

NEW PRODUCT REPORTS

SHOT Daily scours the floor to find the latest in knives from the show

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NSSF

DAY 3, JANUARY 22, 2015

SHOT DAILY

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Federal Premium is re-writing the blackpowder rule book **SEE PAGE 58**



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SHOOT LIKE A GIRL!

Group aims to grow the number of women shooters **SEE PAGE 4**

LEADING THE WAY

Conservation remains big business at the SHOT Show **SEE PAGE 68**



THE DAILY NEWS OF THE 2015 LAS VEGAS SHOT SHOW BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE BONNIER CORPORATION AND THE NSSF

A Determined Industry

At the NSSF State of the Industry dinner on Tuesday night, NSSF president Steve Sanetti struck a “determined” pose. He told the audience that “much of the public and the media are woefully misinformed about who we are and all the good that we do for genuine gun safety.” He then iterated the many efforts that have been undertaken by the shooting-sports industry and NSSF to confront this issue.

“We’re determined to educate the public through blogs, social media, op-eds, TV and radio interviews, and in-person appearances around the country,” he said. “This has been a team effort, and it’s working. But this effort can never let up.” He then tackled an ongoing misperception of the shooting-sports industry. “Some pundits state that the shooting sports are ‘in retreat.’ Well, look at the facts. Last year’s SHOT Show, one of the fastest-growing trade shows in the nation, had its highest attendance ever. The number of federally licensed firearms dealers is growing. Firearms sales

experienced the second-highest year ever.

“Firearms permit and safety classes report long waiting lists, and the number of apprentice hunting licenses increased to well over one million this year. There are now more than 40 million hunters and target shooters and more than 100 million firearms owners. If this is a ‘retreat,’ as those who see no appeal in what we do have alleged, I wonder what an advance would look like!”

But most of all, he said, the many Americans who enjoy the shooting sports are united in the determination “of ordinary people who want nothing more than to peacefully, lawfully, and responsibly exercise their constitutional right to protect their families and enjoy the shooting sports.”

They are also united in “their determined rejection of the false notion of controlling criminals by heaping even more restrictions on the law-abiding. I have never seen our industry more determined to succeed in its mission by working together. And may that determination never falter.”

ATK Sporting Names 2014 Dealers of the Year

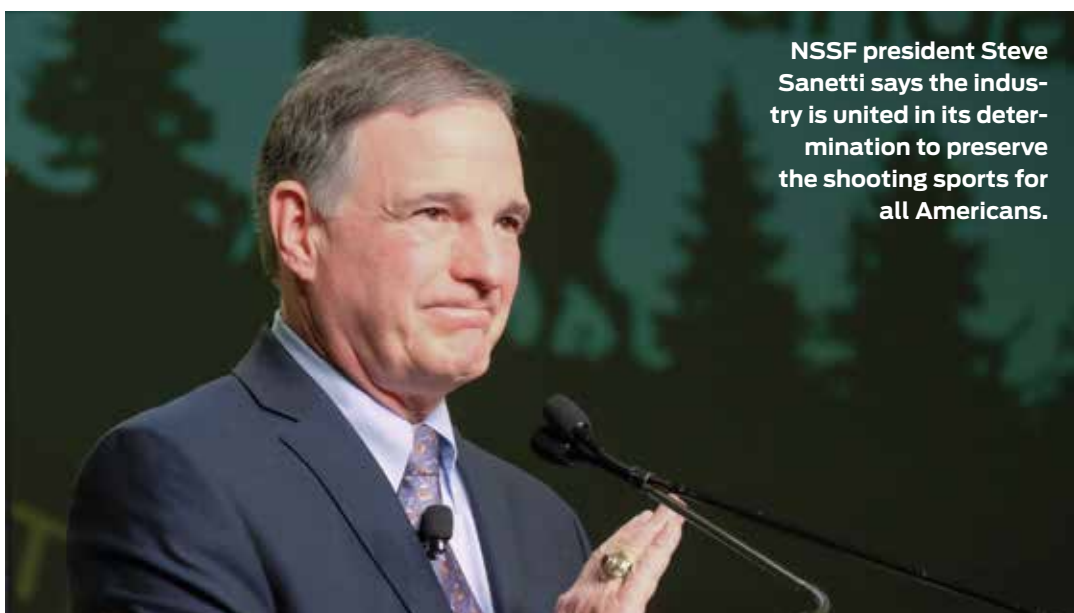
South Carolina’s Palmetto State Armory was recently named 2014 ATK Dealer of the Year.

“Huge inventory expansions and phenomenal sales increases, especially with Bushnell and Savage Arms, plus a dedication to our buyer’s programs have earned Palmetto State Armory this title,” said ATK Sporting Group vice president of sales Jim Bruno. “Owner Jamin McCallum endlessly strives to give his customers the very best products and service. His incredible marketing efforts, sales strategies, and hard work are impressive.”

In related news, the Firearms Dealer of the Year Award went to Vance Outdoors of Ohio.



Reed’s Sporting Goods of Minnesota took home the award for Ammunition Dealer of the Year. Finally, the ATK Shooting Accessory Dealer of the Year Award went to Ohio-based retailer Goschinski’s Fin, Feather & Fur.



NSSF president Steve Sanetti says the industry is united in its determination to preserve the shooting sports for all Americans.

S&G PROTECTS SAFES

Gun-safe owners and manufacturers using Sargent and Greenleaf, Inc., electromechanical locks are in for some good news. This week at SHOT, S&G released new study data regarding its electromechanical locks and their ability to properly open in the event of an electromagnetic-pulse (EMP) attack or solar incident.

To address this concern, S&G put its Spartan, Titan, and 6100 series electromechanical locks to the test. All three were tested at high-EMP levels in the same independent lab where S&G tests the U.S. government’s high-security 2740B locks against EMP “attacks.”

“The EMP threat is a concern, and we wanted to be sure our locks passed the threat potential, testing them at the military’s highest EMP impact standards,” says marketing manager Nate Brown. “The locks passed with flying colors.” Booth #2816. (sargentandgreenleaf.com)



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PETZAL RECEIVES AWARD

Bushnell yesterday recognized David E. Petzal with the 2015 Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement Award. Widely acknowledged as the dean of the gun-writing fraternity, Petzal has engaged readers by educating and advising them about choosing and using optics in a variety of settings.

Bushnell established the Bushnell Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement Award to honor the legendary writer and photojournalist for the vast contributions he has made to the optics and outdoors industry throughout his 50-year career. Introduced in 2011, the annual award was established to both honor McRae and recognize journalists who have made a profound impact in the industry.

