. To my way of thinking, being retired meant you can do whatever you want, whenever you want. Time doesn't matter, so why the watch? Cash money seemed like a better fit.

When we weren't hunting or shooting, we were reading about it and that's why every house had a subscription to one of the “Big Three.” Bobby's family got *Field & Stream*, we got *Outdoor Life* and Jim's dad got *Sports Afield*. When we were all done reading an issue, we'd swap. Talking about what we read was a perfect way to kill time in a duck blind or in a bass boat.



Parker Bros. shotguns were no longer being manufactured when *Guns Magazine* was founded in 1955.



Unlike its “hook and bullet” competitors, **GUNS** has been 100% about shooting in every aspect from hunting to gunsmithing.

A lot of us New Englanders are a little slow to come about to the “latest, greatest,” and this stubbornness held true to the launching of two new companies. Bill Ruger and his partner Alexander McCormick Sturm launched their company not far away in Southport, Conn. They rocked the gun world with their Ruger Standard pistol, a cross between a Luger and a Colt Woodsman.

The semi-automatic was priced for working class Americans and its sales catapulted the company to success so much so that by the time I came around, Ruger was as accepted as any other.

Then there was the launch of a monthly publication called *Guns Magazine*. The inaugural issue of what you’re holding in your hands hit newsstands in January 1955. If you started partying to celebrate Ruger’s 75th birthday in 2024 then keep on rolling because 2025 marks *Guns Magazine*’s 70th birthday.

Bobby’s dad got a subscription when *Guns* first came out and by the time I saw it, he had quite a stack. His dad kept every one because it had a uniqueness maintained to this day. The original issues I remember had themes ranging from The Wild West to military history to large-scale firearm companies and individuals



For 70 years — starting with this cover — *GUNS Magazine* has continued to publish its monthly magazine while adding digital and social media channels.

who excelled in the industry. Where else could you read about Doc Holliday and Dirty Harry but in the September 1972 issue of *Guns* and get a shotgun review by Claire F. Rees on the launch of the Ithaca Model 51 semi-automatic? I guess we can consider Holliday a shotgunner. He did carry a 10-gauge side-by-side with a sawed-off stock and barrels under his coat at some corral in Arizona.

Most of the firearm companies in the Connecticut River Valley have closed their doors or moved to a state with better tax incentives and a more gun-friendly attitude. The Big Three have gone in and out of the publishing

business, but none are the same as they once were. But like Sturm-Ruger Inc., *Guns Magazine* has a winning recipe that forges ahead with monthly print magazines reaching 1.6 million readers worldwide.

One key business principle is “Always innovate” and *Guns Magazine* did with its digital and social footprint. Before you close out reading this issue, be sure to raise a glass to Brent and his team. Because of them, we’re allowed to work on a title celebrating its 70th anniversary in style while keeping an eye on the future. Happy birthday, *Guns Magazine*. I’m proud to add a little of my own patina to a world-class title. **GUNS**

THE SEMMERLING LM-4

THIS WELL-MADE RARITY ONCE DEFINED “POCKET POWERHOUSE”

Payton Miller

It isn't often someone gets to shoot a newly introduced pistol, then lives long enough to see it become an ultra-rare, high-dollar collectible.

The shooter — somewhat clumsily referenced above — was me, a newly minted “associate editor” for a well-known Southern California-based gun magazine. The time? Late 1978 if memory serves.

SHORT-RUN SHOOTER

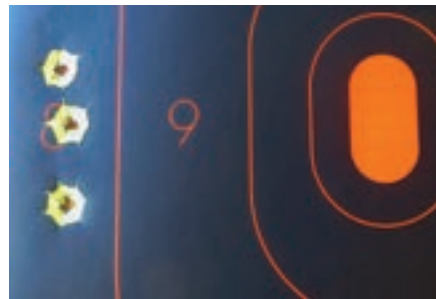
The gun? A .45 ACP Semmerling LM-4 — a unique curiosity with a production life spanning the years 1979 to the early 1990s. It was then produced on a limited basis until 2003 by American Derringer.

A little over 45 years later, I got to shoot one again. But setting my more recent experience aside for a bit, let's try to shed a little light on the LM-4.

First, the obvious: The LM-4 is a magazine-fed, locked-breech, manually operated big-bore pistol bearing a superficial resemblance to an auto-loader, which it is most certainly not. It was conceived by its designer Philip R. Lichtman as a powerful backup/concealed carry piece for anyone not altogether satisfied with the power level of a snub-nosed .38.

In its day, the LM-4 was easily the most eye-catching item I can recall. Dimensionally, it has a 5.2" overall length, a 3.45" barrel, a width of just under an inch and a 3.7" height. When carrying its full complement of 4+1 rounds of 230-grain hardball, the weight is right at 24 oz. — obviously a dramatic weight-to-power ratio.

The LM-4 (“LM” standing for Lichtman Model) is very solid and well-made, built from S-7 tool steel and comprising only 33 parts with screws included. Simply put, it feels bigger than it is.



At 50 feet, the LM-4 shot considerably leftward in a vertical pattern, although that's probably well in excess of the distance the pistol would likely be employed at.

RUN AND GUN

You cycle it by pushing the slide forward a little over an inch or so to eject the empty, and then flick it back into battery and chamber a fresh round. This can be accomplished with the thumb of the support hand, although this method requires practice



The LM-4 was — and is — a hand-operated handful of a .45 ACP delivery system.

to perform efficiently. Because empties are ejected from the right side, cycling the gun via the support-hand thumb would be a problematic technique for left-handed shooters.

But for the right-handed thumb-cycling, combined with a considerable amount of felt recoil, pretty much makes a two-handed hold mandatory. On a personal note, I don't recall the recoil from my long-ago range date with the LM-4 as being as, well ... brisk as it seemed recently. Age does have its drawbacks!

Besides recoil, rarity is the operative word here. Around 600 LM-4s were built originally by the Semmerling Corporation of Boston, Mass. The fact the pistol was essentially



GO HARD

The LM-4 is stamped "Std. Mil. Spec. Ctg. Only" to indicate 230-grain hardball is the only recommended load for the pistol — no JHPs, wadcutters or semi-wadcutters need apply. Ours was "white box" Winchester USA, as always an excellent choice.

I must admit those hard-chromed fixed sights, although adequate for the gun's emergency defensive purpose, weren't as easy or as quick to acquire as the matte black ones I remember from long ago.

Shooting at 50 feet gave us 3-shot groups in the 2.25" range though the gun shot several inches to the left. The main impediments to shootability were a heavy, horrendously long and spongy trigger and, as you might imagine, the recoil.

Besides limited production and cost, what may have also curtailed the success of the LM-4 was the fact that by the late 1970s there were a couple of seriously abbreviated .45 autos by way of competition — notably the Star PD and the Detonics. However, strictly in terms of sheer reliability, the hand-cycled Semmerling was a somewhat better bet than many micro-compact .45 autos of the era.

Although Phillip Lichtman passed away in 2017, his LM-4 stands as a sought-after, one-of-a-kind artifact that defined — literally — the concept of "power in a small package." **GUNS**

handmade is reflected in the low monthly production numbers, something in the neighborhood of 10 per calendar, as well as the price — a relatively whopping \$645 by the early 1980s. If this doesn't sound all that exorbitant by today's standards, consider the fact the price tag translates to around \$3,011 in 2024 dollars.

But the real-world value of currently-available specimens dwarfs the figure by a considerable margin. It can range from \$6,500 to well beyond \$10K, while those made by American Derringer generally go for less. Obviously it's a "they ain't making no more of 'em" item for the truly committed. Which would leave me out, I'm afraid. I couldn't have afforded one back in the day and certainly not now.

The LM-4 was produced with either a matte black, polished blued or satin hard chrome finish. Our particular shooting specimen — courtesy of shooter/collector David Arredondo — was chromed, featuring black checkered plastic grip panels.

Incidentally, the LM-4 was originally offered with an optional skeletonized "thin grip" kit for carry, which allowed for a visual round count, but I was by no means unhappy we didn't have one for our gun. The recoil was impressive enough with what we had, and shooting it recently managed to jar loose some long-ago memories from my first experience with the gun.

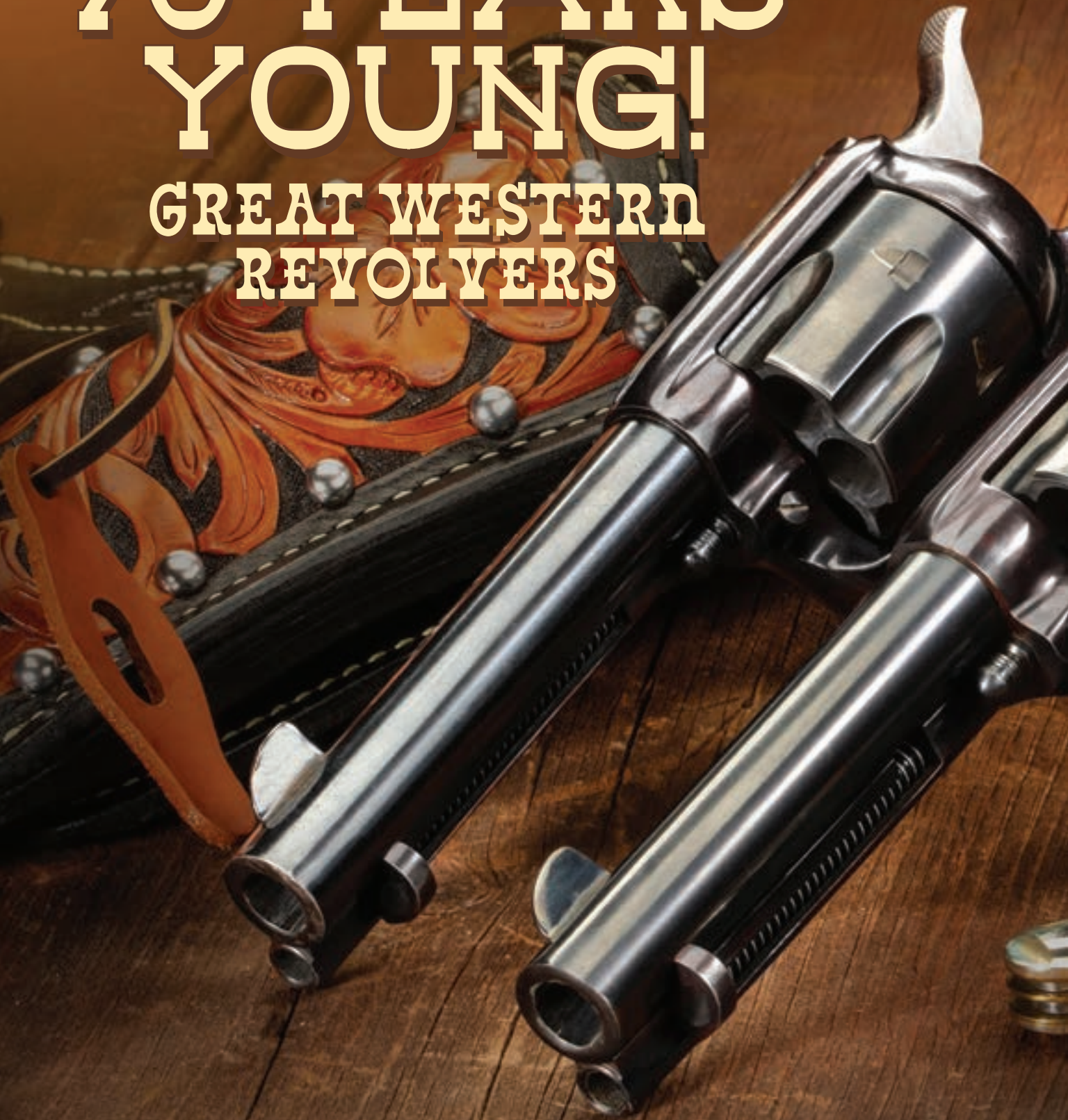


The magazine is removed by pinching both sides at the base and pulling down. Speed reloads are pretty much out of the question! Magazine capacity is four rounds of .45 ACP hardball.



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GUNS MAGAZINE'S HISTORIC JOURNEY

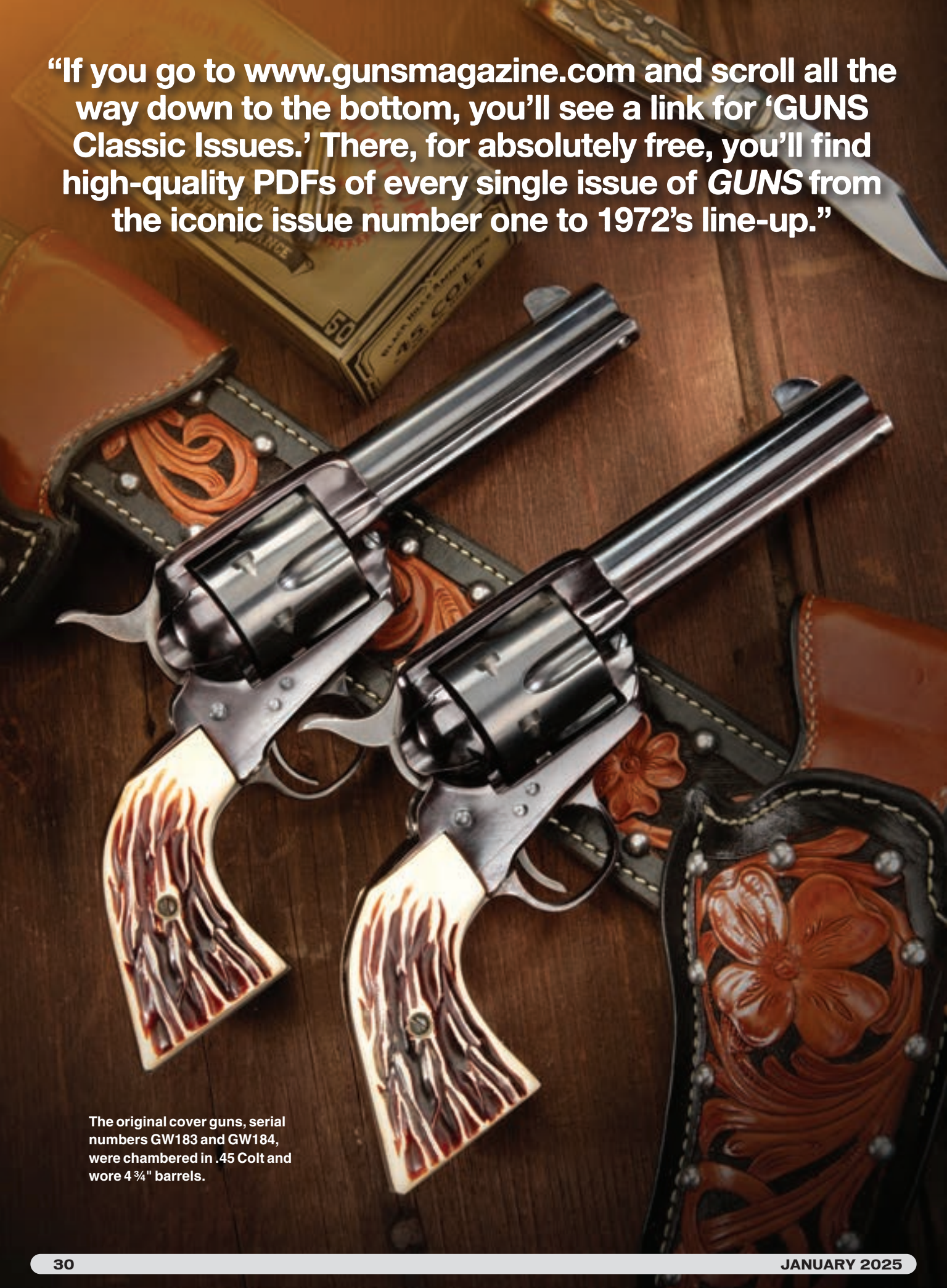


Roy Huntington • Photos: Rob Jones/Imagesmith LLC

I'm not sure what it means, but I turned 70 the same year *GUNS* turned 70. How's that again? I know ... I know ... but I'm in good company. As we all here at FMG take a look back, I thought it'd be fun to indulge in a light-hearted look at the decades we've all lived through. We hope you have a great caper reading this issue and I promise you'll love the old ads!

