



8

HOME-BASED FFLs REACT
TO "PARIAH" LETTER

24

BEST PRACTICES
FAMILY RANGE TIME

36

RIDDING THE "INVISIBLE
WOMAN" SYNDROME

SHOOTING INDUSTRY®

THE INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS MAGAZINE — EST. 1955

MARCH 2022

THE WOMAN'S ISSUE

8 Ways To Retain Women &
Encourage Growth

Marketing To Women:
Earn Their Trust

10 Tips To Welcome
First-Time Guests

New Shooters Need
More Than A Gun

PLUS MORE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Hottest New Products
For Women

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CONTENTS

Presenting The 2022 Woman's Issue

COLUMNS

6

ITI

Inside This Issue

Don't Dismiss 50% Of Your Customers

10

IN

Industry News

- "Woman of the Gun" Awarded To Julie Golob
- SIG SAUER Partners With IHEA-USA
- SABRE L.E. Aerosols Receive Top Marks

18

NM

Newsmakers

**U.S. LawShield Promotes General Counsel, VP;
Creedmoor Sports Taps Marketing Director + More ...**

20

PDM

Personal Defense Market

New Tech Improves Handgun Handling
By Massad Ayoob

22

AW

Arms & The Woman

New Shooters Need More Than A Gun
By Karen Butler

24

BP

Best Practices

Getting The Whole Family Involved
By Robyn Sandoval

54

IL

Industry Link

"Barrier Breakers" Are Now The Rule
By Jade Moldae

Departments

8 Letters To The Editor

52 Advertiser Index

50 New Products

32

First Impressions

**10 Tips To Make First-Time
Female Customers Comfortable**

By Britney Booth



FEATURES

26

8 Ways To Retain Women & Encourage Growth

By Ava Flanell

28

The Full-Circle Approach

**Appeal To More Customers Through
Multi-Generational Marketing**

By Shari LeGate

36

The Invisible Woman

By Tiffany Johnson

40

Understanding Her Mindset

**How To Market To Women, Earn
Their Trust & Reap The Benefits**

By Mia Anstine

44

Forging Her Own Path

By Carolee Anita Boyles

48

Hottest New Products For Women

By Ashley McGee



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Don't Dismiss 50% Of Your Customers

Viewed as the fastest-growing segment of the shooting sports, women make up nearly *half* of new gun owners today. So what are you, the dealer, doing to ensure they feel welcome? *Shooting Industry's* 2022 Woman's Issue presents 11 columns and features centered on this objective. Here's a preview of some highlights in this fourth annual edition.

MORE THAN FREE TAMPONS & CHOCOLATE

In "8 Ways To Retain Women & Encourage Growth," Ava Flanell points out there is more dealers can do to welcome women than "including free tampons in the bathroom or setting out chocolates on the gun counter." One area sure to help welcome women is to diversify your staff.

"The face of gun owners is changing. Expand employment, including your instructors, to younger generations, women and different ethnicities. This opens the opportunity for customers to relate to their instructor or salesperson more," Flanell recommends.

For more, see pp. 26–27.

ADDRESSING "INVISIBLE WOMAN" SYNDROME

Tiffany Johnson shares an anecdote most (all?) women have experienced in a gun store — standing at the counter to make a purchase and being ignored by associates. She offers five tips for retailers and trainers to rid their facilities of "invisible woman" syndrome.

"If the majority of women can shed the invisibility cloak when they walk through your door, then you're not only boosting the bottom line — but also helping ensure the Second Amendment is safe for untold future generations of Americans, regardless of gender," she shared.

See pp. 36–39.



MARCH 2022

MARKETING TO WOMEN A "SMART MOVE"

"Marketing to women is a smart move. But don't shoot first and aim later!" This quote in Mia Anstine's article, "Understanding Her Mindset," (pp. 40–42) comes from noted marketing guru Michael Solomon.

While he's addressing a mainstream audience, Solomon's perspective translates well to our industry. Anstine argues stores should endeavor to understand the psychology of a woman to attract her attention, earn her trust and her purchasing power.

SHOT REVIEW COMING NEXT MONTH

Inside next month's issue, look out for a review of the 2022 SHOT Show. It was a show unlike any other, and the return to in-person business was certainly welcome. The issue will also include a selection of products that launched during SHOT Show week.

The April issue will also examine trends impacting the long-range, precision-shooting segment, tips for elevating your in-store POS systems and, thanks to reader feedback, exploring the added benefits of offering in-house gunsmithing services. Further, Julie Golob provides insights on making an impression through email campaigns. **SI**

Have a comment after reading this issue? Let us know:
comments@shootingindustry.com.

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DEALERS RESPOND TO JANUARY'S "WHY AM I A PARIAH?" LETTER

Editor's Note: In the Jan. 2022 issue, we ran a letter ("Why Am I A Pariah?") from Matthew Sims, who operates Red Roo Defense — a home-based FFL. In his letter, he questioned why some distributors don't sell to online-only stores like his. Sims' letter clearly struck a chord with other home-based FFLs, generating numerous responses. Here are our top picks.

I have to back Matthew Sims' stance concerning major distributors only giving support to the brick-and-mortar stores.

I've been in the firearms industry for 16 years, running my gunsmithing business from the basement of my home. When I started my business — as a second career, after retiring from a 34-year career in the lighting industry — I had eight different distributors. Thanks to the Obama administration, three of these distributors bit the bankruptcy dust. I've since reduced my distributors to two to try to establish a larger presence with them.

Over the years I tried to establish business relationships with several other distributorships and because I didn't have a 1,500+ sq. ft. retail

“**Being small, we can offer a customer to special order a lot of firearms that aren't usually available on the shelf on big-market stores.**”

facility, I was denied. Many of these distributorships are out of business today, due to bankruptcy.

One distributor's financial officer, after a 13-year relationship, decided my open-account status would be denied — even though I had never missed making my account current. Oh, they would still honor my business as a “partner,” but only on a C.O.D. basis. This is unfair

to my customers because I would have to raise my prices to an uncompetitive level.

So, yes — Matthew has a right to be pissed off.

Sam Summey, Owner
B&S Gunsmithing
Flat Rock, N.C.

I have been a home-based dealer with an FFL for 36 years under a gunsmith license. A lot of wholesalers will sell to you if you have all the state and tax licenses, and show you pay your sales tax monthly or quarterly! Just being an FFL holder and home-based address won't work in this time we're in — as wholesalers require proof of a brick-and-mortar storefront. Having an FFL and doing your 4473 forms and selling to friends is better with a collector's license.

Thank you for still putting out a paper magazine! I have taken it for years and enjoy it. I'm a proud supporter of the Second Amendment Foundation.

Ron Brown, Owner
R.B. Gun Repair & Sales
Elko, Nev.

Just received the latest issue and saw the comment about home-based FFLs being shut out of major distributors for not having a brick-and-mortar store. It's definitely disappointing, to say the least.

Being small, we can offer a customer to special order a lot of firearms that aren't usually available on the shelf of big-market stores. **SI**

Jesus Cabrera, Owner
The Right To Bear Arms
Racine, Wis.

SI readers — whether you're a storefront or a home-based FFL — we invite you to weigh in on this topic. Drop me a line at editor@shootingindustry.com. — Jade Moldae, Editor

HAVE A THOUGHT WHILE READING THE ISSUE?

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JULIE GOLOB RECEIVES INAUGURAL “WOMAN OF THE GUN” AWARD

The NSSF named champion shooter and safety advocate Julie Golob recipient of its first-ever Woman of the Gun Award during the 2022 SHOT Show in Las Vegas. The award recognizes Golob's achievements and contributions to the shooting sports, as well as her work to promote the mission and message of NSSF's Project ChildSafe program.

“Julie is a mom, veteran, hunter and one of the most decorated handgun shooting champions in the world,” said Joe Bartozzi, NSSF president and CEO.

“For more than a decade, she's also been an invaluable partner to our Project ChildSafe program, giving of her time, her talents and her energy to promote firearm safety education.”

Golob's career in competitive shooting started when she took top honors in several matches as a junior competitor, leading to her recruitment by the U.S. Army Shooting Team. Over the past 30 years, she has earned more than 150 major championship titles, including more than 50 world and national titles.

Golob is also the first woman in history to win U.S. Practical Shooting Association Championships in all seven handgun divisions.

Golob began working with Project ChildSafe in 2013, lending her name and expertise to a host of firearm safety education efforts through guest columns, social media campaigns, public appearances and videos, including a feature video on how to talk to kids about gun safety.

“I’m a huge advocate of passing on the tradition of safe and fun enjoyment of the shooting sports. They’re an indelible part of our heritage as a nation.”

JULIE GOLOB

“I’m a huge advocate of passing on the tradition of safe and fun enjoyment of the shooting sports. They’re an indelible part of our heritage as a nation,” Golob said. “My whole family shares that heritage, and all of us can take pride in the results of our collective work to promote gun safety and responsibility.”

Continued on pg. 12

BEAR & SON CUTLERY, BLACKHAWK INK LICENSING AGREEMENT

Bear & Son Cutlery has entered into a licensing agreement with Blackhawk. The new licensing deal will allow Bear & Son Cutlery to manufacture new Blackhawk knife models in its Alabama factory, as well as commercialize additional models throughout their nationwide dealer network.

“This agreement will allow us to strategically develop Bear & Son

Cutlery's personal-defense and tactical knife program, providing dealers with even more premium knife choices that meet customer applications,” said Matt Griffey, VP of Bear and Son Cutlery. “The name Blackhawk is trusted by countless military members, veterans, government agencies and first responders of this great country. Bringing this brand into the Bear & Son Cutlery family matches our goals of providing the best cutlery products they can depend on.”

Along with distributing original Blackhawk knives, Bear & Son Cutlery will have the opportunity to influence the design process of new knives



manufactured under the Blackhawk brand. Beginning this spring, the new knife lineup will include a butterfly knife, additional automatics, a fixed-blade dagger, a tactical pry tool, a modified Karambit knife and numerous assisted-opening knives.

**/ bearandsoncutlery.com
/ blackhawk.com**



NATIONAL DEER ASSOCIATION RECEIVES GRANT

The National Deer Association (NDA) announced a \$150,000 grant from the Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund. The grant will benefit important local and regional conservation projects that will help ensure the future of wild deer, wildlife habitat and hunting.

The landmark grant was funded by noted conservationist and Bass Pro Shops Founder Johnny Morris, and generous contributions from Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's customers. It will expand NDA's and its conservation partners' nationwide initiative, "Improving Access, Habitat and Deer Hunting on Public Lands." One of those partners is the U.S. Forest Service (USFS).

"The fund and the organizations it's helped over the years has had an immeasurably positive impact on fish and wildlife conservation, and we're proud

to be part of it," said Nick Pinizzotto, president and CEO of NDA.

Like the NDA, the Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The Outdoor Fund encourages more than 200 million Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's customers to round up purchases to support conservation partners and projects advocating for sportsmen's rights, connect new audiences to the outdoors and protect and conserve wildlife habitat across North America. This mission closely aligns with the NDA's.

Support from the Outdoor Fund will allow the NDA to accelerate important work addressing landscape-level access and forest health issues, reaching a goal of improving 1 million acres of public land by 2026, at least five years ahead of earlier expectations.

An NDA and USFS agreement helps shared stewardship coordinators identify and select proposed projects for completion on public lands across the

country. These efforts are guided by USFS land management objectives, NDA's conservation priorities and local and regional needs. They may include fire abatement strategies and/or prescribed fire treatments; various forms of vegetation management to promote healthy forests; watershed restoration and maintenance; control of noxious and exotic species and the reestablishment of native species; recreational facility management; and road and trail maintenance or decommissioning to restore and improve water quality.

Work has already begun in Kentucky and Mississippi, impacting an estimated 55,000 to 65,000 acres. The NDA and USFS are on track to have projects in six states totaling 175,000 to 265,000 acres in 2022. The NDA was previously awarded \$180,000 in funding to jump-start the initiative in 2021 through an anonymous donor. / deerassociation.com

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Continued from pg. 10

The NSSF launched Project ChildSafe in 1999 as a nationwide program to promote secure and responsible storage of firearms when they are not in use.

The focus has been on preventing accidents and thefts, and suicide prevention.

Project ChildSafe has been recognized by the National Safety Council and the U.S.

Department of Justice, among others, for its effectiveness in educating gun owners. Most importantly, over the past 20 years, fatal firearms accidents have dropped to historic lows. / projectchildsafe.org

BASE CAMP LEASING SUPPORTS FREEDOM HUNTERS

Base Camp Leasing (BCL) announced it has provided a donation to Freedom Hunters, a 501(c)(3) military outreach program that focuses on providing outdoor adventures for U.S. servicemen and women.

Support from BCL will enhance Freedom Hunters' post-deployment outdoor adventures for military personnel and their families, as well as honor the wounded and remember the fallen.

"We're proud to support Freedom

Hunters. Their focus on the military community is outstanding. Our business is all about enjoying hunting and the outdoors, so this is a great match for us," said JT Kreager, BCL CEO.

"We know how important having access to great properties can be. Base Camp Leasing's partnership will open more doors to the great outdoors and witness the power of bringing healing to our military community through our adventures," said Anthony Pace, founder of Freedom Hunters. "The healing and camaraderie that takes place on hunts like this are priceless. Together, we are changing lives. From all of us at Freedom



Hunters, thank you!"
/ basecampleasing.com
/ freedomhunters.org

CHRISTENSEN ARMS PARTNERS WITH W.L. GORE'S OPTIFADE

Christensen Arms has announced its partnership with W.L. Gore for usage of Elevated II and Subalpine OPTIFADE camouflage on their premium firearms.

"This is an incredible opportunity for two iconic industry brands to partner together for the benefit of the consumer. OPTIFADE pattern hunting advantages have been well documented. Adding this superior pattern to our state-of-the-art hunting rifles definitely gives the hunter an extreme advantage in accuracy and concealment," said Stephen Graham, SVP of marketing at Christensen Arms.

Christensen Arms will be using



Elevated II and Subalpine patterns on the Ridgeline and Ranger .22 firearms. The Elevated II pattern will be used on the following: Ridgeline .308 Win. (16.25" barrel length), 6.5 PRC (18"), 6.5 Creedmoor (20") and Ranger .22 LR (18"). The Subalpine pattern will be used on the following: Ridgeline .300 Win. Mag. (26" barrel length), .300 PRC (26"), 6.5 PRC (24"), 28 Nosler (26") and Ranger .22 LR (18"). All rifles are backed by the Christensen Arms Sub-MOA at 50 Yards Guarantee.

The OPTIFADE Subalpine pattern is designed for stalking and ambushing from ground level in tree-covered and vegetated terrain. The OPTIFADE Concealment Elevated II pattern is designed for elevated hunting. Its macro and micro pattern configurations echo the higher contrast of bright sky against the shaded underside of foliage, allowing hunters to extend their season as the leaves change.

/ christensenarms.com

PYRAMYD AIR LAUNCHES "SICK OF COVID CHALLENGE"

Pyramyd Air has kicked off its Sick of COVID Challenge to encourage customers to enjoy trigger time with loved ones while getting out some pent-up pandemic frustration.

Customers can receive a free (plus shipping) set of Sick of COVID stickers and targets and enter to win exclusive prize

packages by sharing how they enjoy their trigger therapy after a long two years of the pandemic.

Whether it's an action-packed film, creative candids or an interesting story, Pyramyd Air wants to hear how shooters are showing they're "Sick of COVID."

Pyramyd Air will award \$3,000 in shopping sprees to winners, plus weekly giveaways, throughout the two-month campaign. The Sick of COVID Challenge launched Feb. 7, 2022 and will run



through April 7. Winners will be drawn after the campaign concludes.

