

SHOOTING INDUSTRY

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

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— **5th** —
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Issue

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She Sells More
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More Than “Just A Fad”

Welcome to *Shooting Industry’s* 2023 Woman’s Issue — the fifth annual edition devoted to empowering and educating FFL dealers in their efforts to serve women. As you’ve no doubt noticed on a near-daily basis, the presence of women in gun stores isn’t just a fad.

According to research from Southwick Associates’ Nancy Bacon, women represented 39% of firearms buyers from 2015–2020. Since the events of 2020, there’s a legitimate claim the proportion of women customers has only increased.

Don’t miss the numerous features and columns inside on generating additional sales from this ever-growing demographic.

Have a comment after reading this issue? Contact the *SI* team: comments@shootingindustry.com.

PRODUCTS FOR WOMEN ON THE GO

Between tragic headlines and uncomfortable personal experiences, women are often motivated to visit their local gun stores to ensure they’re equipped to defend themselves. Maria Dockery, owner of Femme Fatale ARMS, developed her business model to cater to the needs of women interested in self-defense — the products she carries are driven by customer requests.

“We don’t underestimate the intelligence of our customers, and we don’t sell substandard products. We carry pepper spray, tactical flashlights, belly wrap gun holsters — you name it. The key is making sure everything is great quality and laid out in a way that’s inviting for women,” she advises.

For more, see “Safety Top Of Mind For Women On The Go” on **p. 40–42**.

WOMEN-OWNED STORE PERSPECTIVES

In “She Sells More Than Seashells,” Carolee Anita Boyles interviews three dealers who share why they opened their stores and how they’ve effectively served women in their communities.



MARCH 2023

Jessica Ulrich, owner of the Marksman Indoor Range in Waterloo, Neb., sheds light on her store’s philosophy to expanding the shooting sports to women: “I try to take the fear out of gun ownership and the fear out of defensive shooting and focus more on sport.”

SHOT SHOW HIGHLIGHTS

As reported in last month’s issue, the SHOT Show “buzz” was back. In *Industry News*, attendees and exhibitors share their overall impressions from a successful show, (**p. 10**), while Massad Ayooob highlights the “Top Self-Defense Products From SHOT” bound to make an impression this year with consumers (**p. 44**).

COMING NEXT MONTH: PRECISION MARKET, RANGE CAMERAS & MORE

Prior to the pandemic and snarled supply chain, the precision long-range market represented a growing niche in the firearms industry. With ammunition availability recovering from the demand surge of self-defense customers, the precision market can expect a boost in 2023, according to the dealers interviewed by Tim Barker.

Also next month, B.A. Stear of the Shoot Indoors franchise shares how the “hidden benefits” of using cameras on the range elevate the customer experience.

Additional highlights of the April issue include two stores’ niche marketing efforts, tips for “spring cleaning” your digital presence, e-commerce development and how to navigate insurance coverage. **SI**

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A QUESTION FOR YOU

I have a question for the storefront FFLs: Did you just plunk down thousands of dollars and open a gun shop, or did you start out small and build your business slowly? I think the industry attitude is asinine. You discourage new dealers. I believe this is all a smokescreen. You resent the competition from any new gun shop.

I fought my county to sell guns from my home and won a court battle. I had opened a temporary storefront while the lawsuit took its course. When I moved from my storefront to my home, I discovered no wholesaler would sell guns to me. I would not allow the county or the gun industry to beat me, so I decided to only do transfers. In my area, a transfer at a storefront costs \$45 per firearm. So I decided to do them for \$5 each. Every year my business doubles.

Last year I transferred 300 firearms at \$5 each. Some people said it's too low and paid me more. But most of my satisfaction is taking away business from the storefront FFLs.

I wanted to get into this business to make gun ownership affordable. Now it's to punish the gun industry for discriminating against me and protecting the storefronts. My goal is to do every transfer in my county and the surrounding counties. By the way, I am

I wanted to get into this business to make gun ownership affordable. Now it's to punish the gun industry for discriminating against me and protecting the storefronts.

making a profit of \$5 per firearm. The 4473s are free. It takes 10 minutes to process a transfer. That equates to \$30 per hour. At \$5 per transfer, I'm costing the local gun shops \$13,500 per year.

I resent being called a hobbyist. I'm small because you force me to be small. But each year, I take more of the local gun shops' business from them. If the wholesalers would concentrate on making maximum profit and let the free market

take its course, we could all profit. The gun industry is rigged. I will renew my FFL this year and continue to be a thorn in their side.

— **Brian Gross, Owner**
2nd Amendment Shop
Bonaire, Ga.

INFIGHTING NEEDS TO STOP

Over the past 36+ years, I have had very interesting experiences with my FFL and SOT. I have done things and brought things to the table that the vast majority of storefront FFLs cannot do. I can get away with doing these things because I am not tied down the same way a storefront is.

One perfect example is recovering the firearms and submachine guns given to Colonel Andrew Stiller after WWII. Stiller was a close friend for several decades of General George S. Patton, and was Patton's combat field commander during his steamroller through France and deep into Germany. A pristine MP-40 was found which had been missing from Patton's combat command firearms collection for the past 50 years. All the firearms recovered are now on display at the General George Patton Museum of Leadership in Fort Knox, Ky.

This bickering and fighting between storefront FFLs and home-based FFLs has got to stop — and stop now. We're only hurting ourselves and giving the anti-firearm forces ammunition to use against us.

And our distributors, they have to stop the discrimination against home-based FFLs. The distributors are making the problem worse and are setting everyone up for attacks from the anti-firearm forces that hate our guts.

We have one goal and one goal only, protect the Second Amendment and provide the opportunity to all Americans who can legally own a firearm to own that firearm, if they want to. **SI**

— **Richard Merton Bruland, Owner**
Merts Bad Arms
Marysville, Kan.

HAVE A THOUGHT WHILE READING THE ISSUE?

Let us know at comments@shootingindustry.com or facebook.com/shootingindustry.



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SHOT SHOW BRINGS STRONG ATTENDANCE, RECORD EXHIBIT SPACE

Courtesy of NSSF

The 45th SHOT Show, owned and operated by NSSF, was held Jan. 17–20 at the Venetian Expo and Caesars Forum in Las Vegas — featuring more events and exhibit space than ever before. Strong attendance, enthusiastic buyers and sellers and a series of packed special events that collectively made up “SHOT Week” resulted in one of the top-rated SHOT Shows to date.

More than 52,000 industry professionals packed the 13.9 miles of aisles over four days eager to view new, innovative products used for target shooting, hunting, outdoor recreation and law enforcement.

“The industry was back in full force at this year’s SHOT Show, and the energy and momentum among all of the attendees was palpable,” said Chris Dolnack, NSSF SVP and chief customer officer. “I always say SHOT Show is like Christmas morning and the Super Bowl all in one, and this year it was that and more. We’re thrilled at the positive response from our attendees and optimistic for a strong year of industry sales to come.”

More than 2,500 companies displayed products and services in booths covering more than 816,000 net square feet and attracting attendees from 115 countries

and all 50 states.

SENTIMENTS FROM THE SHOW FLOOR

“I’m incredibly excited by the outcome of SHOT Show 2023; we easily had four to five times as much traffic through our booth than any year we’ve ever had,” said Jay Reis, Rushing Ranges CEO.

Ben Fleming, VP of sales at BPI Outdoors, said, “The one thing we value most is our wonderful partnerships with our customers. The SHOT Show offers us the ability to work with each one of these valuable customers. We truly wouldn’t be where we are as a company without the people at this show and we’re extremely grateful for their support and friendship.”

“SHOT is very valuable to my team in a number of ways. We are able to be face-to-face with the leadership of our vendor partners, which allows us to have open conversations that lead to better deals and partnerships long term,” said Hunter Simmons, COO of Simmons Sporting Goods. “SHOT is invaluable for bringing the industry together in the best way.”

“In the firearm industry, there’s no better way to set the tone for the year than by attending SHOT Show,” said Sarah Joy Albrecht, founder and executive director of Hold My Guns. “As a nonprofit in this space, the valuable connections we made will help us reach and support even more gun owners in 2023.”

Aaron Oelger, Hodgdon Powder Co. VP of sales and marketing, added, “I was pleasantly surprised by the number and quality of the dealers stopping by our booth. Buyers were eager to buy and seemed very optimistic about the potential of 2023.”

Continued on p. 12

IRON VALLEY SUPPLY EXPANDS SALES OFFICES

Iron Valley Supply has announced the opening of its new sales office in Downingtown, Pa., as well as the expansion of its sales office in Chapin, S.C. According to a company press release, these moves “will allow Iron

Valley Supply to better serve a growing dealer base while expanding our national footprint.”

The new sales office in Downingtown has space to accommodate 25 account managers — which is significant, as there is not a warehouse attached to this location.

The expanded sales office in Chapin can fit up to 12 account managers. Iron



Valley Supply’s entire merchandising team also works out of this location, which will allow the company “to aggressively grow vendor offerings.”

[/ ironvalleysupply.com](http://ironvalleysupply.com)



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Continued from p. 10

HONORING INDUSTRY'S LEADERS

NSSF announced its 2023 Hall of Fame inductees, honoring three industry leaders who left indelible marks on the industry and the shooting sports. The NSSF Hall of Fame was launched at the 2020 show to honor industry leaders for their contributions to NSSF, the SHOT Show and the heritage of target shooting and hunting in America. This year's inductees were Bill Ruger Sr., Richard Lipsey and Bob Behn.

SUPPLIER SHOWCASE

The two-day Supplier Showcase featured 539 OEM third-party suppliers meeting with exhibiting manufacturers and exploring their needs for extrusions, fabrication, fabrics, machinery, metal, plastics, software, logistical support and tools.

"For a company like us with 40 people, it's a great fit. We can come show our wares for two days. The bigger companies come up here and walk around and the engineering people will talk to us. We've done it every year, and it's really helped us increase our business," said Jeff Miller, Active Manufacturing sales manager.

"I've invited many other suppliers to this show — it's a great show for mingling with other suppliers and getting great customers," said Martin Levy, business development manager for DiFruscia Industries.

"As a manufacturer, we're always looking for new possibilities with customers. It's a win-win when we get to meet new people. Not only do we get to pick up potential new customers, but they also get a solution to whatever application or issue they're facing," said Jessica Ramos, regional sales manager for RÖHM Products America Inc.

EDUCATION SESSIONS

Education sessions for firearm retailers, shooting range operators, exporters and law enforcement professionals are an important segment of SHOT Show. This year, over 6,000 industry members attended SHOT University, the Law Enforcement Education Program and Export Training Sessions for in-person classes on compliance, operations and



The welcome return of a packed Venetian Expo exhibit hall during the opening morning of SHOT Show 2023.



The industry was back in full force at this year's SHOT Show, and the energy and momentum among all of the attendees was palpable."

Chris Dolnack, NSSF
SVP & Chief Customer Officer

much more.

Traci Lewellin, owner of Gun City, shared, "SHOT University adds an amazing value for us. I can come in here, have our managers still out looking at booths and I can learn some of the educational processes to take back to our stores and try to implement them over the next year."

OFF-SITE "SHOT WEEK" HIGHLIGHTS

Many official show events cluster around the four days of the SHOT Show, creating "SHOT Week." Among them was the NSSF/HAVA Golf Classic in

support of Honored American Veterans Afield, a firearm industry-run charitable organization that helps the healing of disabled combat veterans through participation in hunting and the shooting sports.

Also, Industry Day at the Range on the day before the SHOT Show gives invited media members and buyers a truly exclusive opportunity to preview and test the latest guns, gear and gadgets before anyone else in the industry. This year, 3,400 attendees and exhibitors were in attendance.

EXPANDED NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES

This year, the show provided more networking opportunities than ever before with an exciting new element: "SHOT After Dark," featuring three evenings of events that included two networking receptions and an All-Star Jam Concert for all show attendees.

"This year is one of the best shows I've ever been a part of," said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF president and CEO. "On behalf of NSSF, I'd like to thank all the attendees, exhibitors, media members and our guests for helping the industry to succeed and supporting NSSF's mission."

Preparations have already begun for the 46th SHOT Show, slated for January 23–26, 2024.

[/ nssf.org / shotshow.org](https://nssf.org/shotshow.org)

SHOOT LIKE A GIRL RELEASES 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Shoot Like A Girl released its 2022 Annual Report, showcasing its impact on firearm safety and empowerment training for women. It included a record number of mobile range attendees during the Shoot Like A Girl trailer's "Sea to Shining Sea" tour.

"In 2022, Shoot Like A Girl hosted 3,547 guests, with an estimated 8,686 who participated without signing into the experience inside. 2023 marks the 15th year of Shoot Like A Girl, and I'm extremely proud of the impact we've made so far," said Karen Butler, founder and president of Shoot Like A Girl.

In 2022, Shoot Like A Girl saw a 99% confidence rate from guests who visited the trailer. Significantly, 10% of guests had never shot a firearm before, while 19% shot years ago, 40% shot infrequently and 31% shot frequently.

"I came with my 65-year-old mother who had never shot a gun before. The Shoot Like A Girl team made her feel confident, comfortable and safe," said one mobile range attendee.

Guest surveys from the 2022 "Sea to Shining Sea" tour revealed a wide range of shooting experience levels, planned firearm purchases and intended purposes for owning a gun. As many as 35% of attendees purchased one or more firearms, with even more committing to buying one in the future. The leading intended purpose for purchasing a firearm was home defense.

The bulk of Shoot Like A Girl guests had no prior experience with archery, but 30% planned to purchase a bow.

Shoot Like A Girl hosted six industry hunts in 2022 through its Hunt Like A Girl arm, added in 2021. The hunts gave 56 women the opportunity to visit all-female hunting camps and participate in turkey, pheasant and duck hunting. Every one of the Hunt Like A Girl guests reported they



would recruit other women to experience the power of hunting together.

Throughout the year, Shoot Like A Girl also donated to multiple veteran, hunting and youth shooting programs.

Shoot Like A Girl's 2023 mobile range tour is underway.

"As we move forward, we recognize there is much more work to do. Women, men, families and communities are showing an immense need for confidence in firearm safety, and we're fully prepared to meet those needs," Butler said.

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BERSA ANNOUNCES U.S. FACILITY, LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

Bersa launched its BAR15 rifle and BAR9 pistol lines, manufactured in the company's Kennesaw, Ga., facility at January's 2023 SHOT Show in Las Vegas.

The BAR product line features AR-style rifles in .556 NATO and 300 Blackout, and as AR-style pistols in 9mm and .556 NATO.