But first, to help paint a picture of how we all got where we are today, just a tiny bit of history is in order. That sort of thing helps to put things in the proper perspective about why and how we do the things we do today; how the industry, the guns and the all-important human elements have all changed through the years. We're truly the sum of all the parts of our lives and I know I speak for everyone here when I say

“If you go to www.gunsmagazine.com and scroll all the way down to the bottom, you’ll see a link for ‘GUNS Classic Issues.’ There, for absolutely free, you’ll find high-quality PDFs of every single issue of *GUNS* from the iconic issue number one to 1972’s line-up.”

A photograph of two Colt revolvers with custom grips and decorative holsters. The revolvers are positioned diagonally across the frame, with their barrels pointing towards the top right. The grips are made of a light-colored material with a dark, wavy pattern. The holsters are black with orange and brown decorative patterns, including floral and scrollwork designs. The background is a dark wooden surface. A box of .45 Colt ammunition is visible in the upper left corner.

The original cover guns, serial numbers GW183 and GW184, were chambered in .45 Colt and wore 4¾" barrels.

we're proud to continue to be a part of that — for 70 years now!

IN THE BEGINNING ...

George von Rosen started a small company in 1938 called Publishers' Development Corporation. It wasn't a magazine, but a business helping existing magazines with mailing lists, renewals and promotions. But von Rosen — GVR, as he was known — soon had the magazine bug bite for the firearms industry and in early 1955 started a business-to-business magazine called *Shooting Goods Dealer* geared toward the shooting industry. It later became today's popular *Shooting Industry Magazine*, known throughout the outdoors industry.

But the real magic occurred when GVR realized the high level of interest in guns among his consumer magazine readers. Magazines like *Argosy* and others would sometimes publish a gun article and readers would invariably respond wanting more. At that time, there wasn't a dedicated newsstand gun magazine in existence. GVR soon solved this problem by launching *GUNS Magazine* in January 1955, the world's first consumer magazine all about guns. It was available on newsstands and by subscription. GVR's experience helping other magazines paid off in launching *GUNS*. Other publishers paid close attention and *GUNS* was followed over the years by other magazines catering to shooters.

Following the market, staffers at PDC (also known as Firearms Marketing Group, FMG, now) and *GUNS Magazine* noticed a real interest in handguns. From hunting and collecting to target shooting, competition, surplus and more, readers made it clear they wanted to read about handguns of all sorts. Even though nay-sayers in the industry said it'd never fly, PDC launched *American Handgunner* in Sept/Oct 1976 and it was a huge success from the first issue. Both *GUNS* and *American Handgunner* have continued to lead the way, showcasing what's new, classics, hunting, target shooting, collecting, personal defense, shotguns,



rifles and you name it. We've become known for high quality writing and terrific photos, thanks to a string of memorable photographers who have graced our pages.

In 1978, PDC pulled up stakes, moved from Skokie, IL to San Diego, CA and found a home there. *GUNS* is still based in the San Diego area, although in today's business world, staffers are located around the country.

PAST ISSUES

To look through the pages of *GUNS Magazine* over the decades is to look at the history of our shooting culture and indeed, of America. If you go to www.gunsmagazine.com and scroll all the way down to the bottom, you'll see a link for "GUNS Classic Issues." There, for absolutely free, you'll find high-quality PDFs of every single issue of *GUNS* from the iconic issue number one to 1972's line-up. If you haven't taken advantage of this, do not pass Go but get right on it. Trust me when I say it's a huge rabbit hole and you won't be able to stop. You'll soon find yourself saying, "Oh gosh, I remember those ads!" and "Hey, I had one of those when I was a kid!"

From the first issue, *GUNS* grabbed the stars and kept them. Sorry to name-drop, but I have to! This reads like a Who's Who of the shooting world, from the old days to the now. Keep in mind this is only a partial list. If many of the names sound familiar, it's because they laid the groundwork for today's industry. I do wonder though, what they'd have thought of the term "influencer" tossed about these days. These guys lived the life, hunted the hunt, invented the techniques we use today, developed the loads, cartridges and helped drive the industry with their writing.

Repeat after me — Elmer Keith, J.B. Wood, Charles Askins, Skeeter Skelton, Jeff Cooper, Col. Rex Applegate, Maj. George Nonte, Mas Ayoob, Jim Carmichel, Clair Reese, James Triggs (James did those marvelous detailed paintings of guns, often showcased as covers), E.B. Mann and even Grits Gresham! I could go on and on and if you've got a bit of grey in your mustache, you'd nod your head at seeing each name. We truly do stand on the shoulders of some greats.

But let's not forget some of the icons gracing our pages in the past few years.

GUNS[®]

MAGAZINE



Great Western 70th Gear List

Holsters: Mernickle Fully Carved High-Performance System

Ammo: Black Hills .45 Colt 250-grain RNFP

Knife: Rough Rider Classic Cinnamon Bone Stag



It's hard to tell from Rob Jones' exquisite pictures but Great Western frames were actually plum-purple on the frames and ejector rods.

“A key thing to remember about our magazines and digital content is each article, each video, each online post is discussed, vetted and edited by one or more of the team here at FMG.”





According to Elmer Keith, the Great Western Single Action he reviewed was "... very poorly timed, fitted, and showed a total lack of final inspection." But later he wrote, "We are happy to report Great Western has really gotten on the ball."

How about John Taffin, Dave Anderson, J.D. Jones, Mark Hampton, Mike "Duke" Venturino, Jeff "Tank" Hoover, Will Dabbs, Holt Bodinson, Frank Jardim, Dave Workman, Payton Miller, Pat Covert, Wayne van Zwoll — shall I go on?

TODAY?

GUNS and *Handgunner* broke new ground in the late 1980s, finding Ichiro Nagata and his genius behind the lens. It changed the way guns were photographed and left competitors scrambling to keep up. GVR's son, Tom von Rosen, took over when GVR retired and led the company through both challenging and good times. The single thing remaining clearly in my mind about Tom (or TVR as we all

called him) was his unfailing dedication to our readers. They came first, and our content, customer service and even the quality of the paper the magazines were printed on, were all of paramount importance to him. In spite of the fact TVR passed away some years ago, his mantra continues and during meetings invariably someone will say, "Is this good for our readers?"

Do take a few minutes and read the article on the two original Great Western revolvers appearing on the first cover of *Guns* in 1955. John Taffin took them and had them restored and tuned to perfection, then shot them for a feature article. It was great to see them come to life once again and are proof our magazine's roots run deep.

I like to call those two guns a bit of living history.

THE FUTURE?

We'll keep it up, I assure you. With so many new guns constantly being introduced, new calibers, accessories, optics, loading supplies, new technologies, hunting opportunities and so much more seeing the light of day, we'll keep up with the crush for you. A key thing to remember about our magazines and digital content is each article, each video, each online post is discussed, vetted and edited by one or more of the team here at FMG. No man is an island and it's teamwork that keeps us enthused and excited about what the next issue will bring.

We hope you continue to feel the same way!

GUNS



GUNS[®] MAGAZINE 1955 - 2025

On the occasion of our 70th birthday, *GUNS Magazine* would like to take our loyal readers on a short trip down memory lane to look at the stories and advertisements that made this magazine such a significant chronicle of firearms and shooting through the years.

While compiling this special section, I often found myself sitting back to reminisce, not only about the guns I owned – or wanted desperately to buy – but all the adventures and enjoyment shooting sports has brought. These old stories, names and advertisements took me back to the smell of burned powder hanging in the still morning air the first time I successfully bagged a squirrel, the curmudgeonly advice heard at countless gun counters or drinking lousy coffee on the cold morning of a hot shooting match. There were literally countless others, all inspired by smears of ink on a page.

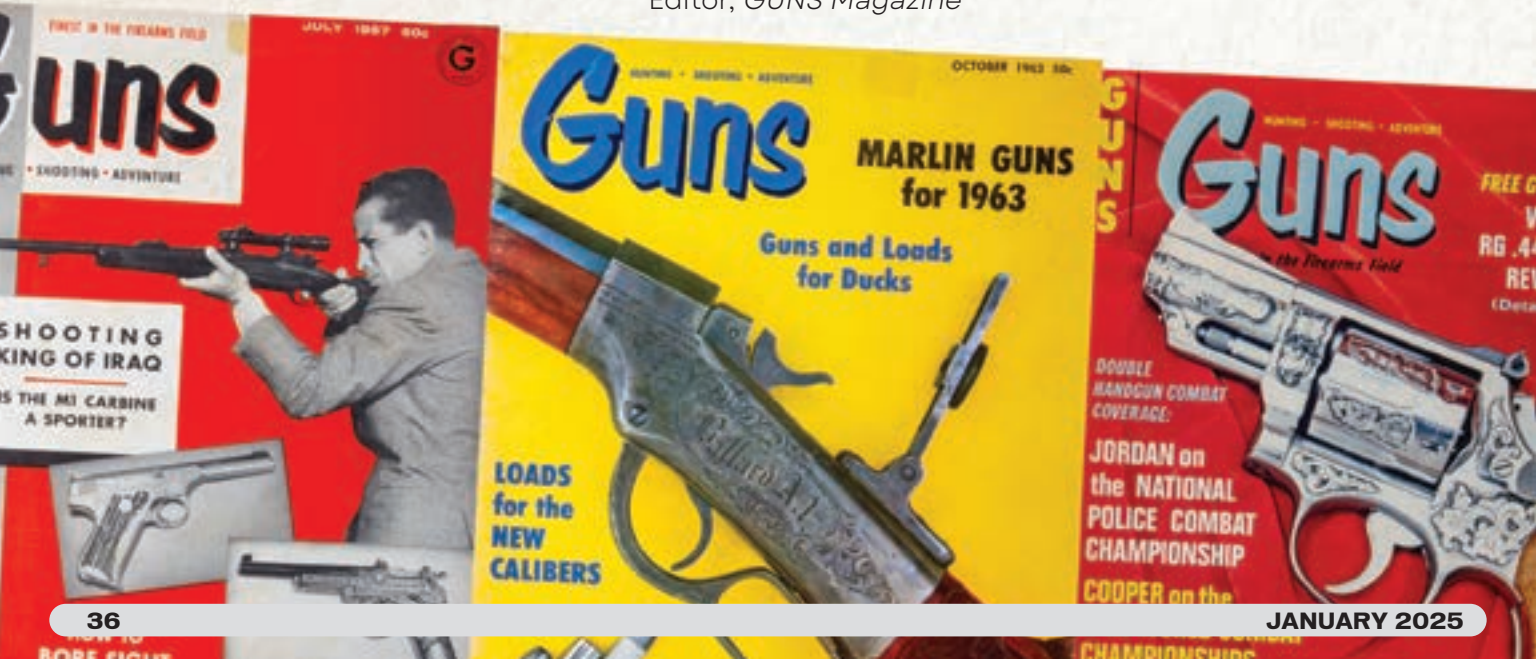
My hope is these images and words will help the reader do likewise. These old pages of *GUNS Magazine*, many forgotten but still valuable, are really a time machine and I hope you can hitch a pleasant ride.

Your Faithful Correspondent,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brent T. Wheat'.

Brent T. Wheat

Editor, *GUNS Magazine*





Tools of the trade: From blue pens and rubber cement, to slides, to digital cameras and CDs and ending on the internet, magazine publishing technology has changed but the key element — good stories — remains constant.

“THESE OLD PAGES OF GUNS MAGAZINE, MANY FORGOTTEN BUT STILL VALUABLE, ARE REALLY A TIME MACHINE AND I HOPE YOU CAN HITCH A PLEASANT RIDE.”



1950s



The cover of the July 1957 edition of *Guns* featured King Faisal II of Iraq, a noted shooting enthusiast. Unfortunately, he was murdered in a coup only one year after this story. Miss Douglass kept ruffians at bay and “the Woman who is my companion” safe on her Vermont farm with a Sentinel revolver.

The year 1955 was one of the more momentous in the 20th century. The Cold War was rapidly spiraling, Bill Haley rocked around the clock, Disneyland opened, the Dodgers beat the Yankees in the World Series and John Taffin was a senior in High School.

On the shooting front, Smith & Wesson introduced both the .357 Combat Magnum and the .44 Magnum while Colt brought out the .357 Python. Bill Ruger offered his first Blackhawk revolver in .357 and Brownells introduced Acraglas.

Meanwhile, a small publishing company started selling a new gun publication on the newsstand.

This was significant because it was the first time a gun-focused magazine was sold to the general public. Before 1955, if you wanted to read a “gun” magazine, you had to join the National Rifle Association and receive one of their fine publications. Other magazines such as *Outdoor Life* or *Field & Stream* included shooting information but it wasn’t their sole reason for being. If you wanted firearms content, *GUNS Magazine* was your only option.

Now, 70 years later, many other publications have come and gone. At the turn of the latest century, cell phones became ubiquitous and helped turn the internet into a central part of both our private and work lives, changing mass communication forever. Through it all, *GUNS* has stayed true to its mission of bringing the best gun stories to readers.



Check to verify accuracy for this magazine. It has a proven record of accuracy. Accuracy is the key to success. Accuracy is the key to success. Accuracy is the key to success.

Locally prepared with other food... (text is partially obscured)



By ALVIN C. BOWEN

“The man who is my companion”... (text is partially obscured)



I don’t see you... (text is partially obscured)

My original intent... (text is partially obscured)

GUNS ARE OUR PROTECTORS



Looking through Weaver K10 to double
K Alamo they double the action. Mauser,
Faisal II of Iraq taking aiming position.

The Shooting

IN HOT SPOT OF MIDDLE EAST, IRAQ'S KING FAISAL II
USES GUNS FOR SPOT. YOUNG MONARCH IS GOOD
ALL-AROUND SHOT WITH RIFLE, SHOTGUN, AND PISTOL

Among other in Iraq, King's interest of
arms is 1917 Remington-Union which
belonged to his father, King Faisal I.



THE KING WITH HIS
1917 REMINGTON
UNION RIFLE
AS HE PREPARED
FOR THE SHOOTING.



BY WILLIAM E. EDWARDS

King of Iraq



GUNS ARE instruments of peace, not
war, in the hands of King Faisal II
of Iraq. For through his love interest
in guns and all the shooting sports,
Faisal maintains the closest personal
contact with a better understanding
of, and the beautiful feelings for the
people of the United States. And
wherever he goes, he speaks for the
people through his sports and
shooting skills and personality
which makes his contribution.