/ pyramydair.com/soc

SAAMI CERTIFIES TRUE VELOCITY 6.8TVC ROUND

True Velocity, a Texas-based advanced defense technology company, announced a commercial version of the 6.8TVC cartridge the company initially designed for the U.S. Army's Next Generation Squad Weapon (NGSW) program is now available for civilian use. The announcement came immediately following a vote by the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI) board of directors to accept the new cartridge and publish its specifications.

The 6.8TVC is a composite-cased round offering significant weight reduction, improved accuracy and extended range over comparable brass-cased cartridges. True Velocity introduced the 6.8TVC cartridge for SAAMI certification at a maximum average pressure of 65,000 psi with a 135-grain bullet at a velocity of 3,000 fps. It's the first composite-cased

cartridge to be accepted for SAAMI certification.

True Velocity, which has produced cartridges for American and allied war fighters for years, plans to make the 6.8TVC cartridge available to consumers via the company's website, as well as at retail locations nationwide.

True Velocity is working with a growing list of preeminent rifle manufacturers, such as Daniel Defense, Beretta USA and Lewis Machine & Tool to develop rifles or conversion kits for the 6.8TVC cartridge. The company will offer special ammunition subscriptions to customers who purchase the 6.8TVC rifles and conversion kits, providing a discount off regular retail price and direct-to-consumer delivery.


True Velocity subsidiary LoneStar Future Weapons also plans to launch a commercial version of the RM-277 bullpup rifle it developed and submitted for the NGSW program in conjunction with the military version of the 6.8TVC cartridge.




LoneStar and True Velocity comprise one of two remaining contenders for the NGSW program.

"What we're doing is putting the performance of the most advanced ammunition ever created for U.S. troops into the hands of discerning shooters who want to hit their target every time," said Kevin Boscamp, CEO of True Velocity. "Without question, the future of shooting sports and performance can be found in our proprietary, composite-cased rounds. SAAMI's certification of the 6.8TVC is further evidence of the adoption we are seeing for composite-cased ammunition."


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March 2022 ■ Shooting Industry 13

BIG ROCK SPORTS ANNOUNCES 2022 NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE WINNERS

Big Rock Sports announced the 2022 New Product Showcase Winners at its second virtual National Outdoor Expo. The category winners were chosen based on the participating retailers' individual votes on each product.

The Shooting Sports 2021 New Product Showcase winners are:

- Best Rifle/Shotgun: Mossberg 940 Pro Waterfowl Semi-Auto
- Best Handgun: Springfield SA-35 9mm Semi-Auto
- Best Ammunition: Hornady CX Superformance 30-06 SPR Rifle Ammo

- Best Scope/Optics: Leupold Patrol 6HD Scope
- Best Hunting Accessory: Covert WC20 Wireless Camera
- Best Shooting Sports Accessory: Hornady Rapid Safe
- Best Knife and Tool: Buck 212 Ranger Fixed Blade
- Overall Best of Show Winner – Shooting Sports: Springfield SA-35 9mm Semi-Auto

The Fishing, Camp and Marine Showcase winners are:

- Best Rod/Reel Combo: Berkley Pro Spec Chrome
- Best Reel: Daiwa Ballistic MQ Spinning Reel
- Best Rod: 13 Fishing Blackout Casting Rod
- Best Freshwater Lure: Berkley PowerBait Gilly



- Best Saltwater Lure: Z-Man HerculeZ Swimbait
- Best Fishing Line: Berkley Pro Spec Chrome
- Best Terminal Tackle/Accessory: Fishin Stix Orange Bite Alarm
- Best Camping/Outdoor: Thermacell Patio Shield Mosquito Repeller
- Best Marine Electronic: Humminbird Helix 7
- Overall Best of Show Winner – Fish/Camp/Marine: Humminbird Helix 7

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

SIG SAUER PARTNERS WITH IHEA-USA

SIG SAUER has announced a new partnership with the International Hunter Education Association-USA (IHEA-USA) that will benefit hunter education instructors in numerous ways.

The IHEA-USA has finalized its multi-year strategic plan, which outlines the commitment to serving and retaining vital volunteers in the shooting industry and the state agency teams that coordinate public education for hunting and the shooting sports. SIG SAUER has agreed to partner in this mission delivery.

SIG SAUER will offer instructor and guide discounts on select products, and IHEA-USA will participate in SIG SAUER-hosted events. Additionally, SIG SAUER will support the new IHEA-USA Firearm Fundamentals Course, scheduled to launch later this year. The course is

designed to give new firearms owners thorough training on firearm safety from the IHEA-USA, the authority on firearm safety in the field.

"SIG's generosity allows us to give even more back to our valuable volunteer Hunter Education Instructor Corps. We are so excited to offer the tens of thousands of volunteer instructors discounts on a variety of SIG products and experiences through giveaways and contests," said Alex Baer, executive director of the IHEA-USA.

"This is an exciting new partnership for SIG SAUER as we begin to further expand our presence in the hunting community for 2022. We first want to express our appreciation to all volunteer Hunter Educators for everything they do for the firearms and hunting community," said Tom Taylor, CMO and executive VP of commercial sales for SIG SAUER Inc. "Partnering with IHEA-USA to provide them with an exclusive SIG SAUER

SIG SAUER



program to get products like the CROSS Rifle and our full line of riflescopes, rangefinders and binoculars is an honor. Additionally, this new affiliation with the IHEA-USA allows us to expand our efforts in education with regard to gun safety through their new Firearms Fundamentals program."

SIG SAUER'S support also allows the IHEA-USA to continue to market and create curriculum and content for state fish and wildlife agencies to execute programs that teach safe gun handling, including their Hunter Education and Firearms Fundamentals Courses.

[/sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com) / ihea-usa.org



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NASGW RELEASES FIRST ANNUAL SCOPE REPORT

The National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers (NASGW), the association representing shooting sports wholesalers, manufacturers and their trade partners, and the creator of the industry-leading SCOPE data platform, has released the first annual SCOPE Report compiling distributor sales and inventory data from throughout 2021, at no cost.

"NASGW has been compiling data for the last few years and reporting is something we've wanted to provide for a long time," said Kenyon Gleason, NASGW president. "With the addition of some key new team members, we are excited to provide a standard to measure trends in our industry."

The 2021 SCOPE Report is also available with regional breakdowns for a more granular analysis. In the future, the national report will be available for purchase on a quarterly and annual basis from NASGW. Data compiled from this report is sourced directly from SCOPE DLX (distributor sales and inventory). In addition, quarterly and annual reporting from SCOPE CLX (retailer sales) will be available in the future as NASGW continues to bring on more POS partners and retail stores.

"We've got big things happening with SCOPE right now," said Easton Kuboushek, NASGW director of data programs. "We're currently adding some significant partners, expanding our reach, growing our users and delivering on the vision we laid out years ago to be the standard for data in the shooting sports industry. This first report is just the beginning of what we plan to provide on a consistent basis."

To download a free copy of the 2021 SCOPE Annual Report, visit <https://nasgwscope.org/resources/the-scope-report>. / nasgw.org



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SCCY FIREARMS LAUNCHES REVAMPED WEBSITE

SCCY Firearms announced the launch of its updated website, with added user-friendly features that make it visually appealing and informative. The new website utilizes new technology complementing SCCY's rebranding effort, which started in 2021 and continues into 2022 and beyond.

The ability to compare model specifications and prices is just one of the site's improved options. A new, 360-degree firearms viewer gives customers the ability to rotate, flip and manipulate models so they can view all of the handguns' features. This allows potential customers to view the firearms as if they were holding them in their hands from the comfort of their home, according to Chris Davis, VP of marketing and sales for SCCY.

New technology called Augmented Reality (AR) allows impressive, new features. Scanning an on-screen QR code with a mobile phone allows customers to manipulate a firearm in a 3D fashion, as if it were right in front of them on a table.

Also included in the new website are a variety of training videos presented by SCCY's Chris Cerino. The videos are located under the Media tab, and can be found by clicking "Training." / sccy.com



As part of SCCY's revamped website, users have the ability to view options like the CPX-2 in a 360-degree viewer. There, they can see different color configurations and other features.

SABRE L.E. AEROSOLS RECEIVE TOP MARKS

Security Equipment Corporation (SEC), manufacturer of SABRE Aerosol Irritant Projectors (AIP), has achieved certification to the ASTM E3187-19, Standard Specification for Less Lethal Aerosol Devices Used by Law Enforcement, Corrections, and Other Public Safety Officers. In addition, it has achieved the companion certification standard, ASTM E3215-19, Standard Practice for Certification of Less Lethal Aerosol Devices Used by Law Enforcement, Corrections, and Other Public Safety Officers.

The SABRE Red 1.33% MC Crossfire Stream & Gel flip top duty belt units

along with the SABRE Red 1.33% MC Generation 1 Stream flip top duty belt units have all been certified by SEI (Safety Equipment Institute), effective October 11, 2021. Initial certification testing was successfully completed on September 24, 2021, in accordance with the requirements of ASTM E3187-19 & E3215-19, Standard Specification for Less Lethal Aerosol Devices Used by Law Enforcement and Corrections & Practice for Certification of Less Lethal Aerosol Devices.

“As the market leader in law enforcement aerosol irritant projectors, our organization is committed to continually investing in our products and procedures so they receive and maintain the highest certification as it is our mission to help agencies Make It Safe,” said Mike Patterson, head of SABRE L.E. sales.



The SABRE Law Enforcement AIPs underwent rigorous testing, including resistance to crushing, resistance to dropping, resistance to high temperature, resistance to low temperature, flammability, electroshock weapon (esw) flammability, HPLC analysis, etc. All product model testing is conducted in accordance with globally recognized product standards from organizations like ASTM International, ANSI/ANAB, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and the U.S. National Institute of Justice (NIJ). / [sabrered.com](https://www.sabrered.com)

LUCID OPTICS INCREASES U.S. MANUFACTURING COMPONENTS

Lucid Optics, manufacturer of quality firearms optics and accessories, announced changes in its production and import process that will allow for more U.S.-made components in the manufacturing of its products.

Businesses have had to look for ways to solve the problems of product and labor shortages, shipping and production delays and reduce their impact on operations.

“Lucid Optics has taken steps (to develop) the infrastructure, and modified some of our supply chain to embrace U.S. manufacturing of key optics in our Riverton, Wyo. facility,” said Jason Wilson, founder and president of Lucid Optics.

Lucid has considered how various solutions would impact the company's values as an American-owned small business. Supporting American jobs and contributing to U.S. economic growth is a strong priority for the company.

“Will these items cost more? Sure, but whenever the conversation about this is



broached, our customers almost always say they would be willing to pay more for a U.S.-made item. With the advances in technology and some of our relationships with component manufacturers, this will be a challenge that should yield an incredible step in the right direction for the Lucid Optics product line,” Wilson said. / [lucidoptics.com](https://www.lucidoptics.com)

RUGER DONATES TO SSSF FROM AUCTIONING RARE FIREARMS ON GUNBROKER

Ruger has donated \$30,000 to the Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF), an organization dedicated to educating youth about the shooting sports. Ruger's donation was raised through auctions on GunBroker.com between September and December 2021.

Since 2010, Ruger has been working with the popular firearms auction website GunBroker.com to auction off rare, unusual, discontinued or one-of-a-kind Ruger firearms. All proceeds from these auctions are donated to various charities, with over \$820,000 raised and donated in



MIKE FIFER'S RUGER HAWKEYE PREDATOR

A Hawkeye Predator rifle owned by former Ruger CEO Mike Fifer — who took the rifle on a hunt in Greenland with his daughter in 2011 — fetched \$3,033 in an auction hosted on GunBroker in late 2021. Since 2010, Ruger has raised and donated \$820,000 to SSSF through similar auctions.

total over the last decade.

“We're proud to be able to support the SSSF in its mission of educating young folks all across America about the shooting sports,” said Chris Killoy, Ruger president and CEO. “These auctions are a creative way for us to support important organizations in our industry while also sharing one-of-a-kind Ruger firearms with

our loyal customers.”

Some rare firearms sold to benefit the SSSF were a Ruger Vaquero revolver featuring a hand-engraved western scroll design and a Hawkeye Predator rifle previously owned by former Ruger CEO, Mike Fifer, who took the rifle on a hunt in Greenland with his daughter in 2011.

/ [ruger.com/auctions](https://www.ruger.com/auctions) / [sssfonline.org](https://www.sssfonline.org)

GREEN TOP SHOOTING RANGE AWARDED NSSF'S FIVE-STAR RATING

Green Top Shooting Range has received a Five-Star rating for range excellence from NSSF, making it Virginia's only indoor shooting range with the top-rated designation.

"We're honored to be recognized as one of only 51 indoor ranges in the U.S. with the NSSF Five-Star rating," said Blaine Altaffer, Green Top president and CEO. "We continue to use experienced-based retailing wrapped with expertise and passion by our team at Green Top as the differentiator for why customers and members so proudly call Green Top their retailer and range of choice. As we celebrate our 75th anniversary this year, getting this award is like a bow on the box for us!"

To receive the NSSF's Five-Star rating



NSSF's Zach Snow (right) presents Green Top's Blaine Altaffer (left) and Will Doss (center) with a plaque signifying Green Top Shooting Range as an NSSF Five-Star rated facility.

the range had to undergo a vigorous 128-point review process.

"The facility stands out for its top-quality range, a clean and open retail showroom, knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff and strong community support. All add up to a top-notch target shooting range," added Zach Snow, NSSF director of member development.

Green Top Shooting Range, which opened in 2019, offers 24 indoor, climate-controlled 25-yard lanes across three shooting bays, a high-efficiency air filtration system, ballistic glass shooting

stalls and fully automated touch-screen target retrieval systems. The facility also offers 2,000 sq. ft. of retail space, which includes an assortment of firearms and range accessories, ammo and gear. In addition, the range offers a full complement of firearms safety and training classes, including courses for women, general firearms safety, home defense and beginners. All classes are taught by certified firearms instructors and all employees are certified RSOs.

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

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

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UPC #7366776035014



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Model Series: MAX-9

Caliber: 9mm Luger

Capacity: 10+1

Barrel Length: 3.2 in

Minimum/Overall Length: 6 in

MORE DETAILS

MSRP: \$559.00

PRODUCT DETAILS

Model Specific: MAX-9

Safety: Manual Safety

Frame Finish: Black

Front Sight: Tritium Fiber Optic

Rear Sight: Drift Adjustable

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

- Striker-fired with a short, smooth trigger pull, clean break and positive reset.
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A. BURDETTE

U.S. LAWSHIELD PROMOTES GENERAL COUNSEL, VP

U.S. LawShield announced Aaron Burdette was promoted to the role of general counsel, and Kristi Heuring to VP of communications.



K. HEURING

P.J. Hermosa, CEO of U.S.

LawShield, stated, "Upon joining the team, Aaron's positive impact throughout the company was immediately recognized. We are honored to have him lead the legal department to ensure good corporate governance and sound business policy."

Burdette previously held the role of deputy general counsel for the company and is a Tulane Law School graduate with more than 15 years' experience.

Hermosa added, "Since joining the team less than a year ago, [Heuring] has continued to put the success of our 2A partners first. Kristi brings extensive industry knowledge and passion to all she does."

Previously the company's director of partner relations, Heuring is an award-winning marketing strategist with over 25 years of experience generating creative strategies and leveraging public relations and media platforms to help businesses achieve revenue and sales goals.



W. DAYBERRY

CREEDMOOR SPORTS TAPS MARKETING DIRECTOR

Creedmoor Sports welcomed Wayne Dayberry as its new director of marketing to lead sales and marketing efforts in support of the precision shooting sports markets.

"Creedmoor Sports is making significant investments in our ability to better serve our industry and our customer; we see the

addition of Wayne to our team as a key driver to our success going forward," said Bill Gravatt, Creedmoor Sports' president.

Dayberry most recently served as brand manager for a CPG firm. He also drove key marketing initiatives for Nightforce Optics.