Over the span of his 42-year



Wayne Van Zwohl (right), the 2013 recipient of the Bushnell Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement Award, congratulates 2015 recipient David E. Petzal at the Bushnell reception yesterday at the 2015 SHOT Show.

career with *Field & Stream*, Petzal has co-hosted the “Gun Nuts” television show (which now is a video blog on the *Field & Stream* website), penned the monthly column “Ask Petzal,” authored seven books, and written thousands of features and erudite product reviews. Known for his candid approach, his vast knowledge of guns, ammunition, and optics has made him the go-to source for information on how to be a better shooter at both the range and in the field.

A graduate of Colgate University, Petzal served in the United States Army, where he started his writing career, from 1963 to 1969. He has hunted all over the United States and Canada, as well as Europe, Africa, and New Zealand.

Girl Power!

Shoot Like a Girl (SLG²) is on a mission: to grow the number of women who participate in shooting sports by empowering them with confidence. Since its founding in 2008, it has achieved that goal again and again, mainly by hands-on connections with women across the country, along with fresh and viable social media outlets and an ever-changing website that features news, pro-staff tips, and techniques.

The main ingredient in this success story is the state-of-the-art 52-foot trailer where women can participate in a revolutionary introduction process, called the Test Shots and Test Flights programs, as they shoot pistols, rifles, and compound bows in a safe, controlled environment in a short amount of time. The trailer, which is wheelchair-accessible, features a military-grade firearms simulation system and a live archery range.

“Colt [Booth #12529] is

eager to find new ways to get our products into the hands of females considering a firearms purchase. The Shoot Like a Girl program offers exactly that, an opportunity for women to try our pistols in a safe and controlled environment. I have been very impressed with their commitment to educate women on safe, responsible gun ownership, and we are proud to be a supporter of Shoot Like a Girl,” says Joyce Rubino, vice president of marketing.

Karen Butler, president of SLG², says the trailer is helping get more women into shooting. “We are growing the number of women who participate in shooting sports. As of November 2014, our surveys show a combined gun sales of 66 percent from nearly 1,700 shooters we have put through our program. That equates to 1,122 guns sales as a result of our introductory program, with 69 percent from new, infrequent, or inexperienced shooters.”

Crimson Trace Corp. (Booth #16731), which has signed on as a sponsor, sees the value of encouraging more women to take up the shooting sports. “At Crimson Trace, our goal is to make laser sighting systems standard equipment on all personal protection firearms sold in this country,” says Kent Thomas, director of marketing and product development. “As the market leader, our role is to reach those who we call ‘Gun Culture 2.0.’ These are today’s new shooters. The concept that Shoot Like a Girl has put together is a creative, fun, and safe way for the new female shooter to be introduced to the shooting sports on her terms.”

(shootlikeagirl.com)

—Barbara Baird



Karen Butler (right) and Cristy Crawford are dedicated to increasing the number of women participants in the shooting sports. A recent survey shows their organization is succeeding in its mission.

POMA/NSSF AWARD

The Professional Outdoor Media Association (POMA) and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) honored *American Rifleman* and *American Rifleman Television* editor-in-chief Mark A. Keefe, IV, with the prestigious POMA/NSSF Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award, an honor that recognizes extraordinary achievements in communications in the areas of responsible firearms use, the shooting sports, and hunting.

Tom Gresham, Grits Gresham’s son, presented Keefe with the award during the Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show’s State of the Industry dinner.

“I couldn’t be happier with the committee’s selection of Mark for this award,” said Gresham. “He’s a skilled communicator, but he also is a true gun geek—someone who enjoys the history, the details, and the workings of both old and new firearms. I’ve been privileged to spend time in the field with Mark, hunting and shooting, and he is one of the most knowledgeable authorities on firearms I know. His integrity, loyalty, and determination make him who he is.”

The Grits Gresham Award recognizes those who grasp the ideals, foster the commitment, and display the talent Grits Gresham showed during his career.



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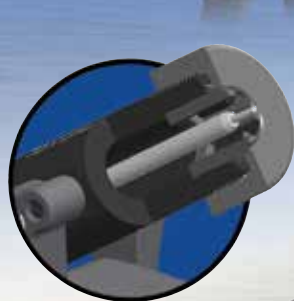
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Markham "Skipper" Dickson has been honored with the Cabela Lifetime Achievement Award from the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance.

USSA Presents Lifetime Achievement Award to Dickson

Last night, the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance honored Markham "Skipper" Dickson with the Cabela Lifetime Business Achievement Award for his enduring contribution to the firearms and ammunition markets as well as his support in protecting and advancing the shooting and hunting sports. Dickson is the fourth generation of his family to lead Sports South, a major shooting industry distributor.

The invitation-only reception took place in the *Field & Stream* and *Outdoor Life* Sportsman's Lounge and featured representatives from throughout the industry.

"What an honor to be put in the same circle as past award recipients, all of whom for which I have the utmost respect," said Dickson. "Our only hope for the future is to preserve the resources that are the underpinning of this industry. We have always been inspired by those who give so much back, especially the Cabela family and USSA."

The U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance, an organization dedicated to protecting outdoorsmen from anti-hunting organizations and initiatives, has

been presenting the lifetime-achievement award since 2007 in honor of the late Dick Cabela and his devotion to the outdoors heritage. The Cabela Lifetime Business Achievement Award honors those businesses and their leaders who have consistently demonstrated a similar passion to support, defend, and promote the outdoors legacy.

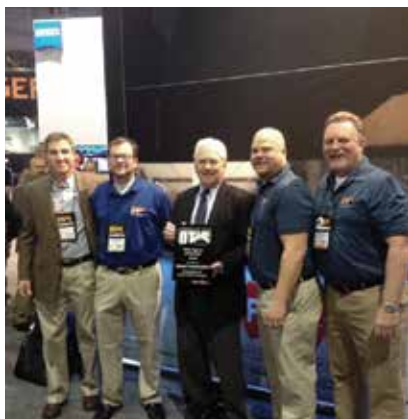
"Mr. Dickson's success in business, accompanied by his undying passion for helping to protect outdoor opportunities for sportsmen, make him an ideal recipient of this award," said USSA president and CEO Nick Pinizzotto. "It was an honor to present this award to such a great friend and defender of our outdoors heritage."

Smith Outdoor Products

Smith's Consumer Products, Inc., best known for knife sharpeners and specialty tools under the Smith's brand, is debuting its new Outdoor Specialty Tool and Survival Line at the 2015 SHOT Show. The new line features several lightweight, durable, and compact products with both sharpening and survival features.