Being a highly critical person
and in the Near East, that is
strongly called Iraq, this young
prince, King Faisal II of Iraq, is
the first man in the world to hold
prize of war trophies. He is the
only man who has won the Gold
and West. He has, Faisal has
made. The West, he understands,
contribution to the English part, con-
tributed to Western ideals and to the
idea of small nations to achieve inde-
pendence. Faisal also knows something
of the West's work. For Faisal is a
hunter, a trap and shoot shooter, a
rifleman and a good shooter. In plain
American, Faisal is a gun fan, and
was he indeed, transported from his
delicious palace and set down
here by his father, he is an Ameri-
can sportsman who would be proud
to compete at any.

Through his habits, Faisal has come
to know more about America and
Americans than many foreign visitors
who have made the same short vis-
its. This is good, for Americans
have always been greatly interested in
the welfare and politics of this new
nation known as the "Land of Eden."
And American interest in the past, as
well, has been maintained by sending
American guns to Eastern princes.

It was quite a coup to interview for *GUNS* the King of Iraq. A coup one year later didn't go so well for King Faisal II.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE: JULY 1957

Just two and half years after the first issue, *GUNS* was full of advertising and international stories. The cover of the July 1957 issue featured a profile of shooting enthusiast King Faisal II of Iraq. It's amazing to think a "mere" gun magazine could have an audience with such an important world figure to discuss his love of shooting. Even so, it's hard not to roll your eyes at the hyperbolic first sentence: "Guns are the emissaries of peace, not war, in the hands of King Faisal II of Iraq." The king would be murdered in a coup only a year later.

Another interesting story is about Ruth C. Douglass, a .22 pistol-packin' mama who kept ruffians and varmints at bay on the farm she shared with "The woman who is my companion." This sentence undoubtedly raised an eyebrow or two in 1957. Opposite the Table of Contents, "Top-Name Comedian" Jerry Lewis is bragging about his guns, including his .357 used by Chicago Police Detectives "to kill three crooks." Society, and our stars, have certainly changed!

On the advertising front, companies such as the Hollywood Fast Draw Holster Company, Stoeger, Pachmayr Gun Works and Hoppes were buying small ads while the only full-page firearms ads came from Hi-Standard and Firearms International Corp.

Certainly the most heartbreaking reminder of the old days are those breathless listings of mail-order military surplus guns. On the back page, Golden Star Arms Corp. of Pasadena, Calif. — it certainly was a different time — sold 7mm Mauser surplus bolt actions for \$19.95, plus \$1 for 20 rounds of ammo. A 1901 7mm Remington rolling block rifle would be purchased for \$14.95 while British No. 1 Mark III rifles in "Guaranteed Good Condition" were offered for only \$21.95! If they would only invent a time machine ...

Need a 7MM Remington Rolling Block? You could order one through the mail for \$14.95. How about a Colt Government Model shipped to your door for \$39.95?

7MM MAUSER CARBINES
Guaranteed Good Condition \$19.95

8MM MANNLICHER RIFLE . . . \$27.50
Favorable 37" Sporting Length Barrel

SMITH & WESSON .38 REVOLVER
\$29.95

7MM REMINGTON ROLLING BLOCK RIFLE
\$14.95

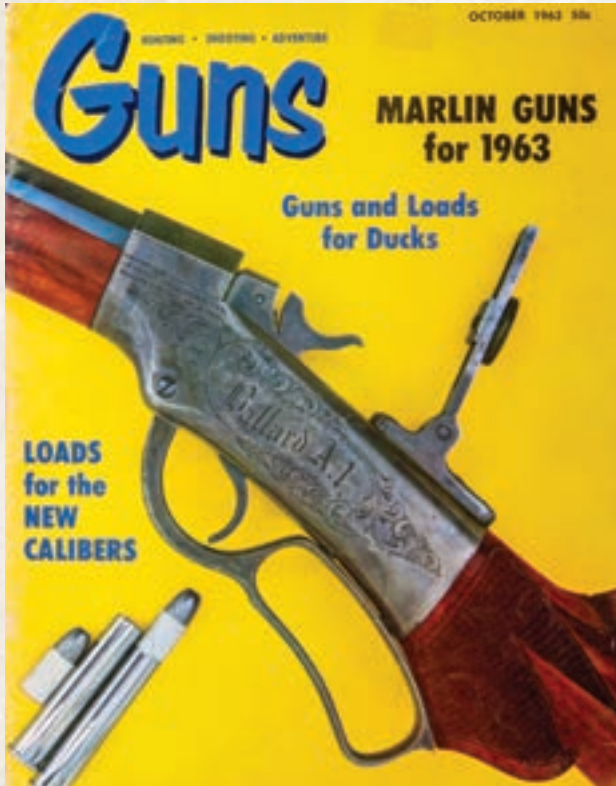
.45 COLT AUTOMATICS \$39.95

ANTIQUE 8MM REMINGTON ROLLING BLOCK RIFLE \$12.95

GUARANTEED GOOD CONDITION \$21.95

GUNSMAGAZINE.COM

1960s



Eight years after *Guns* first debuted, the magazine was full of ads and focused primarily on hunting. The cover was a spectacular Ballard A1 rifle. The “Great Western” influence was readily apparent in the ‘60s.

Peace, love, war, assassination and the Beatles ruled this decade. To say the 1960s was a time of turmoil is similar to saying Donald Trump “occasionally” gets involved in controversy. Vietnam was rapidly ramping up, the Civil Rights movement gained full steam, riots swept the country, the Great Society programs aimed to fix poverty and people kept shooting political leaders. Kids were advised to “Tune in, turn on and drop out” as hippies roamed the landscape in their tie-dyed uniform. This was a visible reminder of the great Culture War sweeping every town, where concerns about the length of your hair sometimes often resulted in serious argument if not an actual beating.

On the gun front, one of the most pivotal moments was the adoption of the M16 in 1964, replacing the M14, which had only been issued since 1959. However, arguably the top shooting story of the decade had to be the passage of the Gun Control Act (GCA) of 1968. Prompted by the slaying of President Kennedy by a mail-order rifle, even the NRA Vice-President Franklin Orth supported parts of the legislation banning purchase of guns via the mail. Other important parts of the GCA include requirement for placing serial numbers on all guns and the federal licensing of firearms dealers. Meanwhile, if you wanted to get involved in “serious” self-defense shooting, there was some group of guys out shooting in the California

HOLLYWOOD, AND TODAY'S NEW FAST DRAW COMPETITORS HAVE DEVELOPED NEW RIGS AND NEW METHODS, BUT THE FACT IS THAT

Old Timers Wore 'em High

By WILLIAM BRENT

THE OLD WESTERN gunner, writer and hunter alike, wear their guns in almost every conceivable manner—except one: the way the movie and television cowboys wear theirs, on a so-called cowboy belt, with the gun hung low and the holster slung to the left.

For me, growing up with the film-land tradition—I worked in the Hollywood factories myself for a number of years—and if the makers think these films are old pieces, I guess no harm is done. But let's not confuse fiction with facts.

The old timers never saw or heard of such rigs, much less wore them. I have examined many of the old pistol holsters and belts, including the ones that were used by Pat Garrett's, and they were all pretty much alike—nothing fancy or elaborate, just a fairly well-constructed leather receptacle to carry a handgun so it wouldn't fly out during a horse ride, and a belt that stretched through a holsters loop.

City in the early twenties to interview Pat Baker, and he asked a lot of questions. One of those questions was, "What about the importance of the fast draw?"

"Well, never seen your faster with their hands than mine," Dad told him. "But the ones I knew and worked with figured that this meant little or nothing.

"In the fast draw, if an outlaw knew he was walking into serious trouble, he took precautions—like covering his gun in his hand. He'd be a damn fast, if he didn't."

"Sound familiar? It should. This is exactly the way our modern police officers work.

"In a law to face fight," Dad went on, "when you had to kill or be killed, you 'wade' faster slowly" in pulling your pistol, unconcerning nobody, not getting that first ball into your man where it would do the most good. If you believed yourself to be the better man—and you'd better have—well, you'd be the better man—and you'd better have your holsters, or get into a few hazardous situations—

Author (top and top right) with gun carried by his father, James Brent, who was Pat Garrett's deputy during the Billy the Kid days. In group: Garrett (left), Brent (center), and John W. Fox, another Garrett deputy. Picture taken (1884)

Baker: Picture Garrett and Brent called a good likeness of Billy the Kid. For different than picture widely published.

Garrett (pulled his gun forward—too forward, for the trigger hit prematurely) and the bullet plowed into the ground at Leta's feet. Garrett's second shot—making sure slowly—did the job, though. It struck Leta in the shoulder, putting him out of action. Then, so fast as anybody knows, was Pat Garrett's last attempt at the fast draw.

The Brent's gun was a .44 Colt single action Frontier

“SOCIETY WAS IN LITERAL UPHEAVAL BUT **GUNS MAGAZINE PROVIDED A BEACON OF STABILITY BY FOCUSING ON WHAT UNITED SHOOTERS RATHER THAN WHAT SEPARATED THEM.**”

desert that included unknowns named Cooper, Reed, Carl, Weaver, Chapman and others.

Society was in literal upheaval but *GUNS Magazine* provided a beacon of stability by focusing on what united shooters rather than what separated them.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE: OCTOBER 1963

By this point, *GUNS* was well on its way to becoming the pre-eminent shooting magazine on newsstands though other upstart publications were nipping at its heels. On the cover of the October 1963 issue was a Ballard A1, a target rifle produced from 1861 to 1888. Hunting was one of the main subjects covered throughout the magazine with stories such as “Choosing A Guide,” “No Magnums For Muley’s” and “Handguns For Small Game.” If you peruse the pages, the Old West mystique was also clearly alive and well.

On the advertising front, the magazine was full of ads for everything from scopes to anti-tank weapons.

By 1963, all the major gun manufacturers were represented, but the best ads were undoubtedly contained in a three-page section awkwardly named “World’s Greatest Collection of America’s Greatest Shooter’s Bargains,” which featured Enfields for \$14.95 and S&W .455 Webley revolvers for \$39.95.

However, if you were in the market for something with a little more firepower, you could also purchase a 20mm Finnish Lahti Anti-Tank Rifle for only \$99.95, while a 25mm Hotchkiss Cannon would set you back \$125. Of course, if you were on a budget, you could pick up a Chinese 60mm mortar for \$29 or a U.S. M1938 mortar for only \$19.95 — so inexpensive, you should buy an extra one for the kids! Of course, in only five short years from the publication date, gun buying would get infinitely more complicated with passage of the GCA. **GUNS**

Imagine being able to order any of these guns direct, without a trip to an FFL. The prices still bring a tear to the eye of many collectors!

WORLD'S LARGEST COLLECTION OF AMERICA'S GREATEST SHOOTERS' BARGAINS

U.S. ARMY MODEL 1917 Col. 2006 **ONLY \$29.95!**

U.S. SPRINGFIELD Col. 2006 **ONLY \$39.95!**

ENFIELD NO. 1 MK II Col. 200 **ONLY \$14.95!**

IMPROVED MAG TORREY Col. 7.03 Number **ONLY \$34.95!**

WORLD WAR II GERMAN MODEL 98K MAUSERS! Col. 8mm Mauser **ONLY \$29.95!**

MODEL 42 (JAP. MAUSER) Col. 7mm **ONLY \$34.95!**

GERMAN MADE MAUSER CARTRIDGE Col. 8mm **ONLY \$34.95!**

GERMAN MADE ROSSING MAUSERS! Col. 8mm **ONLY \$19.95!**

AMMUNITION SPECIALS !!

GERMAN PISTOLE MODEL '08 THE "WORLD'S GREATEST PISTOL!" Col. 9MM **ONLY \$39.95!**

STAR MODEL B1 (BRAND NEW! NEW! NEW! BRAND NEW!) Col. 9MM **ONLY \$44.95!**

ULTRA RARE MODEL 194 Col. 9MM Parabellum **ONLY \$59.95!**

NOW! THE EXOTIC RARE ARTILLERY MODEL! Col. 12MM **ONLY \$79.95!**

CZECH M27 .32 AUTOMATIC! Col. 32 ACP **ONLY \$24.95!**

HUNGARIAN M37 AUTOMATIC! Col. 32 ACP **ONLY \$24.95!**

BROWNING .38 Col. 38 S&P **ONLY \$24.95!**

S&W .455 WEBLEY Col. 455 **ONLY \$39.95!**

SMITH & WESSON .475 REVOLVER Col. 475 **ONLY \$29.95!**

WORLD & MOTT ME 10 REVOLVERS! Col. 455 **ONLY \$14.95!**

SMITH COMMAND REVOLVERS! Col. 455 **ONLY \$14.95!**

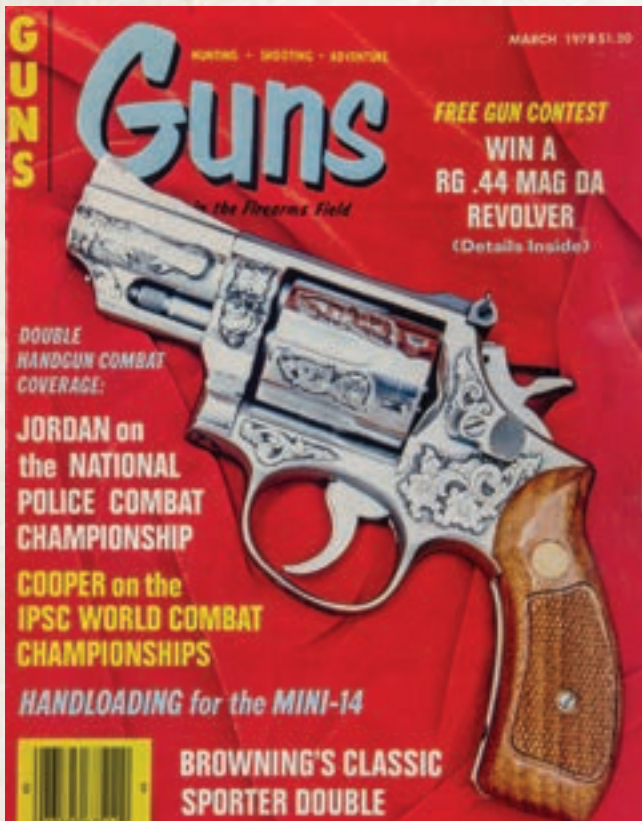
SWISS ARMY REVOLVER Col. 455 **ONLY \$15.95!**

RUSSIAN WAGNER REVOLVER! Col. 455 **ONLY \$14.95!**

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41

1970s



Ahhh, the '70s — disco, environmentalism, Water-gate, energy crisis and the “Me Decade.” Back in Indiana, a certain future editor of *GUNS* could occasionally be seen in his denim three-piece suit, platform shoes and pukka beads headed to the Junior High dance. He looked good but never worked up the nerve to ask Judy The Cheerleader to dance ...

The 1970s was like the Sunday-morning hangover to the 1960s. Things generally calmed down, people turned more inward while longing for a little stability and calm after the non-stop strife of the previous 10 years. Though there were some notable clunkers, television, films and popular music produced some of the greatest works of all time. The Cold War was still hot but the Soviets were running out of steam, which is fortunate since we eventually elected one of the nicest but most ineffective presidents of all time, Jimmy Carter.

Technology was starting to change our lives. Microwave ovens became a common feature of homes, video games likewise, while personal computers were starting to appear in offices. Some aging hippies named Jobs and Wozniak formed a company named Apple as the Sony Walkman redefined how people on the go listened to music.