J. HARLING

MURRAY ROAD AGENCY TAPS CLIENT MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR

The Murray Road Agency added Jonathan Harling as director of client management to its growing team. Harling will be responsible for managing client services including public relations, social media, ambassador and affiliate programs and other marketing needs. He will play an integral role in expanding brand relationships and media partnerships.

Murray Road President Tim Brandt said, "[Harling] is a true industry veteran with an amazing reputation, extensive experience and a hyper-focus on delivering for partners."

Prior to joining Murray Road, Harling handled ad buying, influencer management and public relations for other industry agencies.

He earned a bachelor's in mass communication from Winthrop University.



J. TRULL

TRIJICON INC. NAMES VP

As Trijicon's VP of sales and marketing, John Trull will have oversight responsibilities of the commercial sales and marketing organizations as well as the business development team which serves domestic military organizations, government agencies, international military/L.E. agencies and international commercial sales.

Trijicon President and CEO

Stephen Bindon said, "[Trull's] unique perspective on product development, brand management and operations will be a tremendous asset to Trijicon as we continue to expand our market share within the industry."

Prior to joining Trijicon, Trull served more than 14 years with Remington Arms Company in various executive capacities. He also served as CEO of Hunter's Specialties Inc., EVP of Davidson's and most recently, he held the position of VP of product management-ammunition for Vista Outdoor Inc.

Trull earned his MBA from Wake Forest University.



S. FISCHER

BPI OUTDOORS TAPS CEO, PROMOTES MANAGERS

BPI Outdoors hired Scot Fischer as CEO, promoted Steve Mullinax to national sales manager for CVA and Bergara and Tricia Kinnard to marketing manager.



S. MULLINAX

BPI's former CEO, Nate Treadaway, stated, "I firmly believe Scot will be very complementary to the organization and will bring support and strength to many areas at

BPI with his experience. Kinnard will do a fantastic job leading our marketing efforts."

BPI Brand Manager Dakota Russell stated, "[Mullinax's] enthusiasm and relationships with our account base make him a perfect fit for his new role."



T. KINNARD

CSSI WELCOMES CATEGORY DIRECTOR

Chattanooga Shooting Supplies Inc. (CSSI) recently welcomed Melissa Dubiel to its team as category director.



M. DUBIEL

"As we continue expanding our business from the Southeast to a national footprint, we are investing in people, technology and inventory as well as in our vendor partnerships. [Dubiel's] versatility and grit will add to our ever-growing category diversification," said Ron Staffieri, CSSI president/CEO.

Dubiel joins CSSI with over 35 years in the industry in a variety of roles including operations, IT and merchandising.

She earned a bachelor's in business administration with a concentration in IT management from California State University East Bay.



M. KORDEK

RUBLINE MARKETING ADDS COORDINATOR

With a strong background in communications and passion for the outdoors, Michael

Kordek will help serve RubLine Marketing's roster of clients as the new marketing and social media coordinator. His role includes interacting with clients' fans in real time as well as generating and distributing compelling content within the hunting/shooting space.

"We're happy to have Michael join our team, and I know he'll have an immediate impact on the digital presence of all the brands we serve," said Chase Rohlfen, president of RubLine Marketing.

Kordek is currently completing his master's degree in communication studies at the University of Northern Iowa.



J. ROSE

SENTRY PRODUCTS GROUP RECRUITS MARKETING DIRECTOR

SENTRY Products Group selected Jeff Rose to spearhead the company's new marketing initiatives as director of marketing and creative.

"Jeff has a big task bringing our various brands together under the SENTRY banner," Terry Naughton, president of SENTRY. "I am confident

he will not only handle the marketing challenge, but he will also be integral in making this company internationally recognized."

Rose's 18-year career experience includes serving as creative director for Vista Outdoor and the ATK family of companies.



A. STEWART

PREMIER BODY ARMOR ADVANCES PRESIDENT

Premier Body Armor (PBA) announced the recent promotion of Alex Stewart to company

president. Stewart's new position reflects a shift in the operational leadership at Premier Body Armor, and marks a new era for the growing company.

Frank Stewart, Premier Body Armor CEO, said, "For the last few years, Alex has assembled an amazing team of professionals who have taken Premier Body Armor to another level. His leadership and communication skills are second to none. I will remain on board at PBA as CEO and it will be a pleasure to work alongside him."



N. TREADAWAY

VIGILANT GEAR LLC NAMES CEO

Vigilant Gear LLC, owner of Primary Weapons Systems and Lone Wolf Arms, has named Nate Treadaway

as its new CEO.

Vigilant Gear Founder and Chairman Clay Tippins stated, "Nate's experience and stellar reputation as a seasoned industry professional, as well as his intimate knowledge of how to manage multiple brands, will be instrumental in allowing both of these companies to realize their full potential."

Treadaway has over two decades of executive leadership in the firearms industry, throughout which he has managed various aspects of business including sales, marketing, operations, product development and strategic planning. He previously served as the CEO of BPI Outdoors. **SI**



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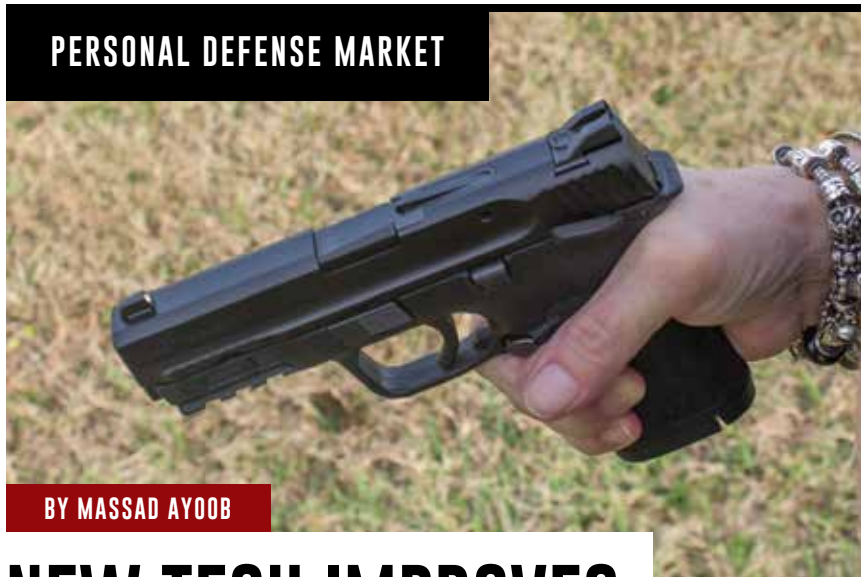
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BY MASSAD AYOUB

NEW TECH IMPROVES HANDGUN HANDLING

It's a given most defensive firearms have historically been designed by and for males. There have been recent developments which improve the situation. Let's remember according to the latest statistics (using Heathline.com as a source), the average adult American male stands just over 5'9" tall and weighs fully 198 lbs., while the average adult American female is just under 5'4" and weighs just over 170 lbs.

That said, though, one of the strongest recent trends in handgun development has been more compact guns, which often have commensurately shorter trigger reach. It's important because this dimension seems to be the single most important one in determining how a pistol or revolver fits a customer's hand.

Another contemporary development is ammo improvement has closed the "power gap" between larger, harder-kicking calibers and medium-caliber rounds with less recoil. The latter, of course, favor the smaller person. There are many well-credentialed experts who now maintain there is no practical difference in "stopping power" between a 9mm, .45 or .357 — assuming the best ammunition is used. Whether or not you or I agree with this, and whether or not it's true, we can't argue the fact modern ammunition developments have made medium calibers (such as 9mm) more

effective than they ever were before.

Much the same is true of the .380 caliber, where ballistic tests of rounds like the latest Federal hollowpoints and reconfigured bullets such as are found in the Black Hills HoneyBadger show increased the destructive potential of the .380.

THE CUSTOM GUN

For customers who don't mind paying more, customized or factory-custom guns can be the answer for any client who has some difficulty in manipulating and shooting handguns.

When testing the Langdon Tactical Technologies (LTT) customized GLOCK 19 pistol recently, I was struck by a comment on the popular pistol-forum.com site by my friend Tim Chandler, a top-flight instructor in Virginia. He told of a new female student he felt would be particularly well-served by a gun like the Langdon. She had been having trouble with her new striker-fired 9mm carry pistol.

Chandler wrote: "I borrowed the gun from her and pressed the trigger and instantly understood why she was struggling. The trigger press was like dragging an anvil through gravel. I took the gun apart, blasted it with some aerosol cleaner and applied a generous portion of Amsoil's gun lube and that made it better, but the gun itself has problems."

◀ There's a reason why Smith & Wesson's "EZ" series has been a top-selling line — its easy-to-work slide assuages fears for those who may not have the hand strength to operate a semi-auto platform.

This veteran instructor continued, "She shot my G17 ... which is set up really, really well. Naturally she loved it and asked if she could get a GLOCK her size set up the same way. 'Yes, all you need to do is change out this list of parts' — and this is where she lost interest. She doesn't want to take the thing apart and replace fire-control bits because she's not comfortable she can work on the gun without harming the safety or reliability of it. She didn't buy a gun to get a build-it-yourself project."

He concluded, "A gun LTT sets up for her is enormously attractive. She puts down the money, she gets a gun set up for her that works and has support if there's an issue."



We can't argue the fact modern ammunition developments have made medium calibers (such as 9mm) more effective than they ever were before.

COMPENSATING FOR LACK OF STRENGTH

Many current buyers of both genders are new to guns. Ease of manipulation is not just for women, who generally do have less upper-body strength (but better fine-motor coordination) than their brothers. We also have a lot of older folks who, due to current social conditions, are buying guns for the first time. If physical manipulation of things like auto-pistol slides becomes a problem, we have answers for that too, and some of those also come from recent trends.

Let me emphasize: These hand strength/manipulation issues aren't just limited to females or the elderly. I've met a retired big-city cop who towers over me but no longer carries autoloaders because severe arthritis has crippled his hands. He now carries a pair of Ruger SP101 revolvers loaded with .38 Special for this reason. (I'd be comfortable having him on my side of a fight anytime; the last time someone tried to murder him, he felled his attacker instantly and fatally with a single double-action shot from his Ruger revolver.)

For these customers, show them the "carry optics option." Not only do some people shoot better with the red dot optical sight, now small enough for carry pistols — particularly if their vision is such they have trouble with regular iron sights — but carry optics offer another advantage to any customer who is not certain about their physical strength in terms of manipulating a semi-auto pistol.



WALTHER CCP M2 — .380

Because the optical sight rises above the slide, it forms a "shelf" able to be manipulated with the heel of the support hand. The movement resembles an actor in a cowboy movie "fanning" the hammer of a single-action, frontier-style revolver. It requires less hand strength, and really no finger strength at all.

IN HAND OR IN SAFE BETTER?

We now have a generation of semi-auto pistols expressly designed for easier slide manipulation. Smith & Wesson has been successful in this market with their EZ variation of the M&P pistol in 9mm, .380 and the new 30 Super Carry, ditto Walther with their CCP, first in 9mm and now in .380, as well.

In the Ruger line we find the pioneering LC380 and also the Lite-Rack line of LCP II pistols, the latter chambered for .22 LR. My own LCP-II has proven 100% reliable with CCI Mini-Mag .22 LR ammunition.



RUGER LCR

No, there are none of us who would recommend .22 rimfire as an appropriate self-defense load against enraged, homicidal 200 lb. men. However, history shows us most armed citizen DGUs (Defensive Gun Usages) end without a round fired when the malefactor realizes he's about to be shot and has suffered a sudden, acute and potentially fatal "failure of the victim selection process."

And I think we'd all agree: If shots *do* need to be fired to save innocent lives, a .22 in hand beats the hell out of a .44 Magnum at home in a locked gun safe.

A double-action revolver with swing-out cylinder won't be obsolete as long as there are people who can't confidently operate a semi-auto. Weak hands create this situation, and it means easy double-action trigger pulls and light-kicking loads are the order of the day.

In today's market, the current iteration of the Colt Cobra and the Ruger LCR seem to have the easiest triggers. In .38 Special ammunition, the lightest kicking load is the 148-grain target wadcutter, endorsed for self-defense in small guns of that caliber by authorities like Chuck Haggard.

The answers are there. So, too, are customers — hungry for the confidence of self-defense capability. **SI**

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ARMS & THE WOMAN



BY KAREN BUTLER

NEW SHOOTERS NEED MORE THAN A GUN

Gun sales are still on the rise — especially to women. At Shoot Like A Girl, we focus on metrics and measures and our data shows us there remains tremendous opportunity to introduce women and their families to the shooting sports, and in turn, create new gun owners.

These are exciting times as our shooting community continues to grow and gain more diversity in every category. As these new shooters show up to the gun counter to make their purchases, the industry has an opportunity to promote safe gun handling and ensure these new consumers have everything they need to be safe, responsible gun owners. Their shopping list should include more than a gun — giving your staff an opportunity to increase add-on sales potential.

PROMOTING SAFETY KEY

In 2021, Shoot Like A Girl traveled to 21 locations and provided 2,815 guests with the experience of shooting a pistol, rifle, bow and pepper spray. The guests and their friends and family had hands-on interactions with a multitude of products. We saw families shopping for firearms for the first time with a desire to learn as much as they could during their visit with Shoot Like A Girl.

Retailers have a tremendous opportunity to not only meet the needs of their customers, but also help the industry promote firearm safety and safe, responsible gun ownership.

Many retailers have stepped up to this occasion to provide new shooters more than a gun by implementing programs to promote safety. Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's now have a checklist they use to review with each customer when they purchase a gun. Other local gun stores, like Larry's Pistol & Pawn in Huntsville, Ala., have created programs to add safety training for new gun owners. To help meet the needs of these new shooters, focus on safety and offer them opportunity to purchase a full array of accessories.

Shoot Like A Girl launched a new public safety campaign called SafeLivinG to promote firearm safety education. This campaign encourages responsible gun ownership by starting an initiative to change the industry's common slogan of "Know the Four" firearms safety rules to "Know the Five to Stay Alive" — adding, "Always keep your gun secured from unauthorized persons."

"KNOW THE FIVE TO STAY ALIVE"

1. Always treat a gun like it is loaded.
2. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a

◀ Janeen Wyatt (right), Shoot Like A Girl Pro-Staff team member and instructor, is well aware a customer's first firearm purchase will lead to related accessories, such as secure storage.

safe direction.

3. Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.
4. Always know your target and what is beyond.
5. Always keep your gun secured from unauthorized persons.

As experienced gun owners, most of us think these rules are common sense and everyone follows them. (Or, at the bare minimum, knows them.) However, new shooters just don't know what they don't know yet, and we should never assume they inherently understand the full responsibility of gun ownership.

Unfortunately, the gun sales counter in many stores is an awkward place, and not all sales teams demonstrate good, safe gun handling. These new shooters should be told the firearm safety rules right up front. For new shooters, when the sales professional first clears the firearm and hands it to the customer, have them explain why they're doing it. Then review the five safety rules and help the customer find the perfect gun. Once the gun is found, offer them the full complement of shooting accessories.

GOOD, BETTER, BEST SAFETY PRODUCTS

New shooters need more than a gun. Often, a new shooter is sold a gun and ammo, but the equipment list they should be offered extends way beyond those two items. With a focus on safety, talk in terms of good, better and best.

Start with required equipment, like eye/ear protection and safe-storage options. Explain why this basic safety equipment is needed, and the benefit of each level, which will help them make decisions based on their budget and needs.

Hearing protection has many options; in terms of good is the basic foam earplugs. Better hearing protection would be adding passive muffs to the foam plugs. Best would be interactive hearing protection — which enables the shooter to hear their instructor/RSO, as well as what is going on around them, while protecting their hearing. Ballistic eye protection is also necessary. Safety glasses come in a variety of styles, from clear basic lenses, to amber or sunglasses.