The seven SKU product line covers a wide range of price points (\$8.99 to \$49.99) and will showcase Smith's new branding and product color schemes. These products should appeal not only to avid hunters, but also to outdoorsmen looking for survival-related gear, and hunters, campers, hikers, and backpackers. They could also be useful in emergency or disaster situations. The line includes the Edgesport Survival Knife (\$19.99), a compact, folding stainless-steel knife that has a sharpener, whistle, and fire starter built into the handle; the Edgesport 10-N-1 Survival Multi-Tool (\$29.99), which contains 10 tools—including a knife blade, saw blade, sharpener, whistle, fire starter, tweezers, removable clip-on light, compass, paracord, and signal mirror—in one compact multi-tool; and the Edgesport Survival Knife and Kit (\$39.99), which is a combination of the Smith survival knife and the survival kit. Booth #12515.

(smithoutdoorproducts.com)



Otis Technology Awards

For the second consecutive year, Sokol Associates has been recognized by Otis Technology as the Sales Agency of the Year. With more than 52 years of experience in the outdoor sports industry, they represent Otis Technology in the upper Midwest and Great Lakes territories.

"It has been my pleasure to have worked with Sokol Associates since

my introduction to this industry," said national sales manager Frank Devlin. "I've found they are a well-managed organization with an amazing group of creative and dedicated sales professionals."

In addition, Mark Woyak, of Sokol Associates, received the 2014 Sales Representative of the Year award. This award is presented to the sales representative who has shown initia-

tive, sales growth, outstanding effort, and customer service.

"We had many great candidates for this award, but Mark truly earned this recognition throughout the year," said Tom Knudtson, Otis Technology central region sales manager. "His attention to detail, his ability to think outside the box, and his focused attention to serving our customers definitely set him apart."



Nighthawk president Mark Stone in class at Gunsite. He went to the renowned training center to learn more about how to build accurate 1911s.



Peak Perfection

Nighthawk Custom sits atop the 1911 Mountain **By Richard Mann**

Nighthawk Custom was formed in 2004. Originally, there were four equal partners. Three were former Wilson Combat employees (two gunsmiths and one sales representative). The fourth, and unlikely, partner was business owner Mark Stone, who worked in the poultry and banking industry. Fast-forward 10 years. Stone is the last man standing. Through his astute leadership, he took this fledgling company, which everyone thought would fail, from nothing to possibly the top of the custom 1911 mountain.

Stone will readily admit it was not an easy climb. From day one, it was difficult for Nighthawk to find solid footing. The manufacturer could not get quality parts or credit, and cash flow was slow. But Stone knew how a business must be operated in order to succeed; he believed in paying his bills on time and in treating his employees and customers fairly. As Nighthawk slowly and deliberately continued its ascent, the company managed to reinvest some profits and attract talented applicants.

Today, Nighthawk Custom—the sole custom 1911 builder to use only fully machined parts—operates out of a 17,000-square-foot facility and has 48 employees. Nighthawk Custom also operates on the “one man, one gun” philosophy. Pistols are not passed from gunsmith to gunsmith down an assembly line. Harkening back to a time gone by, only two hands craft each Nighthawk pistol.

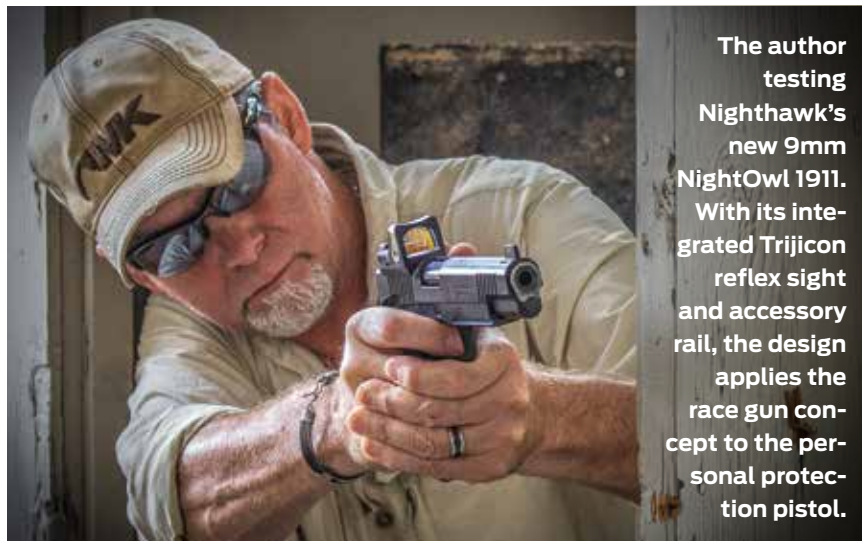
Nighthawk is also committed to

continually improving its pistols. In an effort to learn more about 1911s—particularly how they are used and what customers expect—Stone and his director of operations went to Gunsite Academy to study. After several days on the range at Gunsite, I asked Stone what he’d learned and was rewarded with a very uncharacteristic

admission from the man who runs a company arguably building some of the best 1911s in the world.

Stone said, “I learned I didn’t know enough.”

It’s that humbleness, combined with a commitment to reaching the highest summit, which has allowed Nighthawk to climb out of the shadow of Wilson Combat.



The author testing Nighthawk’s new 9mm NightOwl 1911. With its integrated Trijicon reflex sight and accessory rail, the design applies the race gun concept to the personal protection pistol.

Nighthawk stands behind its product, and its customer service is the equal to the quality of its pistols.

And yet, Nighthawk Custom is not just a one-off, customer-based custom shop. The manufacturer has a preferred dealer program and is always looking to extend its network. It strictly enforces MAP pricing to protect profit margins and offers additional discounts at the SHOT Show each year.

It is also continually striving to innovate. Nighthawk’s new 9mm NightOwl pistol, with an integrated Trijicon reflex sight and accessory rail, has brought the race gun into the sphere of the personal-protection pistol.

All this because Mark Stone and Nighthawk Custom know you cannot remain at the top of the mountain without being dedicated to innovation and remaining loyal to your committed dealers and their demanding customers. Booth #12479. **(870-423-4867; nighthawkcustom.com)**

The Cutting Edge

First Lite reinvents camo **By Bill Miller**

Kevin Wilke wasn't quite sure about the camouflage prototype he was asked to test while bowhunting last season on the Wasatch Range in central Utah.

Fusion, the new camo from First Lite, differs from popular patterns of pixels or replicated foliage. By carefully blending various shapes, colors, and textures, Fusion is designed to "obliterate" a hunter's outline and merge with virtually any environment, from rugged Western mountain slopes to dense Eastern woodlands.