Bersa simultaneously launched a new website offering customers a clean, modern, easy-to-navigate platform. By clicking on the Purpose tab, customers can easily sort through the categories of self-defense, concealed carry, competition, recreational and L.E./military.

The website features the new BAR line, in addition to the full lineup of Bersa's most popular pistols, accessories and merchandise.

"The Bersa brand is completely relevant for today's consumers. We (have



been) excited to bring a fresh look to our consummate product line at the SHOT Show and online on our new website," said Rafael Del Valle, national director of sales for Bersa.

[/ bersa.com](https://bersa.com)

FERNANDEZ HOLDINGS ACQUIRES KASH CA, NAMES EXECUTIVES

Fernandez Holdings Inc. (FHI) announced its acquisition of Kash CA, and has repositioned the company as Freedom Munitions LLC.

The Freedom Munitions umbrella includes the Ammo Load Worldwide and X-Treme Bullets brands, as well as LAX Ammunition retail locations.

The purchase was finalized in August of last year, in an amicable sale by previous Kash CA owner Daniel Kash. He now serves as a consultant for the brands, lending his expertise in ammunitions manufacturing and customer relations.

Fernandez Holdings plans to broaden production capacity, while also seeking

more ways to vertically integrate across the entire manufacturing process.

Toby Thill, former GM of Freedom Munitions, has been named president of the new organization. Thill has been with Freedom Munitions for 17 years, and has valuable experience with all aspects of ammunition development and manufacturing.

"The transition from KASH CA to Freedom Munitions has been seamless thus far. Dan Kash and I agree this was a great move to solidify the future of this company as a premier ammunition, components and technology manufacturer," said Thill.

Additionally, Tadd Wooton was named CFO of the newly consolidated organization. Wooton had been the CFO of Solutionz Inc., an audio-visual systems integrator also owned by FHI, since 2015.

X-Treme Bullets will maintain its



manufacturing operations in Carson City, Nev., with an emphasis on plated bullets. LAX Ammunition will continue to serve as Southern California's largest ammunition retailer and firing range.

Manufacturing facilities throughout Idaho will still produce high-quality ammunition and components, while constantly engineering new designs and building high-end ammunition loading equipment.

[/ freedommunitions.com](https://freedommunitions.com)

NSSF TO PROVIDE FINANCING OPTIONS FOR RETAIL MEMBERS

The NSSF announced Credova, a financing platform offering buy-now, pay-later services, has been added to its Affinity Partner network.

Credova specializes in outdoor recreation and sporting goods point-of-sale financing for manufacturers and retailers, providing customers with multiple financing products and solutions. The company was formed in response to consumer demand for manageable monthly payments on purchases.

Customers have the option of applying for and using various financing options

in a physical store or via an e-commerce platform. Options include four payments, no-interest and longer financing options of up to 36 months.

Credova will allow NSSF members exclusive access to special offers, accessible via NSSF's member portal, and also will provide members volume-based rebate incentives.

"Credova is a respected provider of the buy-now, pay-later consumer payment services options, and NSSF is pleased to make this new benefit available to its members who sell at retail," said Samantha Hill, NSSF director of member services.

"We are looking forward to a long and prosperous relationship with the



NSSF. It is my hope we can deliver compelling financial services to the entire NSSF member base. We look forward to continuing to serve the industry with our buy-now, pay-later products," said Kamron Davis, Credova's chief revenue officer.

[/ nssf.org](https://nssf.org)
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HAVA, NSSF HOLD NINTH GOLF CLASSIC

Honored American Veterans Afield (HAVA) and NSSF held their ninth HAVA/NSSF Golf Classic tournament at the world-class Bear's Best Golf Club in Las Vegas on Jan. 15, prior to the industry's annual SHOT Show.

The tournament drew 34 teams (136 outdoor industry participants) to the Jack Nicklaus-designed course for a fun day of golf and fellowship, with 26 teams finishing under par.

The annual event has become a rewarding addition to SHOT Show, offering camaraderie, food and a wide variety of raffle prizes donated by industry companies to support HAVA's mission to assist disabled veterans.

"Despite the tough playing conditions, industry participants came out for fun, and again made an amazing showing of support for our injured veteran programs.



The HAVA/NSSF Golf Classic, held the day prior to SHOT Show 2023, funds a number of HAVA's annual programs. (Image: NSSF)

The support of our many sponsors each year, which assists HAVA in its mission to help our veterans who have made such an enormous sacrifice for our country, is nothing short of incredible. Many thanks to all who supported the event in so many ways," said Tom Taylor, HAVA chairman.

The tournament funds a number of HAVA's annual events. Those include its popular Family Day in San Antonio every year, along with various range days, hunts and other events.

"NSSF has partnered with HAVA on the creation and sponsorship of the Golf Classic from its inception, and it has become the kickoff event to SHOT Show

week each year. Our outdoor industry also loves golf, and this event adds a tangible veteran-support element to the most important week on the shooting sports industry calendar," said Chris Dolnick, NSSF SVP.

HAVA is a 501(c)(3) organization formed by companies in the shooting and outdoor industries to raise awareness of the needs of disabled veterans and assist with their healing process through guided hunts, shooting events and other outdoor sports activities.

[/ honoredveterans.org](http://honoredveterans.org)



PORTED MINI'S



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A GIRL & A GUN RECAPS SUCCESSFUL 2022

In 2022, A Girl & A Gun (AG & AG) events welcomed 38,053 women, including 5,724 new members — an 8% increase over participants in 2021. The organization held 3,535 live events with 20,873 attendees, and 35 virtual events with 17,180 attendees.

Its reputation continually growing, AG & AG breaks barriers for women and girls in self-defense and the shooting sports, and welcomes beginners who want to learn the basics of safe and accurate shooting. New chapters continue to open at host ranges, with 21 chapters added in 2022.

Events have been diverse, with quality training on various platforms and disciplines that also provide instructor

development opportunities for facilitators.

At the beginning of 2022, AG & AG launched a range safety officer (RSO) certification program. This next-level training for RSOs fine-tunes the skills needed for adherence to firearm and range safety and the AG & AG code of conduct at events. By year's end, 95 women had earned this credential, and are now serving their ranges and chapters as RSOs.

In December, AG & AG launched a new line of defensive and competitive targets. Produced by Axle Targets, they provide enhanced training opportunities for AG & AG instructors and members. Four target designs were released before Christmas, and more are in pre-production.

As a community of women, AG & AG supports causes and charities impacting women and make a difference in their lives. In December, several chapters held



food, toy and clothing drives, as well as fundraisers for essential agencies in their communities. Multiple chapters participated in the Wreaths Across America program to honor veterans.

With members in all 50 states, AG & AG hosts recurring Girls' Nights Out at hundreds of ranges throughout the U.S. / agirlandagun.org

STREAMLIGHT CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Streamlight Inc. marks 50 years of manufacturing high-quality flashlight products this month. Since its founding in 1973, Streamlight has grown from a small company with a single product to a global manufacturer of a broad range of high-performance lights for law enforcement, military, firefighting, industrial, automotive, outdoor and DIY users.

"At Streamlight, we've always taken pride in designing and manufacturing lighting products that make our customers' jobs easier, improve their productivity and keep them safe in trying conditions," said Streamlight President and CEO Ray Sharrah. "As we celebrate 50 years of operation, we pledge to continue to leverage the latest advances in LED

and battery technologies to produce ever brighter, more useful lighting tools, while still maintaining our same high-quality standards."

Among the company's most recent innovations, according to Sharrah, are:

- USB rechargeable flashlights and headlamps that offer the convenience of charging on the go from a USB charging source;
- Multi-fuel flashlight "systems" that use a rechargeable battery but also can accept disposable batteries for alternate sources of power;
- New scene lights that are waterproof and offer powerful brightness in situations involving smoke or water;
- A series of compact work lights that fit in tight places, can be used hands-free or hanging, and rotate on their bodies for light wherever it's needed;
- A growing line of weapon-mounted



lights that fit a variety of long guns, shot guns and handguns.

What began as a small operation with several employees has grown into a 240,000 sq. ft. manufacturing and office space in Eagleville, Pa., with more than 350 employees. The company now holds over 525 U.S. and foreign patents, over 135 U.S. and Foreign Trademarks and is ISO 9001:2015 certified. Today, Streamlight's products are available to military and first responders, automotive and industrial professionals, outdoor enthusiasts and other users in the U.S. and in over 40 countries worldwide.

/ streamlight.com



MESA PRECISION ARMS REBRANDS TO PURE PRECISION

Mesa Precision Arms, manufacturer of firearms and accessories, announced it rebranded to Pure Precision effective Feb. 1, 2023. The rebrand coincides with an expansion of the company's manufacturing capabilities and a new line of actions, stocks and metallic components.

Operating as Mesa Precision Arms since 2017, the name change is necessary to better differentiate company branding within the industry and to create a better foundation of growth.

According to a company press release, "The timing of this name change supports the company's rapidly expanding footprint and vertical integration

of manufacturing capabilities. Pure Precision comprises the same team who will continue to manufacture the same (or better) quality products for many years to come."

Company CEO John Hakes added, "As we started expanding our footprint into other aspects of manufacturing and services provided, it became clear that a name to better represent our trajectory was essential. We will always hold Mesa Precision and the Mesa mountains from which it was born close, but Pure Precision is the culmination of who we are. The new brand will represent us well going forward."

Companies under the Pure Precision brand include: Pure Precision Rifles, Pure Precision Composites and Pure Precision Finishes.

The Pure Precision launch



kicked off with a precision rifle bundle giveaway that included a complete lightweight Carbon Ascent rifle chambered in 6.5 PRC with PROOF carbon fiber barrel, Pure Precision Altitude stock, TriggerTech trigger and Nightforce NX8 2.5-20x50mm scope provided by The Battalion.

[/pureprecision.com](http://pureprecision.com)

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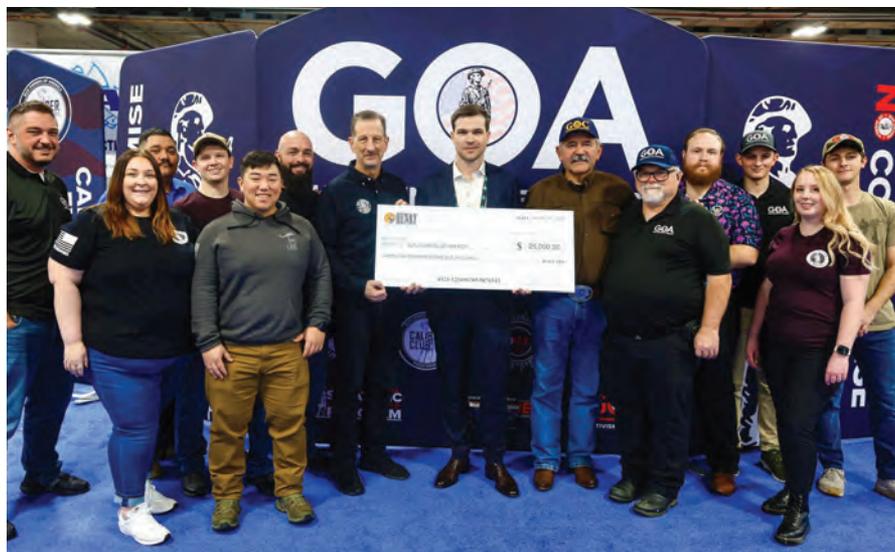
HENRY REPEATING ARMS DONATES \$75,000 TO GUN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Henry Repeating Arms announced donations totaling \$75,000 to several impactful gun rights and Second Amendment advocacy groups as part of its charitable Guns for Great Causes campaign.

The Second Amendment Foundation, Gun Owners of America and the Firearms Policy Coalition each received checks for \$25,000, presented by Henry representatives at this year's SHOT Show in Las Vegas.

"Henry Repeating Arms will never back down when it comes to supporting the individuals and organizations that work tirelessly to fight back against the political degradation of law-abiding Americans' right to keep and bear arms. They have our backs, and we will always have theirs," said Anthony Imperato, CEO and founder of Henry Repeating Arms.

Gun Owners of America, founded in



Henry Repeating Arms VP of Communications Dan Clayton-Luce presents a \$25,000 check to Gun Owners of America's leadership, board members, staff and volunteers at the 2023 SHOT Show.

1976, is a nonprofit lobbying organization representing over 2 million members.

Founded in 1974, the Second Amendment Foundation runs educational and legal action programs to promote a better understanding of the gun control

debate.

The Firearms Policy Coalition provides legal work and grassroots activism through education, and is involved in over 40 active federal court cases.

[/ henryusa.com](http://henryusa.com)

HI-POINT ANNOUNCES DEALER OF THE YEAR

Hi-Point Firearms, an American manufacturer of pistols and carbine rifles for defense, sporting and hunting, recently named Vance Outdoor Inc. its Dealer of the Year.

Vance Outdoor is a sporting goods and law enforcement retail chain of four stores based in Columbus, Ohio. Vance Outdoor has been a strong supporter of MKS brands and Hi-Point firearms for 30 years.

Beginning as a general store in 1938, the company shifted to a full-time emphasis on sporting goods in 1978. The Vance family had maintained ownership until the retail chain's recent transition to employee-owned.

Vance Outdoor currently operates four retail stores located in Columbus, Hebron, Lebanon and Obetz, Ohio, as well as a law enforcement and a marine operation.

"Vance Outdoor has a long history with shooters and outdoor enthusiasts in



MKS Supply President Charlie Brown presents the 2022 Hi-Point Dealer of the Year award to Vance Outdoor's Andrew Hyder during SHOT Show 2023. Pictured (from left): Kyle Smith, Ryan Vance, Brown, Hyder and Kevin Chandler.

the central Ohio region. The company's customer-first approach and dedicated staff have been the winning formula for their 85-year run. We have enjoyed our partnership with the Vance family over the years," said Charlie Brown, president of MKS Supply, Hi-Point's distributor.

All Hi-Point firearms are backed by the company's Real Lifetime Warranty, which means Hi-Point offers repairs for the life of the gun, regardless of ownership lineage.

[/ hi-pointfirearms.com](http://hi-pointfirearms.com)

POWDER VALLEY ACQUIRES PRO-MOTION DISTRIBUTING

Powder Valley, supplier of reloading components, ammunition and accessories, has completed its acquisition of Las Vegas-based Pro-Motion Distributing, a multi-category distributor of e-commerce consumer and commercial products.