Safe storage is a must for every gun owner. Take a moment to share how gun cable locks are used; it's often overlooked at the sales counter, leaving the new gun owner at a disadvantage.

Secure-storage options, such as safes, are bountiful. Following the good, better, best approach, make sure to keep entry-level safes in stock, up to electronic rapid entry options.

Lastly, don't forget to sell training. Retailers should encourage new shooters to fully educate themselves on how to be proficient and safe, responsible gun owners.

ELEVATING THE SHOOTING EXPERIENCE

Once the required safety equipment is purchased, there's a multitude of other accessories that make a new shooter's experiences better. We hope these new shooters are headed to the range. They need a safe way to carry their firearm into the range. A good option is a simple soft pistol case, even better would



Retailers should encourage new shooters to fully educate themselves on how to be proficient and safe, responsible gun owners.

be a range bag and best would be a backpack range bag.

If the customer's intent is to carry concealed, show him or her a variety of holsters, concealed carry bags and concealed carry clothing. The new shooter will need to purchase a gun-cleaning mat and kit. Retailers should offer a gun-cleaning class as well.

Additionally, with ammunition being a big investment for a new shooter, talk to them about options for training — like buying a .22-caliber pistol to practice or an airgun. Airguns are a great way

to practice, and are not only cost effective, they allow for a wider range of safe locations to set up and practice. Dry-fire training systems represent another cost-effective option.

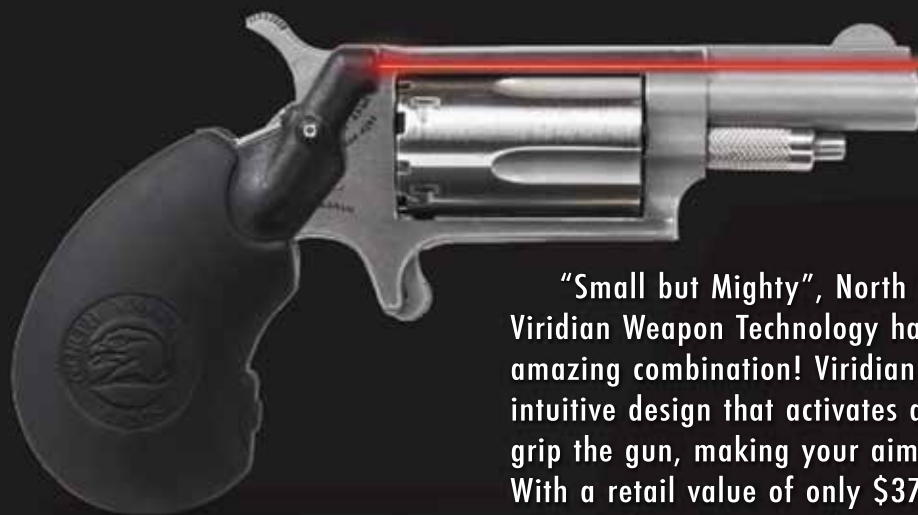
These items are not the end of the list; there are many ways we can spend our money on our shooting sports journey. New shooters, however, need to be provided with options to help them be successful.

Dealers can influence the industry with thousands upon thousands of gun safety advocates by promoting safety messages like SafeLiving's "Know the Five to Stay Alive." Local retailers are also the key factor in helping new shooters move forward to experienced enthusiasts. It all starts with new shooters needing more than a gun. **SI**

KAREN BUTLER is the founder and president of Shoot Like A Girl. Through its state-of-the-art Shoot Like A Girl Trailer, the organization has introduced thousands of women to archery and shooting sports across the U.S.



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BEST PRACTICES

BY ROBYN SANDOVAL

GETTING THE WHOLE FAMILY INVOLVED

In a survey of A Girl & A Gun members, 76% of the 6,300 respondents said they enjoy shooting with members of their family, and 4% reported their entire family often goes shooting together. Some families go to the beach or amusement parks, while shooting families spend their vacation days at tournaments and training events.

Memories are made, and many important lessons are learned when women spend time shooting with their children. Let's examine four avenues for getting the whole family involved in the shooting sports — with some personal anecdotes.

TRAINING CLASSES

Encouraging families to take a training class together is a great way to introduce kids to gun safety and shooting sports. One of my favorite experiences was a long-range precision class I attended with my son, Nathan, last summer. I spotted for him and he called wind for me, so working together was a lot of fun. I watched him learn and grow his shooting skills — and I was beaming with pride when my 14-year-old earned Top Shot in a class of 18 adults!

Most importantly, I watched Nathan demonstrate responsibility with his firearm, scope and gear and overcome challenges with a positive attitude. As an added benefit, he realized my

shooting friends and I could be fun to be around, so now he regularly attends pistol matches and other events. As a mom, there's nothing better than my teen wanting to spend more time with me and less time on his PlayStation.

Other mothers have had similar experiences when taking their children to a training class or event. Last spring, 11 mother/daughter pairs attended the A Girl & A Gun National Conference together. One mother, Sharon Rider, attended with her daughter, Amber, and 12-year-old granddaughter, Callyn. As a retired peace officer, Rider trained primarily with men throughout her career and said shooting with other women at the training event was “one of the best experiences of my life.” She loved seeing Callyn's enthusiasm grow for the shooting sports. Amber also enjoyed watching Callyn learn situational awareness, de-escalation techniques and ways to navigate the world with a safety mindset.

HUNTING TRIPS

Many families enjoy spending time together hunting in the outdoors. Katrina Reed grew up hunting with her family and was looking forward to building memories with her son, JT. He was only 10 months old when she took him to the treestand for the first time. JT was too young to know what was going on, but he enjoyed the scenery and was completely content. She harvested a

◀ Last summer, Robyn and her son, Nathan, attended a long-range precision class, which ignited his interest in attending pistol matches and other shooting events.

deer with him that day, and still smiles at the pictures of him watching as she and her husband loaded the deer up and prepared the meat. (JT harvested his first buck at the age of five, alongside his dad — with a priceless smile.)

Reed shared, “As a parent, I love that my son continues to appreciate all the outdoors has to offer. Hopefully he'll pass the knowledge we have shared with him to future generations.”

Heidi Lyn Rao has four boys, and she has immersed them in the outdoors through hunting and shooting. They learned all about firearm safety and wildlife while sitting in deer blinds, duck blinds and treestands with Mom. They didn't have much choice in the matter because Rao is the Texas Parks and Wildlife Hunter Education Specialist and statewide Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Coordinator, who married a (now retired) Texas Game Warden. Hunting and the outdoors define their family. Rao believes when you recruit the mom, you involve the entire family.

RANGE DAYS

Gina Manning's daughter, Sydney, began attending A Girl & A Gun chapter events two years ago when she was 16. Sydney is glad the time at the range allowed her to learn about gun safety and handling of firearms. It put her in a different mindset as far as going from being a good witness to possibly taking action if needed in a real-life defensive situation.

In addition to the defensive training, Manning appreciates the life lessons Sydney gets at the range. She appreciates Sydney's time with women at the range allows her to hear stories from different walks of life and surrounds her with additional positive influences and mentors.

Manning said, “I have peace of mind knowing she's being guided in the right direction as a young adult, with valuable life skills and the ability to protect herself.”

As a kid, Kay Rogers' son, Jack, played soccer and basketball, but he spent more time on the bench than in the game, which didn't help his self-esteem. When

Jack was introduced to trapshooting at age 12, he discovered he was a natural! Trapshooting has given Jack lifelong friends, opportunities to travel and see the country and probably a college scholarship.

Rogers said, "As a single mom, shooting has been a great activity for us to do together. I'm not a good trapshooter, but I'm a good cheerleader for him. Everywhere we travel we make the most of it."

Now 15, Jack is currently ranked fifth in the American Trapshooting Association for his age group, and is on the 2022 All-American Team. He's planning an event for beginner youth shooters to help them learn the sport and grow their confidence.

"Jack is committed to being a good role model and lifting others up. It's all his idea, and I couldn't be prouder," Rogers shared.

“

Time spent together as a family promotes fun opportunities for learning and memories to last a lifetime.

COMPETITIVE MATCHES

Competitive shooting has always been a family outing for Dani Durante. She and her husband would shoot USPSA, Tactical Carbine, Steel Challenge, Falling Steel and 3-Gun matches all while toting their daughters, Caitlin and Meghan, in a wagon with their range bags and snacks.

When they were very young, their daughters were content to play with each other or their activities, but as time went on, they showed an increased interest in the matches and

helped reset targets. One of Meghan's favorite things to do at a match was to walk the stages and advise her parents on how to shoot different scenarios.

Today, Meghan competes in archery competitions with her mom and dad cheering from the sidelines.

Denise White loves training and competing with her 12-year-old daughter, Christianna, who is active in 4H, Steel Challenge and recently competed in 3-Gun. Denise says participating with A Girl & A Gun gives Christianna confidence both in the shooting sports and in life.

They recently competed at A Girl & A Gun's Fall Fest Multigun Challenge, where they made lifelong friendships. Christianna shared the mentoring she received from women from all over the country will last far beyond shooting.

"It was my first 3-Gun match, and I may not have shot very well, but the fact I was able to be there, shooting alongside my mom and all my AG & AG sisters, was such a blessing that's hard to capture in words," she said.

FAMILY TIME

When a dad is the only marksman in the family, shooting is often considered a hobby; however, when a mom gets involved in the shooting sports, there's a major shift in the family's time and budget. Gun safety and shooting sports become part of the family's lifestyle. Suddenly, gun safety rules and safe storage protocols become frequent topics of conversation.

Not only do the shooting sports include a variety of shooting competitions that are fun for the whole family, but they can also lead a youth shooter to college scholarships and Olympic dreams. Regardless of the outcome, time spent together as a family promotes fun opportunities for learning and memories to last a lifetime. **GI**

ROBYN SANDOVAL is co-owner and executive director of A Girl & A Gun Women's Shooting League, and manages the day-to-day operations of the organization. She's a certified pistol instructor, range safety officer and serves on the board of directors and advisory board of the DC Project.

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Ways To Retain Women & Encourage Growth

By Ava Flanell

Nearly half of new gun buyers continue to be women. This has been an increasing trend for years now, and although we anticipate seeing more female gun owners, you should never take them for granted. Just like anything in life, it can be here today and gone tomorrow.

So how do we retain current female clients and encourage more growth in this fast-growing demographic? It doesn't mean including free tampons in the bathroom or setting out chocolates on the gun counter; although it's a nice gesture, there are more important factors to create a welcoming atmosphere. Women aren't that difficult to please when it comes to firearms and training; we just need a little encouragement, and in the end, just want to feel comfortable and confident.

1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF!

For many first-time buyers, purchasing a firearm or taking a gun-training class can be intimidating. We live in the age of the internet: 90% of your customers are going to find you on Google and research you before giving you their business, especially when it comes to something foreign to them.

Therefore, it's imperative to portray a friendly and welcoming environment even online. Invest in a decent website and use a lot of pictures. Introduce yourself and your staff with an "About Us" section that states what your

mission is and include quick bios about you and the staff.

You also want to take advantage of social media. Post pictures and videos weekly, which can be something as simple as a quick educational video from one of the employees, a sale or even a photo of the shop dog customers will soon get to know.

Small, friendly depictions of the business like this will help potential customers get to know you before they even walk through the door.

As for current customers, it will help continue the relationship they already have with you, and just like marketing 101, you don't want them to forget about you. Pop up in their newsfeeds and show them what's new with the business, show off cool new inventory and advertise sales or training opportunities.

2. THE ATMOSPHERE.

As I mentioned, you don't have to offer feminine products to appease the ladies — keep a clean atmosphere. Parts of the business can of course portray a rugged outdoor-style environment. We might be a little thrown off if it's feminine and colorful, but it should always remain clean.

A stale-smelling man cave isn't welcoming for women, especially if your shop only has one restroom. This should go without saying, but take pride in your business and its appearance — which

may mean a thorough cleaning often.

Perhaps go the extra mile and create a comfortable ambiance with a sitting area or offer a refreshments area. Make it feel more like a welcoming community so customers aren't anxious to get in and out. In general, the more time customers spend in the store — even just chatting — leads to more business.

3. DIVERSIFY YOUR STAFF.

As much as we all love the older gentlemen behind the gun counter, we need to mix things up a bit. The face of gun owners is changing. Expand employment, including your instructors, to younger generations, women and different ethnicities. This opens the opportunity for customers to relate to their instructor or salesperson more.

At times, women might feel talked down to by a salesman or reluctant to ask a question for the fear of looking dumb. The same goes for men who are new to gun ownership and might be put off by someone who comes across as egotistical or a know-it-all. This is often eliminated when they share more in common with the person helping them. More than ever, women are working at gun stores and ranges, and they've proved to be a huge asset.

4. OFFER VERY BASIC CLASSES.

The NRA's Basic Pistol Class is eight hours long. Though it's informative, this can be overwhelming

for someone who's never held a gun before. Not to mention, the human brain loses concentration well before eight hours.


What about offering a class that outlines the very basics to get someone's feet wet? Teach them safety fundamentals — how to load and unload a firearm and proper shooting techniques. Then bring them to the range and have them shoot larger handguns chambered in smaller calibers.

Kerry Slone, founder of We The Female, shared, "Many women in my firearms fundamentals classes don't own a firearm yet. They want to have a basic understanding of firearms to find what they're comfortable with, but also to not be as intimidated when going to a gun store to make their first firearm purchase."

This experience will build a student's interest and confidence. It gives them a solid foundation to work with as they make their first purchase and take other classes.

5. ADVERTISE REAL-WORLD SCENARIOS.

Historically, women have relied on the man of the household for protection, which is why many women don't see a need to purchase a firearm and take up training. Today, many women are now the head of the household and even if they aren't, this doesn't mean they won't be put in a situation where they might have to protect themselves and their family. We need to emphasize this to give women a reason to purchase a gun and train with it.



Women aren't that difficult to please when it comes to firearms and training; we just need a little encouragement, and in the end, just want to feel comfortable and confident.

Offering real-world applications that involve home protection, safety procedures with children and creating the best plan if there's an intruder are great options to encourage women to take the next step. Also, beyond the self-defense aspect, more women are enjoying shooting sports. Consider hosting women's shooting events if you have the facilities or provide information on where they are to help increase their popularity.

6. INCREASE AWARENESS.

One way to increase defense awareness is by hosting a guest speaker who might share his or her experience in a self-defense situation. Humans tend to think bad things won't happen to them, which is why it's important to remind them it can happen to anyone and it's important to be prepared.

Additionally, you can also bring in a guest instructor who specializes in training women if you don't have a female instructor on staff. (Slone, for example, has been praised for her ability to sympathize and teach women who've been in domestic violence encounters — which is rarely focused on.)

Women have an easier time learning from other women who can provide instruction in a less-intimidating manner and with the personal experience of another woman. Especially when it comes to matters of how to carry and shooting dynamics, our biology is clearly different. Another

woman provides valuable training insight men just don't have.

7. CARRY CONFIDENTLY.

There are a lot of holsters on the market, but unless you buy them, you can't try them. Consider setting up a holster section dedicated to women.

It's a very personal choice for women. Being able to feel the material, check out the retention and perhaps even try it on as long as it's not breaking any sanitary codes gives a huge benefit toward having a satisfied customer. This is a great way to make an extra sale and rest assured your client is carrying safely and securely.

Most gun stores don't like sitting on inventory and with all the holster options out there, this would require a lot of space and money. Maybe you could team up with a local holster company that can make custom holsters with a quick turnaround. This would be a win-win for all parties involved.

8. EMBRACE THE CHANGE.

The gun community is growing and evolving faster today than ever before. It may be challenging at times but allows lots of potential for growth if we embrace the needs of the new demographics. Take the opportunity to grow with the market and increase customer satisfaction. **SI**

Ava Flanell is the founder of Elite Firearms Training in Colorado Springs, Colo., and producer/host of the Gun Funny podcast.