Wilke, a First Lite pro staffer, says Fusion initially seemed too dark. A hunting buddy suggested it was too light. Opinions changed, however, as Wilke put a stalk on a small herd of mule deer and his friend tried to follow him with a spotting scope. Wilke blended into the scenery like a chameleon.

"My buddy said, 'Dude, that camo looked totally different when you got out there a ways. I had a hard time keeping track of you.' He ordered the new camo the next day," he says.

A Super-Versatile Pattern

► Kenton Carruth and Scott Robinson started First Lite, based in Ketchum, Idaho, in 2007.

First Lite is licensed for popular camo patterns, but Carruth says the company sought a proprietary pattern that would excel in central Idaho, where mountain ranges have dry grass and sage on south slopes, contrasted by deep timber on the north sides.

"You can be in both environments maybe 20 times a day," Carruth says. "So for us, we really had to have a super-versatile pattern."

Meanwhile, Joseph Skinner, a bowhunter in New York State, had embarked on a personal study of camouflage—and a quest to make it better.

Skinner, a resident of Cornwall-On-Hudson, says he was a First Lite customer, so he decided to show Fusion's prototypes to the company, but something was missing.

No Pixels, No Trees

► "I just started obsessively digging into the other patterns, reading everything I could and buying obscure patterns and design software, and it blossomed from there," Skinner says. He determined the most versatile camo would not involve digital patterns or exact images of foliage, but rather large swaths of light and dark colors that effectively distort a hunter's

First Lite's new camo pattern uses shapes and colors that occur in nature rather than pictures of trees or pixels.



body signature.

Next, he worked on dissolving the hunter into any surroundings by adding small-to-medium-sized elements of various colors in shapes that mimic those in nature, creating a pattern

designed to confuse an animal's depth perception and focus.

"Fusion copies the way nature works," he says. "That's why we say, 'No pixels and no trees.'" Booth #10053. (firstlite.com)



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KNIVES

2015

To Each His Own

Consumers are demanding more specialized knives for specific purposes, and the industry is responding **By Christopher Cogley**

From tactical, military, and law enforcement to hunting and everyday carry, today's knives are becoming more and more specialized as consumers continue to demand very specific tools for very specific tasks. This increased specialization has led to a wider assortment of knives for every market, but it's also resulted in a need for retailers to carry a larger selection of blades to remain competitive. The good news is that this trend has the potential to translate into higher profits for you. The bad news is that the task of trying to determine which knives are best suited for your store is considerably more daunting than it was in the days when three or four general-purpose knives constituted an impressive selection. To maximize your potential profits and ensure you have the knives your customers will be asking for when they walk through your door this year, take a quick look below at some of the latest—and coolest—knives being released at this year's SHOT Show. Be warned, however: Chances are good that you're going to walk away needing a bigger display case.

Benchmade The popular Bushcrafter gets a makeover in 2015. The S30V drop-point blade has a sharp-edged spine to aid fire-starting.



Bear & Son Cutlery

➤ Bear & Son is releasing the new G13 everyday carry knife that has a 3-inch blade made with 440 stainless steel with a satin finish. It features a G10 handle, has a closed length of 4.5 inches, and weighs just 2.7 ounces. SRP: \$50. From the Bear OPS Division comes the new push-button automatic AC-350-ALBK-S that features a 3.5-inch spear point CPM-S30V stainless-steel blade. The knife has a handle made from T6 aircraft-grade aluminum and includes a pocket clip for easy carry. SRP: \$200. Booth #446. (800-844-3034; bearandsoncutlery.com)

Benchmade

➤ For years, Benchmade has been offering a wide variety of high-quality and innovative knives for nearly every type of application, and Benchmade's lineup for 2015 looks to raise the bar in each of those categories. The new Serum features a 3.47-inch blade made with 154CM, a martensitic stainless steel with a high molybdenum content that provides a combination of hardness and corrosion resistance ideal for tactical applications. The Serum also features Benchmade's upgraded AXIS Dual-Action opening mechanism that allows users to open the blade manually by pulling the ambidex-

trous thumb stud halfway down or deploy the blade automatically by pulling it all the way back. The Serum has an overall length of 8.09 inches and weighs 4.63 ounces. SRP: \$265, satin blade; \$280, black-coated blade.

Benchmade is also adding to its popular HK line this year with the new Turmoil, which has a redesigned asymmetrical thumb-button opener to make it easy to deploy the 3.47-inch blade out of the front. The Turmoil has an overall length of 8.10 inches and is available with either a satin (\$300) or a black-coated blade (\$315). Benchmade is also releasing a new version of its popular Bushcrafter

BLADE-TECH

This year, Blade-Tech is launching a redesigned version of one of its classic hunting knives. Created by Blade-Tech founder Tim Wegner, the new Professional Hunter Magnum II features a 3 5/8-inch S30V steel blade with a V-Hole for easy one-handed opening. The blade has been designed specifically to make the process of field-dressing big game easier and features several strategically placed sections of indexing serrations along the spine to allow for better control, whether the knife is being used for gutting, skinning, quartering, or caping. To provide an even more secure grip, the PHM II has a G10 handle and contoured shape. The knife features Blade-Tech's D-Nut Torx head-blade pivot and double-nested liners with a radius-ramp liner lock. SRP: \$299.95. Booth #14205. (253-655-8059; blade-tech.com)





Browning The Black Label Stow-Away survival knife (top) has a hidden compartment inside the handle for a survival saw and knife sharpener. High-grade Storm Front Damascus knives (bottom) are available in either a clip or a drop-point.

knife that features a 4.43-inch drop-point S30V blade; its spine is designed with sharp edges to make it easier to create sparks when striking it with a flint rod. The new Bushcrafter has solid tan G10 handle scales that are pressed with titanium tubing. It's 9.2 inches overall and weighs 7.72 ounces. SRP: \$215.

The new Vicar is Benchmade's latest collaboration with Shane Sibbert. The stylish knife includes a 3.9-inch S30V blade with stacked green-and-black G10 handle scales and a titanium pocket clip. SRP: \$300, satin blade; \$315, black-coated blade. Rounding out Benchmade's new releases is the 761 titanium monolock folder with a new ball-bearing pivot that makes for an incredibly smooth-opening blade (\$390), the 485 compact gentleman's folder with a 3-inch M390 steel blade (\$285), and the 3320 double-action out-of-the-front opener with a chisel-grind spear-point blade made from 154CM steel (\$420, satin finish; \$435, black-coated). Booth #10357. (800-800-7427; benchmade.com)

Browning

➤ Browning is expanding its already substantial offering of knives for 2015 by adding new models in several different categories. For the demanding sportsman, Browning is increasing its selection of High Grade knives by adding the Storm Front Damascus knives, which feature hand-forged Damascus steel fixed blades in

either a clip or drop-point. Both models have a 4¼-inch blade and stag antler handles. SRP: \$333. Browning is also releasing three new models of Damascus Folders as part of the High Grade collection. The folders all feature 3 1/16-inch hollow-ground Damascus steel blades and are available with either a full Damascus handle (\$222), a mother-of-pearl handle (\$333), or a mammoth tooth handle (\$555).