Powder Valley offers every brand of powder and primer available in the U.S., along with a growing selection of reloading components, reloading tools and equipment, gun care items and ammunition. Its products are available to retail and wholesale customers in all 50 states. The company's expertise and reach, combined with Pro-Motion's innovative technology solutions, is expected to provide a solid foundation for future

growth.

"We are passionate about shooting, hunting and the outdoors, and see tremendous growth opportunity in this market over the next several years. The technology platforms offered by the Pro-Motion team bring world-class solutions for managing large product catalogs, significantly enhancing our ability to rapidly expand our product offerings and improve our ability to serve customers," said Bill Clinton, CEO of Powder Valley.

"We are excited to bring our technology capabilities and extensive product mix to the table, and work with the talented team at Powder Valley to revolutionize the way sports and outdoor products are sold and distributed. This merger is a win for both companies and for our customers," said Pro-Motion CEO Brian Malewicz.



The merged company will be headquartered in Winfield, Kan. During the integration phase, both companies will continue to operate under their existing brands. Clinton will serve as CEO, Malewicz will be CFO and Paul Thiry will act as COO. [SI](#)

[/ powdervalleyinc.com](http://powdervalleyinc.com)

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NEWSMAKERS



G. ADER

Henry Repeating Arms Promotes Chief Engineer, VP

Henry Repeating Arms announced the promotions of Geoff Ader to chief R&D engineer and Daniel Clayton-Luce to VP of communications.



D. CLAYTON-LUCE

Ader is responsible for positioning the company as a leader in product innovation through the research and development of designs previously unseen.

He joined Henry as an intern in 2017 and graduated from Colorado State University with a B.S. in mechanical engineering.

Clayton-Luce has worked for Henry in various roles for a decade, most recently as director of communications. As VP, he will help formulate and implement the company's marketing, media and PR strategies.



P. HARDING IV

Burris Appoints Sales Manager

As U.S. regional sales manager, Phillip Harding IV will focus on training representatives

and dealers on Burris product knowledge and sales strategy, in addition to targeting key growth opportunities with dedicated support.

Todd Vulton, VP of sales at Burris/Steiner, stated, "His technical knowledge adds depth to our sales team. I'm confident Phil will communicate at a high level to assist any customer needs."

Harding joined Burris in 2014 as a technical support representative.



D. RACINE

Redding Reloading Equipment Names Sales & Marketing VP

Dennis Racine has joined Redding

Reloading Equipment to serve as its VP of sales and marketing.

"Dennis's leadership will be integral in marketing and sales support for our line of reloading equipment," stated Richard Beebe, president and CEO of Redding.

Previously, Racine was with Textron Systems Unmanned Systems as the senior director of military sales and strategy.

Racine earned master's degrees in international business and marketing from Bryant University, and a bachelor's in marketing from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. He also is a certified Six Sigma Black Belt and Green Belt.



B. BOOKS

Creedmoor Sports Advances Merchandising Director

Creedmoor Sports announced the promotion of Brent Books to

director of merchandising, where he'll serve as a driving force within the new product identification and selection process.

"We're excited Brent will be the driving force behind our merchandising," said John Teachey, Creedmoor VP of operations and marketing.

For more than seven years, Books has been instrumental in building out the capabilities and robust product portfolio the company currently offers.



M. BELLITTI

Davidson's Inc. Taps Manager

Davidson's Inc. selected Matt Bellitti for the position of Arizona call center sales manager.

Mike Massimo, VP of sales for Davidson's, stated, "We look forward to seeing [Bellitti's] leadership capabilities further energize and strengthen our account executives as well as develop sound strategies to help our dealer base continue to

succeed."

Prior to joining Davidson's, Bellitti was the general manager-turned-president of a firearm accessory manufacturing company.



B. PLOWFIELD

Maxim Defense Industries Announces Sr. Sales Director

Bobby Plowfield is the new senior director of distribution sales for

Maxim Defense where he is tasked with accelerating the company's growth and strengthening its presence throughout the distribution and dealer channels.

David Farrell, VP of commercial sales for Maxim Defense, said, "Bobby is a highly passionate, action-oriented professional with years of supply chain management and industry knowledge."

Before joining Maxim, Plowfield enjoyed a successful career as a buyer for the RSR Group.

He earned a B.S. in finance from the University of Central Florida and is a Certified Professional in Supply Management from the Institute for Supply Management.



J. STAFFORD

O.F. Mossberg & Sons Inc. Welcomes L.E./ Military Sales Manager

Jeremy Stafford has joined Mossberg as its law enforcement

(L.E.) and military sales manager. In this role, Stafford will have responsibility for all the company's sales operations in the L.E. and military markets.

"Jeremy's deep understanding of L.E. and military professionals will be instrumental in aligning Mossberg to meet our goals of better serving the L.E. and military communities," shared John MacLellan, Mossberg's VP of sales and marketing.

Stafford has over three decades of L.E. and military experience.

He also worked as a writer, host and contributor for the Outdoor Sportsman Group.



B. SILVERIA

Streamlight Inc. Selects Sales Manager

Brice Silveria was named regional sales manager for Streamlight's Federal/Military Division.

He is responsible for the sales development of the company's products to the federal, military and government markets, as well as maintaining relationships with distributors and sales agencies.

Streamlight Chief Revenue Officer Michael F. Dineen stated, "[Silveria's] extensive ... experience will be very helpful in responding to the lighting needs of the various U.S. military divisions, as well as recognizing new opportunities for Streamlight."

Silveria previously served as government accounts manager at Quantico Tactical following a 10-year career in various roles with the U.S. Coast Guard.



M. WOODWARD

Nosler Inc. Advances Managers

Nosler announced the recent promotions of Madi Woodward to the role of brand marketing manager, and John Nason to senior business development manager.



J. NASON

Woodward assumed the new role after holding several different titles within the company's

marketing department.

Nason joined Nosler in the spring of 2022 to lead industry relations and assist in the implementation of a business development division within the organization.



K. ARNOLD

TenPoint Crossbow Technologies Promotes Sales VP

TenPoint Crossbow Technologies promoted Keith Arnold to VP of sales. He will manage all

functions of the sales operation within TenPoint.

TenPoint President and CEO Phil Bednar said, "[Arnold's] 30 years of experience in the archery industry, both from a selling and buying perspective, and his unmatched passion and excitement for the outdoors makes him incredibly valuable to the organization."

Arnold joined the company in 2019 and has served as national sales manager and brand manager over his tenure. Prior to joining TenPoint, he held roles at Plano Synergy, Kinsey's Archery Products and French Creek Outfitters.



R. JEFFERY

Can-Am Sales Group LLC Names Outdoors VP

Ray Jeffery is now serving Can-Am Sales Group's VP Outdoors, a newly created position.

Jeffery will lead the sales team members responsible for customers in the Outdoor & Sporting goods categories, while continuing to manage key customers.

Can-Am Sales Group President Scott Makway shared, "With over 20+ years of sales, retail and merchandising experience, I am confident Ray will do a fantastic job leading our sales efforts."

Jeffery joined the company in 2021 as senior account manager. His experience stems from a variety of retail and senior account management positions.



P. GRILLONE

SK Guns Names CCO

SK Guns has named Peter Grillone its chief creative officer. Grillone will be responsible for leading a team of

designers, historians and copywriters on the rapid growth of the SK brand.

Simon Khiabani, owner and founder of SK Guns and SK Customs said, "With his unique style and extensive experience in photography and creative services, I have no doubt he will contribute greatly to the growth of SK Guns and SK Customs."

Grillone most recently served as the

commercial photographer for a variety of brands in the firearm industry such as Wilson Combat and Nighthawk Custom.



A. GRAHAM

Orchid Taps Chief Firearms & Explosives Officer

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) senior executive Andrew Graham has joined Orchid's team to serve as chief firearms and explosives officer.

Attorney and Orchid VP of Regulatory Services Philip Milks stated, "[Graham] will play a key role in assisting clients with complex inspection matters, firearm classifications and strategic matters related to firearm industry mergers and acquisitions licensing and sunseting. Of significant value will be Andy's expertise of Firearm & Ammunition Excise Tax (FAET)."

Graham most recently served as the deputy assistant director of enforcement programs and services during his 37-year ATF career.

Prior to joining the DOJ, he studied at George Mason University and Harvard University. He also served in the U.S. Air Force and both District of Columbia and Tennessee Air National Guards.



D. DEMENT

Franklin Armory Appoints Brand/Product Director

Franklin Armory Inc. announced the appointment of Dan Dement to brand and

product marketing director. In his new role, Dement will oversee Franklin Armory's brand development, product marketing, advertising, social media and media relations.

Dement joins the company with more than 20 years of experience in multiple industries, including firearms, internet technology, higher education and publishing. Most recently, he managed marketing communications for Firearms Policy Coalition, a Second Amendment advocacy group. **SI**

BY MASSAD AYOUB



DISPELLING SELF-DEFENSE MYTHS: PART 3

In our past couple of columns in this space, we've touched on giving customers a shorthand education on when they can (and can't) use the lethal force of a firearm in self-defense. We'll finish the series here with some more of the common myths and misunderstandings we in the industry have an ethical duty to dispel.

1.5 SECONDS, 7 YARDS

How many times have we heard, "You can't pull out your gun until you're justified in shooting your opponent"? I presume you're familiar with the long-running "Armed Citizen" column in the NRA magazines, detailing stories of successful defense. You must have noticed how many of those end without bloodshed. Every study in the last half-century shows this is the case in the majority of DGUs (Defensive Gun Usages), usually to somewhere in the 90th percentile.

Are we to throw away this life-saving deterrent effect by waiting to draw until the criminal's deadly attack is already underway and there is no alternative left but to shoot him?

Moreover, this bad advice hampers the armed citizen's survivability. Dennis Tueller's 1983 research proved from a

standing start, the average adult male can close 7 yards distance and inflict a fatal knife wound in 1.5 seconds. At the fabled Gunsite Academy, one graduation exercise is drawing the pistol from open carry and scoring two hits from 7 yards in ... 1.5 seconds. (Correlation: at the end of 1.5 seconds the person who waited to draw has been stabbed, with the cold comfort of "taking his assailant with him.")

If instead the knife-wielding criminal suspect is taken at gunpoint *before* he starts to lunge, the defender can now get his first shot into him in as little as one-third of a second if the suspect does begin to move forward. This gives the armed citizen a much better window of survival if shooting does become necessary ... and, remember, creates a deterrent effect that's highly likely to result in the opponent breaking off his assault, and no one being shot at all.

CASTLE DOCTRINE MISUNDERSTANDINGS

Who among us has not heard, "I'll kill any stranger I find in my house! Castle Doctrine says I can!" Actually, the doctrine says nothing of the kind. An inheritance from ancient English Common Law, the Castle Doctrine does indeed say one's home is one's castle, and attacked there by an

◀ Whether out in public or defending the "castle," firearms owners need to be aware of legal, appropriate uses of lethal force. There's a lot of bad advice out there — which could give you an opportunity to take a leadership role and educate customers in a seminar-type setting. (Image: Ruger)

intruder one need not retreat before using appropriate force in self-defense. However, there must still be an articulable deadly danger to warrant firing a shot.

Castle Doctrine is for protection against *criminal intruders*. We have to remind the customer there is any number of situations where someone unknown to them could be inside their dwelling for perfectly legal reasons. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Another member of the family may have had to call an electrician or plumber and gave them entry to the home.
- In a rented home, it might be the landlord performing an inspection or some other routine task.
- Our teenage kid may have brought a young friend home because the latter was so drunk his or her parents would have punished them for being in that condition.
- A member of the household may have gone out for a late-night walk or early-morning run without notifying family members, and be mistaken for an intruder upon their return.

Ask the customer how many friends, relatives or housekeepers have keys to their home for emergencies, and then ask if it isn't possible such a person might arrive unannounced at an unexpected time. There have been tragic mistaken identity shootings in all of the above situations, and more.

As of this writing, I'm presently working on a murder case that evolved from an invited guest going rogue and savagely attacking the elderly homeowner who had invited him — forcing the latter to shoot the raging guest in self-defense. Castle Doctrine won't be an issue in this case. An invited or initially welcomed guest is seen as having a right to be present there.

The shorthand explanation I give is, "Your home is indeed your castle, but it doesn't mean you're allowed to have an execution chamber there. All the issues of self-defense justification discussed in

the first part of this series must still be present to justify deadly force.”

TALKING TO THE POLICE

We constantly hear, “Never talk to the police after a shooting! Cops don’t have to say anything when *they’re* involved in a shooting, so why should we?” There’s so much wrong with this bad advice.



Ask the customer how many friends, relatives or housekeepers have keys to their home for emergencies, and then ask if it isn’t possible such a person might arrive unannounced at an unexpected time.

To begin with, police officers involved in line-of-duty shootings most certainly *do* “have to say something” in the immediate aftermath. It’s called a “public safety statement.” Responding officers and other emergency personnel need to know if any violent criminal suspects are still at large. (If you follow self-defense shootings, you know how often multiple criminals attack, one of them is shot in self-defense by their intended victim and the others run away.)

Police need an idea of what direction shots were fired in, so they can check and make sure stray bullets haven’t struck innocent victims. An officer will frequently be *ordered* to answer questions about his or her shooting or face termination: It’s

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known in general as a *Garrity* statement or in California as a *Lybarger* statement, named after high court cases which required such.

Let’s go back to the “Armed Citizen” column in the NRA magazines. You must have noted how often the story ends with “The citizen was not arrested or charged.” Does anyone seriously believe this will be the outcome when the police arrive and find one person dead from gunshot wounds, the other in possession of the “smoking gun” and the shooter said nothing to the police? Seriously?

The “don’t talk to the police” advice tracks largely to law professor James Duane and his super-popular video lecture on YouTube of the same title. It’s excellent advice for guilty people, but falls short in some respects for law-abiding citizens who fired in self-defense.

In professor Duane’s own subsequent book, *You Have the Right to Remain Innocent* (2016), on page 122, he explicitly says, “At the risk of stating the obvious, you should of course talk to the police (although as briefly as possible) in those situations in which the law requires you to call them (to let them know, for example, you have been involved in an automobile accident *or a shooting* in which someone has been seriously injured or killed), or if you are a witness to or the victim of a crime...” (Italics are mine.)

The point here is some things do need

to be stated at the scene where a firearm has been used in self-defense. I have long recommended a five-point checklist:

1. “This man attacked me with a knife” (or whatever it was that led to the gun coming out).
2. Indicate cooperation (“I will sign a complaint against this person,” or words to that effect).
3. Point out evidence before it disappears.
4. Point out witnesses before they disappear.
5. As to any further questioning at the scene, promise cooperation after you’ve spoken with legal counsel and invoke your right to remain silent.