On the firearms front, guns took a definite turn toward tactical. The Ingram MAC-10 appeared in the 1970s and then in every single movie about drug dealers thereafter

The '70s were the start of the “Golden Age” of magazines. Advertising dollars were much bigger, staffs were larger and even the magazines themselves had more pages.

(Left) Col. Jeff Cooper did indeed write for many different magazines, including *GUNS*. During the '70s, the “Guns Magazine Sweepstakes” (below) was impressive — three first prizes and 90-second prizes!



HOW TO GET STARTED IN SILHOUETTE SHOOTING



The silhouette shooter and his basic equipment. An accurate rifle, a good scope and comfortable, casual clothing allows for the sliding of clothes over various silhouettes.

By WES BLAIN

Silhouette shooting combines the precision of long-range riflery, the challenge of the difficult silhouetted target, and the fun of a good hunt. It's fun, but it's also a sport that has become increasingly popular in the United States. Without a doubt, silhouette shooting is the latest growing shooting sport in the country and one can expect that within a few years there will be full-fledged ranges in every state.

Silhouette shooting originated in Mexico where it is called "Sikatan Mexicano." A number of years ago, the owners discovered the sport, but it was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that it became a major sport.

11" x 12" are shot at 200 yards. Five are fired at 300 yards and measure 14 x 17". Turkey, which many shooters consider the most difficult target, are fired at a long 300 yards and this target is only 19" by 22". At 300 yards one fires at a sheep silhouette measuring 20" x 32".

The course of fire in this state is 2-1-2-1-2-1. Depending upon your rifle you may start shooting at the top or when you see a red dot that you have the right string for each range.

At best the shooting is tough. Wind conditions can make a lot of difference, but considering the small size of the targets. For example during the 1976 National Championship held at the Three Points Range in Tucson, Arizona, Major Lance Wigot Jr., was declared winner with a score of 66 hits out of 100 shots. 60 shots were not fired because of sub-zero conditions on the range.

Last weekend on the Yakima, Washington silhouette range, being under adverse weather conditions my personal score was 33 out of a 60 shot match. The match was not scored only 17 hits. Assume that you hit 50% of the targets is going to be a top AA shooter.

On my first experience at shooting the fall silhouette course, I used only hunting equipment. My weapon of choice was a Remington-760 in .308 caliber. I had a 100 grain Remington-760 bullet pushed by 42 grains of 4064. I had a whole of a year, I didn't give the target face much to give up, but I learned a lot.

This is one shooting sport where you can walk out on the range with your best rifle (MANY DO), and have a much better chance on the next day. Your rifle based shooting partner may be using an M1 Garand and the gun on your left on ME. You are very uncomfortable if you hit the target. There were a few who carried a .308 and one up the range with a .308 and one up the range with a .308 and one up the range with a .308.

Here is what you need to get started in silhouette shooting. A rifle with preferably a good quality scope and between 50 and 100 yards of magnification. Most shooters prefer the 308 or 3006. My personal silhouette rifle and one that I recommend is a Remington 77 measuring 6.5mm Weaver 5.10 with a Weaver 5.10 with a Weaver 5.10 with a Weaver 5.10.



The silhouette position is strictly adhered to, increasing the difficulty and challenge of the game.

silhouette shooter under a minute of work, in a Canyon Model 771 set target. When using the set, one increases back time somewhat and this may not be advisable for inexperienced shooters.

Handguns are used by the majority of silhouette shooters. My personal preference is the Hornady 308 grain RTSP. Handgun of 308 grain of 308 and a 401 or 200 Primer. This load is used at the 200, 300 and 305 meter ranges, and was developed by the Army Marksmanship Unit at Ft. Benning Georgia. The 308 meter slugs target weight is at 360 pounds and takes a better point to hit target at 300. At this range, most 308 shooters use 4 to 100 bullet.

For the 300 meter range I use the Hornady 190 grain RTSP pushed by 42 grains of 4064. This is the long range load.

used in many members of the "hot" California team that regularly walks off with the NAC title at Camp Perry.

Other loads required to be extremely accurate are the 100 grain match bullet and 41 grains of 3080 or 42 grains of 4065. The 190 grain match bullet will give better than M18 accuracy with 40 grains of 4330 or 40 grains of 4065. Many of these loads are maximum loads so you should start a grain or two lower and build up gradually to see how your rifle handles them from both accuracy and pressure standpoint.

The most critical factor of silhouette shooting is the ability to easily change your sights from one to the next and to see that your sight will remain constant. For this factor one should have a quality scope that allows for quick and easy to be modified in this way to be modified in this way.

Most shooters use their own. Using the 100 grain of 3080 I find scope to get me right on (100 gr. bullet) 200 yards (100 gr. bullet) 300 yards (100 gr. bullet) 300 yards.

In rapping with other one I find that the popular above identical settings of Washington State silhouette level's and adjust over 24 gr. pushing a 100 grain bullet.



The Washington state shooter has a gold and a bronze State Championship trophy, he's got a fine all-around Wolf and a AA average load.

Competition was a big topic in the 1970s.

"THE '70S WERE LIKE A SUNDAY MORNING HANGOVER TO THE 1960S."

for a decade. Bill Ruger came out with the Mini-14 in 1973, which immediately gained a bad reputation as most of the guns could only hit the side of a barn if it were firing from the inside. It was a rare misstep for Ruger, the result of poor quality control and was later fixed. The Mossberg 590, a popular police shotgun, was introduced in 1975 and just so the hunters weren't forgotten, the Winchester Model 1300 shotgun was unveiled.

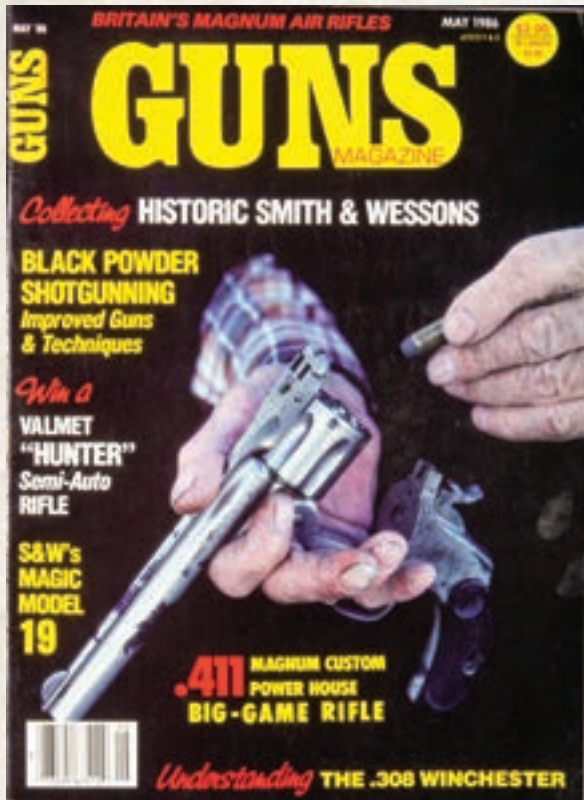
ABOUT THIS ISSUE: MARCH 1978

By 1978, GUNS had entered the golden age of shooting magazines. The magazine was filled with advertisements large and small, while the "Guns Magazine Sweepstakes" didn't offer just one first prize — it offered three! There were 90-second prizes and more guns than you could imagine. Elsewhere, the first inklings of the "tactical" revolution were being seen. This issue included coverage of the 1977 IPSC Combat Championships by Col. Jeff Cooper and a story on the National Police Combat Championships by Bill Jordan. The editorial mix is noticeably skewing toward self-defense topics and competition

shooting with virtually no mention of hunting and only a smattering of Old West guns.

On the advertising side, books were making a big appearance covering all sorts of mainstream and odd topics. One notable was a small advertisement of "Bodyguard and Mercenary Functions Provided — A Manual on Bodyguard, Assassination and Harassment Techniques." Unless you're a narcotics kingpin, we wonder why your bodyguard needs to know assassination and harassment technique but the information was available for \$4.95. Elsewhere, the advertising roster is a virtual Who's Who of gun and accessory manufacturers. Some notables include Winchester, Colt, Ruger, Don Hume, Reinhart Fajen Inc., Tyler's "T" Grip, Oehler Chronographs, MTM Casegard, Dixie Gun Works, Birchwood Casey, Weaver scopes, Lee Precision and many others. Of course, there was also a ubiquitous full-page ad for the "Learn Gun Repair" correspondence course from North American School of Firearms.

GUNS



The cover of the May 1986 issue (above) made it clear the magazine used non-professional photos for the cover. Otherwise, the layout and design was quite good. *GUNS* has always been known for not following mainstream trends as slavishly as other gun magazines. Below, an intro primer to black powder shotgunning is a good example.

Black Powder Shotgunning



Believe it or not, a black powder shotgun can perform on par with today's most modern smoothbores. Here's how to make it happen...

By Sam Fiedler

The first time I ever shot a black powder shotgun was in 1974, between a World War II... I did what I should have done in the first place. I patterned that black powder smokeless. I felt a little bit better about my shooting. Anyone who could consistently hit anything with these patterns would have to be called damned lucky, not damned good. The pattern had holes large enough to allow a goose free passage. And as for the distribution of shot, was not bad enough. The pattern covered enough surface at 40 yards to get holes in a house seven screens from corner to corner. Yes, I had to shoot 22 times to bag my first three mallards that first time out with the black powder side-by-side. But today's newspaper that on my second day I would see no more than two or six times to bag three birds. Many times I have taken three or three, and even seven for seven on ducks and 22 for 22 on doves. What happened? Just I got better! Not really. Just my shotgun did. The first point in understanding the black powder shotgun, and it's paramount to choosing the shotgun you want, is the fact that a cylinder bore, a black powder or smooth shotgun take. Want 40 percent patterns? Fine. Those 40 percent patterns could be easily forged using either

The 1980s were a great time if you were a conservative and/or a shooter. The buzzword of the 1980s was "the Preppy" and many people ran around in chinos, boat shoes and with turned up the collars on their Izod shirts. If you were a serious knob, you wore two Izod shirts with the collars turned up. You know who you were!

Ronald Regan was president and America suddenly woke up to the crazy idea that the U.S. Military was actually an important and honorable part of our country. On the social side, everyone wanted to be a Wolf of Wall Street and pretended to be a part-time bond trader while pining for a car phone of their own. Conspicuous consumption was "in" and simply being "good" wasn't good enough.

On the shooting side, I can summarize everything about the decade with two words — *Miami Vice*. The show was wildly popular and used current rock hits alongside an ever-changing panorama of sexy guns to stage the stylized weekly gunfights. Though the gun handling was pure Hollywood and cringeworthy, Crockett and Tubbs were probably the first TV detectives since *Starsky & Hutch* to affect gun sales. To this day, gun nerds — I'm talking to you, Dr. Will Dabbs — still get a gleam in their eye when they discuss Sonny's Bren Ten and his backup Detonics Pocket 9. The show also gave a major sales boost to Galco gun leather.

- 1) The first step in loading the black powder shotgun is pouring a measured powder charge down the bore. Film cameras are handy for holding pre-measured charges. To avoid double charging, load only one barrel at a time and insert the tin can cap in the other so you don't get mixed up.
- 2) Load the over-powder wad.
- 3) Load the wad (optional) and ram it home.
- 4) Load a measured shot charge.
- 5) Insert an over-shot wad.
- 6) Insert the ramrod to freely seat the charge after each wad is loaded. A loose wad could be disastrous.
- 7) Cap the nipple only after you have loaded both barrels and are ready to fire.

Patched round balls can be used for big game hunting. They are very often remarkably accurate.

However and many others noting that this made all of the difference in pellet distribution was back in the 19th century — we shoot in one of two things when we bring our muzzle-loading shotguns home from the gun store. The first (and best) is to have the gun cleaned. This means the jag choke, and it does work. I had a 40 percent wadmaker turned into a nearly 50 percent shotgun by one shot of the jag choke. Mr. Marvin Glass, who lives in answer letters but he will answer his phone at (800) 866-0887. If there's enough metal in

Both are the... I think choke is the most important aspect of shooting the black powder wadmaker. Picking

77/22™ Ruger Presents a New .22 Bolt-Action Rifle



And Ruger Design Leadership Makes it the World's Finest

ABOUT THIS ISSUE: MAY 1986

By the mid-1980s, significant changes had taken place in *GUNS*. The magazine embarked on a more modern layout, used thicker paper and had moved corporate offices to San Diego, Calif. from Skokie, Illinois. The editorial direction was much less about defensive shooting and competition as it had been during the mid-'70s and early '80s, and settled back toward a mix of general shooting topics with no single subject overly represented. This was the last decade for "Guns" versus the "GUNS" of today.

The cover still used a non-professional photography and the Gun of the Month was reduced to a two-page spread to highlight the monthly gun giveaway. Massad Ayoob retained his status as handgun editor, while Bill Jordan and Jeff Cooper seldom appeared

The Gun Market Classifieds (below) was still a robust section of the magazine. You could always find something "interesting" among the tiny ads. Oddly, the only full-page gun advertisement was from Sturm, Ruger and Co. (right) on the back page.

The first time you see the new Ruger 77/22™ bolt-action rifle, you'll agree it's an amazing .22 rifle, with the quality and precision you've always associated with the finest big-game rifles. The light weight, elegant lines, smooth mechanism, and outstanding accuracy of the 77/22™ will restore the pure pleasure of small-bore rifle shooting. This is the rifle that was made to inspire the pride of any experienced owner, and to prove again that Ruger stands for advanced design, superior performance, and exceptional value.

Specifications: Caliber/Ammunition: .22 Long Rifle; Barrel Length: 20"; Overall Length: 39½"; Sights: Gold Bead Front Sight and Adjustable Folding Leaf Rear Sight; Weight (without scope, magazine empty): 5 Lbs. Available with iron sights (Catalog No. 77-22S) with iron sights and one inch Ruger scope rings (Catalog No. 77-22RS), or plain barrel model without sights, but with one inch Ruger scope rings (Catalog No. 77-22R).



GUN MARKET

Classified ads \$45 per word per insertion (15¢ per word per insertion for 2nd insertion) including name and address of advertiser. Minimum charge \$10.00. Copy and name ads must be received with advance payment in advance. NO CASH ON DELIVERY. All ads will appear in the following issue. Please allow 4-6 weeks for each insertion. NO PROOF BILL BE FORWARDED. Please send your address and name. PLEASE NOTE: All ads are subject to change. Advertiser's name and address must be printed on all correspondence. Send 30¢ for a name. Send 50¢ for a name. Classified ads.