As part of its standard hunting



Buck The MWG is a tribute to the late U.S. Navy SEAL Matt Leathers. The tactical design incorporates a micarta handle and a 4.5-inch blade.



Columbia River Knife & Tool The Shizuka noh Ken (blade of stealth) has a sleek, modern profile and an AUS 8 steel blade.

knife collection, Browning is adding the Ignite fixed blade with a 4-inch 7Cr stainless-steel blade that has either a titanium coating in the black-and-gray model or a black-oxide coating in the black-and-orange model. Both models feature a polymer handle. SRP: \$33. Browning is also adding new models to its popular Black Label Tactical Knives collection. The Shock N' Awe tactical tomahawk

has a black powder-coated 1055 tool-steel blade with a spiked pommel and a checkered G-10 scale handle. SRP: \$133. The Stow-Away Survival knife features a hidden compartment inside the handle that houses a diamond-wire survival saw and knife sharpener. The 8 3/8-inch blade is made from 440C stainless steel with a matte black finish and features a splitting edge on the spine. SRP: \$265. Booth #12740. (800-333-3288; browning.com)

knife that any operator would be honored to carry. The 9-inch MWG is made from 5160 spring steel with a 4.5-inch blade that's black-coated for increased corrosion resistance. The knife has a Micarta layup handle and comes with a custom kydex sheath that includes a Blade-Tech belt clip for customizable carry. SRP: \$245.

Buck is also releasing its new Open Season series of hunting knives. Created to handle every type of hunting situation, the line includes a Skinner, folder, bird/trout, boning, and caping knife. All of the knives in the line feature blades that were designed for the specific task they were created to perform and include full-tang construction and contoured handles with large choils for secure grips. The Pro Series knives are made with S30V steel and feature Rosewood Dymondwood handles and leather sheaths (SRP: \$125 to \$140), while the Select Series knives are made with 420HC steel and feature black injection-molded handles and nylon sheaths (SRP: \$82 to \$98). The knives are all made in the U.S. and backed by Buck's Forever Warranty. Booth #14504. (800-326-2825; buckknives.com)

Columbia River Knife & Tool

➤ Columbia River's tradition of creating high-quality blades with distinctive designs that deliver exceptional performance continues in 2015 with the release of the Shizuka noh Ken. The 8.25-inch

At this year's SHOT Show, Boker is releasing a smaller version of its popular Classic Hunter. Designed by W.C. Davis, the Classic Small Hunter is rugged enough to tackle light field-dressing situations and precise caping operations, but is stylish and practical enough to be your first choice for an everyday carry folder. The handle features red fiber inlays under green canvas Micarta scales that provide a secure grip and a sharp contrast to the stainless-steel bolsters. The 2 5/8-inch blade is made with N690 steel. The Classic Small Hunter has an overall length of 6 3/4 inches and weighs 3.1 ounces. SRP: \$210. Booth #13267. (800-992-6537; bokerusa.com)



Designed by W.C. Davis, the Classic Small Hunter can handle light field-dressing situations.

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PRODUCTS

GERBER LEGENDARY BLADES

The extreme functionality of Gerber's Gator series of knives has made them some of the most popular blades in hunting camps across the country, and this year Gerber is giving sportsmen a new Gator to look for by releasing the Gator Premium Series. The series includes a fixed blade and a folder option that are available with either a straight drop-point blade or a drop point with a gut hook. All of the Premium Gator knives feature a 3.6-inch CPM-S30V blade that provides increased durability and longer edge retention. The handles are made from the same rubberized Gator grip that made the original series so popular—and functional—with sportsmen, but the Premium Gator line includes polished steel bolsters and the fixed-blade versions feature stainless-steel pommels. The Premium Gator knives all come with a U.S.-made leather sheath. SRP: \$120. Gerber is also releasing a new addition to its survival and combat collection of knives. The StrongArm features a 4.8-inch fine-edge full-tang 420HC blade with ceramic coating. The knife is 9.8 inches overall and has a diamond textured rubberized handle for a secure grip in all conditions. The StrongArm comes with a modular sheath system that allows operators to mount the knife in a way that best suits their individual needs. SRP: \$75. Booth #13614. **(800-950-6161; gerbergear.com)**



Shizuka noh Ken, which means blade of stealth, features a 3.67-inch AUS 8 steel blade that has a sleek, modern profile with sharp edges and a straight spine that come together to create an intimidating clip-point tip. The Shizuka noh Ken has a G10 handle and uses CRKT's LAWKS mechanism to lock the blade into place when open. SRP: \$140. CRKT is also releasing another Japan-inspired knife at this year's SHOT Show. The Achi is a 6.25-inch knife designed to resemble a modern version of the traditional samurai tanto. The 2.83-inch blade is made from 8Cr13MoV steel and features a titanium-nitride etch-pattern finish on the gently sloping drop-point design. The Achi's handle is made from a neon green faux ray skin and wrapped in a black cord in the same fashion that samurai used for



Helle of Norway The Algonquin is an all-around outdoors knife. The triple-laminated steel blade adds strength and corrosion protection.

hundreds of years to ensure a steady grip on their swords. SRP: \$59.99. Booth #414. **(800-891-3100; crkt.com)**

Helle of Norway

> Helle of Norway has been making high-quality handcrafted knives since 1932. The manufacturer uses up to 45 different manual processes to create each one of the knives, which are crafted in the time-honored Scandinavian tradition of combining the rugged functionality that outdoor enthusiasts demand with classic good looks that even the most traditional hunter can appreciate. Among the new knives that Helle will be featuring at the SHOT Show this year is the Algonquin. The handcrafted knife was designed with world-renowned outdoor photographer and *Survivorman* production team member Laura Bombier. Like Canada's Algonquin Wilderness that the knife is named for, the Algonquin has a natural beauty that's surpassed only by its rugged functionality. Designed as an all-around outdoors knife, it features a 2.72-inch blade that's made with Helle's triple-laminated stainless steel for added strength and corrosion protection. The knife has a 3.62-inch darkened oak and curly birch handle and comes with a genuine leather sheath to round out the classic natural look. SRP: \$169. Booth #3652. **(828-398-4880; helle.com or sport-hansa.com)**

Morakniv

> Morakniv is launching a new line this year that gives outdoor enthusiasts an affordable way to get a better grip on their knives. The Morakniv Pro series includes several different knife designs that all feature an ergonomic handle made with TPE rubber to provide a steady, secure grip even in the harshest conditions. The Pro C is an 8.11-inch knife with a 3.58-inch carbon-steel blade and a drop-point design that makes it a great choice for an all-around outdoor knife. For sportsmen looking for a little more heft, Morakniv is also releasing the Robust, which has the same 3.58-inch carbon-steel blade, but it is 3.2mm thick instead of the 2mm



Morakniv The Pro Series features an ergonomic handle made of TPE rubber for a secure grip.

thickness in the Pro C. SRP: \$24.99. The Pro S offers the same basic design as the Pro C, but instead of carbon, the blade is made from stainless steel. SRP: \$19.99.