I hope the above has been helpful. The two books you might want to have on sale for your customers that speak directly to this topic are *Law of Self-Defense* by attorney Andrew Branca and my own, *Deadly Force*. They are available wholesale from lawofselfdefense.com/wholesale and jim@gundigest.com, respectively.

Editor’s Note: This concludes our series of self-defense myth-busting, which will help you keep well-intentioned customers away from tragic mistakes. Would you like to see additional articles on this topic? Send a note to editor@shootingindustry.com. Part 1 and Part 2 of this series are available at shootingindustry.com/discover/personal-defense.



BY KAREN BUTLER

BEING YOUR CUSTOMERS' CHEERLEADER

New customers are continuing to visit your store every day — many having made the decision to buy their first firearm. These customers shop differently than your experienced gun owners and need a bit of encouragement. The salesperson needs to be the customer's cheerleader.

Customers need a cheerleader for three reasons:

1. To validate their decision to buy a gun.
2. To allay their fears of hurting themselves or someone they love.
3. To encourage them to get the training they need to be a safe and responsible gun owner.

WHY VALIDATION IS IMPORTANT

Customers buying a gun for the first time need the salesperson to validate their decision. The demographics of first-time gun buyers are evolving and include more older adults. In Shoot Like A Girl's recent Annual Report, of their 3,457 guests who participated in 2022, 67% were over 40 years old — 17% of those were over 60 years old. This is a long time to live without feeling like there was a need to buy a gun, but here we are today, as gun sales continue to be strong.

Data also tells us most new gun owners are purchasing firearms for personal protection. For these

customers, coming to terms with their decision is a constant process. As their cheerleader, retailers can validate their decision and also acknowledge the courage the customer is showing.

For example, an elderly customer comes in to buy a gun for the first time.

Retailer: "Is this your first gun?"

Customer: "Yes."

Retailer: "Wow, that's great! You're making a good decision."

It's subtle, but this little bit of encouragement will more than likely lead to different conversations than you have with experienced gun owners. Experienced gun owners typically don't want to talk about the features of the gun and/or gun safety; they like to talk about hunting, range time or general information about guns. Comparatively, first-time gun buyers want to discuss the specific features of the gun and learn as much as they can from the "expert" salesperson. The first-time gun buyer may tell you a long story of how they came to the decision to be in your store. If this happens, retailers should be prepared to listen and follow up with encouragement.

At Shoot Like A Girl, some of the stories we've heard are, quite frankly, horrifying. We always talk about the courage it takes to make the decision for the individual to be responsible for his or her own security. We don't

◀ Encouragement and validation at the point of sale and on the range will only bring positives!

ask detailed questions about our guest's story but show compassion and encouragement toward their decision to learn to be a safe, responsible gun owner.

HELP THEM OVERCOME FEAR

Potential new gun owners also are afraid ... of the gun. Let's face it, mainstream media does not portray guns in a way that makes the average person feel "safe." To add to it, many of us firearms enthusiasts quickly discount their fears by saying things like, "There's nothing to be scared of." While true, it sure doesn't help the new gun owner feel any better.



Saying, 'Get training' can get lost in translation. Retailers can encourage customers to get training by explaining to them the 'why' and the necessity to be safe.

If the salesperson picks up on any fear, we recommend validating the customer's fear. Retailers can tell the customer, "It's okay to be scared." Validate the fear, then follow up by encouraging them with a statement such as, "Having fear means you understand the responsibility, and it will help you be a safer gun owner." If your store offers safety classes, it would be a good opportunity to let the customer know about them — which leads to our next point ...

EXPLAIN THE "WHY" FOR TRAINING

Potential new gun owners also need to be encouraged to get training. If they have finally come to the decision to



◀ It's likely not a line item you thought to add to a job description, but if you can add sales staff who will champion customers — your store will benefit.

purchase a gun, they need to learn how to safely use it. As an industry, we want everyone to be safe. Unfortunately, just saying, "Get training" can get lost in translation. Retailers can encourage customers to get training by explaining to them the "why" and the necessity to be safe.

This encouragement can be blunt — but hey, they need to hear it. If they ever find themselves in a situation where the use of their firearm was their last and only option, they need to be ready. They'll only be prepared through training and practice. However, don't count out the fact training is fun; share with them the fact shooting has the

psychological effect of feeling good from aiming at a target and hitting it.

AN UNLIKELY JOB DESCRIPTION

When you opened your shop or got a job at the gun counter, you might not have thought "cheerleader" would be part of the job description. But to help people buy a gun for the first time, you really need to be one.

Many of these first-time gun buyers have delayed the decision to buy a gun for decades, and if you can recognize and understand *why* they have now made the decision to purchase a gun, it will facilitate the sale. They need a cheerleader who can validate their decision, address their fears and point them in the right direction to get training. If you can do all this, chances are good you just created another long-term customer. **SI**

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BEST PRACTICES



BY AVA FLANNEL

BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH SEMINARS

Women continue to be a buying force in the industry, but the majority of our peers can't seem to figure out how to market properly to women — and if we do, we struggle to maintain their attention.

Women are buying guns, but then what? Are they buying holsters and other accessories to aid their initial desire to have a gun? Are they taking classes so they know how to operate what they just bought or participating in shooting events to advance their skills?

As an industry, what are we doing to retain interest and make it fun and enjoyable for them? We must get creative behind the scenes to keep ahead of the demand.

Many ranges have ladies' night, and some stores offer women-only firearms training classes, but that's old news. To stay on top of the game as business owners, we must constantly evolve and reinvent. Recently, I thought about what women love to do most. Call it predictable, but the majority of us love to socialize with like-minded people, eat and drink — especially when it's wine — and we love to shop. So, I combined all three of these elements and created a women's seminar event with the intention of building a stronger community, empowering women and

igniting an interest that might have recently been dimmed.

LESSONS LEARNED

My first women's seminar was slightly nerve-racking because I wasn't sure if it would be a success or not. With any new endeavor, you stress about the turnout. To get the word out, I used all the resources I had. I sent out an email to all my previous students who had taken my classes and extended the invite to all my girlfriends and requested them to extend it to theirs. Before I knew it, all 20 seats were filled.

I didn't charge anyone to attend this event; I wanted it to be free as an appreciation I showed to the community. This was my first, albeit minor, mistake. Twenty people signed up for the event, but only 14 people showed up. More than likely, because the event was free, nothing was lost on the attendee if she decided that day to do something else with her time.

The venue I used was DCF Guns West, where I'm a shareholder. The indoor range and gun store in Colorado Springs has a nice lounge area with a kitchen located upstairs and overlooks the entire gun store. They also have their liquor license; although I found out in Colorado this isn't mandatory unless you plan to sell liquor to the public. If

◀ Smiles all around after Ava's first seminar — not only did it build a network of like-minded women, it also led to accessory sales immediately afterward.

it's a private event, you don't need one. This might be the same for your state, but you'll want to make sure.

The only thing I charged was \$5 per glass of wine and I encouraged ladies to bring cash so I wouldn't have to charge cards. I made a charcuterie board with meats and cheeses, put out pretzels and crackers and offered a few desserts. The expense for all of this came out of my own pocket, but I'm always looking for a good tax write-off.

BUILDING TRUST

At the first event, the seminar featured "tips and tricks" I've learned over the years. I started with a safety speech, going over all four rules of safe gun handling, and then discussed techniques I used to operate guns, such as the push/pull method when locking a slide back, the Maglula UpLULA to load magazines and ways to absorb the recoil better when shooting. In between, I took time to pass items around the room or have women demonstrate what I just showed them. Absolutely no live ammo was present, and another firearms instructor was there to help supervise.



Before I knew it, I was not only creating a seminar that educated women about firearms, but also a strong network of women.

I highlighted things I preferred, such as eyewear, ear pro, snap caps, red dots and holsters. As I went over these items and shared ways of using them, I could see how excited the women were getting. This seminar offered what seemed to me to be basic advice, but for women who don't have the resource of another

experienced woman showing them what works and doesn't, this advice was gold.

Every woman who attended my event left happy, encouraged and eager to learn and do more. At the end, a lot of them asked me when the next event would be, told me they wanted to enroll in more classes and/or rushed downstairs to look over or purchase the products I discussed in the seminar.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

A realtor and a restaurant owner attended that first seminar. Afterward, they offered to sponsor my next event. The realtor, Wendy Wormal of RE/MAX in Colorado Springs, offered to supply a variety of wines, and Christina Frasca, owner of P74: The Downtown Paninos, an Italian restaurant also located in Colorado Springs, offered to bring a variety of appetizers.

Curious, I asked them why they wanted to do this. For Wormal it seemed like a no-brainer.

She said, "As a realtor and woman, it's important women are comfortable and knowledgeable with firearms in case they have to protect themselves."

Frasca shared she really enjoyed lifting other women up and loved the idea of bringing women together with similar interests.

As I planned the next event, I mentioned it to other ladies I see on a semi-regular basis. People I thought weren't interested in learning about firearms were interested in attending. I told them to bring their business cards so I could introduce them at the event and women could utilize their services if they wanted to.

Before I knew it, I was not only creating a seminar that educated women about firearms, but also a strong network of women who may not be firearms enthusiasts, but who know the importance of the Second Amendment and the ability to be able to protect themselves.

Moving forward, I decided to charge \$15 per person for the women's seminar. This wasn't to make a profit, but was done more for accountability. With only 20 seats available, I wanted to make



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This seminar offered what seemed to me to be basic advice, but for women who don't have the resource of another experienced woman showing them what works and doesn't, this advice was gold.

sure they were all filled and accounted for. Charging a small fee gave women more of a reason to show up even after they might have had a long day and just wanted to go home instead of attending the evening event. With this fee, one glass of wine and the food I'd provided was included.

VALUE OF ON-HAND INVENTORY, COUPON CODES

Each event will have a different topic, so the women who attend every event will learn something new. I didn't set out to make much of a profit from the first event, but if stores decide to do something similar, it would be wise to stock the items covered in the seminars. (After I showed women how the Maglula UpLULA speedloader worked, all of them wanted to purchase one.)

Working with other companies to offer discount codes is effective. For example, I talked about the Flashbang Holster at my first seminar. The ladies who own and operate the company were nice enough to give me a coupon code for the women who attended the event. I didn't receive a kickback from the code used, but I'm sure affiliate codes could be worked out with businesses you cover in the seminar.

Similar seminars and events could be beneficial for stores and ranges. You don't need a range or even room in your gun store. This event can be held in a conference room at a hotel or a bar/restaurant with an event room.

You might not make a ton of money on the event, but getting your name out there, building a strong community and retaining at least part of the largest growing market in the industry will undoubtedly pay off in the future. **SI**

By Nancy Keaton

THE FAMILY WHO TRAINS TOGETHER ...



Image: foxysgraphic / Adobe Stock

Family Safety Classes Encourage Female Customers

As more women enter the shooting world, they like to make it a family affair. Most ranges offer the usual ladies' night or youth classes. Offering kids' programs has, historically, been a great way to draw in women, as most of the classes require an adult to attend with their child. So, these classes are actually family-oriented because of parental involvement.

For example, Training Manager Mark Covington of Reno Guns & Range in Reno,

Nev., requires parents to attend youth classes with their kids in the 6–11 age range, and they have the option of staying for the classes for kids 12–17.

“Most of the parents do choose to stay,” Covington shared. “If they’re interested enough to sign up their kids, they’re interested enough to stay and see what’s being taught.”

FAMILY CLASSES

Changing things up and advertising as “Family Classes” or “Parent-Child Classes” may be even more effective advertising for women who prefer to learn and participate with their kids.

C2Tactical, with locations in Scottsdale and Tempe, Ariz.,

offers “Family Protection Courses.”

“We’ve always offered classes for adults, but we wanted to get more into family awareness and family education,” explained Managing Partner Vincent Vasquez. (The Family Firearm Safety classes are where parents and kids come together to learn.) “We try to educate the whole family about safety and awareness, and we speak to all ages. For instance, when the kids are really young, we talk to them about what to do if you’re at a friend’s house and your friend shows you his dad’s gun; what should you do?”

Vasquez reports the classes are very popular.

“I think as things get a little crazy and people grow up and have families, they start realizing they have something else to protect beyond just themselves now,” he reasoned.

According to Vasquez, feedback on the class offering is phenomenal.

“It’s super positive even for people who have had firearms safety training in the past. They come and say things like, ‘Gosh, that was really good, a good refresher. It was good for my family to hear it.’ I think one of the bigger benefits is that all of the family members hear the same information. So now when questions come up over the dinner table, they can talk to it as a group and they’re all on the same page. People hear so much conflicting information, it’s nice to be able to educate them properly,” he elaborated.

Osseo Gun Club & Pro

Shop in Osseo, Minn., offers a “Parent and Child Intro to Firearms” class. Director of Training Jeff Luther explains the class is based on NSSF’s First Shots program.

“Most of the parents do choose to stay. If they’re interested enough to sign up their kids, they’re interested enough to stay and see what’s being taught.”

Mark Covington
Training Manager
Reno Guns & Range

“Anyone 11 years old and older can take it. We typically offer it in the fall, but also other times as requested,” he shared. “People see it on our website and call to ask when it will be offered again. It’s also a

great complement to our Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Youth Firearms Program.”

Luther confirmed the class is very popular and is attended by many moms.

“Typically, after class they’ll ask, ‘What can we do next?’ We have a variety of classes for them to take next and their children can take the classes with them as well,” he said.

When researching online for family classes or parent/child classes, very few results appear. Multiple ranges indicate they do offer family training, yet it’s not readily apparent. Specifically identifying and marketing classes for the family could

help drive women to this type of class.

Even simply advertising private lessons for families could increase attendance because customers may not realize there can be more than just one-on-one, adult training. Women may also be more comfortable with this type of training, knowing their family will receive individual attention. Removing the “intimidation factor” of having a lot of other people around could be beneficial.

WHAT IF YOU DON’T HAVE A RANGE?

What if you have a retail store only and no range to provide live fire, but want to draw families



C2 Tactical offers two Family Protection Courses: Family Firearm Safety and Youth Introduction to Firearms.

in? Don't count yourself out; there are several options you could take advantage of.

You could offer educational programs such as the NRA's Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program or a 4-H or scout program.

A great program called Kids Safe Foundation, based out of Eugene, Ore., will come to you. While they do offer hands-on shooting education at ranges, they also offer non-shooting safety education classes. Parents are required to attend and hear the same information so they are on the page. Kids Safe Foundation can also bring their Daisy inflatable gun-range system to set up in your parking lot to teach safety with BB guns.