THE FULL- CIRCLE APPROACH

BY SHARI LEGATE

Appeal To More Customers Through Multi-Generational Marketing

Naming the generations started in 1991 and is generally credited to generational theorists Neil Howe and William Strauss. Another source credits Peter Francese, a demographic and consumer markets expert, who explained

it all began when the Census Bureau referred to the years between 1946 and 1964 as the “Post-War Baby Boom.” Birthrates skyrocketed from around 3 million a year to over 4 million a year.

Thus, “baby boomers” were the first named generation to exist. The generations prior to them, such as The Greatest Generation and The Silent Generation, were named retroactively. (A little side note here, this would be the first, and thus far, last time a generation’s “official” name

“

Spend a little time recognizing the different generations and how they affect your business. Generational marketing is here to stay – as is the female customer.

”

would come from a government organization.)

How it started though, doesn't really matter, as it has since become one of the basics used in marketing strategies when companies and advertising agencies are defining who their target audience is.

We can break these individual generations down even further by separating gender and focusing only on how to reach women in the generations defining our customers. It's no question there are differences in the purchasing habits of men and women — men and women see, think and understand things differently. So, lumping genders together because they fall into a particular age group can cause a lot of missed opportunities.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL MARKETING

Even though there are many similarities in all the defined generations, differences do exist — not only in the range of years and labels, but in lifestyle, needs, expectations and values. Understanding these differences and knowing how to connect with each generation (and with both men and women in those generations) can bring your marketing strategy full circle.

Multi-generational marketing is the practice of appealing to the unique needs and behaviors of individuals within more than one specific generational group. By factoring in the different characteristics and behaviors of the generations, it'll be easier to build relationships and gain trust with your customer no matter what generation they fit into.

Let's focus on the three generations who have the most buying power at this point in time. For starters, marketing to the generational woman doesn't simply mean "think pink." It's also knowing who your

customer is and understanding a 55-year-old woman isn't merely a 30-year-older version of her 25-year-old self.

BABY BOOMER WOMEN

Baby boomer women are categorized as mature females with sophisticated tastes and needs. They want to make the most of their substantial purchasing power and there is no one-size-fits-all campaign when it comes to marketing to boomer women.



Women don't buy brands, they join them. Just as they join clubs, organizations and associations. Who gets their loyalty? The groups and institutions that matter to them.



Boomer women are at the peak of their earning potential and the majority plan on working through their retirement years, meaning they'll have even more purchasing power. Reaching this segment isn't difficult, but getting them to join your brand and become a loyal customer requires a little planning.

Boomer women are smart and they want to be treated as such. Speak to their minds, not just their hearts. They want to be understood and have their needs recognized and their values respected. They won't buy from a company that condescends to

them. Most important, women don't buy brands, they join them. Just as they join clubs, organizations and associations. Who gets their loyalty? The groups and institutions that matter to them.

Things to remember when connecting with the boomer generation:

Engage Into A Dialogue: The boomer woman wants an authentic relationship with your company or brand. When talking with her, you'll find out her reason for interest in the product she's looking at may be totally different than that of another generational woman. As an example, her reason for buying a firearm may be to protect her family and her home, where the millennial woman who has yet to establish a family circle, might have other reasons for the purchase.

Realize Her Desire To Learn: Let your brand be her link to products, services and opportunities where she can learn more about and understand the things she faces every day.

Recognize & Respect Her Age: The focus of the boomer woman has shifted. While she's not happy about aging, she's accepted it and can laugh at the physical differences between herself now and 30 years ago. She has life experience and is looking for personal growth.

By creating authenticity in your conversation and your message, you'll find the boomer woman will deliver more profit to you through loyalty and referrals.

GEN X WOMEN

Thought of as the in-between generation sandwiched between baby boomers and millennials, the Gen Xers are often forgotten. But they shouldn't be. This generation makes up more than 30% of

the population and has vast purchasing power. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, this generation outspends all other generations when it comes to housing, clothing and entertainment.

Gen X women are very experienced shopping in-store and online, so the marketing strategy has to be a little more broad-based.

Here are some ideas to keep at the forefront for reaching this group of customers:

Offer A Valuable Service & Be

Trustworthy: The oldest Gen Xers are 54 and the youngest are 39. They're financially stable and have families with children in school or just graduating. They're at their highest earning years, interested in security and have strong family values. Show them your brand can be trusted.

Embrace The Internet: These women spend time researching online before purchasing. Once they see or hear an ad, they'll look the business up online. Be sure your website is up to date and is consistent across the social platforms.

Be Factual In The Message: This generation has seen and been through a lot. The internet revolution, Y2K and everything else. They're a bit jaded and look for authenticity and realism. Don't try and fake it. They'll see right through it.

MILLENNIAL WOMEN

Millennials have gotten a bad rap over the last few years, but keep in mind, not all millennials are created equal. This is the first generation to grow up with computers and with the speed technology changes, millennials have a technology gap within their own generation. They were born roughly between 1980–2000, so the difference in how to market to them is substantial.

While a 33-year-old millennial woman uses Instagram and Facebook, the 22-year-old won't go near anything but TikTok.

Millennial women want, expect and demand more from brands than other generations.



To reach millennial women, you have to entertain, inform, provide thought-provoking insight and, on top of all that, make them laugh. Seem impossible?



According to a NewsCred study, 30% absolutely refuse to read content that doesn't either entertain or inform them, 60% share content that is strictly thought-provoking and intelligent and 70% share content that makes them laugh.

So, there you have it. To reach millennial women, you have to entertain, inform, provide thought-provoking insight and, on top of all that, make them laugh. Seem impossible? Not really. Here are a few ideas on how to reach this generation:

Be Targeted & Relevant: Instead of using a macro-marketing approach, become very micro. Millennial women want content that completely caters to them and in small amounts so it's easily shared.

Connect On Social Media: Millennial women make up the majority on

social media platforms. Connect with them on their terms and on their mobile devices and you'll have a loyal customer.

Understand Their Commitment To Social Good: Understand their commitment to social good. This generation wants to make the world a better place and will support brands in line with their values. Support organizations and movements they can relate to and they will relate to your brand.

THE NEXT STEP

Women drive consumer spending — understanding how they think, feel and relate to your brand may take some time and effort. But it will increase your customer base through referrals and recommendations, and will ultimately show up on your bottom line. Spend a little time recognizing the different generations and how they affect your business.

And, don't forget about upcoming generations. Next up is Generation Z, and they'll be taking their first step into adulthood, providing an entirely new pool of potential new customers — and it won't be long until they overtake the spending power of other groups.

The youngest generation (Generation Alpha) will be the first generation born entirely in the 21st century and the children of millennials.

All in all, generational marketing is here to stay — as is the female consumer. **SI**

Shari LeGate is FMG Publications' video producer and shooting sports analyst. She's a former USA Shooting skeet shooter, executive director of the Women's Shooting Sports Foundation and has covered the past four summer Olympic Games as NBC's in-studio shooting analyst.

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Hello!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

By Britney Booth

10 Tips To Make First-Time Female Customers Comfortable

According to a 2018 Concealed Carry Consumer Study Report by NSSF,¹ during the course of a 12-month timespan, women spent significantly more money on ammunition, carry equipment and accessories than men, and an equal amount on firearms purchases. This can be attributed to the fact women may be newer to concealed carry than a large

portion of men, leading them to purchase handguns and the accessories necessary to carry.

With the potential for female customers to make up a large portion of your sales — especially these days — it's essential to deliver an inviting experience when they enter your facility. Here are 10 steps you can take to ensure just that



for women purchasing a handgun for the first time.

1. FIRST IMPRESSIONS LAST.

When a customer walks into the entrance of your location, their first impression is a lasting one, so make it count!

Paige Roux, training coordinator and senior firearms instructor at Shooter's World in Arizona, says all three of their locations have a welcome desk within a retail space that includes apparel and coffee.

"For women, when they walk in, the first

thing they see is apparel — and it's already a dropped barrier because it makes them comfortable in this setting versus being overwhelmed by walls of guns and tactical gear as far as the eye can see. It's a softer opening into our retail facilities," said Roux.

When a customer walks in, something as simple as a friendly greeting and asking how you can help can go a long way. This allows the customer to define their main reason for visiting and be pointed in the correct direction, rather than feeling like they



Photo: Magnum Shooting Center

want to turn around and run out of the store because they don't know where to even start.

Additionally, making sure your location is clean and organized reduces anxiety for someone who may be stepping foot into this setting for the first time. These are easy things to do from a dealer's perspective, but you'd be surprised by how many times they're overlooked.

2. DRESS CODE.

At Shooter's World, employees are given polos and button-down shirts to wear along with their own jeans and are encouraged to express themselves through their attire, as long as it's

done professionally. This helps soften the look of the space overall and gives a more laid-back approach to the dress code.

"A female might think, 'Oh my gosh, I don't fit in here' if she sees a group of people kitted out in full tactical gear," Roux explained.

3. CUSTOMER SERVICE KEY.

Hiring employees based on their customer service and "people skills" is something Shooter's World focuses on wholeheartedly. Employees are put through extensive training, both on and off the range, which allows them to have individual testimonials about how the facility

helped them transition from non-shooters to proficient and knowledgeable firearms users. When training her employees, Roux noted an emphasis on treating everyone who comes through the door like family — and having fun.

4. GENDER RATIO OF EMPLOYEES.

A mix of both male to female employees is highly recommended. For example, Shooter's World employs a ratio of 50% women and 50% men. Roux says it's incredibly reassuring for a female to walk in and see another woman behind the counter. Often, the customer becomes less guarded and more relaxed, which leads to more open interactions.

5. FIND OUT THE "WHY".

Melissa Lockburner, co-owner and senior membership manager of Magnum Shooting Center in Colorado, says employees at their two locations like to start by asking the right questions when a female comes in to purchase a handgun. Most importantly, finding out the main goal and function of the firearm — concealed carry, home protection, plinking, etc.

Perhaps their significant other bought them a gun, and they're looking to trade it for something that fits and works better for them. Whatever the reason for their visit, Lockburner lends establishing the customer's goal is the most important thing before making any recommendations.

At Shooter's World, Roux likes to start with the question, "When was the last time you shot?" which is

phrased in this specific way so no matter the answer, you can dig deeper into their level of experience.

6. FIND THE RIGHT FIT.

Once you've found the customer's "why," you can walk them through what your facility offers — education, range time, rental guns, classes, etc. Then show them a few handgun options to meet their needs. Next, demonstrate how to properly hold the firearm and explain the importance of grip and fit. As Roux puts it, you're looking for the "Goldilocks feel — just right."

If the customer's significant other pushes for a revolver or micro-pistol, which may not be the best option for a first-time shooter, there are tactful ways to work around the situation, like asking, "Can I help find a gun that's the right fit for you?"

"Just because a customer is a female with small hands doesn't mean she needs to purchase a small gun or a revolver," Lockburner shared.

Instead, she recommends explaining the physics behind recoil by showing the customer two different models of the same caliber and detailing why the bigger one will have less recoil because of its weight.

7. REVIEW TECHNIQUE.

For a first-time pistol owner, racking the slide can present an intimidating obstacle. Magnum Shooting Center maintains a good selection of pistols with easy-to-rack slides.

"If a woman is concerned with not being



Magnum Shooting Center has more than 3,000 members who are women. It stages a “Women of Magnum” group meeting twice a month, catering to both beginner and intermediate shooters. “It’s always full,” Melissa Lockburner noted.



Paige Roux takes students through pistol handling basics during a ladies-only introduction to handguns course at Shooter’s World. When a customer walks in the door, she likes to begin with “When was the last time you shot?” — which serves a non-threatening conversation starter.

strong enough to rack the slide on a semi-auto, there are newer handguns on the market that have alleviated this issue, and they’ve been very popular with our female customers,” Lockburner said.

The Magnum Shooting Center staff is trained to offer assistance to customers who may not be

able to rack the slide with confidence.

“It’s important to help them with the technique and show the proper way to rack the slide, which definitely helps make it easier. We try to educate the customer from the time they walk in the door to the time they leave,” Lockburner added.

8. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE.

One thing to keep in mind: it’s crucial not to give *too much* information at once. Roux says she trains her employees to gauge how much the customer can digest and provide them with a custom experience from there. Avoiding information overload will lead to better interaction for your customer, especially if they’re a first-time buyer.

9. FEMALE-ONLY CLASSES & GROUPS.

Lockburner says of their 10,000 members, a third are women, which she attributes to how much women are growing in the industry and sport. They offer female-only classes and training, as well as their “Women of Magnum” group that meets twice a month in both beginner and intermediate levels.

“Our Women of Magnum group offers classroom and range time designed for women with likemindedness and common goals to come shoot and learn together — it’s always full,” she said.

Shooter’s World offers a weekly Ladies’ Day, during which women get their first hour of range time and one gun rental for free. Doing this breaks their barrier down by allowing them to come in on a fun day and bring a friend, making them even more comfortable. Shooter’s World also offers women-specific classes taught by female instructors.

“Classes like this are empowering for women. They say: ‘You’re absolutely capable of doing it, and we’re going to show you how,’” Roux said.

10. RENTAL GUNS.

Offering rental guns is a surefire way to solidify a first-timer gets the correct gun. Much like test-driving a car before purchasing it, being able to shoot a handgun you’re interested in buying takes away the majority of hesitations associated with a purchase — like recoil management and fit. Of course, be sure to encourage the customer to take a class to learn the basics before they’re offered time on the range.

FIND SUCCESS, GROW CUSTOMER BASE

Using the tips above, as well as your experience and firearms knowledge, will help women advocate for themselves and make the best decisions based on their needs. In turn, a comfortable, welcoming and safe environment will foster a lifetime of growth and training and a loyal customer at your facility. **SI**

Footnote:

1. <https://bit.ly/3H5RxVn>

Britney Booth is the owner of Booth Media Group, which specializes in communications and PR services in the outdoor and shooting industries. She also serves as the editor-in-chief of the Ruffed Grouse Society.

What other tips would you add? Let the SI team know: comments@shootingindustry.com.



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THE INVISIBLE WOMAN

BY TIFFANY JOHNSON

It was summer 2018. In my usual unassuming sweatpants and T-shirt, I strolled into the impressive pro shop of a well-stocked, well-staffed, modern, indoor shooting range just outside of Nashville, Tenn. I had never been to this range before, but I had heard nothing but great things about it. With state-of-the-art equipment, multiple ranges and training rooms, indoor rifle lanes and every kind of handgun and long gun known to humankind, it was quite the candy store!

The staff members were easily identifiable by their matching branded polo shirts. One walked by me and gave a quaint Southern

smile. Another made eye contact and tipped his chin. Both were acknowledging me on their way to other customers who had come in behind me. A few more staff members stood behind glass showcases and stared beyond me as if they hoped I wouldn't expect their service. A few minutes passed. Then 10. Then 15. I stood there, in the middle of the pro shop, while at least a half-dozen workers declined to offer me any assistance beyond a passing nod.

Finally, an employee approached me with a kind glow and said, "Hi, I'm [she told me her name], how are you today?" After pleasantries she asked, "Has anyone helped you yet?" I was so glad she asked. "Actually,

I've been here 15 minutes and not one person approached me until you did." She was genuinely disappointed and apologized to me profusely. She took great care of me, and since that day she's been my go-to person whenever I do business there.

WAS IT ME?

So, what was it that rendered me invisible or unapproachable to the rest of the staff? Was it my casual dress? My youthful face? My chubby stature? Did I strike them as a scanty spender or noncommittal browser? A loiterer? I can't be sure.

But there was one noticeable difference between me and every other customer in the pro shop: I was a woman, and they were all men. Likewise, there was one apparent difference between the staff member who approached me and the six or seven others who didn't bother: She was a woman, and they were all men.

I'll never know for sure why those workers declined to engage me as a customer — one isolated, atypical experience that unfortunately now occupies a permanently disproportionate space in my memory.