The Pro series also features several knives designed for specialized purposes, including the Precision, with a 2.95-inch thin-bellied stainless-steel blade for delicate work; the Chisel, with a flat-sided carbon-steel blade; and the Rope, with a serrated stainless-steel blade. All of the Morakniv knives are made in Mora, Sweden, and come with a molded sheath. Booth #1446. **(630-337-6505; industrialrev.com/morakniv)**

Ontario Knife

➤ Ontario Knife is adding to its selection of assisted-open knives with the new Utilitac 1A. Designed by Joe Pardue, the Utilitac has a 3-inch AUS 8 blade that's available with either a satin or a black finish.

Deployment is via Ontario Knife's patent-pending Tactical Assisted Opening mechanism, which uses only five moving parts to release the blade. The Utilitac has a black G10 handle. SRP: \$75. Booth #20305. **(800-222-5233; ontarioknife.com)**

Outdoor Edge

➤ To complement its well-known line of field-dressing knives and home-processing tools, Outdoor Edge is launching a new collection of survival knives at this year's SHOT Show, developed in cooperation with custom knifemaker Jerry Hossom. Among the knives in the line is the Harpoon, which features a cord-wrapped handle and includes a polymer blade holder designed to attach to a pole as a way to easily convert the knife into a spear in a survival situation. The blade holder also features a storage compartment for carrying fishhooks, matches, or

Ontario Knife Designed by Joe Pardue, the revamped Utilitac 1A has a 3-inch AUS 8 blade and a black G10 handle. The knife takes advantage of the company's patent-pending Tactical Assisted Opening, which uses only five moving parts to release the blade.

other survival essentials, and has a liquid-filled compass in the butt cap.

Another introduction to the survival series is the Brush Demon. The 20-inch machete features a 13-inch blade made from 65MN spring steel and covered with a black powder coat. Outdoor Edge is also releasing several new models of replacement razor-blade knives in its Razor-Lite series. Included in the new additions are the Razor-Lite EDC (everyday carry), which features a pocket clip and thumb stud for one-handed opening; the Razor-Cape, with six blades and a nylon sheath; and the Razor-Pro/Saw Combo, which has a razor/gutting blade knife and folding 4.5-inch wood/bone saw. Booth #1220. **(800-447-3343; outdoor edge.com)**

Remington

➤ Among the new knives that Remington is releasing at this year's



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Remington The three-piece Skinner Set includes a caper, a skinner, and a guthook. All are made of 420 stainless steel with a black oxidized coating. A finger hole in each helps improve grip in wet conditions.



SHOT Show are the Model 700 series of folders, which feature handles made from authentic Model 700 gun stock. The 2 7/8-inch blades are made from 440 stainless steel and feature a thumbhole for one-handed opening. SRP: \$75. The Remington three-piece Skinner Set includes a 6.5-inch caper, a 7 3/8-inch skinner, and a 7 1/4-inch guthook knife. All three knives are made of 420 stainless steel with a black oxidized coating and feature a unique finger hole for a secure grip. Designed to be light in the pack and durable in the field, the three knives all fit inside the same nylon sheath. SRP: \$40. Remington is also releasing the new FAST 2.0 assisted opener with a 3-inch drop-point blade

that's made with 440 stainless steel and has a black-oxidized coating. The ergonomic handle is made from aircraft-grade aluminum and has a low-riding metal clip for easy carry. SRP: \$32. Booth #446. (800-844-3034; remingtonblades.com)

Spyderco

➤ Designed by renowned Polish knifemaker Marcin Slysz, Spyderco's new Slysz Bowie Clipit will definitely earn its place among the top-shelf folders of 2015. The knife features a Bowie-style blade made from Carpenter CTS XHP powder-metallurgy stainless steel, which offers the performance of D2 but with a higher degree of corrosion resistance. The handle is made from a pair of titanium scales that are curved across the entire length and stonewashed to provide better ergonomics and a more secure grip. The Slysz Bowie features Spyderco's R.I.L. mechanism to help lock the blade in place while opened. SRP: \$499.95. Spyderco is also releasing a Dog Tag Folder designed to be carried in the pocket or worn around the neck. The 1-ounce knife is 3.2 inches long open and features a sheepfoot blade made from CPM S30V steel. The Dog Tag is available in a green/blue anodized finish as well as an all-black version. SRP: \$119.95. Booth #13113. (800-525-7770; spyderco.com)

SOG

➤ This year, SOG is once again stepping up in the multi-tool category in a big way by releasing several new tools including the Power

Sleek Assist, the SwitchPlier, and the SwitchPlier Deluxe. Both of the SwitchPlier models have tools that open with the push of a button, and all of the new multi-tools have innovative features and the kind of quality that earned SOG its stellar reputation in the category. SOG is also releasing the Survival Hawk tomahawk, which features a paracord-wrapped handle and fire-starting striker. The new SEAL Strike is the latest addition to SOG's long line of tactical knives designed for the SEALs. The SEAL Strike is made with AUS 8 stainless steel and comes with a sheath that incorporates many new functional elements, such as a cord cutter and knife sharpener. SOG is also adding to the popular BladeLight series it introduced last year with the BladeLight fillet knife. Booth #425. (888-405-6433; sogknives.com)

Steel Will

➤ This might be Steel Will's debut year at the SHOT Show, but they're hitting the ground like seasoned veterans. With a focus on practical aesthetics, Steel Will is releasing high-quality knives that are as functional as they are good looking. Among the knives Steel Will is releasing this year is the Bruiser 500 folder that features a 4-inch K110 steel blade with a black finish. The Bruiser has a G10 textured handle and an oversize thumb stud for easy opening even with gloves on. SRP: \$399.99. Steel Will is also releasing the new Gekko series of knives, which feature N690Co clip-point blades and stylized Micarta handles. The Gekko 1530 is a fixed-blade