ACCESSORIES

AMMUNITION

BOOKS

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

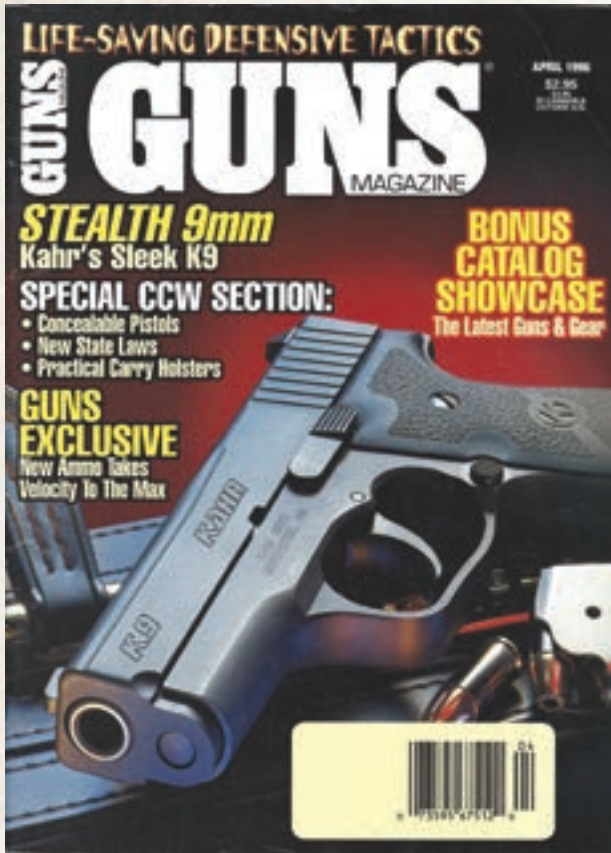
COLLECTORS

STURM, RUGER & Company, Inc.
6 Lacey Place
Southport, Connecticut 06490 U.S.A.
ALL RUGER WEAPONS ARE DESIGNED AND MANUFACTURED IN THE U.S.A.

as writers. The story mix in this issue included a feature about the gun collection of S&W historian Roy Jinks, a review of the Colt No. 3 Frontier Single Action, introduction to blackpowder shotgunning and the .411 Magnum, an obscure dangerous-game round made from a necked-down .458 Winchester casing.

On the advertising side of things, books and training courses continued a strong showing, along with the "Learn to be a Locksmith" course advertisement that seemed to be in every magazine of the era. The "Gun Marketplace" of classified ads was a robust three solid pages in which you could find anything from Ninja equipment to Nazi war souvenirs and Excalibur wax pellets to make your own indoor practice ammo. In the display ads, you could also pick up belt buckles and rawhide whips while larger ads featured names such as FIE, Kleen Bore, RWS, Beeman, CCI, RCBS, Hornady, Federal, AMT and Outers. Strangely, the only full-page gun advertisement is from our longtime friends at Ruger on the back cover.

GUNS



In the 1990s, the magazine turned to using professional photography on the cover (above). Ichiro Nagata was well known for his beautiful covers during this era. A magazine selling catalogs? **GUNS** tried selling catalogs (below) from its partners for a small fee. The ironic thing is catalogs were soon to become a thing of the past, thanks to that internet-thingsy people were talking about.

Just when everything seemed fairly staid and calm, along came the '90s. The decade almost seemed to be a violent backlash against everything from the 1980s. Music went from bland pop into the Grunge movement as rap also surfaced to foul the ears of humanity.

Technology started its major ascent during this decade. Music went from vinyl to cassettes to CDs and finally MP3s while personal computers became a fixture in many homes. At the same time, the fledgling internet grew as more people learned how to use a dial-up modem to connect. Though speeds were slow, things like file sharing and email started to show a hint of what the world would look like today. People also began talking in earnest about a future world where anyone could publish anything at the push of a button and the whole of the world's knowledge was available in your hand.

In other words, we all thought the 2000s would be wonderful. In 1997 we should have realized the Dot-Com bubble was a foreshadowing of the dangers of placing too much stock on an invisible data stream.

In 1991, the Soviet Union finally fell, sparking a series of anti-communist revolutions across Europe while the U.S. assumed the role as the only legitimate superpower. In 1990, Saddam Hussein made the first of a couple of critical mistakes by invading Kuwait. For the first time since arguably WWII, the U.S. public actually responded favorably and wholly supported the troops. Hussein was roundly defeated and peace has ruled the Middle East since that time. (Sorry, I couldn't resist).

On the gun side of life, this decade marked the rise of semi-autos. Law enforcement was rapidly trading in their old sixguns for higher-capacity semi-auto guns and





The Kahr 9 in nine millimeter was representative of the “new breed” of CCW guns in the 1990s.

shooters everywhere noticed. Meanwhile, the AR15, now intimately familiar to a whole generation of former soldiers, became the “Modern Sporting Rifle.” One tragedy did occur — this was the time of the “.45 versus 9mm shootout” article, a trite concept wholly flogged to death by every single firearms publication in the world aside from *GUNS Magazine*. This is a true claim!

ABOUT THIS ISSUE: APRIL 1996

By the 1990s, the look of *GUNS Magazine* was thoroughly modern and to my eye, quite upscale. The cover featured professional photography by Ichiro Nagata and full-color printing was used throughout the pages. The length had also expanded to 100 pages for the bargain price of \$2.95!

The April issue was themed with “CCW & Self-Defense” so the content leaned heavily in this direction. “Officer Roy” and Suzi Huntington make a couple of appearances while Massad Ayoob gave practical tips for concealed carry. The *Crossfire* section was interesting as the general theme seemed to be one of deep anger toward the Federal government and various alphabet agencies, reflecting sentiment in the country at the time. Meanwhile, one reader severely upbraided Massad Ayoob for being a proponent of the 9mm. The reader’s gripe was based on the experiences of a friend who served on the Eastern Front in WWII. The friend claimed the German 9mm wouldn’t go through a frozen Soviet greatcoat, so how dare Mr. Ayoob support the cartridge for self-defense!?

Turns out Mas was right.

In the *Insider* column by Editor Scott Farrell, Scott was wowed and amazed by the new Christensen Arms Carbon-One rifle with a newfangled carbon fiber barrel announced at the 1996 SHOT Show. One of the first of its kind, the CarbonOne had a palpitation-inducing price tag of \$2,700. The cover gun for the issue was a Kahr K9 while the Gun Giveaway was a Custom Colt Delta Elite in .357 SIG.

In the New Product section, the Tasco PDP5 Red Dot Sight was one of the offerings profiled. It retailed for \$499 and the photograph made it look the size of a 40mm grenade shell perched on a 6” S&W wheelgun. One special feature is a Catalog Showcase section offering of 7 ½ pages of literature from all sorts of firearm and accessory companies. *GUNS* sold them inexpensively to cover mailing and handling costs. These pages were likely the Little Bighorn of the catalog industry.

With 100 pages to fill, the thick inventory of advertising ran the gamut: Ruger, Leupold, Tasco, Springfield Armory, Savage, Birchwood Casey, Para-Ordnance, Dillon Precision, Auto-Ordnance Corp, Mag-na-port, Shotgun News, Benchmade, SOG Knives and yes, even cigars. It was, after all, the height of The Great Cigar Boom. **GUNS**



The 1990s and 2000s have seen only small changes to the magazine (above) — “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?” The magazine covered a wild new trend — electronic sights. Battery life then was measured in hundreds of hours instead of the tens of thousands of hours today. They were right about one thing — red dots are here to stay.

The 2000s was the dawn of the millennium and clearly defined by rapid technological advancements in every sector. It was also the dawn of the Digital Age of Communication, where every person has the ability to broadcast anything they want with little restraint or quality control. Advertising, once under the sole ownership of mass media, shifted to online technology companies and dramatically changed the media landscape, ultimately forcing many traditional outlets out of business. This is why I’m a “former” newspaper outdoor writer. Facebook launched in 2004 while YouTube opened a year later, revolutionizing communication among the entire human race — for better and clearly worse.

Geopolitics changed in 2001 after the 9/11 Terror Attacks. It ushered in the longest war in U.S. history and created a whole new generation of shooters who were most comfortable with polymer 9mm pistols and the AR15 platform. These sandbox-instilled preferences still drive the market today.

In the gun industry itself, the widespread adoption of computer-operated manufacturing machines meant quality went up across the board. Skilled workers on milling machines were supplanted by computerized devices, which produced nearly identical parts day-in and



“IT IS NATURAL TO WORRY ABOUT BATTERIES WITH ANY ELECTRONIC SYSTEM. FORTUNATELY, THIS SYSTEM HAS A RELATIVELY HUGE BATTERY LIFE, WITH A MINIMUM OF 200 HOURS AND A MAXIMUM OF 1,000 HOURS, DEPENDING UPON CONDITIONS AND USAGE.”

Click after the blink. You might think that the darkest the conditions, the brighter the dot seems necessary. However, the opposite is generally true. In dark conditions, the laser dot settings are more than adequate, while in bright light, the brightest settings are needed to get a good sight picture.

The particular Airguns model adopted by the Army has an improvement, so it will not increase your position of aiming. In other words, do not expect to shoot better groups with an Airgun than you can with your sights. The advantage, however, of being in position and only one point of eye focus is that it may allow many people to shoot better groups than they can with your sights. We have been able to shoot excellent work with this sight all the way out to 100 yards against a steel-plate target.

The military has adopted this sight for two important reasons. First, it is one of the easiest and fastest to use. Just put the dot where you want the bullet to go and squeeze the trigger. Second, it allows those users to use light conditions. As long as there is enough light to see your target, the bright red dot makes sight acquisition a snap. While this sight is one of the best there is for low-light applications, it is not by itself a night sight.

Electronic Enhancement



DESERT EAGLE
50AE



The “centerfold” of the magazine became more prominent to feature the incredible work of Ichiro Nagata and now Rob Jones.

“OUR OLD FRIEND DICK WILLIAMS WAS THE UNLUCKY VOLUNTEER TO SAMPLE THE PISTOL’S ROBUST RECOIL AND HE MIGHT HAVE UNDERSTATED THINGS A BIT WHEN HE MENTIONED ‘THE BIG BORE SEMIAUTO DOES GENERATE A LOT OF TORQUE.’”

day-out. This, coupled with computer-aided design and improvements in design, materials and testing means even today’s “budget” guns have quality levels close to those of more expensive hand-built guns of yesteryear. Overall, there are now very few bad guns on the market and even the cheapest ones work well. Couple this with new goodies such as ballistic computers, improved ammunition, better holster technology and improvements in LED optical sights, and shooters should realize they are indeed living in the “Golden Age” of shooting.

ABOUT THIS ISSUE: MAY 2001

If you look at the magazine in 2001 versus today, it isn’t much different, which is a compliment to those who made the changes. Many of the names you’ll recognize — Anderson, Ayoob, Bodinson, Huntington, Taffin and others. One or two behind-the-scenes folks are also still around.

The magazine did go on a bit of a diet, coming in at 80 pages.

THE STATE OF THE CARTRIDGE

By Dave Anderson

Looking back at the last 100 years, we can see that the time is ripe for a new wave of innovation in rifle ballistics and cartridge design.

There are exciting days in rifle ballistics. New cartridges are being introduced at a rate not seen in 40 years. Who started with a trickle of new

cartridges in 1991 is having into a carabida flood. Remington has developed a line of magnum capacity, belted cartridges in calibers from 7mm to .375. Winchester has announced a magnum belted cartridge for deer and other rifles (300 WSM) and will distribute and offer calibers on the same base case. Weatherby has two new calibers. Sauer has a new proprietary round and Martin-Scotty has a second proprietary hunting rifle round. Why so many new cartridges now?

The combination of new cartridges used to come to market typically every few years, new commercial cartridges are announced at a bewildering pace. Followed by a period of relative quiet in which the marketplace sorts out the winners and losers, and then the wildcards on the stage for the next round.

It appears we are currently heading toward the peak of another cycle. Over the last few years, Remington, Winchester and Weatherby have introduced as many new cartridges as they did in the previous 25 years, and the number will be double again. To understand what is going on, it helps to look back at how previous waves.

The Mother of Invention

The years following the First World War were tough for firearm manufacturers. They had just made huge capital investments and found new employees to meet wartime demand when World War I ended and military contracts were cancelled. Just as they started to recover thousands of surplus rifles, Mauser, Fielder and Remington rifles were released to the civilian market often at extremely low prices.

After the war the supply of surplus rifles ran out, the Great Depression struck. Manufacturers attempted to continue demand by introducing a number of new cartridges, usually a somewhat modest capacity, the standardly known diameter. Six new diameters at the time. The list included the .300 Savage, .270 Win., .22 Hornet, .257 Roberts, .243 Smith, .219 Ruger, .209 Pigeon, .148 Win., and the adoption by Winchester of the British rounds, the .303 and .375 H&M Magnums.

During World War II, American manufacturers were primarily involved in helping with the war effort, and industry's spare resources to produce existing calibers, such as long cartridge alternatives. For a decade or so after World War II, demand for consumer goods, including firearms and accessories, was so great that there was no need for new cartridges. Manufacturers had to fill out not just to meet demand, but to increase demand. What innovation occurred was primarily done by wildcards such as Aulick, Gibbs, Hardison, Florin, Pissal, Meyer, and a host who would profoundly influence the industry. Buy Weatherby.

A Booming Market

After the war, demand began to rise in the mid-1940s as people began to catch up with demand and across around the world began adopting automatic weapons, and again putting out of demand surplus long-action rifles on the market. Two new rounds which had been introduced, the .222 Rem. (1939) and .308 (1952), were both doing well. It was at about this time new cartridges would become the rule.

Over the years, the .308 gained a market preponderance of better of sales between 1940 and 1971, some 20 commercial rifle cartridges were introduced by Remington, Remington-Weatherby and

Weatherby. In the decade from 1951 to 1960 alone, 21 new cartridges were introduced.

Several factors influenced the decision-making at Remington and Weatherby. One Weatherby's withdrawal of the 7mm was allowing commercial states being tested by Norma under the Weatherby trademark. The Weatherby Magnum cartridges were getting a lot of publicity, due to both Weatherby's press for promotion and the fact that they were (and are) excellent rounds. Weatherby had even checked the box with the 7/8 Winchester in 1955.

Warren Page, shooting editor of Field & Stream, and Mike Walker of Remington were probably responsible for the acceptance and acceptance of the .222 Remington. Page and Ford (Remington of BC-25) both felt that the 7mm caliber had potential as a belted and hunting round. Page had a wildcat based on the new .308 case necked in 7mm, while Remington based his focus on the .222 Roberts' case. Page also wanted the Tom-Weatherby, a wildcat based on the .300 H&M case.

Jack O'Connor, shooting editor of Gunter Life, announced his new cartridge, a .270 in Tom-Weatherby .300 H&M case, a 22-caliber cartridge with a 30 gr bullet in 2,200 fps. A short cartridge with .270 Win. ballistics for great accuracy, rifle and introduction of the .27-283 and .28-76 wildcat. Eddie Kuhl had long been promoting the virtues of 5/8 caliber rounds such as the wildcat 224 G&S.

The new cartridges certainly reflected three influences: Weatherby designed a series of belted magnum cartridges designed to fit in standard 95-100 length actions. Page's and Remington's ideas which appeared as the 243 Win. and 244 (later from Remington). The magnum-capacity Tom promoted by Page and

O'Connor appeared as the Tom-Weatherby Magnum. In fact, all of O'Connor's production came about in the form of the .222 Rem., Tom-Weatherby Mag., 284 Win., and the contemporary addition of the .22-250 and .25-76 by Remington. Kuhl got his wish with the 214 Win. and 240 Weatherby Magnums.

The Judgement of History

Rating the success of various cartridges is to some extent subjective, and we certainly do not claim to be the final arbiter. Our opinions are based on tracking rankings from the 40-90s list of leading rifle sales, and three leading magnum cartridges and counting the number of makes and models available in various calibers.

If the cartridges introduced prior to 1950, the .30-06, .30-06 and .375 Win. have been ranked as the top in popularity for many years. The .30-06 probably leads in factory cartridge sales that just translated to winning the sales and in the number of rifle models available.