Another idea for retail stores without a range

might be a book party. You could hold a fun family event presenting a variety of books written to help children learn gun safety. Some suggestions to get started are *Toys, Tools, Guns & Rules* (also available in Spanish) written by champion shooter and mom, Julie Golob, and USCCA Associate Editor and mom, Beth Alcazar's *Children's Firearms & Safety Fundamentals: A Guide For Families, Parents, Instructors and Gun Owners*.

Bonus tip: Providing snacks is always a plus for these kinds of events.

CLASSES FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Sometimes women want to learn other less-lethal self-defense options and want their children to

learn them, too. You can offer a variety of classes that would be useful for the whole family, such as:

- Personal Protection
- Situational Awareness
- Stop The Bleed
- Trauma/Gunshot Wound Treatment
- Tourniquet Use
- Mini-Baton Use
- Pepper Spray
- Taser Use
- Alternative Weapons
- Anti-Bullying
- Internet Safety
- Suicide Prevention
- Disaster Preparedness

If there isn't a separate meeting space in your store, hold the events after hours within the retail space or rent a tent and hold the classes outside in the parking area.

RESOURCES AROUND

There's such a multitude of information you can offer to families that will simply get them in your doors, looking around and learning. If you need help with any topics, just ask within the firearms community. There are a variety of groups (A Girl & A Gun Women's Shooting League, Armed Women of America, NSSF, NRA, etc.) more than willing to send someone to present the information for you.

The one thing all the training has in common is for parents and kids to hear the same information together so they are on the same page for safety and awareness.

Once you open the boundaries to the wide variety of educational opportunities available, you'll easily be able to tailor your advertising to draw in women and their kids. And we know that once they start learning,

“One of the bigger benefits is that all of the family members hear the same information. So now when questions come up over the dinner table, they can talk to it as a group and they're all on the same page. People hear so much conflicting information, it's nice to be able to educate them properly.”

Vincent Vasquez
Managing Partner
C2Tactical

they'll want to learn more — and buy more products — and you will be right there ready to help them take that next step. **SI**



Getting to hear the same information at the same time is a major benefit of family-focused classes.



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

Everyone struggles sometimes.
Sometimes we need help.
And that's okay!

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



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Image: VectorMine / Adobe Stock

INSIGHTS INTO THE FIREARM PURCHASE JOURNEY FOR WOMEN

By Nancy Bacon



SOUTHWICK ASSOCIATES

It's not just a fad. Women continue to be a growing force in the firearms market, representing 39% of firearms buyers from 2015 through 2020.

Helping to fuel this growth is the trade's increasing realization women are capable shooters and want much more than pink products. Better understanding women's mindset and their frequently different approaches to the purchase process

are key factors to help focus customer service and drive new business opportunities for retailers and trainers.

SURVEY UNCOVERS DIFFERENCES

In 2020, Southwick Associates and NSSF partnered to better understand the shifts in firearms consumer behavior by updating the original firearms consumer segmentation study conducted five years earlier. These

studies grouped firearm consumers based on their needs and motivations to purchase a firearm, rather than their demographic characteristics or participation. (Our article in the 2021 *Shooting Industry* Woman's Issue summarized three of the segments containing significant portions of women — unsurprisingly all protection based.)

Last year, Southwick Associates expanded this work to explore the purchase journey each

segment travels through, from realizing the need or desire for a firearm through to the post-purchase experience. Fundamental to these new insights is knowing a customer's demographic appearance doesn't dictate their motivations or interests, and there are differences in how each consumer segment approaches a purchase.



IN THE AWARENESS PHASE, MORE THAN 8 IN 10 WOMEN NOTED A SPECIFIC EVENT MOTIVATED THEM TO PURCHASE THEIR MOST RECENT FIREARM.

We separated women from the data set to explore how they compare to men in the firearms purchase journey. Let's look at some of the differences.

IT STARTS WITH AWARENESS

Four stages of the purchase journey were explored — starting with the awareness of the need to buy a firearm, to research conducted, the purchase and a post-purchase reflection.

In the awareness phase, more than 8 in 10 women noted a specific event motivated them to purchase their most recent firearm. Even though increased crime, social unrest and politics/legislation were the top inciting events among all gun buyers in the past six years, women were significantly more likely to have had a bad personal experience themselves or to have known someone who had a bad personal experience. They wanted to be prepared should a situation arise again. Women were also more likely to have been encouraged by family and friends to purchase a firearm, meaning efforts to spur discussions about the benefits of firearm ownership may boost interest.

Like men, women's sentiments about owning a firearm and the purchase process evolve through various phases. "Excited," "confident" and "enthusiastic" were top sentiments among women as they first became aware they wanted to buy a gun.

However, in the awareness phase, women were significantly more likely to express feelings of being "overwhelmed," "afraid," "nervous," "safer" and "stressed." Be sure to take time to reassure these

customers of the resources and support available to maintain their interest in purchasing and using a firearm.



MORE THAN A THIRD OF WOMEN OBTAINED EDUCATION OR TRAINING FROM A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER, NEARLY HALF TOOK A CLASS AND 41% PURCHASED INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION.

RESEARCH PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE

People these days might think most firearm purchases are bought on a whim, especially over the past couple of years. This is not necessarily the case; only a small percentage of gun purchases were an impulse buy. Most gun buyers revealed they conducted research prior to the purchase.

While both men and

women primarily consult typical information sources, such as websites or consumer reviews, women are more likely to gather the input of friends and family and to try different firearms — either at a range or with friends and family — before purchasing. Although women are more likely to have tried a few types of firearms prior to purchasing, recommendations are a key factor in their purchase process, with more than two-thirds of women reporting they sought a recommendation from the store clerk.

Top sentiments among women after the research phase include "satisfied," "excited" and "confident." Similar to the awareness phase, in the research phase women were still more likely to express feeling "overwhelmed," "afraid," "nervous," "safer" and "stressed."

PURCHASE & POST-PURCHASE OBSERVATIONS

During the purchase phase, the majority of women who sought a recommendation from the store clerk purchased the gun recommended to them, emphasizing the importance of clearly understanding their needs to provide a reliable and justified recommendation.

If your store doesn't already offer or have references and recommendations for firearm education or training, you're missing an opportunity to better help women. Women have a higher propensity

for firearm education or training, with half the women in the study obtaining further education or training with their most recent gun purchase. More than a third of the women obtained education or training from a friend or family member, nearly half took a class and 41% purchased individual instruction.

In post-purchase reflection, practically all women were satisfied with their purchase and just under half recommended to friends or family to purchase a gun. Sentiments among women in both the purchase and post-purchase phases were: "satisfied," "confident," "excited," "safer" and "relieved."

While we point out some differences women experience while traveling through the purchase process, it's important to note not all women have the same needs, motivations and experience during this journey. More can be learned about each of the firearm consumer segments to better target your marketing and product mix. [SI](#)

The "Firearms Consumer Segmentation Overview and Purchase Journey Report" is now available from Southwick Associates.

For more info, contact Nancy Bacon at nancy@southwickassociates.com.



RANGE

1. All safety and responsibility at all times on the range. As their safety Officers may remove anyone from the range for any reason while on the range.

2. Live and wet protection must be put on **BEFORE** entering the range.

3. Firearms must be pointed down range at the bullet trap **AT ALL** times firearms are being loaded and unloaded.

4. Hand your finger straight and off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.

5. Handling of firearms is only permitted inside of the shooting booth (unloading). A holder may only be used to transport a firearm if it is unloaded.

6. Do not cross the red firing line for any reason. If you need assistance forward of the firing line, please ask the RSO for help.

7. Upon the command "CEASE FIRE" stop all shooting, set the firearm down and back out of the booth. You may return to the booth when the RSO says so.

8. Unloading is permitted only if instructed. **Qualified THROUGH BRISTLES** military, law enforcement and armed security.

9. It is your responsibility to know how to safely operate your firearm. Firearm training is required to be used on the range and must have operational skills.

10. The following types of ammo are not permitted on the range: Steel core rounds, tracer, or any type of penetrating ammo. Single projectile (slugs) are acceptable type of shotgun ammo.

11. All the **CALIBERS** must be shot in the Tactical Bay regardless of the firearm.

12. Appropriate attire must be worn on the range. Appropriate attire includes closed-toed shoes and crew neck or higher cut shirts. Low cut shirts and shorts are not allowed.

13. Food, drink, gum, and tobacco are not allowed in the range. Food and drink containers outside the range.

She Sells More Than Seashells

WOMAN-OWNED STORES ROLL OUT THE WELCOME MAT

BY CAROLEE ANITA BOYLES

AS more women enter the shooting sports, it's no surprise a percentage of them also will become interested in the business side of shooting. These women — whether they own or manage a gun shop or a

range, or both — are part of a growing trend that is broadening the appeal of guns and shooting to an ever-widening audience.

GENERATIONAL GUNS: ON A GROWTH TREND

Heather Carpenter, who owns Generational Guns in Bondurant, Iowa, with her husband Bo, has always been interested in business, but she never dreamed she would own or operate a gun shop. Her family wasn't involved in firearms, and she knew nothing about them when she met Bo.

"He was interested in them, but it was his thing and I wasn't involved in it," she recalled. "I didn't really get interested until we started talking about making a business of it. Now we each have our own gun safe. He has his collection and I have mine."

The couple began their business in their garage. Half of the garage was set up for gunsmithing, and half was set up for retail sales.

"Bo is very mechanical and likes working on guns, so he took care of that side of things," Heather said. "I did the retail sales part of the business."

The business soon outgrew their garage, and eight years ago the couple moved the store to its present location. With the move, their roles in the business shifted. Bo still runs the gunsmithing

part of the business, and now he also manages the retail portion as well. Heather does more back-office work, handling paperwork and making sure the store is in compliance with ATF and other regulations.

"Handling all the paperwork and all the compliance stuff has been one of our biggest challenges," she relayed. "A lot of people don't realize the degree of my involvement with the business because I'm not as visible as I used to be. I'm very involved on a day-to-day basis, because the details I handle are very important to keeping us compliant."

Generational Guns has continued to grow in its current location, and Heather shared they'll soon need more space.

"We are up to 10 employees, including the two of us," she informed.

◀ Jacquelyn Clark (right) and her husband didn't set out to own a range and retail center, but they decided to open Bristlecone Shooting and model it after a place they'd want to visit with their family.

"Our area is growing, and space is both difficult to find and expensive. We're watching for the right location, but we haven't found it yet."

One of the things Heather likes most about the business is the sense of family that

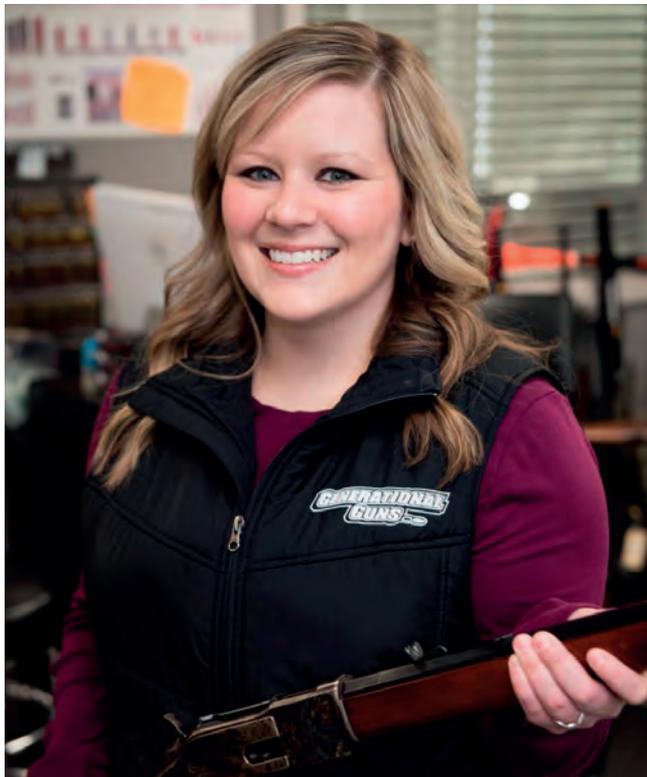
has come about with their customer base.

"People come in and bring their children and we watch those children grow up," she said. "We have regulars who come in all the time."

One thing Heather has noticed is people aren't as patient as they were before COVID. In the past, customers were willing to wait for what they want; today, they want what they want — now.

THESE WOMEN ARE PART OF A GROWING TREND THAT IS BROADENING THE APPEAL OF GUNS AND SHOOTING TO AN EVER-WIDENING AUDIENCE.

”



Heather Carpenter shares one of the most gratifying elements of owning Generational Guns is the sense of community that's generated when entire families come into her store together.

BRISTLECONE SHOOTING: A FAMILY-FRIENDLY RANGE FROM THE GET-GO

In Lakewood, Colo., Jacquelyn Clark owns Bristlecone Shooting, Training and Retail Center with her husband Bryan. Clark wasn't involved in law enforcement or the military, and she didn't grow up around guns, so the step into running a range and retail center was a stretch for her.

When Clark and her husband were first married, they lived in suburban Atlanta. Soon after they moved there, they had a home-defense scare in the middle of the night that turned out to be walnuts from the neighbor's tree falling and rolling down their roof.

"We hid behind the bed with a golf club until the police arrived," Clark said. "It took them seven minutes, which seemed like an eternity."

As a result of their experience, the Clarks decided they needed a home-defense plan, and purchased a firearm.

"Once we made the decision to do that, Bryan researched it and made a spreadsheet of all the different handguns out there. I was pretty much not interested, but it was what he wanted to do. The only thing I said was 'If it's going to be in my house, I want to know how to use it. I'm not going to be afraid of it, and I'm not going to have somebody use it on me.'"

Clark started going to the range to learn to use the gun, and fell in love with the recreational side of shooting.

"Shooting became what we did on date night," she noted. "We ended up joining

a range in Atlanta that was run by two women."

A couple of years later, the Clarks moved to Ohio and found a great range there; then the family moved to Colorado.

"One of the first things we did when we moved here was try to find a nice indoor range that was family friendly like what we had found in Atlanta and Ohio," Clark said.

When they didn't find the kind of range where they wanted to shoot, they decided to build one.

"It was kind of a dinner conversation that became serious," she recalled. Bryan was a real estate attorney and Jacquelyn was in business development, so they already had a lot of the skills they needed to be successful at starting a new business. Eight years ago, they opened Bristlecone.