PUMA

This year Puma is adding to its popular SGB collection of hunting knives. These knives are distinguished by 440A German steel, but are designed to be affordable enough to allow any hunter to carry a quality blade. The blades are all tested to ensure a Rockwell hardness between 55 and 57, and each of the knives in the SGB line is available with either a white bone, Micarta, wood, or stag handle. Among the new knives in the collection is the 8-inch Frontier Stag, which features a 3.3-inch blade and a stag handle. Designed as an ideal big-game skinning knife, the Frontier comes with a leather sheath. SRP: \$99.95. Puma is also releasing the 8.5-inch Badlands Wood. The full-tang construction and solid weight make it a great all-around knife. SRP: \$39.95. Booth #520. (913-888-5524; pumaknifecompanyusa.com)



Spyderco

The Slysz Bowie CLIPIT features a Bowie-style blade made from Carpenter CTS XHP powder-metallurgy stainless steel.





Steel Will The Bruiser 500 folder features a 4-inch K110 steel blade with a black finish as well as a G10 textured handle and an oversize thumb stud for easy opening—even while wearing gloves.



Victorinox Swiss Army The Delémont Collection of folders includes the EvoGrip (pictured), EvoWood, and Evolution handles.

version. Overall length is 10.12 inches, blade length is 5.12 inches. The 1500 features the same style in a folder with a 3.94-inch blade that locks into place with Steel Will's

Lock Back technology. The 1510 is a smaller version of the 1530 fixed blade that features a 4.33-inch blade and an overall length of 9.33 inches. All of the Gekko knives feature a pointed buttplate that's designed to double as a glass breaker in an emergency. A lanyard hole is also provided for additional carrying options. Booth #3366. (718-575-1801; steelwillknives.com)

Victorinox Swiss Army

➤ Victorinox Swiss Army is launching its first collection of knives since its official merger with Wenger last year. The Delémont Collection combines the best features of both of these iconic Swiss Army brands into one complete collection that offers something for every outdoor enthusiast. The line includes four

basic handle styles and three different sizes. The 85mm knives are available with either the EvoWood, EvoGrip, or Evolution handles, while the 130mm knives feature either the RangerGrip or RangerWood handles. All of the handles are designed with a contoured, ergonomic grip that makes them easier to hold and use. In true Swiss Army fashion, each of the knives in the collection features an assortment of tools designed to handle the most common tasks of the outdoor enthusiast it was created for. Among the knives in the collection is the 85mm EvoGrip S18, which includes a 2.75-inch double-cut wood saw and 14 other functions. The collection also includes the 130mm RangerGrip 74 with a 3.9-inch locking blade, needle-nose pliers with wire cutters, among other tools. SRP: \$29.99 to \$195.

Booth #14202. (800-422-2706; swissarmy.com)

W.R. Case & Sons

➤ In 1942, W.R. Case & Sons was the exclusive maker of the V-42 Stiletto that was issued to members of the combined U.S./Canadian special forces unit dubbed "The Devil's Brigade." The Stilletos had a limited production run of 3,700, making the originals a coveted collector's item for knife enthusiasts around the globe. In 2015, Case is releasing a new V-42 Stiletto as a tribute to the original and the men who carried it into battle. The Rebirth is designed to replicate the original in every regard and is destined to be a collector's item in its own right someday. SRP: \$399.

Case is also releasing several new models of its popular folders. The



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Case 6.5 BoneStag Folding Hunter features a clip and skinner blade made with Tru-Sharp surgical steel and housed in a BoneStag handle. SRP: \$102.99. The Whitetail Trapper has a natural bone handle with a picturesque scene of a trophy buck and two does etched into it. The knife has a spey blade and a specially decorated clip blade. SRP: \$91.99. The Cattleman's Knife is Case's latest collaboration with custom knife maker Tony Bose. The knife features a clip, sheepfoot, and short clip blade that are made with 154-CM stainless steel. All will be available in an assortment of handle options from mother-of-pearl and abalone to ebon and two variations of peach-seed jigged bone. Case is also releasing the Patriot Kirinite Russlock knife, which features a stylized red, white, and blue Kirinite handle that provides a better grip



the more it's used. The knife has a locking-clip blade with a one-hand opening mechanism reminiscent of the straight-edge razors of yesteryear. SRP: \$80.99. Booth #13905. (800-523-6350; wrcase.com)

White River Knife & Tool

➤ White River Knife & Tool might be relatively new as far as American knife manufacturers go, but the Michigan-based company is certainly proving that it has the chops to hang with the big boys. With a focus on quality that is gaining a

White River Knife & Tool

Jerry Fisk designed this Sendero Bush Knife. It features a 3.6-inch thick-bellied blade made from CPM S30V steel. The G10 handle is contoured for an ergonomic fit.



great deal of attention, White River is consistently releasing innovative knife designs that are as comfortable in hand as they are effective in the field. The knives have a distinct custom feel without the heavy custom price tag, and each is made at White River's U.S. factory from all-American materials, including custom sheaths that are cut from U.S.-sourced cowhide.

Among the knives that White River is featuring at SHOT this year is the Sendero Bush Knife designed by renowned bladesmith Jerry Fisk. The Sendero features a 3.6-inch thick-bellied blade that's

W.R. Case & Sons 1) The BoneStag Folding Hunter features a clip and skinner blade made with Tru-Sharp surgical steel and housed in a BoneStag handle. 2) The Patriot Kirinite Russlock offers a stylized red, white, and blue handle. It also has a one-hand-opening mechanism. 3) The Whitetail Trapper has a natural bone handle with a picturesque scene of a trophy buck and two does.

made from CPM S30V steel. The blade's functional shape is designed to be durable enough to cut through the pelvic bone of an elk while still providing the balance needed to handle even the most delicate caping operations. The G10 handle has an ergonomic design that increases the knife's balance, and the stonewash grain finish adds to its aesthetic appeal. Designed to be the one knife to handle every hunting task, the Sendero has an overall length of 8.25 inches. SRP: \$220. Booth #2253. (616-997-0026; white riverknives.com) ■



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DES44MB

.44 Magnum, 6" Barrel with Integral Muzzle Brake

Black Oxide

ACCESSORIES

2015



Pelican The Pelican 7000 LED flashlight is lightweight and lasts 90 minutes on high and up to 16 hours on low. Two CR-123 lithium batteries are included.