The .30-06 and .375 have been consistently popular for decades, and in the face of self-competition from new cartridges, they show no signs of fading. In the year 2000, when Remington introduced their Model 700 rifle, it was offered in two calibers: .270 and .30-06.

Other cartridges from the pre-1950 era that have endured include the .45-70, Tom-Weatherby, Sauer Mauser, 6.5x55 Swedish Mauser, 30-40 King and .311 British. All some of the most iconic military cartridges, and all are useful cartridges in their own right. The .22 Hornet, .223 Rem. and .277 Roberts are still available in new rifles.

Actually, cartridges were never so readily disappear, and



Dave Anderson said the time was ripe for a new wave of cartridge design. Little did he know this trickle would turn into a full-on deluge by 2015.

THE GOAL OF THIS EXTENDED SAUNTER DOWN MEMORY LANE WASN'T INTENDED TO BE AN EXERCISE IN SELF-CONGRATULATIONS. THE HOPE WAS WE COULD REKINDLE SOME OF THE GREAT MEMORIES OF SHOOTING WE ALL HAVE.

to write a simple press release or short news item. Where it falls short — and likely will for the foreseeable future — is “experiential” writing, the kind where real people talk about the things they’ve done in the physical world. In other words, AI can’t do the exact same stuff we’ve been doing for 70 years. We’ve been told “print is dead” for decades but I think Mark Twain was correct when he noted, “The news of my demise is greatly exaggerated.”

We’ll now close this chapter of history for *GUNS Magazine*. On behalf of myself and the hundreds of people

whom I represent on this page, I’d like to give a heartfelt thanks to the millions of readers for their support over the years. We’re all part of the *GUNS* family and I look forward to many more years of being together. I’ll even take this opportunity to be the first person to raise a toast to the 100th anniversary of *GUNS Magazine*!

In closing, as I always say — Now get out there and get shooting! —BW

GUNS

CROSSFIRE

Burn Not Blow continued from page 8

to find out more about the cause. He talked with the engineers and metallurgists at both Colt and Smith & Wesson. They said that in their experiments, even a double charge of Bullseye wouldn't cause the damage those guns were experiencing. They did a bunch of research and decided the powder charge was "detonating" rather than progressively burning 2.7 grains. is a very small charge and it would lay elongated in the bottom of the horizontal case. As the flame from the primer passed above the charge the whole thing detonated at once instead of getting a progressive burn. If, by chance, the muzzle of the gun were tipped skyward, the powder would settle at the back of the case and ignite properly. This is why sometimes the load would fire correctly and sometimes it would ruin a fine firearm.

So my question is, might that also happen with a light charge in that big .45-70 case?

Carl Stroup

First, this gets into science/chemistry/physics/voodoo above my pay grade, but keeping to what I think is going on here I've also heard of the detonation factor before as you describe. There is an additional variable which, in my opinion, makes the scenario more likely — the burn rate of the powder. Bullseye is a very "fast" powder — not velocity per se but the rate of burn of the powder itself. If you look at a powder burn rate chart, which shows the burn rate from fastest to slowest, Bullseye is up near the top. You can find these charts on the internet using Google.

Now check out some common powders for .45-70, like IMR 4895 or IMR 4064. They're generally far lower on the rate of burn scale. So, in my non-scientific opinion only, far less likely to have the light charge detonation issue when using a super-small charge floating around in the case.

With all that said, I pay attention to the rate of burn when choosing loads. Right, wrong, or indifferent, if all else is

the same (consistency, accuracy, etc.), I prefer to use a powder that fills up the case, more rather than less. This helps make me sleep better as I think it minimizes the possibility of overcharges and maximizes the possibility of me being able to spot any errors. There's also more consistent ignition and less sensitivity to gravity-induced problems like the detonation scenario. —Tom McHale



.350 HEADACHE

I am an old grey haired wheelgunner who is always looking for more entertainment in this field. Have you ever done anything on the 350 Legend S&W M350? If you have, could you please send me information on how I can access this article. I would like to reload for this, but find it troubling about 50% of the articles I read contradict each other when it comes to bore size — .355 vs .357. I do not know how to slug a bore to measure for exact bore size, so I depend on the experts to help me out. Selecting the correct diameter bullet is critical and this is the problem. I would be using it for deer hunting, and want the best results out to 100 yds. Yes, I can keep the bullet in a 5" plate 85% of the time at that distance, but bullet performance on a deer needs to be thought about.

Charles Benedict

You gave me a headache! I knew the 350 Legend had some confusion

regarding bullet diameter but I didn't know the extent until I researched this answer to your email. The M350 is also one of a few revolvers I've never had the pleasure of meeting.

The SAAMI spec is listed at .357. For some strange reason, I can't find the "official" bullet diameter for the M350 but several writers claim it is also .357. Some of the confusion stems from the early days of the round when some rifle builders used a diameter of .355 for the cartridge, similar to the "match" chambers of .22 target rifles. I've also heard reports of factory ammo measuring at .354 to .358. Overall, the .350 Legend has a reputation as being challenging to reload, so I (along with everyone I know) says they stick with factory ammo. —BW

BIKES AND BULLETS

I loved your article regarding testosterone (*Insider* column), November 2024). My preferred carry is my Kimber 1911 Ultra but I find myself just grabbing my S&W Hammerless 38 more and more. It's just easier to carry and will still do the job if needed.

Back in 1976, I bought my Norton 850 — one of the hottest bike you could ride. I rode it all the time and a lot of it over 100 mph, especially after more than a few "cocktails!" I still have the Norton but it's been awhile since it's been over 80 MPH, even after maybe two beers!

Jim in NY

I'm in the same place regarding the .38! Be careful on that Norton, I don't have too many inviolate rules but I never twist a throttle after cocktails. —BW

THE FINAL CALL

Regarding the final *Montana Musings*; another great article by Mike Venturino and yes, I remember reading it a year ago. It is also a great article to end his tenure at *GUNS Magazine*.

Is there any info available concerning how Yvonne is dealing with the aftermath of losing Mike?

Philip Gregory

Yvonne has been getting help from Duke's friends in terms of dealing with his gun affairs. Otherwise, she and Duke are very private so I won't really comment further other than to say I think she's getting the help she needs. —BW

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TRIGGER PULL TEMP

I really appreciated Mr. van Zwoll's story about trigger pull (October 2024, "Of Triggers and Sights"). Temperature plays a part in adjusting trigger pull. I had a Winchester Model 70 in .243 I used for deer hunting and on occasion to shoot groundhogs. Knowing I was going to a friend's farm to help cull the large number of groundhogs, I lightened the pull on my rifle to around 2-½ lbs. and with a buddy, shot until we ran out of ammo between the two of us, well over 400 rounds. The hay field was cut by groundhogs right to the earth for 100 yards from the bottom of the field until it slowly got taller, so we barely made a dent.

Fall came around and time for the deer hunt. Opening day was a cold one around -5 and hearing a sound behind me I turned to see a nice 4-point Whitetail. The cold temperatures had contracted the steel of the trigger and just pushing the safety off fired the gun. I was at least aiming in the direction of the deer and actually hit the base of his antlers. That knocked him down and upon reloading, carefully keeping my finger off the trigger until I was aiming where I wanted. I barely touched the trigger and the deer fell down for good that time. Needless to say when I got home I increased the trigger weight to a better weight for both cold AND warm weather shooting.

Oh and Mr. Editor, I commend your bravery for having both a bilateral augmentation and growing a ponytail just for Suzi Huntington's article on Gun Cranks. I can't say you would make the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit edition, but I hope you can live it down ... eventually. Sincerely with the last paragraph completely tongue firmly in cheek cause otherwise I'd be laughing my head off.

Terry Gardner



Interesting idea. I'm not doubting your theory and observations but I'm a bit skeptical that the cold could mechanically lighten the trigger pull. If the springs were suspect, I'd guess their pull weight was heavier, rather than lighter, due to the cold. I'm guessing it was some other factor, such as an unknowing bump or perhaps the trigger was on the verge of failing already. On the other hand, I suppose theoretically the cold temp could shrink the steel of the sear enough to pull it away from the notch if they were barely engaged already. I'd love to hear from our readers about their theories, especially from gunsmiths or designers.

And, regarding the thumbnail on our "Gun Bunny" podcast. Let's just say I was as shocked as anyone when I saw it while surfing YouTube. Our Art Director Joe is now on Double-Secret Probation. —BW

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WARNING WHOOPS

I just watched the Gun Cranks episode #236 about warning shots. I once fired a warning shot into a concrete floor when I was confronted by a knife-wielding thug. He was obviously high and advancing toward me. I drew my .32 caliber Colt pistol and fired one warning shot into the concrete floor I was standing on. The full metal jacket bullet struck the floor a couple of feet in front of me. The thug walked away rapidly and I limped away in the opposite direction. A fragment of the bullet I fired pierced my leather dress shoe

and embedded in my right foot. That's my warning shot story. I did not call the police as I did not have a concealed pistol license.

Also, what is the reason Smith & Wesson continues to have the key lock on the side plate of most of their new revolvers. It seems to me that feature is unpopular with nearly all my shooting friends and pre lock revolvers sell at a premium.

M L Mallory

The S&W key lock was widely viewed as a sell-out in the 1990s to the Clinton Administration as a way to keep selling S&W guns to the federal "govement" during a time when GLOCK had burst onto the scene. Since that time, institutional inertia seems to keep the lock in place. One can also imagine the press conference where a grieving widow or parent (or, more likely, their attorney) cries "Why did you remove the lock from your guns? If you hadn't, my client's family member would still be alive!" We know the truth but the professional product liability lawyers seem unburdened by conscience or facts. Thus, it's my opinion the liability attorneys and maybe marketing people at S&W quietly encourage retaining the lock. Of course, rumors surface every year that the company is going to remove the lock but no major push has been seen. I believe you're more likely to see it quietly dropped with individual product redesign cycles rather than a wholesale "We're done with the lock!" announcement. —BW

GUNS



Columbia River Knife & Tool's Russ Kommer designed Soldotna. It has all the right curves and with a level of finishing that rivals many handmade customs.

CRKT SOLDOTNA ANNIVERSARY ARTISTRY

Pat Covert

When Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT) wanted a special knife to celebrate their 30th anniversary, they turned to one of their longtime custom knife collaborators, Russ Kommer. The result is the exquisite Soldotna hunting knife, named for a town on the Kenai Peninsula of Alaska where Russ and CRKT founder Rod Bremer would often hunt. An upscale limited edition of 500 Damascus blade models with Walnut scales (priced at \$500) was produced as well as a more affordable 1095 Carbon Steel version highlighted here. TOPS Knives of Idaho was tasked with the production of both Soldotna runs.

The Soldotna is a small Drop Point Skinner, 7.63" in overall length with

3.48" dedicated to its cutting edge. The 1095 Carbon Steel full tang blade received a healthy Gray Cerakote finish from tip to base for rust protection. The mainstream Soldotna's 4.15" handle got a set of Brown Micarta scales with a tube brass-lined lanyard hole at the base. The knife's overall weight is a svelte 3.25 oz. The Soldotna is delivered with a black leather sheath with a nostalgic ball catch release securing the handle.

WHY YOU'LL LIKE IT.

Russ Kommer's styling sets the Soldotna apart from the crowd and leaves you begging for a larger companion. Kommer, also a professional hunting guide, has a way of doing more with less curves than are absolutely necessary.



The Soldotna comes delivered with black leather sheath with a hint of nostalgia — a ball catch release.

No flab or curb feelers here. CRKT and TOPS delivered the quality and fit 'n finish to rival many customs to boot. MSRP for the standard run Soldotna is \$200, very reasonable for a knife that gets it right by all measures.

GUNS

CRKT.com



POPTICALS POPZULU FOLDING SHOOTING GLASSES

If you like ‘gadgety’ stuff — things that fold out and turn into something useful and unexpected, like a stapler that morphs into a fully-functional motorcycle — you’ll love Popticals Popzulu folding glasses.

The glasses come in a palm-sized 5" x 2" ovoid hard case but when unfurled become stout full-sized ballistic-protective glasses. The lenses come in three colors — gray, orange and clear — and meet ANSI Z87.1 impact resistance. These glasses only weigh an ounce, seem robust as heck and have impeccable optical quality. The downsides? They’re fiddly to fold and unfold until you understand the process and mine always seem to end up with a dozen fingerprints before wearing. But, if you’re looking for lightweight, robust folding shooting glasses, the Popzulu models are a prime choice. My pair will be living in my range bag as backup eye protection.

MSRP: \$139
Popticals.com

GLOW RHINO GLOW FOBS

Who doesn’t love nuclear-powered shooting accessories? I certainly do and now you can (barely) light the night with Glow Rhino tritium-powered glow fobs.

The Glow Rhino flagship Glob Fob contains a tritium capsule larger than common pistol night sights encased in a stout 1.45"x.33" metal housing. The housing has a keychain or lanyard loop hole and is waterproof, while the self-luminous tritium capsule will stay visible for around a decade. They also make the smaller, less-expensive Spark model with a clear plastic body. Both types include a window-breaker tip.

These are perfect for marking need-to-find-at-night equipment such as keys, zipper pulls and people. The tritium provides a soft glow which readily can be seen without damaging your night vision. The Spark also comes in several colors so you can easily color code your gear. I also think these make a cool inexpensive EDC Christmas gift!

MSRP: Glow Fob from \$39.99, The Spark from \$11.99
GlowRhino.com



PARABELLUM WOODCRAFT WRANGLER GRIPS

Looking to dress up your Ruger Wrangler or Super Wrangler with good-looking wood grips? If so, Parabellum Woodcraft can help you out.

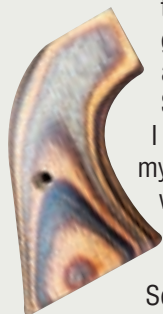
Made from CNC-cut wood and hand-finished, they’re made in the USA by a small one-man shop. The owner Brandon offers laminated wood models along with several beautiful hardwoods. Unlike many other grips, the Parabellum Woodcraft grips are specific to



the standard-sized Wrangler and Super Wrangler grips and will not fit any other Ruger single action, such as the Birdhead Wrangler or Single Six models.

I got a pair of laminated wood Tiger grips for my Super Wrangler and they provided an easy way to dress up a favorite gun. Parabellum also makes nice textured wood panels to replace the plastic factory panels on your Marlin Dark Series lever-action rifle. As Brandon says, they

“Transform your rifle from plastic to classic!”



MSRP: \$44
Parabellum-woodcraft-f10.mybigcommerce.com

RITON OPTICS 3 TACTIX PRD SERIES

In a world of red dot sights, one of the lesser-known but “coming up on the inside rail” pistol optics is Riton. I’ve been playing with their 3 Tactix PRD 3 and MPRD 3 of late and I’m a big fan.

I love the PRD for its picture window 24x17mm glass for full-sized guns using the RMR footprint. The MPRD is smaller for compact/subcompact guns using the RMSc footprint.

Overall construction is very robust from 7075 aluminum and battery life is a significant 50,000 hrs. Even better, Riton uses a side battery tray so you don’t have to dismount the unit to change batteries. The adjust brightness optic uses three selectable patterns, a 2 MOA dot inside a 50 MOA circle. The series also uses a shake-awake feature which has so-far worked flawlessly.

Riton optics come with a limited lifetime warranty and with some careful shopping, you can get a high-quality pistol optic at a quite-nice price.

MSRP: \$329
RitonOptics.com



LISTEN TO THE PROFESSOR DON'T AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME ...