Today, the store comprises about 25,000 sq. ft. of combined range, retail shop and gunsmithing area. The range includes 14 lanes separated into two separate bays. One bay is pistols only, and the other one is a tactical bay where they allow rifles and shotguns. The retail space is about 6,000 sq. ft.; inventory focuses on home defense, personal defense and recreational and competitive shooting. The store has two full-time gunsmiths and two classrooms where instructors teach a wide variety of self-defense courses, with a total of 30 employees.

Bristlecone offers reloading supplies and equipment in a unique way.

"We have a business that operates inside of our store called The Reloading Zone,"

Clark shared. “They sell all reloading components and equipment, but they’re a separate company from us. They rent space from us — so they’re like a Starbucks inside a grocery store.”

The Clarks have considered either expanding or adding another location, but Jacquelyn feels this economic climate isn’t a time for aggressive expansion.

“This year, we’re all about getting through an economic downturn,” she explained. “So, any discussion of other locations, or expanding the location we have, is on hold. We also have some major state laws that may be passed, which will affect our long-term planning as well.”

THE MARKSMAN INDOOR RANGE: TAKING FEAR OUT OF GUN OWNERSHIP

Jessica Ulrich owns The Marksman Indoor Range in Waterloo, Neb., along with three other family members. She and her family had talked for years about opening a range in their area, because shooting is something the whole family enjoys.

“I grew up with a father who hunted,” Ulrich said. “There were shotguns and rifles in the house, but my sister and I had zero interest. But as we got into our 20s, it’s something we wanted to cross off our bucket lists. We would go to the range with our father and he would load the gun and hand it to us and we’d shoot, and as soon as it was empty we’d hand it back to him.”

Then in her 30s, Ulrich was involved in the Von Maur shooting in 2007, where more than a dozen people were shot in the first mass shooting that ever took place in Omaha. In the days after, Ulrich started taking training classes.



Generational Guns has an entire section displaying popular conceal carry purses from several brands that even catch the attention of up-and-coming customers!



Since its opening its doors in 2015, Bristlecone Shooting has attracted shooting enthusiasts of all skill levels and disciplines.

I TRY TO TAKE THE FEAR OUT OF GUN OWNERSHIP AND THE FEAR OUT OF DEFENSIVE SHOOTING AND FOCUS MORE ON SPORT.

Jessica Ulrich, *Owner*

The Marksman Indoor Range in Waterloo, Neb.



“I started training out of fear,” she said. “I did a lot of research and talked to many instructors and surrounded myself with the industry, because I was scared.”

Today, Ulrich has transcended that fear. She said she doesn’t want the women she teaches to learn out of fear.

“It’s the worst way to learn,” she stated. “I try to take the fear out of gun

ownership and the fear out of defensive shooting and focus more on sport. I introduce women to the sport of shooting.”

According to Ulrich, 35% of her clientele is female.

“I stay in the industry because it’s what I love,” she expressed. “I cannot imagine a day going by without training or talking about guns.”

The Marksman Indoor

Range is a range first and a retailer second. Today, the store is run by four family members and 10 part-time employees. Jessica and her mother, Chris Anderson, are heavily involved in the operational side of things, handling staffing for day-to-day operations on the range. Jessica and her father, Kirk Anderson, are both instructors, and Kyle Ulrich does maintenance and other behind-the-scenes chores.

“We all are very different and play very different roles in the range, and it works,” Ulrich said. “My mother has a medical background, so she does a lot of trauma training and suicide awareness. My dad was a salesman and a businessman, so he does all the accounting and the books. I come from the hospitality industry, so I’m all about sales and taking care of people. My husband is a blue-collar worker, so he’s in the dirt every day and does all the behind-the-scenes construction sorts of things. He’s an avid hunter where I’m more of a pistol gal and I shoot competitively; he puts the meat on the table.”

When they opened the range six years ago, the family dreamed one day they could be what they are right now.

“Every month brings a different surprise, and a different element to the business,” she noted. “We’ve slowly integrated some competitive shooting, IDPA, USPSA and some things like that. We’ve added some e-commerce and AR-building courses. I’m just blown away with how far we have come in such a short time.”

With women like these three continuing to join the trade side of the industry, the days of simply “shrink it and pink it” are long gone. **SI**

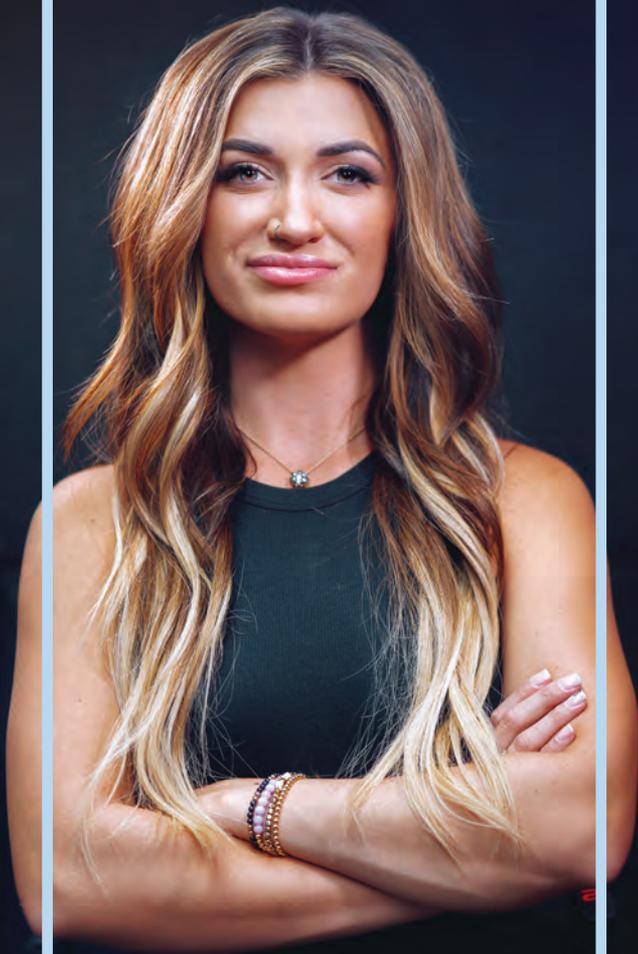


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By Ashley McGee

IN DEMAND

Female firearms instructors, quality products for women in demand *more than ever*

According to the latest report on concealed carry in the United States from the Crime Prevention Research Center, “In 2022, women made up 29.2% of permit holders in the 15 states that provide data by gender, an increase from the 28.3% last year. Seven states had data from 2012 to 2021/2022, and permit numbers grew 115.4% faster for women than for men.”¹

As female firearm ownership continues to grow, so does the demand for both female firearms instructors and quality products for women. To better understand exactly how much the landscape has changed over time, we connected with industry veterans Ava Flanell,

owner of Elite Firearms & Training and host of the Gun Funny Podcast; Claudia Chisholm, product designer, developer and owner of GTM Originals; and Paige Roux, senior firearms instructor and training coordinator at Shooter’s World and owner of Some Chick Who Shoots.

THEN AND NOW

Despite the fact her parents once owned a gun store, Ava Flanell’s path to working in the shooting industry was a little unconventional. On her website, she admits she once wrote it off as a “male hobby” — a sentiment she still believes holds true.

“I didn’t think much about it at the time, but when my mom became a firearms instructor almost 20 years ago, she really was quite a pioneer,” Flanell said. “When I took my instructor’s test in 2013, I was the only female in my class. I just recently started to participate in shooting events at my local range and continue to be the only female. This is not to say women aren’t getting into the sport or taking up guns for defense or hobby. The number of women who purchased guns in the past few years is huge, but unfortunately, firearms are still very much a male-dominated hobby; we need more women.”

ROOM FOR GROWTH

While it’s great to celebrate how far women in the industry have come, Flanell’s remarks underscore the importance of acknowledging how much room remains for growth.

“I want to go to a shooting sports event and

have women outnumber men. I want women to recognize the value they hold in the gun world,” she said. “We have more power to change minds, influence others to get involved and empower others. I’d love to see more women in the industry who value themselves for more than just their looks by recognizing they can be admired for their knowledge, skills and hard work.”

Claudia Chisholm of GTM Originals would like to see more women involved not just on the range, but in other, often overlooked areas of the shooting industry like manufacturing, marketing, product development and retail.

“There are so many companies out there that create products for

“IN MY EXPERIENCE, FEMALE-TAUGHT CLASSES FILL UP MUCH QUICKER THAN THOSE TAUGHT BY MEN, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO ENTRY-LEVEL CLASSES.”

Ava Flanell, Owner
Elite Firearms & Training

“IF YOU EMBRACE WOMEN AS A BUYING DEMOGRAPHIC, THEY WILL ALWAYS DELIVER.”

Claudia Chisholm, Owner
GTM Originals

women just to check the box and say they do,” said Chisholm. “While there are more women involved in the process of getting these products to market than before, we’re nowhere near the point of saturation.”

Chisholm emphasized the importance for brands and retailers, as well as women themselves, to understand and value the power of

women as consumers.

“Since GTM Originals began in 2009, this industry has changed immensely, but we still have situations where dealers feel the need to close their doors when sales dip,” she shared. “If they would instead embrace female consumers, many wouldn’t have to.”

The GTM Originals’ return customer owns an average of five of the company’s bags.

“Women come back,” asserted Chisholm. “Not only that, but women love to be together. We bring friends. We bring family. If you embrace women as a buying demographic, they will always deliver.”

ON THE RANGE

The area within the shooting industry perhaps poised for the most growth is firearms instruction.

“Female instructors are so in demand right now many of us can’t keep up,” remarked Flanell. “Ranges would be crazy not to hire a

knowledgeable female instructor — they’re like winning the lottery. Not only do women want to learn from women, but men with little to no experience often feel more comfortable learning from a female as well. In my experience, female-taught classes fill up much quicker than those taught by men, especially when it comes to entry-level classes.”

Paige Roux agrees, but notes it may not be as simple as going out and hiring an already experienced instructor.

“Many ranges don’t have female instructors because there aren’t a lot of us available,” she explained. “There are very few of us who have both the ability and the interest in teaching.”

Roux’s journey to becoming an instructor started at the age of 4 or 5 when her dad, a former law enforcement officer, purchased Shooter’s World in 2002.

“I basically absorbed

information through osmosis I didn’t even know I was learning,” she recalled. “I listened to sales pitches, learned about customer service and gained a greater understanding of our customers.”

Roux started helping teach classes as a range safety officer around the age of 14, but it wasn’t until adulthood she realized her passion for teaching others and began working at the range as an instructor full-time.

“Women are often hesitant because we want to be good at something we do, especially when we’re the minority. We want to be respected,” she said. “Even as someone who grew up in the business, it took me a while to be confident in not only my knowledge of the curriculum but also in my ability to teach it.”

Roux said many Shooter’s World employees don’t know how to shoot when they start.

“They’re hired based on their customer service skills. Then, we train them to shoot using our curriculum,” she informed. “We’re opening the door and investing in our team members who might not have even known it was an interest of theirs or there was an opportunity to pursue it.”

So, rather than limit your prospects by only searching for already licensed female instructors, or worse, justifying your all-male range staff by saying “there just aren’t any female instructors,” consider how you can help change that from the ground up. **SI**

Footnotes:

1. papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4279137



Whether it’s tips for running a handgun like the IWI Masada or a customized AR, Ava Flanell has had success training both men and women. She notes adding a female to your instruction staff can not only encourage women to take a class, but it could also boost participation from others new to shooting.



5 TIPS TO SUPPORT THEM

Safety Top Of Mind For Women On The Go

BY BRITNEY BOOTH

“

Police Identify Body of Abducted Runner Eliza Fletcher,” “Knoxville Runner Escapes Kidnapping, Attempted Rape” and “Michigan Nurse Gunned Down While Jogging” are just a few news headlines regarding violence inflicted on female runners in recent years.

In a survey of more than 2,000 runners conducted by *Runner’s World* and *Women’s Health* magazines, 74% of women said they’d been harassed via sexist comments or unwanted sexual attention when running, and 6% said they feared for their life while running.

UNWRITTEN HEADLINES, SECOND CHANCES

Amy Robbins, CEO and co-founder of Alexo Athletica, describes an encounter that was the catalyst to starting her concealed carry legging and activewear company.

“I never understood why people carried a firearm on their body every day until I went out training for a marathon one morning in 2015. I got followed and harassed by a van full of men. They didn’t just follow me one time, they pretty much followed me for the whole first part of my run,” she shared.

“It was a very scary

experience for me,” she continued, “because it was at that moment I realized, *If this escalates from just the calls and harassing, what am I going to do? It’s me against seven guys.* I didn’t have a self-defense tool on my body. I don’t even think I had my phone with me at that time.”

Luckily, they drove off and Robbins was able to make it home safely.

“I made it home and I got a second chance,” she recalled. “I was determined never to feel helpless and defenseless again. The next step for me was to get my concealed carry license and purchase a handgun. Then, I realized

there was no place for me to put it while out running. At that time, there weren't concealed carry leggings or activewear brands promoting the idea of empowering a woman to stay safe while exercising, so I created Alexo Athletica."

Because of these unfortunate situations making headlines and the quick spread of information on social media, retailers will likely see an uptick in women becoming increasingly more interested in self-protection tools, whether it's for running, taking their kid(s) to the park or everyday carry.

A study conducted by the NSSF in 2018 ("Concealed Carry Consumer Study Report") found during the course of a 12-month timespan, women — on average — spent nearly the same amount purchasing a firearm for concealed carry (\$889.50) as men (\$905.80).¹ The study also showed women spent significantly more money on handgun ammunition and reloading supplies (\$621.80) than men (\$501.40). And, on average, women (\$273.02) spent more on accessories during the 12 months than men (\$245.15).

Here are five ways to support your female customers on their self-defense journey.

1. START SMALL, OFFER VARIETY

Emily Valentine has run StyleMeTactical.com for six years as an avenue to connect with other women interested in firearms and fashion.

"I want women to get

to the point of thinking of their personal safety in any way it fits into their lifestyle," she said. "A gun isn't the only option. It's important to offer women tools for situational awareness and mindset training and start small."

A mindset switch may have a snowball effect, causing your customer to then become interested in carrying a flashlight or mace, which might then lead to becoming interested in carrying a firearm and taking classes at your facility.

One piece of advice you can give a customer who may be just starting out on their personal-protection journey and is overwhelmed is to begin by carrying a tactical flashlight on their person.