But I'm not alone. Ask any experienced shooter with two X chromosomes and the chances are high she's had a similar experience at least once or twice. Women often share familiar chuckles over those all-too-familiar moments of feeling wholly unnoticed by gun-store salesmen.

It takes many forms: everything from being utterly ignored to being aggressively pitched a pink bedazzled J-Frame. Those two extremes — and all manner of missteps in between —

THEY WERE
ALL MEN

“

There was one noticeable difference between me and every other customer in the pro shop: I was a woman, and they were all men.

are just different manifestations of being the invisible woman.

AN IMPORTANT VANTAGE POINT

Gun-store workers might read this and think, *I've never done anything to make female customers feel unwelcome*. And it could be 100% true. Here's the limitation of this perspective: it's business-centric instead of customer-centric. In other words, does your response include much effort to walk in the customer's shoes? Or does it instead prioritize defending the gun store?

As Chris Norville said when I asked him about preventing invisible woman syndrome, "The trainers and retail employees have to remember it's all about the customer's needs, not yours. When I'm helping a customer, I can't view the transaction through my own personal lens. I've got to do my best to approach it from the customer's vantage point."

Norville is director of training at On Target Shooting Sports in Murfreesboro, Tenn. Putting Norville's insight into context, I'm guessing he would not unilaterally assume a woman wants a 2" sparkly revolver. If it's what she wants, she can say so. And if gun-store workers engage her the same way they would any other paying customer, eventually she'll do exactly that.

Will Dougan is director of training at Top Gun Academy in Memphis, Tenn. Rarely does he mince words. I asked Dougan about women feeling invisible in gun stores. His response was matter of fact: "I've found when you treat women like people, they respond well."

I'm not sure it has to be any simpler or any more complicated.

But what does this look like in practice? What do we mean

by “treating women like people”? Is it just an empty platitude, or might it require a few tweaks to standard practices at the gun counter?

For those who like lists and concrete examples, here are five tips for firearms retailers and trainers hoping to rid their facilities of invisible woman syndrome.

1. Don't suggest a gun for her.

“I know just what'll work for you ...” “I've got the perfect gun for you right over here ...” “Here's what most of my female customers are buying ...” Nope, nope, nope. These approaches are easy to take and are usually well intended. However, nothing could be more dishonest than purporting to know what's perfect for a person you just met two seconds ago.

If you know what equipment she needs within the first few moments, you've made some unwarranted assumptions. In so doing, you might have just insulted her by implying you know her better than she knows herself. At best, it could cost you the sale; and at worst, you've lost her as a customer forever.

And if she's a newcomer or a hesitant or fearful entrant into the gun-owning community, then by making her decisions for her, you might have unwittingly dispossessed her of the very agency and autonomy the Second Amendment was codified to safeguard. How's that for irony?

A much better approach is to ask questions. If she's shopping for a gun, ask her what she plans to use it for. How often does she plan to practice? Has she taken any classes? Does she plan to carry? Or is it for home defense? Or for sport shooting? Or hunting? If she'll be carrying the gun, what are her daily activities? If your shop offers rental guns, have you suggested she rent a few guns before purchasing one?

Try to ascertain her needs, not your own preferences. Even if

she has no idea what she wants, help her make her own decision by asking questions rather than just presumptively imposing a solution before you've confirmed what issue she's trying to solve.



Women often share familiar chuckles over those all-too-familiar moments of feeling wholly unnoticed by gun-store salesmen.

2. Don't just point to the “women's stuff.”

“We just got in a huge shipment of gun purses ...” “This model comes in lots of different colors ...” These are more examples of retailers unintentionally applying the “since you're a woman” filter. Why sell a customer only a small fraction of your inventory?

Instead, keep asking her questions until you get a sense of what *she* likes, wants and needs (see the previous tip). If she wants a pink bedazzled revolver stashed in a shoulder-slung Coach knock-off, okay, fine. Invite her to explain what brought her into the store in the first place — you might be surprised to learn there are far more options to offer her than “women's stuff.”

3. If she's the customer, don't focus on her male companion.

“So, has she ever fired a gun before? Does she want a semi-auto or a revolver?” Um, hello. She is standing right there and is perfectly able to speak for herself. This phenomenon baffles me. Women often enter gun stores accompanied by a brother, a boyfriend, spouse or a father figure — especially if it's her first time purchasing a firearm.

In those instances, it's easy for the salesperson to engage with the male companion rather than with the woman herself. Resist temptation. Even if the woman seems reserved or deferential to her male companion, or if companion dominates the conversation, please do your best to steer the focus back to the customer: in this case, the woman.

Make eye contact with her. Speak directly to her rather than to her companion. Even if she says something like, “Well, I'll take whatever he thinks I should have,” see if you can gently coax her into offering some insight on her own wishes. Remind her this purchase is as personalized as buying a new car or a new pair of shoes, and she's the only one who can decide what's best for her.

4. During live-fire training, separate her from her male companion.

This one often gets overlooked and might be counterintuitive. Any time my training partners and I have open-enrollment classes, we always assign everyone's placement on the firing line, and we always deliberately separate spouses.

Why? Because people are competitive, and negative peer pressure is strongest among those we know personally. Having a person take her first shots in a training class while standing right next to her spouse can be nerve-wracking (and in some cases, intimidating). So, we try to position students so they don't have the added pressure

of knowing their spouse is staring at them while they learn how to shoot.

5. Represent women positively in your establishment.

This one should go without saying, but be as proactive as possible about representing women in a positive light. Sell books by respected women authors. Display posters featuring decorated competitive shooters who are women. Collect and showcase testimonials from your regular female customers — preferably with photos or video. Hire competent female salespeople and trainers and invest in their professional development. Don't let them be the token girl employees just to "check the box."

Promote qualified women

to leadership positions, send them to tradeshows and other events to represent your brand and remove any obstacles to their success. And please ... please take down the "gun bunny" posters of scantily clad pin-up models draping themselves over tanks and Gatling guns.

REACH A BROADER AUDIENCE

These are just five things, but there are countless ways to be proactive about rolling out a proper welcome mat for women in your store. The most difficult part is there's no single correct answer. Women aren't a monolith any more than men are. (Frankly, some women might love seeing the pin-up model I just suggested you remove.) But the tips here aren't about satisfying

everyone — that's impossible. Instead, all we can hope to do is reach the broadest possible audience.

If the majority of women can shed the invisibility cloak when they walk through your door, then you're not only boosting the bottom line, but also helping ensure the Second Amendment is safe for untold future generations of Americans, regardless of gender. **\$I**

Tiffany Johnson is a licensed attorney, freelance legal writer and offers web design services through her website, FrontSightPress.com. Johnson is also an NRA Training Counselor and teaches handgun classes with Citizens Safety Academy in Tennessee.

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UNDERSTANDING HER MINDSET

By Mia Anstine

*How To Market To Women, Earn
Their Trust & Reap The Benefits*

IT'S no secret the number of female gun owners is rising. However, what seems to be the plight is how gun shops keep female customers returning to the shop. There are numerous studies about marketing to women, but it's not a straightforward approach. Gone are the days of "pink it and shrink it," and husbands thinking a .38 Special revolver will suit all needs.

DIVERSITY OF WOMEN & GUNS

According to a recent study from Harvard University, 42% of all gun owners are women. This means close to half of your marketplace is female. Of those women, there are numerous reasons why they own guns. If you ask women why they own a firearm, they'll tell you it's for self-defense, recreational shooting, competition, family traditions and hunting purposes.

WHY MARKET TO WOMEN?


Historically, women are responsible for more than 80% of the purchasing decisions in a household. Between 2020 and 2021, more than 6 million women purchased a firearm for the first time. In addition, the A Girl & A Gun (AG & AG) women's shooting league saw a jump in the number of women who signed up for

training courses and instruction.

AG & AG conducts an annual survey of its members and recently examined the first-time gun buyer category — yielding a few key indicators of how to market to women. In the survey, AG & AG learned nearly half of the women in this group were "brand new to firearms."

The AG & AG segment also indicated fear was their primary reason for taking up arms. The women indicated fear of riots, gun bans, increased crime, violence, discrimination and the lack of law enforcement were reasons for buying firearms. In short, these women realize they're their own first-responders.

With the wave of women who are taking up arms, they're a critical demographic your shop should



consider in all of its marketing endeavors.

SMART MARKETING

“Marketing to women is a smart move,” said Michael Solomon, a professor of marketing at Saint Joseph’s University, keynote speaker and expert on consumer behavior. “But don’t shoot first and aim later!”

Solomon is explicitly cautioning you to avoid some of the main pitfalls you’ve likely heard before when it comes to marketing to women.

First, avoid stereotyping. We’re not all the same, and our reasons for visiting your shop may not be the same either. I mentioned the many reasons women use guns and why new gun owners are buying. It’s a mistake to group women together and could likely insult the newbie or the veteran firearm owner.

Second, avoid the “pink it and shrink it” mentality. We’ve been seeing it for years; stores realize the importance of the lady customer and add smaller, pink, and sparkly items to their shelves to entice women to buy. While this may work to some degree, the assumption is a turnoff to many women willing to spend their hard-earned money on quality products.

According to Insights in Marketing, a market research company based in Chicago, you must first understand the psychology of a woman to attract her attention and her purchasing power.

Know what motivates her behavior. Does she live alone on the edge of a dangerous neighborhood or has she made friends with other women gun owners? Is she looking for empowerment or protection? Or maybe she found a new recreational activity?

Understand the nuances that can lead you astray. Don’t

assume she needs a 9mm because “everyone else has one.” Additionally, don’t assume she’ll know how to load a magazine or how to open a cylinder to inspect if a gun is loaded or not.

Think outside of the traditional market research box. Be there and be ready to help fill the needs of the female gun owner. If she’s an experienced gun owner, she may like to join a class (or lead one) and learn how to build an AR. Maybe she’s a newbie and would like to know there are other female gun owners in the community; let her know about clubs such as AG & AG or other women’s shooting groups.

I’ve met multiple women who’ve recommended Centennial Gun Club in Centennial, Colo., and recently stopped by for a visit. From the moment I walked in, I noticed the shop was bustling with customers. There’s plenty of room to move about with a clean, open layout, and I didn’t have to wait in line at a service counter. Although my husband lingered behind, a young associate immediately asked to help me — a far cry from experiences nearly every woman has had with an

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OFFER.**

associate asking the “Are you here to buy something for your husband?” question.

Since multiple women had recommended the shop, I asked to visit with a manager or purchasing agent at Centennial as part of my research about marketing to women. As I waited, I noticed multiple women happily shopping around the store.

EARNING THEIR TRUST

Social scientists estimate we are conscious of only about 5% of our cognitive function. The other 95% goes beyond our awareness and significantly influences our lives. For example, while I came to the store to learn more about marketing to women, I observed and experienced what a shop engaging female clientele looks and feels. Something as minimal as addressing my husband could’ve subconsciously lost my trust and been a deal-breaker.

To earn her trust and get better at marketing to women, you have to learn what is driving her behavior.

“Don’t just sell to women; ask them questions,” suggests A Girl & A Gun Executive Director Robyn Sandoval. “For example, ask about her goals, interests, lifestyle, budget, plans, needs, wants, etc.”

As your shop develops an interest in her, she’ll subconsciously find trust in your store.

During my visit, I spoke with Joey Mizufuka, Centennial’s retail sales manager, about what successful marketing to women looks like in their area. He revealed while there have been some ups and downs in the shop’s dealings with women, it was working hard to mend bridges in this segment.

Mizufuka relayed the store had, at one time, lost the trust of women’s shooting groups because it had eliminated women’s nights — only to



(Above, left) If your staff can establish trust with a prospective customer, it could create a sportswoman who becomes a lifetime participant. Robyn Sandoval (Right) [with Coni Brooks of Barnes Bullets] advises, "Don't just sell to women; ask them questions." (Above, right) While hosting weekly women's events might, at first, seem like a loss leader, they provide a non-threatening introduction to firearms ownership and training. Ultimately, these events open up your establishment's brand to nearly half of your prospective customer base!

discover how strong their demand was for training.

"The women's classes can, at times, be a loss-leader," he said. "With groups like A Girl & A Gun and The Well Armed Woman, we hold a monthly ladies' night where we host 80 to 100 women who are potential customers."

Before the store's learning experience, they hosted up to 150 women on any given ladies' night. However, with Centennial under new ownership, who realizes the potential client base, the store has geared back up and is hosting more women's events.

The shop's new owners are working to regain the trust of their female clientele.

In addition to guest speakers and appetizers on ladies' night, Centennial chooses to waive range fees and provides free rentals as an incentive to bring women through the door. In addition, the gun club is stocking quality women's accessories. The women are happy with the choices and share the good news with others.

MARKETING IDEAS

Women readily adopt technology, so by all means, use social media platforms for your marketing. Work to curate a "tribe" of women who support your shop. Studies show 92% of women pass along information about deals, and 76% want to be part of unique panels or groups.

Women readily share the good, the bad and the ugly of brand experiences,

THINK OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL MARKET RESEARCH BOX. BE THERE AND BE READY TO HELP FILL THE NEEDS OF THE FEMALE GUN OWNER.

so work on your emotional messaging to attract them to your store and the products, classes or experiences you offer. Once you have their attention and loyalty, they'll readily boast as brand advocates on your behalf. Follow guidelines as social media platforms require, but enlist your tribe to comment on posts, share surveys or promote upcoming events.

UNDERSTANDING HER MINDSET

While you're working to understand how to market to women, you must know the different mindsets of women. According to Insights, five categories stand out to help better understand womens' purchasing views.

1. Achievement & Impression Oriented:

These women are do-it-all women who lead busy lives and carefully manage their to-do lists. She's status-oriented

and will be attracted to new, improved or high-quality products.

2. Conservative: These women focus on traditions and family. She spends carefully and will be attracted to good products for her family or her home.

3. Predictable: These women follow routines and may seem rigid or inflexible, but their practice helps maintain balance and minimize stress. She'll weigh the benefits and trade-offs, and look for the value in all of her purchases.

4. Stressed: These women work to keep up with the momentum of life and have learned there are no safety nets. She's her own first responder. She may need affirmations from others to feel good about herself. She will splurge, but not wastefully; her money matters.

5. Experience Junkie: These women want to see and try it all. She's looking to savor everything in life. She's open to trying and buying, but she's easily distracted, so you'll need to vie for her attention.

As you begin to understand what motivates her, you'll more readily add her to your marketing plan. Your shop may have more or less women from one category or another, but the bottom line is you must get to know your customers who are women in order to properly market to them. **\$I**

Mia Anstine is the founder of MAC Outdoors, licensed outfitter, hunting guide, life coach, keynote speaker and a range safety officer, firearms instructor and archery instructor.

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BY CAROLEE ANITA BOYLES

FORGING HER OWN PATH

3 Women Share Their Experiences As Instructors & Dealers

AS the number of female hunters and shooters increases, so does the number of women in the industry. Whether new to the industry or a longtimer, each woman has her unique story and own way of providing service to her clientele — retail customers and students alike. Let's look at three women who have forged unique paths to prominence as an instructor, dealer or both.

MY SISTER'S KEEPER DEFENSE

Marchelle "Tig" Davis began her journey into the firearms industry in the military. Davis owns and operates My Sister's Keeper Defense, which provides firearms training for women in the Atlanta area. Davis also organizes National Range Day, which promotes Black gun ownership through education and training nationwide every year on June 13.

Davis was in the U.S. Army

for seven years, working in military intelligence. When she left the Army in 2016, she needed a job. One of her Army buddies managed a gun range in Atlanta, and he asked her to come work for him.

"Initially I wasn't in the firearms industry, and I didn't know anything about it other than what I had learned in the military," Davis noted. "But I fell in love with working at the range, being around other gun owners and shooting every day."