Dave Workman

Bob Cottrol is a remarkable fellow by anyone's standards — a chair at the George Washington University Law School, an occasional speaker at the annual Gun Rights Policy Conference, author and a guy with whom this correspondent has had some insightful chats about gun ownership and the right to keep and bear arms.

NOT WHAT YOU'D THINK

As noted in his biography, he supports background checks to prevent gun acquisition by convicted felons. We don't see eye-to-eye on this one as I'm not sure convicted felons bother with background checks, and it's sort of like having to prove you're innocent in order to exercise a constitutionally protected right. Aside from this point, he argues "that law-abiding citizens should have ready access to guns 'for self-defense.' He says that minorities in particular need them to counter the threat of harsh treatment in racist cultures," his biography says.

At the end of the day, he's a guy who makes anti-gunners a little uneasy, if not downright squirm. Prior to his tenure at George Washington, he taught at Rutgers University and Boston College, and as noted by The Federalist Society, "His writings on law and history have appeared in the *Yale Law Journal*, *Georgetown Law Journal*, *American Journal of Legal History*, *Law and Society Review*, *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* and *American Quarterly*."

Cottrol's advice to Second Amendment activists heading into 2025 is pretty simple — Learn to reach out to liberal gun owners, find ways to accommodate their "other issues" while reminding them of the right to

keep and bear arms shouldn't really be just a conservative issue. The Second Amendment belongs to everybody.

"I think people need to be proactive in searching out opportunities to educate the public," he observed, "particularly the non-gun owning public and people not engaged in the Second Amendment (fight)."

NO DEMS

Cottrol is quick to acknowledge that in politics, there are very few, if any, strong pro-gun Democrats on Capitol Hill anymore. A generation ago there

(2008), McDonald (2010), Caetano (2016) and Bruen (2022) — which have reinforced the individual right to keep and bear arms, including non-firearms ("all instruments that constitute bearable arms," as noted by Justia). The good news is that every law school now must deal with those Supreme Court rulings.

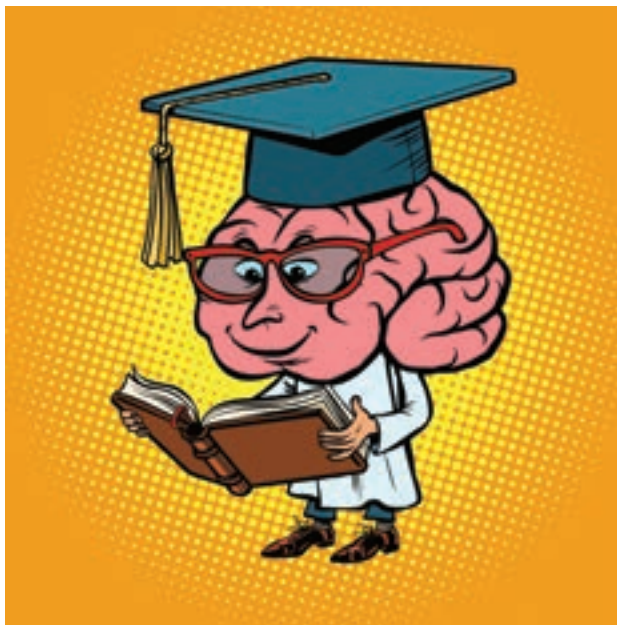
"They're teaching the Second Amendment at a lot of schools," Cottrol said. "I know people who have been teaching Second Amendment seminars at other law schools."

Long story short, it's not just grassroots activism and lawsuits that will win the gun rights war. It is education, and the ability and willingness to engage with those in the neutral "cultural middle" where one of the most effective arguments is the gun control movement is, in many ways, an anti-self-defense movement. Cottrol suggested the basic contention is anti-gunners are making it difficult for average citizens to defend themselves and they "need to be called out."

Here's an interesting tidbit: I routinely get concealed pistol license data from my state's Department of Licensing. Guess what I find interesting? In King County, Washington — the state's most populous and most liberal county — I always find

the highest number of active CPLs of any county in the state. Looks like even liberals feel the need to defend themselves and their families.

Consider this: When was the last time the gun prohibition lobby stepped forward to recognize the bravery of armed private citizens who take action to stop criminal acts? For example, a would-be mass shooting at a shopping mall in Indiana back in July 2022? When has anybody wearing a "Moms Demand Action" T-shirt openly applauded when a legally armed citizen has intervened in a violent crime and saved the day? Right, the gun ban bunch traditionally



were, but the party has drifted as the recent elections reminded us. But that's the difference between what's going on inside the Beltway and out here where the people reside.

"I think the Second Amendment enjoys overwhelming majority support (among the American public)," he says, subsequently stating as an example, "My sense from the polls is that the public no longer buys the notion of banning so-called 'assault weapons.'"

Ever the educator, Cottrol has his students read his book on the Second Amendment and examine 21st Century Second Amendment cases — Heller

develops lockjaw after such incidents because it goes squarely against the gun control narrative.

One example is 22-year-old Elisha Dicken who was at the Greenwood Park Mall two-and-one-half years ago when he used a legally carried GLOCK 19 to take down a rifle-toting 20-year-old who had just fatally shot two people in the food court. While the nation was recognizing his actions, gun control proponents skulked back into the shadows.

If you find yourself at a public meeting on gun control and a bunch of T-shirt-clad “Moms” troop into the room, hit them with this question: “What have you got against my right to defend myself and my family from a violent criminal?” Don’t allow anyone to dodge the question. “Hey, you showed up here to back a proposal that will make it impossible for me to defend my home and family. Why are you doing this?”

Last year about this time, I testified before a Washington State House committee against legislation

that would have made it more difficult for honest citizens to purchase firearms. By no small coincidence, a judge in Oregon had recently declared the state’s effort to require a purchase permit to buy a gun, part of the broader Measure 114, to be unconstitutional. I reminded the committee about this and was pleasantly surprised when the legislation subsequently died in committee.

MARCHING ORDERS

Grassroots activists can do their homework and testify at their state’s legislative hearings. It’s not that difficult, and in Cottrol’s world, it’s one of the “common sense” things to do in order to protect and defend the Second Amendment.

If the issue of banning so-called “assault rifles” comes up in your state, you have FBI annual crime data on your side to remind lawmakers rifles of any kind are used in a fraction of all homicides in any given year. More

people are fatally stabbed than are fatally shot with rifles. More people are beaten or stomped to death with hands, fists and/or feet than are killed with rifles. Data is easily available online, just go get it, and then use it.

The obvious question to lawmakers: “Since these guns are used in such a small number of murders, why would you want to ban them?”

2A Defense can involve much more than blowing off steam on social media. Study up on what experts such as Bob Cottrol say about the Second Amendment, because he presents arguments in a way that even liberals can understand.

Learn to call B.S. on the other side diplomatically. Remove the terms “liar” and “traitor” and “communist” from your vocabulary. When someone on the other side makes a specious argument — they do it a lot! — come back with the facts, and arguments one might find between the covers of Cottrol’s book.

GUNS

Enjoy Extra Time With Duke

A complete collection of Mike “Duke” Venturino’s Shooting Iron columns originally published in *American Handgunner* Magazine from 2005 through 2024 is available now. Venturino’s extensive gun knowledge and easy-reading writing style entertained and informed a generation of readers. Enjoy this collection and think about the kind man who wrote it all.

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QUICK DRAW 5-PIN BOW SIGHT DEAD RINGER

Dead Ringer announces the launch of its new *Quick Draw 5-Pin Bow Sight*. Designed to mount directly on nearly any bow via a universal mounting system, this archery tool allows for micro-adjustments for pinpoint accuracy. It's constructed with a precision machined 6061 CNC aluminum alloy frame and sports a tool-free locking arm knob. MSRP: \$109.99. For more info: (844) 471-4868, DeadRingerHunting.com

WL11 RAIL MOUNTED TACTICAL LIGHT NEXTORCH INDUSTRIES

The high-output rechargeable *WL11 Rail Mounted Tactical Light* features a toggle switch positioned just the right distance from the trigger for comfort. The 650-lumen beam casts the ideal amount of illumination in low light situations. The WL11 is a powerful weapon light compatible with MIL-STD-1913 and GLOCK rails. MSRP: \$107.99. For more info: Nextorch.com



S-TAC 1-6X24 AR1 RIFLESCOPE SIGHTRON

Sightron's *S-TAC 1-6x24 AR1 Rifle Scope* is an excellent choice for modern sporting rifles chambered in .223/5.56mm. At the core of the design are 13 Japanese optical glass lenses. Combined with SIGHTRON's exclusive MC-333 multi-coating technology, each lens gets three layers of camera-grade multi-coatings applied to both sides for a combined six layers on each lens. That is a total of 78 layers for the best possible light transmission, contrast and clarity. MSRP: \$499.99. For more info: (919) 562-3000, Sightron.com

FLOATING BLIND BAG CUPPED WATERFOWL

The *Floating Blind Bag* from Cupped Waterfowl keeps all your hunting gear secure. Featuring a water-resistant shell, the Floating Blind Bag protects calls, ammo and more from moisture and sports a foam lining to prevent sinking. It's equipped with a shoulder strap and carry handle. Available in Mossy Oak Bottomland and Realtree Max-7 camo. MSRP: \$99.99 for the large size; \$69.99 for medium. For more info: (844) 471-4868, Cupped.com



350 LEGEND AND 360 BUCKHAMMER CUSTOM BULLETS

NORTHERN PRECISION

The *350 Legend and 360 Buckhammer Custom Bullets* are now being made for the 350 Legend and the 360 Buckhammer in .355 and .258 up to 250 grains in round nose and also in spritzer for single shots and bolt guns. Almost any weight can be ordered. These are a thin jacket that expands well on deer-sized game. Bullets are custom made just for these guns, one at a time. Bullets can be bonded as an option. Bullets for straight wall cartridges are also made in .275, .429 and in .458 in flat tip round nose and spritzers. MSRP: \$50 for a box of 50 in non-bonded and \$35 for 24 in bonded core. For more info: (315) 955-8679, NPCustomBullets.com



GO CUBE SOFT COOLERS MAMMOTH

The new *GoCube Soft Coolers* from Mammoth Coolers is compact enough to carry into the backcountry yet robust enough to keep contents cool during all-day outings. Constructed of high-density nylon with thick TPU laminated material, the lightweight GoCube is puncture- and tear-resistant for all outdoor adventures. Inch-thick foam insulation allows for 1+ days of ice retention inside the soft cooler. MSRP: \$99.99. For more info: (816) 295-6321, MammothCooler.com



SILENT SERIES NOSE JAMMER

Nose Jammer's *Silent Series* are for hunters who need sound-free stealth in the field. The Silent Series pack includes a 4-oz. Silent Pump Spray to block game's ability to sense odors, 2-oz. Rub On Wax Stick with time release formula, and 28-gram Dust for wind detection and protection. All three products in the Nose Jammer Silent Series deploy silently and tip the odds in the hunter's favor with long-lasting, olfactory-blocking technology. MSRP: \$24.99. For more info: (507) 452-9202, NoseJammer.com





SPARROW-TI SILENCERCO

SilencerCo is celebrating 15 years in business with the launch of a limited edition *Sparrow-Ti*. The Sparrow-Ti offers the same iconic features of the original Sparrow with a new spin on materials. Rather than stainless steel, the Sparrow-Ti is completely constructed from titanium. It's also only around half the weight of the original Sparrow, with the titanium version at 3.8 oz. MSRP: \$499. For more info: (801) 417-5384, SilencerCo.com

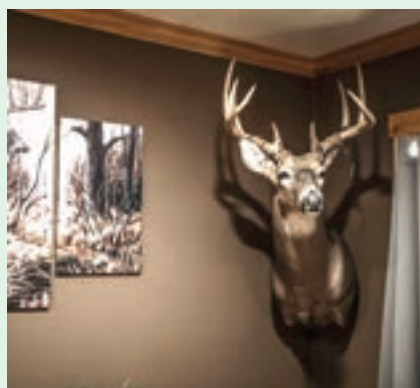


R3D 2.0 TRITIUM NIGHT SIGHTS XS SIGHTS

XS Sights is pleased to offer its popular *R3D 2.0 Tritium Night Sights* for Colt, Kimber and Springfield Armory 1911 pistols. Designed for improved speed and accuracy in any light, these new sights are brighter, stronger and even easier to install than the original R3D models. Featuring a notch and post design with two rear tritium dots and a high-contrast green dual-illuminated Glow Dot front sight, the R3D 2.0 is designed to improve your shooting. MSRP: \$148.99. For more info: (888) 744-4880, XSSights.com

OPERATUS JACKET VIKTOS

Stay warm and comfortable during your outdoor adventures with the VIKTOS *Operatus Jacket*. It reimagines the field jacket liner into a stand-alone tactical battle wagon. Designed by U.S. veterans, the jacket features FiteLite insulation, rib-knit waist and cuffs, two interior cargo pockets and Gunvent sidearm access zippers to keep your iron handy. MSRP: \$175. For more info: (800) 597-7179, VIKTOS.com



CORNER SYSTEM FULL RANGE HANGING SYSTEM

The *Corner System* from Full Range Hanging Systems allows you to display your once-in-a-lifetime trophies. Engineered to take advantage of unused space in a trophy room when walls begin to fill up, the Corner System allows a shoulder mount to be rotated to find the ideal angle to show off game. Built to hold mounts up to 35 lbs., the Corner System is ideal for showcasing whitetails, mule deer, antelope, sheep and more. MSRP: \$40. For more info: (336) 886-6258, FullRangeSystems.com



BE:1 OZONE 8K BAG + RADIAL NANO COMBO SCENTLOK

The *BE:1 Ozone 8K Bag + Radial Nano Combo* is a storage bag delivering odor-destroying ozone and proven-deadly Carbon Alloy odor adsorption. The included OZ Radial Nano rechargeable ozone generator is designed with simple, one-button operation and extreme portability, emitting and distributing the right amount of ozone to attack and destroy odors throughout the bag's 8,000 cubic-inch interior. MSRP: \$349.99. For more info: ScentLok.com



PINK NANO LIGHT STREAMLIGHT

The *Pink Nano Light* from Streamlight produces 10 lumens of light and has a run time of 8 hours. It features the Breast Cancer Pink Ribbon on one side and the Streamlight logo on the other. For every flashlight sold, Streamlight donates \$1 to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. For more info: (800) 523-7488, Streamlight.com



COLISEUM RUTTED-UP BLINDS

The *Coliseum* from Rutted-Up Blinds provides hunters with a stealthy yet comfortable setup to ambush bucks all season long. Boasting a spacious 9'X7' footprint, the Coliseum is engineered to keep you comfortable and provide plenty of shot opportunities in any hunting scenario. The 13 windows can lock out in any position and are 100% smoked but still provide a clear view, even in low light conditions. MSRP: \$5,995. For more info: (319) 494-5522, Rutted-Up.com

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If you are unable to enter online, mail a postcard with your name and address (no envelopes please). Entries must be received by January 31, 2025. Limit one entry per household.