"It's a very simple non-lethal tool and a great segue into living the personal-protection lifestyle. A tactical flashlight shouldn't be underestimated. You can shine it into someone's eyes to blind them, or carry it in your hand to reinforce your fist and use it as a striking tool. You can take them anywhere and there are no legal restrictions for use, so young girls or teenagers can carry them and take them when they go places where there are gun restrictions, like concerts or airports," Valentine said.

Retailers will want to stock a variety of products to cover all levels of self-protection, whether non-lethal or lethal. Items like flashlights, keychain alarms, mace, TASERS, stun guns, knives and handguns are all options.

Handgun accessories specific for running, like

concealed carry leggings or shorts, athletic wear, belly band holsters, beltless holster options, fanny packs or waist packs are great, depending on the intended use.

Take the time to get to know your customer and their needs, and you'll be able to recommend the right tool for them.

2. ESTABLISH WOMEN'S CLASSES & GROUPS

Shooter's World, with three locations in Arizona, offers a weekly Ladies' Day. At this event, women get their first hour of range time and one gun rental for free. Doing this breaks the barrier down by allowing them to

come in on a fun day and bring a friend with them, making them even more comfortable. Shooter's World also offers women-specific classes taught by female instructors.

"Classes like this are empowering for women. 'You're absolutely capable of doing it, and we're going to show you how,'" shared Paige Roux, Shooter's World training coordinator and senior firearms instructor.

If yours is a retail-only location, partner with a gun range or instructor in the area who offers women-only classes. You'll have the ability to further assist your female customers by suggesting

If you're looking to stock your retail space with accessories, less-lethal personal protection options or trying to figure out what classes to offer for women, insights from around the world are at your fingertips.



Top: Style Me Tactical's Emily Valentine says on-body accessories like flashlights can serve as a "starter" to get women in the self-defense mindset before they decide to carry a firearm.

Bottom: When a guest steps into Femme Fatale ARMS, an inviting layout allows her to peruse new arrivals with ease. Maria Dockery maintains it's all about carrying quality products.



classes at whatever level they might need.

3. LISTEN TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

Maria Dockery, the owner of Femme Fatale ARMS in Palm Bay, Fla., confirmed all of the products in her ladies' gun store are driven by requests from female customers. By listening to the customers' needs, she's able to purchase high-quality products that will last.

"We don't underestimate the intelligence of our customers, and we don't sell substandard products.

We carry pepper spray, which is a great option if you're worried about dogs or other wild animals while hiking or running, as well as tactical flashlights, concealed carry leggings, belly wrap gun holsters — you name it. The key is making sure everything is great quality and laid out in a way that's inviting to women," she said.

4. BE APPROACHABLE

If you're stocking items specifically for women in your retail space or hosting classes geared toward female attendees, be sure to take a step back and approach the space and

content with women in mind.

"Approach women who come into your facility like you're an educator, but don't assume they're clueless. Be willing to help them narrow down self-defense or accessory options to fit their needs. Get out from behind the counter and chat with your customers," Valentine advised.

"The key is making sure everything is great quality and laid out in a way that's inviting to women."

**Maria Dockery, Owner
Femme Fatale ARMS
Palm Bay, Fla.**

It can be helpful to make a women's area in your store with a display of products available for personal protection and accessories so someone who's never been to a gun store can easily find what they need.

This lessens the overwhelming sense of seeing rows and rows of

products and not knowing what to choose.

5. TAKE TO SOCIAL MEDIA

In this digital age, plenty of resources can be readily found with a quick social media search. Check out Instagram for accounts like @casualandtactical, @stylemetactical (mentioned above) and @elegantandarmed to draw inspiration from their content.

You'll find women-specific concealed carry product reviews for guns, holsters, knives, etc., podcasts, clothing/style tips for concealed carry, troubleshooting, concealed carry guides for women and even cigar reviews.

So, if you're looking to stock your retail space with accessories, or less-lethal personal-protection options or trying to figure out what classes to offer for women, insights from around the world are at your fingertips.

Using these tips will help support women who visit your retail space looking for a way to protect themselves while living an active lifestyle.

A comfortable, welcoming and encouraging environment will foster a lifetime of growth and training — and a loyal customer at your facility. **SI**

Footnote:

1. <https://bit.ly/3WC40XJ>

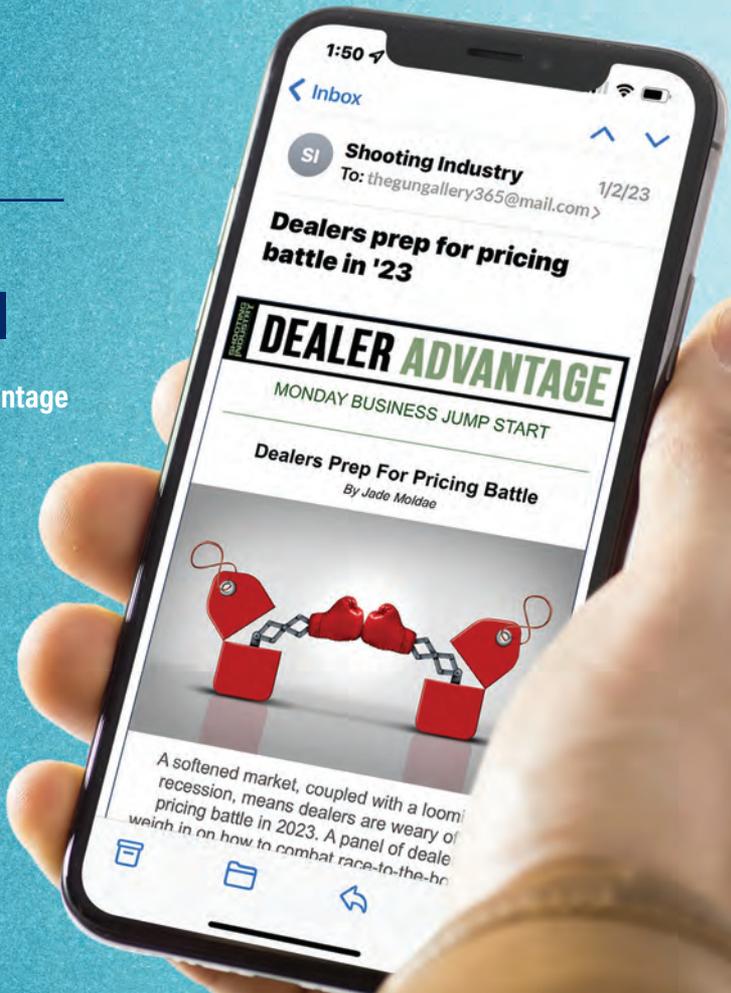
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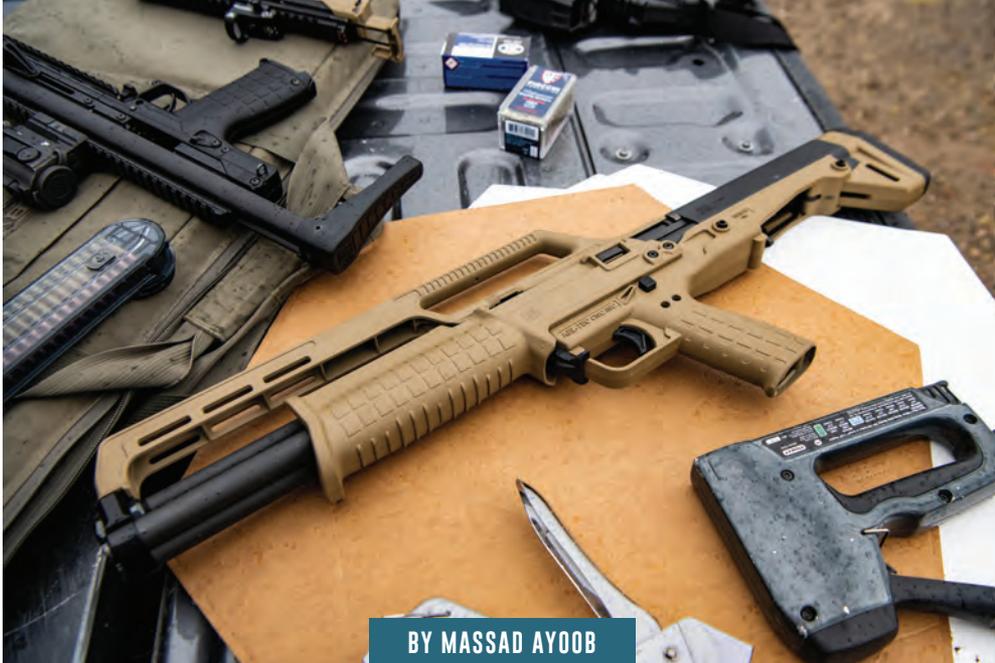
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**SHOOTING
INDUSTRY**



BY MASSAD AYOUB

TOP SELF-DEFENSE PRODUCTS FROM SHOT

With an estimated 2,400 exhibits at SHOT Show, we obviously can't cover them all here. Let's touch on the new products that have particular promise for personal-defense sales — starting with the most popular products, handguns.

HANDGUNS MAKING A MARK

Beretta brings back their Cheetah, a holster-rather than pocket-sized .380 as the Model 80X. Old-school double-action, all-metal construction and double-stack magazine, but with an optic cut and light attachment rail. Mild recoil, easy slide operation with the hammer cocked and carry optics option for both older eyes and modern tastes. There's also a heavy, undoubtedly sweet-shooting single-action Model 92 9mm.

Dan Wesson DWX pistols, long teased, are here. At the risk of oversimplification, think of a 1911 top on a CZ frame with 19-round 9mm magazine. It's reported to

shoot extremely flat (sights stay on target in rapid fire) with excellent trigger pull and competition-ready out of the box.

GLOCK debuts their Gen5 series in large-frame models, the G20 10mm and G21 .45 ACP. All I've seen have been MOS configured. Look for the compact variants, such as the GLOCK 30 .45 Auto, around the time of the NRA show in May. Perhaps of broader interest, though, is GLOCK's new OEM performance trigger for Gen5 standard-frame models: The GLOCK Performance Trigger. Resembling the Timney aftermarket trigger, it brings the pull weight down to

about 3.5 lbs. crisp, and should be installed by a certified GLOCK armorer. MSRP is about \$100. (Be reminded, though, since about 1988 GLOCK has cautioned against going below a 5.5-lb. pull on a pistol intended for self-defense use.)



BERETTA 80X CHEETAH

Smith & Wesson now offers the M&P in 5.7mm. The M&P5.7 is full-size, cut for optics and ships with 22-round capacity magazines. Check mark in the "fun" category.

Rossi revolvers have returned. For many years,

◀ Touted by KelTec as the KSG line's "sidekick with no kick," the KSG410 will appeal to the whole family. It weighs in at 5.4 lbs. and has a capacity of 10+1 (3" shells). (Image: KelTec)

the Brazilian-made Rossi brand was a popular choice in budget-priced self-defense revolvers. For 2023, the brand is back, featuring a mid-size six-shot .357 Magnum with a rounded butt and an economy price tag (adjusted for inflation).

Taurus' upgraded Executive series of revolvers has expanded to include the popular Judge in .410/.45 Colt.



According to SIG, ROSE "is supported by an online community to encourage, inspire and grow female shooters to become more confident and comfortable."

For the "carriage trade," Cabot Guns introduces a superbly crafted 1911 pistol made entirely of Damascus steel, right down to the grip panels. Should you have a customer who thinks a \$3,500 custom pistol is altogether too pedestrian, this one carries a suggested

retail of just under \$35,000. The trick will be finding the right customer.

While not exhibiting at SHOT, SIG SAUER announced a different kind of “package deal” ahead of the show. Lena Miculek, daughter of legendary shooters Jerry Miculek and Kay Clark Miculek, is the spearhead of an exciting new approach. ROSE by SIG SAUER includes a special edition P365-XL COMP ROSE pistol in 9mm or P365-380 ROSE, a custom ROSE Vaultek Safe and instant access to a video training series with Miculek. According to SIG, ROSE “is supported by an online community to encourage, inspire and grow female shooters to become more confident and comfortable.”

DEFENSIVE LONG GUNS

Henry has a wood-stocked 9mm auto-loading carbine called the Homesteader that looks more like a 1907 Winchester than an “evil black rifle.” It takes its own magazines but has adapters to accept GLOCK, S&W M&P and SIG P320 magazines. A top-tang safety makes it functionally

ambidextrous, too.

The results of a partnership two years in the making, Magpul and ZEV introduced the FDP-9 and FDC-9 “folding guns” in 9mm in pistol (FDP) and carbine form (FDC).

KelTec’s popular bullpup shotgun is now available in light-kicking .410 bore. The KSG410’s twin five-shell magazines hold 11 rounds, plus one in the chamber.

Are you in a jurisdiction where auto-loading rifles are restricted or do you have customers who fear that’s going to happen? Two lever-action rifles vaguely resembling the AR-15 were at SHOT Show: the Herring Model 2024 5.56 from FightLite, and the Tombstone 9mm from POF-USA. There was also a concept lever-action rifle from Bond Arms that made waves with attendees, as well.

AMMO & ACCESSORIES

Ammo choices have just become wider. Winchester has noticed the extreme interest in powerful outdoorsman’s handguns of late and introduced their Big Bore line. It includes



The GLOCK Performance Trigger on display at SHOT. It’s compatible with the G17 Gen5, G19 Gen5, G19X, G26 Gen5, G34 Gen5, G45 and G47.

“**Henry has a wood-stocked 9mm auto-loading carbine called the Homesteader that looks more like a 1907 Winchester than an “evil black rifle.”**”

a bruin-ruining jacketed soft point 240-grain .44 Magnum at nearly 1,500 foot-seconds velocity and 1,175 foot-pounds of energy, a 157-grain (not a misprint) .357 Magnum hollowpoint loaded to 1,460 fps, and a 10mm Auto 200-grain soft point at 1,175 fps.

Lehigh’s fluted bullets got a popularity boost recently when the company was purchased by Wilson Combat. A lot of savvy gun experts have gone to this stuff.

Holsters are critical for concealed carry and only a fool would routinely carry a gun without one. On the economy-priced end, many of you already carry the Tagua brand of leather holsters. Tagua has just come out with a hybrid line that’s leather on the outside, and Kydex on the inside formed to solidly “click in” to the trigger guard of the handgun for more security. They call

it their LOCK Line.

Safariland has a new holster you’ll want to look at if you sell police-duty gear. According to the company, “Our new SafariVault has been designed for uncompromising strength. SafariVault also incorporates the adaptability our customers require for the use of an ever-expanding array of lights and optics.”