Soon, Davis decided to become a firearms instructor. Before long she was promoted and became the manager of the range. She watched women come onto the range and feel uncomfortable while their significant other tried to teach them about firearms, and she resolved to do something about it.

"In 2017, I decided I would open up my own firearms instruction company," she stated.

"That way I could really enjoy what I do without the day-to-day management of the range."

Davis opened Trigger Happy Firearm Instruction, which eventually became My Sister's Keeper Defense. Davis shared her long-term goal is to effectively teach 1 million women how to defend themselves with firearms.

"As a domestic abuse and sexual assault survivor, I think it's important women feel like they're in control of their safety," she said. "My Sister's Keeper Defense is here to empower women and make sure no one else becomes a victim."

Davis teaches mostly women's handgun classes, but she also teaches some co-ed classes, as well as introductory classes for rifles and shotguns.

"We also teach Stop the Bleed and situational awareness classes," she shared. "Stop the Bleed is an emergency first-aid fundamentals course for someone who's injured or has

had a gunshot wound.”

As Davis’s business has expanded, she’s hired additional instructors.

“Now we’re a team of eight instructors, and between us we bring a lot of knowledge to the table, so we teach some of everything,” she said. Of those instructors, five are women and the other two are male — all from different backgrounds.

Davis has big plans for the future. Her current goal is to open her own gun range.

“We’re scouting properties in the Atlanta area now,” she relayed. “My realtor and I have been working on this for about a year, trying to find the perfect property in the perfect location.”

Once she has the first range in place, Davis wants to start franchising the operation.

“I want to put in multiple ranges across the country, with a franchise of the firearms instruction company,” she closed.

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

DONUTS & AMMO: A WINNING COMBO

Victoria and Paul Di Biase have taken a unique approach to selling firearms and ammo in their hometown of Montrose, Pa. On a family trip to Minnesota last summer, they drove past a vacant storefront they had driven by many times before.

“It’s been vacant for close to 10 years,” Victoria noted. “We said it’s so sad the building is just sitting there; we kept talking about what we could do with it.”

The couple had already been brainstorming ideas for business since the start of COVID.

Paul had wanted to start selling ammo, because nobody in the area had what he needed, and he had been able to get a lot of ammo for friends and family who needed different things.

“I told him if he was going to do something fun like sell ammo, I wanted to do something fun

too,” Victoria recalled. “I wanted to bake; I love to bake and always have.”

They discussed cupcakes and cookies, but neither one of those struck a chord.

“As a domestic abuse and sexual assault survivor, I think it’s important women feel like they’re in control of their safety.”

Marchelle “Tig” Davis

Owner, My Sister’s Keeper Defense

“Then I said, ‘Let’s do donuts,’” she declared. “A family friend had taught us how to make them — which is why I decided on it.”

And with this idea, Donuts & Ammo was born. By the time the Di Biases got home from their trip to Minnesota, they had applied for their business name and had their paperwork in process.

Besides refining her donut-

making techniques, Victoria also has applied herself to learning as much as she can about the ammo side of the business.

“I knew the common calibers just from my own experience,” she said. “Now I know a lot more of them. It’s been fun learning that side of the business and I couldn’t pick a better person to learn from than my husband.”

The Di Biases have established a division of labor, which works for them.

“I talk to the customers on a daily basis about what they’re looking for and what they need,” Victoria shared. “Paul has a lot of sources he searches each day to find what the customers and the community want. It’s been our goal. We don’t try to have everything in the store as inventory, but to cultivate our store environment to what our neighborhood needs.”

This includes catering to the various gun clubs in the area, all of which want something slightly different.

“One of our first donut sales was a large bulk order from a gun club in New Milford, because they were having a Women On Target event,” Di Biase said. “We got a lot of support from it, because



Donuts & Ammo has carved a unique niche in its community — guests can come in and find ammo, while enjoying a morning pick-me-up. Victoria Di Biase, right, shared, “We don’t try to have everything in the store as inventory, but to cultivate our store environment to what our neighborhood needs.”



Marchelle "Tig" Davis, left, helps women of all skill levels learn how to defend themselves. "My Sister's Keeper Defense is here to empower women and make sure no one else becomes a victim," she shared.

their clientele kept coming back here because our donuts are delicious, and we were able to find some of the ammo they needed."

The couple hope to expand their business over the next couple of years, both on the donuts side and on the ammo side.

"We would like to have our donuts in some other business around the area. Beyond that, our goal is just to maintain — and grow," Di Biase added.

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

THE SHOOTING FOR WOMEN ALLIANCE

Susan Romanov's story began with an abduction in 1992. After being held hostage at home at knife point for five-and-a-half hours by someone she had considered a friend, and then let down by the police units who responded to her frantic 911 call, Romanov resolved to learn to defend herself. At the time, her home state of Tennessee did not have a concealed carry permit program.

Over the next two years, while her assailant was still at large and stalking her, she was given "special deputy status" by her county sheriff and qualified as a deputy with her local sheriff's department.

As Romanov learned more about firearms and shooting, she became more interested in the recreational side of shooting as well as the self-defense side. By the late 1990s, Romanov had developed good contacts in the firearms industry, and could see the need for our industry to reach out more to women. She began a magazine called *Shooting for*

Women, which led to the development of a 501(c)(3), the Shooting for Women Alliance (SFWA). The SFWA held the first shooting-related national conference for women in the spring of 2004, with the second one a year later.

Both the SFWA and the magazine were going strong when Romanov was diagnosed with throat cancer and had to put everything on hold while she sought treatment. While she was ill, Tennessee developed a state concealed carry permit program, so women now could carry guns for protection. After Romanov made a full recovery, she became a firearms instructor and earned her certification to teach the state's concealed carry class.

Training Courses To Help Retailers Grow

In 2013, Romanov developed Family Fun Indoor Range, marketed as "The only shooting range designed especially for women."

In 2019, she and her husband Vladimir moved Family Fun Indoor Range to its current location in Sevierville, Tenn.,

"The new range has 11 lanes," Romanov said. "It's in the foothills of the Smokey Mountains, which is a good place for tourists. So, we're able to reach a lot of people. We teach kids 6 years old and up."

SFWA has developed a series of 10 classes on how to take people from the basics to advanced defense, train kids, prevail in a self-defense situation and other topics.

"Most people don't have a lifetime to be trained once they decide they need a gun," Romanov said. "So, we

make those curricula available to retailers and ranges who would like to have them."

By using these curricula and offering Women of a Different Caliber training and its association membership benefits, retailers and ranges can increase the number of times women who purchase guns come into the store or range.

"Once a woman finally gets over the fear of guns and decides she wants to shoot a gun or get a carry permit, where do you go for more than the basics?" Romanov queried. "How do you get them to come back? And how does a retailer make money on this? The Women of a Different Caliber program has been very successful at helping retailers do just that."

There's no ongoing fee for retailers to participate in this program or to use SFWA curriculum materials.

At the end of the day, Romanov

"Most people don't have a lifetime to be trained once they decide they need a gun."

Susan Romanov

Founder, Shooting for Women Alliance

concluded, the industry needs more good people like the sheriff who trusted a frightened young woman to carry a firearm for protection 30 years ago.

"We need more good men like him to serve as our instructors and volunteers — those who have touched the lives of girlfriends, daughters, moms, wives and others in a positive way. It will enable them to experience safe firearms ownership and the joy the shooting sports can bring." **SI**

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

Carolee Anita Boyles has been covering the outdoor industry for more than 40 years, and has been a *Shooting Industry* contributing editor since 1998.



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Próis Greann
Jacket



Byrna SD
Pepper Kit



Springfield
SA-35



Hottest New Products For Women

BY ASHLEY MCGEE



GTM-65
Holster
Wallet

DSG Kylie 4.0
Drop Seat Bib



From concealed carry firearms and accessories to the latest hunting gear and apparel, we've rounded up the hottest new products for women — many of which were designed by women.

CONCEALED CARRY

Springfield Armory's **SA-35 9mm pistol** (\$699) pays homage to the beloved Browning Hi-Power by preserving many of its much-loved vintage features such as all-steel construction, blued finish and handsome checkered walnut grips. NRA Women calls its design "A boon for those of us with somewhat smaller hands who want a slim, sleek 9mm with a bit more weight in the frame to help manage felt recoil."

The new **GTM-65 Holster Wallet** (\$99.95) was designed for women who only want to carry the necessities. The overall bag size is 6.5" wide by 5.75" tall and 2.75" deep, with a gun compartment size that's 6.25" wide by 5.5" tall and 1.5" deep. It was designed for both left- and right-handed use. The main wallet compartment zips closed on all three sides and features 14 pockets for ID, cards and cash along with an RFID-protected outside wall. When not able to legally carry, it's also an ideal size for pepper spray.

Made from American washable cowhide, the GTM-65's beautiful

multi-tone finish will get softer with use. Thanks to a slight resin coating for protection, the main wallet compartment can be cleaned with a damp cloth and mild dish soap. The GTM-65 includes a mini holster (designed by Mernickle Holsters). It was tested with the Kimber Micro 9mm and .380, Ruger LCP, Springfield Hellcat 9mm, SIG SAUER P238 .380 ACP and SIG SAUER P938 9mm.

The patent-pending bosumbuddy **Bullet** (\$79.95) is a small, soft holster that takes advantage of a piece of clothing women wear every day — a bra. A bra's shoulder straps and torso band are the perfect foundation for the safety, concealment, comfort and accessibility of a holster and firearm.

The suede strap snaps around the center of the bra and a 2" soft adjustable belt is worn around the torso over the band of the bra holding the holster and firearm firmly in place. For safety, there are three layers of heavy-duty elastic covering the firearm. The suede strap and belt become part of the wearer's bra for concealment

along with the ability to adjust the holster up and down, left or right. The bosumbuddy Bullet is ambidextrous and holds just about any firearm.

Designed in the U.S. by a husband and wife duo, Jessie & James recently released a new collection of concealed carry handbags including the **Elia Concealed Carry Lock and Key Crossbody** (\$59.99). Measuring 9" wide by 11" tall, the faux leather purse features a reinforced adjustable shoulder strap, a separate concealed compartment on the back with a one-zipper opening, lock and key feature for safe and secure weapon storage, magnetic flap closure, removable holster and tassel zipper detail.

With a wide elastic waistband and 7/8 length inseam, Rounded by Concealment Express' **Concealed Carry Leggings** (\$64.99) are a comfortable and secure way to carry a firearm. Made from 20% spandex and 80% polyester, these durable and breathable leggings feature concealed pockets in the appendix and 5 o'clock carry positions and two external side pockets to carry other belongings such as a cellphone.

HUNTING PURSUITS

Engineered and designed using the company's own female employees as their models, Bushmaster's new **.450 Bushmaster Lite Hunting Rifle** (\$1,329.99) is an ideal option for female hunters or anyone hunting deer, bear and hogs. Features include a 20" barrel, 14" BFI free-float handguard, DM2S two-stage trigger, five-round aluminum magazine, fixed A2-style shoulder stock and a muzzlebrake that significantly reduces the levels of felt recoil produced by its big-bore cartridge. Plus, it weighs in at just over 7 lbs., without a magazine.

Designed for women hunters by women hunters, DSG Outerwear's **Women's Insulated Cold-Weather Rubber Hunting Boots** (\$189.99) incorporate a host of smart features. Made of rubber with a lightweight and warm neoprene upper and featuring 1200G Thinsulate insulation and 5mm removable wool insoles, these waterproof boots will keep lady hunters dry and warm during cold-weather late-season hunts. An incorporated shinguard overlay for extra protection and a grip sole for excellent traction means these boots will get hunters through the toughest terrain well protected.

DSG also recently introduced the **Kylie 4.0 3-in-1 Hunting Jacket** and **Drop Seat Bib** (\$199.99 each) The most versatile of the line, the new jacket and bib set helps female hunters gear up for all scenarios from cold to cooler weather hunts to casual wear around camp. The brushed, fine-knitted shell fabric is quiet, windproof and breathable. Removable suspenders, a cinchable waist and an adjustable inseam make for a flattering fit on a variety of body types, but the most notable feature is the drop seat. The Kylie's seat zips out of the way allowing female hunters to answer nature's calling without taking off layers and losing precious body heat. The set is available in five colorways including blaze orange and three popular Realtree camo patterns and sizes from petite to plus (XXS to 5XL).

NRA Women calls its design "A boon for those of us with somewhat smaller hands who want a slim, sleek 9mm with a bit more weight in the frame to help manage felt recoil."

Made with only quality ingredients, Meraki Hunt offers a groundbreaking scent-free line of hair and skin products for female hunters of all generations. The salon-grade Meraki Hunt **Scent-Free Shampoo and Conditioner Set** (\$37.99) is made from a unique blend of nourishing botanicals, biotin and keratin complex to leave hair feeling soft and silky. The color-safe shampoo and conditioner are 100% sulfate-, phosphate-, paraben- and silicone-free, and were designed for all hair types. The fragrance-free products provide moisturization without weighing hair down and leaving it healthy, soft and manageable so female hunters can have beautiful hair even during hunting season.

Together, the **Greann Jacket** and **Greann Bib** (\$299.99 each) from Próis are the ultimate combination of warmth, protection from the elements and silence. With its 100% polyester

brushed-fleece exterior and the interior Primaloft insulation, the Greann Jacket is the perfect piece for female hunters to have on late-season and treestand hunts. Primaloft Next is the latest in next-to-skin insulation combined with Primaloft Gold to make the ultimate cold-weather gear. The YKK Aquaguard pockets found both at the chest and hip provide easy access to calls, licenses, phone, etc. The articulated elbows cut down on the bulk of the material, providing easy maneuverability. To provide an additional step for safety, a treestand harness port is found in between the shoulder blades for easy access.

With Primaloft Next through the upper body as well as Primaloft Gold through the middle back to lower legs, the Greann Bib offers top-of-the-line insulation for warmth that lasts through the day. The YKK Aquaguard Zippers keep moisture out, and the strap running behind the neck (rather than traditional overall shoulder straps) allows it to be removed without having to take off the jacket if nature calls.

OTHER SELF-DEFENSE TOOLS

Although not specifically created for them, the Byrna **SD Pepper Kit** (\$399) is a powerful, non-lethal self-defense weapon ideal for women. The successor of the Byrna HD, the SD has been re-engineered for optimal performance. Powered by compressed air, it shoots .68-caliber round kinetic and/or chemical irritant projectiles that can disable a threat from up to 60' away.

Plegium **Smart Pepper Spray** (\$44.95) is the first pepper spray in the world to connect to a smartphone and text an exact location alert to the user's emergency contacts. The device also features a powerful 130 dB siren, LED strobe light and maximum strength pepper spray formula (10' range) with red marking dye and UV dye. Designed to maximize grasp and aim, it's also equipped with a break-away magnetic keychain for immediate one-hand access. Professional monitoring is available through the Plegium app, which sends an active tracking link to a 24/7 call center that will contact local authorities. **SI**

Ashley McGee is a writer and marketing consultant specializing in editorial and advertorial articles, content marketing and social media management.

NEW PRODUCTS

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

SHOOTINGINDUSTRY.COM/CATEGORY/FIRST-LOOK

By Jenna Buckley



BUSHNELL

(800) 423-3537
bushnell.com

Bushnell's new **EQL RETICLE** has been added to Elite Tactical XRS3 and DMR3 riflescopes to give shooters a more streamlined view for faster acquisition without sacrificing precision. The EQL is a 0.2 MIL grid developed to be fast and precise no matter the required hold or read. The wave-based hash system with intermediate floating and overlap dots is thinned and "opened up" where possible to reduce perceived complexity and target obstruction. Other features include main stadia integer floating dots, half value overlap dots and integral milling bar sections.