WINNERS CHOSEN BY RANDOM DRAWING. Limit one entry per household. To protect the privacy and security of winners, their names will NOT be made public. Contest void where prohibited by law. Winners must undergo a background check and comply with all other federal, state and local laws. Taxes and fees will be the responsibility of the winner. Contest open to U.S. residents only. Employees and agents of Publishers' Development Corp. are not eligible. No purchase necessary. Attention deployed military: Use stateside address! Giveaway guns and accessories may have evidence of being test fired or exhibit minor handling marks. Factory warranties may apply in some cases. The Gun of the Month package is awarded only to the entrant drawn and will not be awarded if the firearm presented is illegal in the jurisdiction of the winner. An alternate, authorized winner will be selected. No substitutions or transfers to a third party are allowed.

CR920XP SUB COMPACT COMPENSATED CROSSOVER PISTOL

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ShadowSystemsCorp.com
(469) 458-6808

Caliber: 9mm; **Capacity:** 15+1
Barrel Length: 3.65"; **OAL:** 7.18"
Weight: 21.2 oz.



SHADOW SYSTEMS

CR920XP PACKAGE

Be the first one to own the CR920XP, Shadow System's latest compensated pistol. Built on the CR920X platform, it is a long-grip version of the CR920. This compensated version of the CR920X with an extended dust cover has a black frame, ELITE slide optic and bronze spiral compensated barrel. The gun comes with two 15-round flush fit magazines with extended capacity options. Industry-leading ergonomics and texture make the CR920XP shoot and handle like a full-sized pistol. Shadow System's patent pending tool-less attachment technology provides the shooter with an unparalleled degree of control at speed. Features include Shadow Systems' multi-footprint optic cut and accessory rail to fit small format weapon lights.

The Shadow Systems CR920XP and two 15-round Shadow Systems magazines plus one range bag and the Shadow Systems tool. You get all these when you win. Join now! Go to GUNSMagazine.com/giveaways or mail a postcard. —Jazz Jimenez

GUNS



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BIG AL DIPRIMA & HIS FRANKENGUN

MAKEOVERS AND MULLET ARE ALWAYS COOL!

Jeff “Tank” Hoover

I first laid eyes on Al DiPrima in *Single Action Sixguns* written by our own John Taffin. While reading chapter 24 about the Freedom Arms Model 83 on page 158, there he was, larger than life, posing with an Alaskan brown bear he dispatched with his FA .454 Casull.

Although I’d never heard his name before, it was certainly worth remembering, to me at least. I’d routinely see the image when re-reading John’s book over and over. The man with the mullet hairdo, sporting vintage camouflage, proudly holding his FA 83 with his brown bear. Some things never go out of style and Big Al proves it!

I read the book so much I about wore it out. The spine was showing signs of wear so I bought a back-up copy!

A REUNION OF SORTS

Ten years later I was in Raton, NM sitting in the courtyard of the Melody Inn enjoying a beverage, listening to Boge Quinn picking his guitar and singing. Out of nowhere, the legend himself walks up, dressed in cowboy boots, jeans and a sleeveless shirt. He was about to introduce himself.

Stunned, I stand up, saying, “Hey, Big Al DiPrima!” He’s taken aback I know his name. “I’ve seen your picture hundreds of times in Taffin’s book! You killed an Alaskan brown bear with a Freedom Arms!”

Big Al grins, shaking my hand, sheepishly saying, “I can’t believe you remember that?” It was the beginning of a long-standing friendship, showing you just never know who knows what about you — and remembers it.

Over time, I learned Big Al has been a union commercial electrician, appeared in a few movies, done work as a bodyguard and hunted all over the world, mostly with a handgun. His trophy room is quite impressive.

THE GUN

This past year, Big Al told me about a custom Smith he had built from a rescued dog of a gun. The story starts back in the mid 1980s when things moved at a more casual pace. The Internet was years from existence. Sure, the Internet’s great for finding guns on auction sites but for every convenience the Internet provides, it’s responsible for 10 times the disruptions, obsessions, and inconveniences experienced by us today.

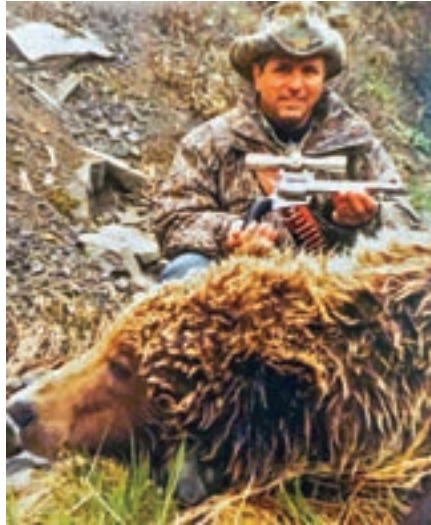
Anyway, Big Al saw a S&W Model 1917 listed in the *Shotgun News* for a mere \$59. Remember *Shotgun News*? The gun was pitted and rusted but Big Al saw potential, or, a new lease



on life for the old battle relic. His gears were churning for a custom gun, the blueprint already in his mind. He wanted an all-around easy-packing back-up piece for hunting.

He bought the gun and scrounged an S&W Model 25 cylinder chambered in .45 Colt to replace the old, tired original. Next, he found a discarded blued S&W Mountain Gun barrel for his project. Everything is boxed up and shipped to Bobby Tyler of Tyler Gun Works to work his magic. Bobby and crew fit the parts to perfection, adding a dovetailed patridge front sight and beautifully blued the gun. A set of new Eagle coke bottle stocks was also added.

Later, Big Al sent the “Franken-gun” to Nelson Ford for tuning and action work, including jewel-ing the hammer and trigger. With the transformation complete, the once well-used, well-abused dog of a battle relic is now a classic looking sixshooter. The contoured curves



This photo of Al DiPrima from John Taffin’s book *Single Action Sixguns* started Tank down the road to his man-crush.

of the thin 4” mountain gun barrel provides a sexy profile — along with being lightweight.

This drool-worthy custom mountain gun would make the heart of any

sixgun aficionado go into myocardial infarction upon seeing it, much less shooting it! Any sixgunner worth their salt would be proud to own such a classic gun. The smooth, slicked-up action and trigger are a testament to what a gun doctor can perform. Double-action pull breaks at 7.5 lbs. and single action pull at 2 lbs. even, without misfires.

Nelson Ford sent a photo showing a one-hole group he fired at 8 yards shooting double action as testament to the gun’s accuracy potential.

HAPPY ENDING

This story demonstrates that while fancy, custom sixguns are cool, it’s the back story that gives the gun its personality. Some things never go out of style and guys like Big Al DiPrima prove it every day by building and carrying cool guns while keeping the mullet alive. Some things never go out of style and Big Al DiPrima is proof in the pudding it doesn’t. **GUNS**

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This paperback has 95 articles with full color photos. It is full of your favorite authors from the pages of *American Handgunner*, *GUNS Magazine* and our *Special Editions*. You will enjoy this romp down memory lane as you read — and re-read — stories behind these historical guns of Smith & Wesson. This book includes all the guns featured between 2010 and 2019.

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FMG Publications — “Best Of Smith & Wesson 2010-2019”	63	Smith & Wesson	3
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FMG Special Editions — Old West	7	Springfield Armory	68
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		Walk The Talk America	64
		WRB Inc.	23



MENTAL HEALTH: IT'S OK TO TALK ABOUT IT.

As firearms owners, we often have a tough time admitting when we need help, and that is particularly true with our psychological struggles. One great way to check in on yourself and your mental state is to take a free and anonymous screening.

Walk the Talk America is made up of gun people who want to help other gun people while protecting our rights.



Take a free & anonymous screening
at WTTA.org/LOVE



GUNS INSIDER

continued from page 66

Future Ammunition — Assuming we're still using actual bullets and powder, ammunition choices will continue to proliferate *in extremis*. Exotic materials and new technology will make it even more difficult to choose the best load:

"Hmmm, lemme see. The deer I'm hunting, codenamed Alpha-1.5T-ECHO, weighs between 180 and 202 lbs. and favors his front left hoof according to my trail cam drone advanced sensor payload. The A.I. hunting prediction computer says I should get a 214-yard shot at him quartering away next Tuesday around sunset. For nostalgia, I'll go with one of my grandad's ancient Model 70s in .30-06. I could pick up a box of the Winchester UltraNuke Depleted Uranium 8,000-grainers or maybe the Federal ('Brought to you by TikTok') Radar-Intercept Sabot 50-grain directed-energy plasma bullet ..."

Likewise, developments in shotgun cartridges mean the .410 eventually will be considered a "big bore" to be used exclusively for things like bear defense, while new guns such as the ultra-lightweight Ithaca .25-caliber side-by-side shotgun will be the most popular choice for upland hunters.

There will also be the continued unrestrained development of new rifle and pistol cartridges. For example, long-range shooters will someday work themselves into a froth on the internet while engaged in endless arguments as to which Creedmoor cartridge is the best for long-range shots — the original iconic 6.5 Creed, the new and improved 6.6 Creedmoor, the revolutionary 6.65 Creedmoor, the game-changing 6.67 Creedmoor or the tack-driving 6.705 Creedmoor. Wildcatters will further experiment with cartridges in between these factory loadings. Berger (owned by Elon Musk) will announce Very Very Very Really Freakin' Low Drag (VVVVRFLD) bullets with a G7 Ballistic Coefficient approaching 8x10 (-2). These have been known to speed up in flight during times of high sunspot activity.

Optics — Every gun in the future will come with some type of optic installed and most will have video recording capability. In fact, in the future it will be nearly impossible to buy a gun, automobile, refrigerator or pair of shoes that isn't equipped with a red dot optic (and it goes without saying — a Picatinny rail).

In the future, the quality of the video recording made by the optic or weapon itself will be a key purchase decision. The better firearms optics will not only calculate windage, elevation and spindrift but overlay weather radar, pick up local television broadcasts, have a full-featured internet browser and receive 400 different pornography channels. Some will even make Julienne fries for that post-hunt cookout.

Gun Magazines — I'm not talking about how you feed your gun, I'm talking about this thing in your hand made of dead trees that feeds your mind. As I've said countless times, I'm bullish on the magazine format so I believe they'll still be around in some form, just as there are still steam locomotives and paddlewheel riverboats. Granted, most of those are abandoned and rusting away somewhere but there are a few working examples.

Of course, the content of shooting magazines will change over time since young people no longer want to write about guns anymore. The gun magazine of the future will likely just reprint press releases from manufacturers mixed with other articles focusing on makeup tips and beard grooming for a YouTube Channel or podcast appearances. As everyone in the future will have their own "platform" and "Brand" regardless if they have anything important or factual to say, looking good will be far more valuable and respected than actual wisdom or facts.

Hmmm, that sounds familiar. So, I guess what I'm saying is — we've already seen the future.

And, frankly, I'm not impressed. That's why I'm making plans to hitch a ride into the sunset on the next passing steamboat. Good luck in 2055! **GUNS**

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1. Publication Title: GUNS Magazine

2. Publication Number: 10446257

3. Filing Date: 9/27/2024

4. Issue Frequency: Monthly

5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 12

6. Annual Subscription Price: \$24.95

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®): 225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): 225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025

9. Full Name and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank): Publisher: Randy Molde, 225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025; Editor: Brent Wheat, 225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025; Managing Editor: Brent Wheat, 225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)

Full Name	Complete Mailing Address
Publisher's Development Corporation	225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025
Dawn von Rosen	225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025
Joanne von Rosen	225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025
Margo Gullickson	225 W Valley Parkway, Suite 100, Escondido, CA 92025

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box: None

Full Name: N/A

Complete Mailing Address: N/A

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one):
 The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes.
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement.)

PS Form 3526, July 2014 (Page 1 of 4) (See instructions page 4) PSN: 7530-01-000-9001 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy notice on www.usps.com

Publication Title	Issue Date	Number of Copies	Total Number of Copies	Number of Copies Outside the United States
GUNS Magazine	September 2024	12,000	12,000	0
GUNS Magazine	August 2024	12,000	12,000	0
GUNS Magazine	July 2024	12,000	12,000	0
GUNS Magazine	June 2024	12,000	12,000	0
GUNS Magazine	May 2024	12,000	12,000	0
GUNS Magazine	April 2024	12,000	12,000	0
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THE ANNIVERSARY TIME CAPSULE

DO NOT OPEN UNTIL 2055

Brent T. Wheat

We have now arrived at *The Insider*, the final story in this magazine. This is my figurative 40 acres of real estate where Your Humble Correspondent hopefully writes something memorable, informative or funny — and usually fails by all metrics. Why should this month be any different?

Regardless, our *topic du jour* should be fairly obvious. Being the final word of our 70th anniversary issue, I think it's wholly appropriate to use these last pages to bring down the curtain on our big Happy Birthday party.

pointless promises a long-drawn-out parting often brings. Leaving someone or something, whether for a few hours or the rest of your life, is best handled by saying whatever needs to be said, tipping your hat and riding off into the sunset. I know — I grew up watching too many westerns, but it still seems to work well in practice. Thus we've now officially shut the door on yesterday, which leaves the present or future as possible topic fodder.

Regarding today ... well, I don't want to be a pessimist or spoil sport but our 2025 societal situation isn't exactly one I'd hold up as a rockin' great party,

history, I'll offer my thoughts on what I think the world of shooting will look like in 30 years as they celebrate the 100th anniversary of *GUNS*. Assuming we haven't yet blown up the planet with nukes or been baked alive from climate change due to cow flatulence and Styrofoam coolers, I only hope the future generation uses this information to better understand the current ethos and appreciate our outlook. And in case any of those future people are wondering — No, I don't have a gas leak in my office. There are several open tubes of model airplane glue, but no gas leak.

THE PREDICTIONS

Future Guns — Firearms of the future will undoubtedly be based on some type of electronic technology, lasers or some other heretofore undiscovered directed energy transfer method. These guns will be 100% effective, selectable as to the desired terminal effects, clean, inexpensive, easy to use and completely restricted to government-only use after the 2034 election.

Meanwhile, those of us clinging to our guns and Bibles will continue clinging. Remington Arms will have been sold another 153 times and end up being owned by Apple. Springfield Armory will have set a record by unveiling 116,000 different firearms models in a single year while S&W will still have the ugly lock on the side of their revolvers. Sometime around 2035, I predict Ruger will buy Microsoft.

Rifles will commonly weigh under 2 lbs. and shoot .25 MOA out of the box, while handguns will come from the manufacturer equipped with an incredible array of high-tech accessories, government-mandated safeties and a suppressor. The average CCW pistol will tip the scales at around 7 lbs. and have an OAL of approximately 24".

continued on page 65



THE REARVIEW MIRROR

Don't worry, this is not going to be one last mucoidal wad of hoopla as I think we've had plenty of self-congratulations by this point. When we started discussing ideas for this issue, former Publisher Roy Huntington offered one important insight — readers will quickly tire of too much "Hooray for us!" so we needed to avoid it. This is why I focused on all the great stuff we've offered over the years and how it relates to our readers, rather than name-dropping the world-class writers and shooters who have graced our magazine.

And now we're officially done looking backward. I like to keep my "good-byes" simple and short so there are none of the awkward pauses and

so let's scratch "current events" off our list. This only leaves the misty horizons of tomorrow.

This being an anniversary issue, I realized there is a better-than-normal chance somebody will look up these words in the future, much like I did while compiling this issue. Therefore I decided this edition of *The Insider* would best serve as the official *GUNS* 70th Anniversary time capsule.

As to contents, your typical time capsule contains present-day items to give future generations an idea of what life was like "way back when." In our case, the magazine itself serves as a good resource so we'll move onto the other common feature of many time capsules — predictions for the future.

Given I have prime box seats to the firearms industry plus a keen sense of



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