Moving up into medium-priced holsters, DeSantis introduces synthetic gear ideal for increasingly popular “appendix carry,” modular with and without a spare mag pouch. Called the Persuader, it includes the popular “claw” feature that tucks the holstered gun more snugly into the wearer’s body.

Body armor is legal for law-abiding private citizens to own, and even to wear in public, in most jurisdictions. Problem is, many of the big-name armor makers insist their products only be sold to military, police and professional security. One firm that encourages innocent people to own this critical passive protection is a relatively new company, Premier Body Armor. Their line encompasses a wide variety of plate carriers and vests suitable for home-defense use or concealed wear in public. They’ll work with local gun shops on wholesale pricing.

There were, of course, any number of AR-15 variants, 1911s and clones of the GLOCK at SHOT Show 2023. But the ones mentioned are the products that look as if they might offer the strongest customer interest right out of the gate. **SI**

Agree/disagree? Let us know:
editor@shootingindustry.com

NEW PRODUCTS

TO VIEW HUNDREDS OF PRODUCTS
FEATURED IN PAST ISSUES, VISIT:

SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM/CATEGORY/FIRST-LOOK

By Jenna Buckley



G201

FALCO HOLSTERS

+421 90 343 0057
falcoholsters.com

FALCO Holsters announced four Simple Concealed Carry Handgun Bags — G200 Series to its lineup. Constructed from durable, water-resistant ballistic nylon, each bag features an integrated internal gun holster in the primary storage compartment large enough to contain firearms with tactical lights or lasers. The **G222 CROSSBODY BAG** features two storage compartments and can be worn on the chest, back or as a waist pack. The exterior MOLLE panel on the front provides additional storage options and it is constructed of ballistic nylon. The bag measures 12.2"H x 5.7"W x 2"D and is available in black. Additional items in the series include the **G201 LARGE, TACTICAL BAG**, **G210 SHOULDER BAG** AND **G213 THIGH CARRY BAG**.



BROWNING

(800) 333-3288
browning.com

Browning's **1911-380 BLACK LABEL POLAR BLUE COMPACT** sports a Polar Blue Cerakote finish and is fitted with steel three-dot sights, an extended ambi manual safety, beavertail grip safety and a skeletonized hammer. Chambered in .380 ACP, the pistol has a compact 3.625" barrel, black, stippled laminated wood grips and includes two eight-round magazines. OAL is 6.875", and it weighs 18 oz.



SAFARILAND

(800) 347-1200
safariland.com

Safariland expands its rifle-rated family of Hard Armor plates to include three offerings for women. **MODEL DT206CF** (NIJ Level III), along with non-certified variants, **X-CALO DT CF1** and **IMPACO CF1** offer a unique radius of curvature to enhance fit and comfort. The plates have low-profile capabilities and are compatible with the TAC PH Plate Harness. They are designed with high-performing ceramic and polyethylene composites with 1,000-denier Cordura nylon covering that can withstand long-term wear. The X-CAL DT CF1 (3.3 lbs.) and IMPAC CF1 (3.2 lbs.) were tested to hold up against the M80 (7.62x51mm) round, and six impacts of the M855 (5.56x45mm) Green tip, M193 (5.56x45mm) and Mild Steel Core (7.62x39mm) rounds. The 3.4-lb. DT206CF is certified to stop six impacts of the 7.62x51mm, 147-grain NATO M80 round.



5.11 TACTICAL

(866) 451-1726
511tactical.com

5.11 Tactical adds to its Physical Training-Ready (PT-R) lineup with the **PT-R WOMEN'S PACKABLE JACKET**. Its 100% nylon ripstop with PU coating provides a durable water-resistant shell, while the venting at the upper back yoke helps prevent overheating. For ultimate versatility, it stows inside its internal pocket, allowing for easy access and storage.

The **PT-R WOMEN'S MAX EFFORT TIGHT** utilizes a nylon/elastane blend with moisture-wicking and anti-odor finishes to keep women comfortable and focused through any workout. A contoured waistband offers extra support while also offering key and phone pockets, and the internal stretch draw cord creates an adjustable fit.



GARMONT TACTICAL

garmonttactical.com

The **ATHENA** is the first Garmont tactical boot developed specifically for women. This breathable, lightweight, flexible boot features a narrow heel, shorter achilles area and increased arch support for a higher instep. A high-density EVA provides shock absorption and differentiates support zones. The 8" textile shaft is made with an abrasion-resistant, water-repellent suede leather upper for unparalleled durability and protection. The GTF Diamonte outsole with multi-directional lugs provides stability and traction. Zama alloy hooks provide a safe and reliable closure system. Available in women's sizes 4-11.



RIVAL ARMS

(877) 269-8490
rival-arms.com

Rival Arms expands its offerings with the **X1 RED DOT**, a 3 MOA red dot ideally suited for use on defensive pistols, target pistols, rifles, hunting and defensive shotguns. The base offers an RMR-compatible mounting system for slides featuring an RMR optic footprint and the sight includes a mount for quick installation onto any Picatinny rail. It boasts an IPX7 water-resistant rating and a generous 29x17mm multi-coated objective lens. Digital push-button controls allow the shooter to quickly select one of 10 brightness settings. Windage and elevation adjustments in 1-MOA/click increments come via a flat-blade driver bit.



DITALE OUTDOORS

(214) 856-0133
ditaleoutdoors.com

Ideal for mid-season hunts, the versatile **SOFIA ADVENTURE PANT** from Ditale Outdoors is made from a durable polyester spandex double weave blend fabric with four way stretch. With a flat integrated stretch waistband, durable water repellent treatment and high-rise, this pant gives users everything they need for mobility and ultimate comfort. Additional features include deep front pockets, cargo pockets and two interior zipper pockets; knee pad, tactical belt and suspender compatibility, zippered bottom hem and a snap-adjustable inseam. Sizes range from XXS-3XL, each with a CURVY option.

VICTORY ARCHERY

(866) 934-6565
victoryarchery.com

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The **STINGER COLOR-RITE** from Streamlight is a rechargeable flashlight that produces a warm, white light. It features the company's Color-Rite Technology that brings out the natural light users need to differentiate between colors and prevent glare and eye fatigue. It boasts anodized aluminum construction with non-slip rubberized comfort grip; multi-function, push-button switch to easily toggle from high, medium, low or strobe settings; unbreakable polycarbonate lens with scratch-resistant coating and 90 CRI LED. The light is water-resistance rated IPX4 and 1m impact resistance tested.

unknown and the stereotypes that follow it. A lot of the time, with education and experience, women love the industry just as much as men. First-time intimidation is a big factor, too.”

Carpenter has made it a priority for Generational Guns staff to recognize these differences and maintain a welcoming presence.

“As things are changing, the industry is still mostly a man’s world. For a woman stepping into it and unsure of everything around her, it’s very intimidating. In our store, our team is trained to understand this and be cognitive of it. It’s important for our team to recognize this, but treat them as equals. Our goal is to make people feel at ease, understand there are no stupid questions, share our expertise with them and have fun while doing it — whether they’re a woman or a man.”

Jessica Ulrich of The Indoor Marksman concurred, adding dealers need to understand the motives behind a woman’s desire to own a firearm.

“With women being the fastest-growing demographic in this industry, it’s important we address the ‘whys.’ Why are they coming in? Sport? Fear? Curiosity? We must welcome and accommodate every reason,” she noted. “We must also respect every woman’s journey with firearms looks a little bit different, and give her the tools to take her next steps.”

As we conclude the fifth annual Woman’s Issue, I’ll leave this parting thought: What is your store doing to break down barriers and negative stereotypes for first-time guests? The more our industry can welcome in customers of “non-traditional” backgrounds, the better.

ROSE BY SIG SAUER DEBUTS

SIG SAUER has partnered with Team SIG professional shooter Lena Miculek to launch an extensive new program to help women of all skill levels. ROSE by SIG SAUER includes a custom P365 kit and step-by-step training videos with Lena Miculek. The educational component is further complemented by an online community of other ROSE owners.

“I’ve heard countless times from women they leave the store with more questions than answers and they want to learn. This is where ROSE by SIG SAUER comes in; the heartbeat of this program is education and getting you from the retailer to the range so you can start your lasting journey with firearms,” Miculek said during the launch of this program.

“ROSE was developed to be a complete system that’s easy to understand, easy to learn and easy to use,” added Tom Taylor, SIG SAUER CMO and EVP, commercial sales. “For all ROSE has to offer including the kit, the program and the community, the entire package is a tremendous value that will pay dividends from the day you purchase and well into the future as both the ROSE by SIG SAUER brand and



P365-XL COMP ROSE

program grows.”

The SIG SAUER ROSE kit includes either a custom P365-XL COMP ROSE in 9mm or a P365-380 ROSE with two magazines, a signature ROSE Vaultek Lifepod pistol safe with built-in lock system (TSA-approved), five polymer dummy rounds for safe dry-fire practice, a magazine loader, a personal note from Miculek that includes access to the QuickStart guide and online training series. Additionally, custom ROSE by SIG SAUER printable practice targets are available for download. sigsauer.com/rose

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OUT OF CONTEXT: OPPORTUNITY IN DIVERSITY

In the editorial realm, it's viewed akin to a cardinal sin: quoting someone out of context. In the scores of interviews I've done over the years with sources, I've been very mindful to *not* do it — so I was struck by the irony of seeing an article published by *The Trace*, in partnership with *Rolling Stone*, last year using a quote from my column taken very much out of context (and without my permission).

While discussing how the firearms industry has thrived amid the “unfolding tragedy” of devastating shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde, *The Trace's* Champe Barton included the following in his article “Shootings Have Surged — and Gun Companies Have Made Billions”:

“Jade Moldae, an editor at the trade publication *Shooting Industry Magazine*, seemed to acknowledge the irony of this success in a December 2021 editorial. ‘There are many words we could use to describe the past two years,’ he wrote. ‘[U]nprecedented, relentless, eye-opening, stretching, tumultuous, frustrating, to name a few. But here, let's focus on another: opportunity.’”

This passage was the only part of my original editorial that was used; taking it out of context does it a disservice. The author missed a key point: He ignored the fact the “opportunity” referenced here is found in the millions of Americans who have become firearms owners since 2020.

Women and minorities were catalysts of the record growth that was

experienced in 2020–2021, and continue to be a vibrant part of post-COVID business planning. If dealers can better position their stores and staff to *continue* welcoming them in, they'll benefit during a downturn and be well prepared ahead of the next surge.

DIVERSIFYING YOUR STAFF MATTERS

Larry Hyatt, owner of Hyatt Guns in Charlotte, N.C., has shared in the past his store's unique vantage point, being located in a diverse area. He's made it a priority to hire salespersons representative of his community.

“It's important to diversify your staff if you're in a city with diversity. Find good people who know the gun business,” he said. “There are a lot of stores where the employees know a lot about guns, but they don't particularly like people.”

Relating to women, Hyatt suggests a change in mindset is needed when a salesperson approaches a husband and wife or dating partners: “The female customer is just as likely to be the buyer as the male customer. Don't assume anything.”

FOCUSING ON WOMEN “TOO” MUCH?

In this month's “She Shells More Than Seashells” feature, three woman-owned stores shared their motivations for entering the industry and what makes their stores different from the “traditional gun store.” I followed up with each of them to glean further

insights into what could be a slippery slope: Has the industry focused “too” much on appealing to women, and has it done them a disservice?

Jacquelyn Clark, of Bristlecone Shooting, didn't seem to think a concerted effort to welcome women caused much harm.

“Is the industry doing a disservice to women by focusing too much on encouraging dealers to welcome them? I don't see any negative in that. If the fastest-growing segment was a different demographic, I'd expect the industry to put the same effort in to communicating this and encouraging dealers to welcome said demographic,” she stated.

Clark did contend, though, there's a right and wrong way to approach prospective female customers.



It's important we address the 'whys.' Why are they coming in? Sport? Fear? Curiosity? We must welcome and accommodate every reason.”

Jessica Ulrich, Co-Owner/Operator
Marksman Indoor Range

“I do think the encouragement needs to be done in the right way and with the right message, though,” she said. “Encouraging dealers to buy lots of pink and purple guns because ‘that's what all women like’ and they represent the fast-growing segment just doesn't work.”

In a similar vein, Generational Guns' Heather Carpenter highlighted education and positive experiences are key to welcoming women.

“I don't think it's a disservice to women as a whole, but there is a line where it could be too much,” she said. “However, it's great to welcome women into this industry! What I've seen over the years is a lot of women are unsure of the industry because of the

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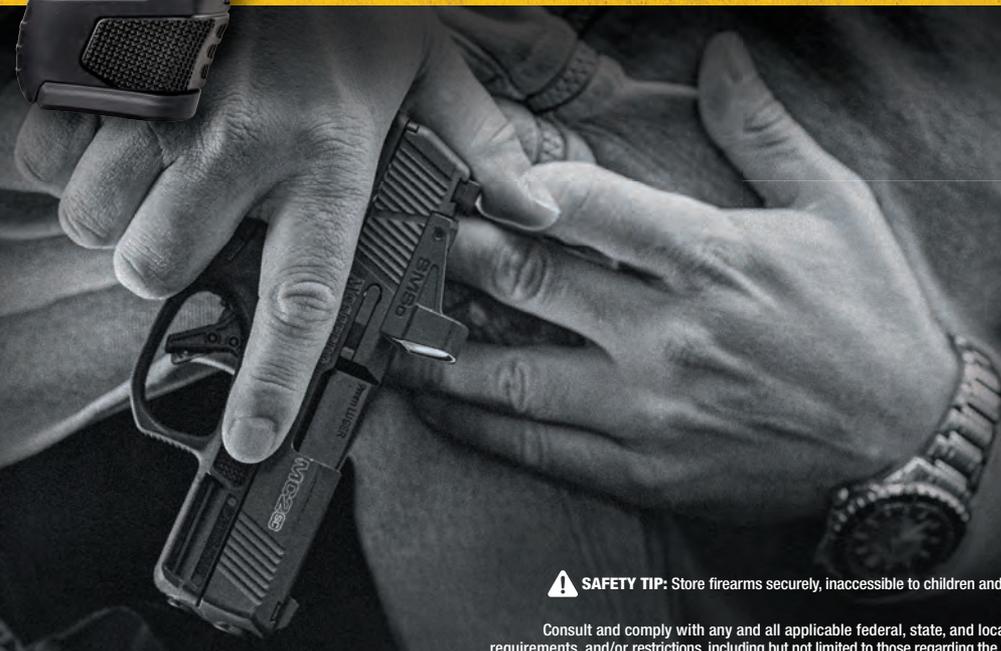
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