1791 GUNLEATHER

(800) 407-1791
1791gunleather.com

1791 Gunleather's **ULTRA CUSTOM LIGHT BEARING HOLSTER** eliminates the need for matching a gun and light/laser combo with a specific holster. Featuring the company's patented Memory-Lok technology, the OWB holster can be molded and re-molded for endless customization and offers the freedom to pair a handgun with the accessories of a user's choice. The high sweat guard provides added protection for EDC. An optic-cut can accommodate most pistol optics, and the holster design fits most rail- and trigger guard-mounted accessories. Available in three different models, Ultra Custom Light Bearing Holsters are compatible with a wide variety of handguns.



BENELLI USA

(800) 264-4962
benelliusa.com

Benelli USA expands the Nova pump shotgun lineup with the **NOVA TURKEY** (model #20043). The lightweight (6.5 lbs.) Nova Turkey comes chambered for 2.75" and 3" 20 GA shotshells and features a 24" barrel with included improved cylinder, modified and full chokes. Its unitized receiver and stock design is comprised of a skeletonized steel frame and overmolded polymer for maximum rigidity and operational simplicity. An aggressively ribbed and ergonomically contoured forend provides exceptional grip, ensuring positive pump-action. The full-length ribbed barrel terminates with a high-visibility red-bar front sight for quick sight picture acquisition. The Nova Turkey is dressed in full-coverage Mossy Oak Bottomland camo.



SIG SAUER

(603) 610-3000
sigsauer.com

The SIG SAUER Electro-Optics **ROMEOZERO ELITE** is a premium, micro open reflex sight featuring an aspherical glass lens with zero distortion. It has an RMSc footprint and is constructed with a carbon-infused, weapons-grade ultra-light polymer housing for increased drop and shock protection. The ROMEOZero ELITE is available with a circle dot reticle with a 2 MOA dot in combination with a 32 MOA circle, or a standard 3 MOA dot only. It has eight daytime illumination settings and uses a CR1632 battery for up to 20,000 hours of run time. Models also include T.A.P. (Touch Activated Programming) for an additional method of changing brightness and reticles and a SuperLuminova glow-in-the-dark backup rear sight.



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HORNADY SECURITY

(800) 338-3220
hornadyssecurity.com

The **RAPID SAFE READY VAULT W/ WIFI SPECIFICATIONS** from Hornady Security boasts heavy-duty steel construction with five internal hardened locking lugs and SQUARE-LOK walls for mounting accessories. Swiping an RFID-equipped wristband, key fob or decal over the safe's sensor instantly opens the vault door. A programmable digital keypad and mechanical key offer additional entry methods. Notifications can be sent to a phone or other portable device through the Hornady app, allowing owners to be alerted to critical information about authorized (and unauthorized) vault entry. Its exterior dimensions are 52.2"H x 20" W x 15.1" D and interior dimensions are 51.8"H x 19"W x 12.7"D. It weighs: 165 lbs. The **RAPID SAFE COMPACT READY VAULT W/ WIFI SPECIFICATIONS** shares the same features, but in a more compact size. Its exterior dimensions are 52.2"H x 10"W x 10"D and interior dimensions are 51.8"H x 9.8"W x 8"D. It weighs 80 lbs.



FN AMERICA

(800) 635-1321
fnamerica.com

Inspired by the original, the **FN HIGH POWER** features dramatic improvements in ergonomics and fire-control design, accuracy and increased magazine capacity. With improved internals and a modern barrel lockup, the FN High Power design is more robust and capable of cycling most 9mm loads and boasts 17+1 round capacity. Ambidextrous controls aid in overall operability and the elimination of the magazine disconnect makes for a single-action trigger that breaks crisply and cleanly. Takedown has been simplified, allowing users to instantly field strip the pistol. Offered in a choice of black, stainless steel or FDE finishes, each gun ships with two pairs of polymer grips.



CROSSBREED HOLSTERS

(888) 732-5011
crossbreedholsters.com

CrossBreed now offers several IWB and OWB holster systems for the **SPRINGFIELD ARMORY SA-35** 9mm pistol including: SuperTuck IWB, SnapSlide OWB, DropSlide OWB and mag carrier, SuperSlide OWB, Tuckable IWB mag carrier, Accomplish Mag Carrier and the IDPA- and USPSA-approved Accomplish Mag Carrier with QLS. In addition to these on-body carry solutions, CrossBreed's hook-and-loop-style off-body pistol holsters and magazine carriers are available for the SA-35, such as the Bedside Backup, Pac Mat system and Ohai system.



BA712 SEMI-AUTO SHOTGUN

ADCO ARMS CO. INC.

(781) 935-1799
adcosales.com

Due to overwhelming demand, ADCO Arms is now producing two of Best Arms shotguns, the **BULLPUP BA912** and the **SEMI-AUTO BA712**, in an American Flag coated format. The durable coating surpasses normal anodized finishes for long-lasting performance.

JESSIE & JAMES HANDBAGS

(323) 917-8828
jessiejameshandbags.com



The **ESTHER CONCEALED CARRY LOCK AND KEY CROSSBODY** bag from Jessie & James has a separate concealed compartment at the rear with a locking one-zippered opening for safe and secure firearm storage. The main compartment has a slip pocket and a zippered pocket, and a front slip pocket with woven grommet detail offers additional storage. A removable holster is included. The bag is offered in seven colors, including dark grey, dark mauve (pictured) and dark turquoise. The Esther measures 11"L x 5.25"W x 9"H.

STREAMLIGHT INC.

(800) 523-7488
streamlight.com

Streamlight now offers its ultra-compact TLR-6 rail-mounted weapon light for the **TAURUS GX4**. The bright-white LED delivers 100 lumens and 2,000 candela over a beam distance of 89 meters. The light is equipped with a 640-660nm red laser. It offers three lighting modes: LED only, LED/laser and laser only. The TLR-6 is powered by two 3-volt CR-1/3N lithium batteries. The integrated battery door allows the batteries to be replaced while the light remains mounted, eliminating the need to re-sight the laser. The light is equipped with left- and right-handed switches for ambidextrous operation.



ADVERTISER INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE	ADVERTISER	PAGE
1791 Gunleather	19	North American Arms	23
Absolute Machine Tools	13	North American Bancard	31
Armcor/Rock Island Armory	3	O.F. Mossberg & Sons	56
B&T Industries	25	PrOlix	21
Davidson's Inc.	17	Ruger	7
DeSantis Gunhide	5	SCCY Firearms	1
EOTECH Inc.	55	Sports South	2
HSS Corp.	25	Streamlight Inc.	11
Joseph Chiarello & Co. Inc.	15	U.S. Target Inc.	19
MGE Wholesale Inc.	9	Zanders Sporting Goods	39
Nighthawk Custom	35		



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NEW PRODUCTS

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ALEXO ATHLETICA

alexoathletica.com

The **TUCK AND CARRY JOGGER** represents Alexo Athletica's first men's jogger, and the patent-pending design allows users to carry essentials and still tuck in a shirt. The ambidextrous carry pocket design features one right and one left appendix carry pocket, and one 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock carry pocket. Pockets not being used to store a firearm can be used to store extra magazines and other tools. The pull-on-style joggers boast side-slip pockets, a back welt pocket with zipper, a hidden phone pocket, an athletic tapered cut and banded cuffs. A drawstring facilitates added retention.

DAVIDSON'S INC.

(800) 367-4867
davidsonsinc.com

Davidson's announces an exclusive offering produced in conjunction with Radical Firearms. The Radical **RAD-15 RDR** is an AR-15 platform carbine quipped with Davidson's exclusive 15" RDR (Radical Davidson's Rail) M-LOK compatible aluminum forend and full-length Picatinny rail. The 5.56 NATO-chambered carbine is ready for the user's choice of optics, lasers and other accessories. The RAD-15 RDR features a low-profile gas block, mid-length gas system, B5 Bravo stock, B5 Type 23 grip, 16" barrel and a forged 7075 T6 lower receiver. OAL is 36", and it weighs 8 lbs. One 30-round metal magazine is included.



KUSA, PARTNERS CONNECT VETERAN WITH SUPPORT DOG

Kalashnikov USA (KUSA) believes in giving back, especially to military veterans. The company is also filled with dog lovers. KUSA decided to help a deserving Marine veteran by providing her with an emotional support service dog. U.S. Marine Corps veteran Lorena Guimares has been paired with Vityaz, a male Labrador retriever puppy.

Fletcher Swain of Custom K-9, a professional dog trainer and senior drill instructor, will provide Guimares and Vityaz with training over the next several

months.

Several key individuals and organizations helped make this happy connection happen. Sgt. Adams Lin of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office introduced KUSA to Guimares. Swain helped identify and secure a suitable puppy with the right temperament and intelligence needed to become a fully-trained emotional support service dog. Custom K-9 is providing lodging for Vityaz as well as a suitable parade ground where he and Guimares can learn to march in unison and communicate with each other.

"This really was a team effort involving KUSA employees, community partners and even our customers (especially



USMC veteran Lorena Guimares and her new K-9 companion, Vityaz.

Dennis M.) who helped us select 'Vityaz' as the name for the service dog in training. In Slavic mythology, a *vityaz* was a noble knight who fought dragons, giants and other creatures using a combination of strength, wits and courage. We're confident our canine Vityaz will likewise help Lorena overcome her challenges," said David Garretson, KUSA VP of marketing. / kalashnikov-usa.com

BROWNELLS LAUNCHES INAUGURAL 2A DAY

On 2-22-22, Brownells presented the inaugural National 2nd Amendment Day.

"The spirit of this event is to designate a day that we, as a nation, recognize, celebrate and do our part to secure one of the most important rights guaranteed by our Constitution — the right to keep and bear arms," said Pete Brownell, chairman of the board.

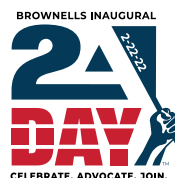
National 2nd Amendment Day promoted three ways for gun owners to participate: Celebrate, Advocate and Join. Putting the principle into practice, Brownells either contributed financially or served its employees in each capacity.

Celebrate: Brownells partnered with select gun ranges — both in Iowa

and across the U.S. — to host National 2nd Amendment Day range sessions. The range sessions included Brownells-paid range time and food for those who attended. To encourage company participation, Brownells provided an opportunity for its employees to shoot at its Iowa range location.

Advocate: The National 2nd Amendment Day webpage featured tips on how gun owners could contact their state and federal lawmakers to weigh in on their support for gun rights. Brownells welcomed its state and federal legislators to participate in shooting at its Iowa range location.

Join: The third element of the Inaugural National 2nd Amendment Day called on gun owners to join a national and/or state-level gun rights organization. Brownells promoted the



Firearms Policy Coalition (FPC), Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) and American Suppressor Association (ASA) on its website. In addition, Brownells also featured a clickable map of the U.S. visitors could use to find a state-level organization to join. Brownells purchased FPC memberships for its employees and donated \$22,222 each to FPC, SAF, ASA and the Iowa Firearms Coalition.

Salutes, Brownells team! We're looking forward to celebrating #2ADay2023. / brownells.com

ARMED WOMEN OF AMERICA, GUNSITE ANNOUNCE NEW PARTNERSHIP

The Well Armed Woman Shooting Chapters Inc. (dba Armed Women of America [AWA]) has announced a partnership with Gunsite Academy.

"Armed Women of America is pleased to announce the Gunsite Academy Instructor courses are being accepted for AWA instructor certification," said Helen Moore, AWA executive director. "Gunsite offers excellent firearms training at


every level and AWA recognizes the high standards set for its students."

Located in Paulden, Ariz., Gunsite Academy has offered training to elite military personnel, law enforcement and private citizens since being founded by Lt. Col. Jeff Cooper in 1976.

"Gunsite Academy has been a long-time partner of Armed Women of America," said Sheriff Ken Campbell (Ret.), Gunsite CEO. "We're proud of the large chapter we host at the Gunsite Ranch in Arizona and to be a regular host for the annual State Conference as well. Offering this Instructor opportunity is helping the Armed Women of America to go to the



next level in training of their ladies. We look forward to continuing to support this organization."

Armed Women of America is a non-profit organization with chapters across the country where women gather regularly to learn and grow in their abilities to handle firearms safely, responsibly and competently. 

/ twawshootingchapters.org
/ gunsite.com

BY JADE MOLDAE

"BARRIER BREAKERS" ARE NOW THE RULE

During a recent trip to my local FFL, I witnessed an interaction that has taken place countless times over the past two years. An older, frail, masked, Black woman was at the counter talking with a young, unmasked, white, male sales associate — asking him for advice on some good home-defense handgun options.

Due to her smaller stature, the customer was concerned for her physical well-being living at home alone. It was a textbook interaction: The sales associate advised her to get a handgun with an easy-to-operate slide rather than a snub-nosed revolver and emphasized, repeatedly, the importance of getting good training to go along with it — no matter what she decides.

While the guest didn't make the purchase that day (she was still on the fence of whether or not she wanted the responsibility of owning a firearm) I have a pretty good idea where she'll be going if she changes her mind.

If any silver linings can be gleaned from the experiences of the past two years, it's interactions like what I witnessed have become the rule, rather than the exception. Even though this one didn't translate to a direct sale, it left the door open for future visits and empowered the customer with knowledge to make an educated decision for her self-defense needs.

CORRECTING PAST ASSUMPTIONS

The industry has made significant inroads welcoming women, minorities and other non-traditional shooters, but there's always more we can be doing — from the macro to the micro level — to further develop positive interactions and enhance firearms ownership.

One of our motives for publishing the Woman's Issue is to help correct past assumptions that may be made (even subconsciously) during a dealer's dialogue with a customer who's a female.

In Tiffany Johnson's article, "The Invisible Woman" (pp. 36–39), she shares the devastating (and ironic) impact of making assumptions during a potential firearms purchase:

"If you know what equipment she needs within the first few moments, you've made some unwarranted assumptions. In so doing, you might have just insulted her by implying you know her better than she knows herself. At best, it could cost you the sale; and at worst, you've lost her as a customer forever.

"And if she's a newcomer or a hesitant or fearful entrant into the gun-owning community, then by making her decisions for her, you might have unwittingly dispossessed her of the very agency and autonomy the Second Amendment was codified to safeguard. How's that for irony?"

Tough, but true words. Hopefully this doesn't apply to your store or staff — but if it does, it's not too late to shed the label and break down barriers. Have a staff meeting or invite a panel of customers from diverse backgrounds to learn how they feel when in your establishment. (And, if you didn't get a chance to read Johnson's article, I highly recommend you do so.)

"IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME"

It may be a famous *Field Of Dreams* misquote, but the "If you build it, they will come" mantra certainly applies to welcoming women into your store.

Build an environment to show to women they're welcome in your store. A calendar to promote when the next ladies' night on the range is, displays, diverse staff and marketing/social media campaigns featuring women in the shooting sports are simple ways your store can develop a welcoming presence.

Debbie Rose, of Girls Shoot Guns Too, noted if you put the effort into making your store more approachable, it will generate opportunity.

"If FFLs put themselves out there as being more woman-friendly and approachable, women will be more apt to come in to them and feel more comfortable," she said. "Maybe even advertise a women's day or evening, and see if there are any women firearms instructors in the area who would be willing to be present for the event. It will draw a crowd! Having female camaraderie really helps."

Don't overthink it. Easier said than done, but as Ava Flanell points out in this month's "8 Ways To Retain Women & Encourage Growth" (pp. 26–27): "Women aren't that difficult to please when it comes to firearms and training; we just need a little encouragement, and in the end, just want to feel comfortable and confident." It's never too late to start.

Continued on p. 53

Next year will bring *Shooting Industry's* fifth annual Woman's Issue — let us know what you liked, disliked or what you'd want to see in the next installment. Contact me anytime: editor@shootingindustry.com.



ADVANTAGE:YOU

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 **SAFETY TIP:** Store firearms securely, inaccessible to children and unauthorized users.

Consult and comply with any and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, requirements, and/or restrictions, including but not limited to those regarding the purchase, ownership and carrying of a firearm.