Silver Lining

When big-ticket items don't move, accessory sales handily pick up the slack **By Peter B. Mathiesen**

If there's one thing that retailers know, it's that accessories sell, even when bigger-ticket items don't. Though sales of many firearms slackened precipitously in the last half of 2014, the silver lining was that retailers reported higher-than-usual turns for rails, flashlights, stocks, and other accessories. There's a lot of money to be made in this category, which is no doubt why the aisles at the 2015 SHOT Show are chock-full of the extras that hunters and shooters crave.

Alps Outdoorz

➤ With an array of pockets, the Traverse X pack has ample room to store everything a hunter needs in the field. The two wing pockets are lined with fleece, which helps keep a spotting scope and other valuable gear tucked away quietly. The pockets also have easy-access slots for a shooting stick and a tripod holder. The front organizational pocket is an ideal storage space for calls, knives, lights, and other small gadgets.

The Traverse X has a drop-down pocket that can securely carry a firearm; a built-in stowaway meat shelf (which attaches to the front of the pack) securely holds any meat you're packing out. A blaze orange flag can be unfurled for safety.

Combined with a comfortable waist belt and shoulder-strap system, this pack includes lashing straps as well as Hypalon material at stress points to hold extreme weight. The exterior is a tough and rugged ballistic fabric. SRP: \$229.

Booth #3653. (800-344-2477; alpsoutdoorz.com)

Ameristep

➤ The perfect gift for the future waterfowl hunter, the Duck Commander Kid's First Blind will not only entertain the youngsters in the playroom or yard, but it will also conceal them in the duck swamp. The blind has a 36-inch footprint and is 36 inches tall. A spring-steel design allows for easy setup and

takedown. The blind comes standard in Realtree Max-4 Camo. SRP: \$39.99. Booth #10336. (800-847-8269; ameristep.com)

Birchwood Casey

➤ Hopper Spit from Birchwood Casey was designed to provide long-term extreme rust and corrosion protection for firearms. The spray is specifically formulated to protect both ferrous and non-ferrous metals from the corrosive



Wiley X The new WX Tide's removable Facial Cavity Seal blocks wind and dust and prevents reflected light from entering from any part of the frame.

effects of harsh conditions and long-term storage. In laboratory testing that used salt spray to attack metal, Hopper Spit significantly outlasted the competition on metal surfaces. And when it's time to put the firearm back into service, it's quickly and easily removed. SRP: \$14.40. Booth #11723. (800-746-6862; birchwoodcasey.com)

Browning Flashlights

➤ Though the Browning Black Label Disrupter flashlight is no bigger than a can of soda, it can pump out a stunning 2,800 lumens of white light that reaches out 500 yards. Its rugged all-aluminum construction houses a 10400 mAh rechargeable lithium-ion battery.

Built on an anti-roll bezel profile with heat-dissipating fins on the lamp head, the light's scratch-resistant glass lens is constructed for years of rugged duty. Three super-bright white Cree LEDs provide illumination from 75 to 500 yards, and three red LEDs and three green LEDs are also featured for stealth, safety, and night use. The user can select from high, medium, or low output on white LEDs in addition to a green, red, and fast strobe; a thumb switch for momentary or continuous lighting is also featured. It will be supplied with household (AC) and vehicle (DC) chargers. All cords, including USB, will come in a rugged polymer carrying and storage case. SRP: \$425. Booth #15538. (800-322-4626; browning.com)

Bullseye Camera

➤ The AmmoCan Sight-In Edition is a software-supported, wireless, target-camera system. It will show a bullet's impact and placement up to 300 yards away via a laptop or mobile device. This self-contained camera weighs only 5 pounds. It is an excellent choice for shooters practicing or sighting in at 300 yards or less.

Simply set the unit downrange, flip the switch on, and start shooting. The system is weather-resistant, has a 12-plus-hour battery life, and supports iPhone, iPad, and Android devices as well as Windows-based laptops. Multiple users can connect to the system to track their individual shooting progress. SRP: \$349. Booth #4147. (541-357-7035; bullseyecamera.com)



Minox The inch-thick DTC 400 SLIM Wildlife Camera is waterproof and slightly curved so it fits snugly against a tree trunk.

Bushnell

► The new 14MP Trophy Cam Aggressor offers industry-leading reliability and rugged performance to provide game monitoring that hunters can depend on. The super-fast .2-second trigger speed will capture moving game with a one-second recovery time. The Aggressor HD provides maximum clarity for improved nighttime images. It will produce high-def images, as well as 1080p HD video with audio.

The new cam unit is available in two Low-Glow IR models and two No-Glow models with Black LEDs that are invisible to game and other hunters. When you combine the extended nighttime photo range with the extended battery life, your customers may never miss a shot. The eight-AA-battery case provides up to one year of operation. SRP: starts at \$222.95. Booth #14551. (800-423-3537; bushnell.com)

Coast Products

► The new HP7R and HP5R feature Coast's exclusive Flex Charge Dual Power Rechargeable System, including the Pro-Tek Charging Port. The tail caps pop up to reveal a micro USB port for the charging cable. That means there are no parts to lose, and the system stays clean of dust and debris.

Lithium rechargeable batteries are included, however, so the lights also run on standard alkaline batteries. Batteries can be charged inside the flashlight or outside. A spare cartridge is also included, so users can always have a fresh battery ready.

The HP7R and HP5R models offer water-resistance, along with impressive light output and runtimes. Both lights use Coast's new Long Range Focusing Optic. The HP7R will produce more than 200 lumens and an effective beam dis-

tance of 306 meters; that's more than the length of three football fields. The Long Range Focusing Optic also provides superior beam consistency from spot to flood, which offers users the advantages of both a long-range spot beam for distance illumination and a flood beam for up-close work and ground searches.

An ideal flashlight for tactical, rescue, and law enforcement professionals who want a pocket-size light, the HP5R boasts a runtime of nearly four hours. Its extraordinary beam illuminates up to 564 feet. SRP: \$125.49 to \$147.49. Booth #15120. (800-426-5858; coastportland.com)

Code Blue

► Years of product development at a leading animal research university have resulted in the next generation of deer attractants: Platinum Standing Estrous. The product has been tested and proven to be 63 percent more effective in the field, the highest buck response rate ever recorded by the company. Platinum Standing Estrous is collected at the precise time in which a buck attempts to breed. Due to the unique process involved, there is a limited availability of estrous, which is why it is premium-priced product. SRP: \$39.99, 1.5-ounce bottle. Booth #16123. (251-368-4089; codebluescents.com)

Daniel Defense

► The SLiM Rail—for Slim, Lightweight, Modular—from Daniel Defense utilizes the KeyMod accessory attachment system. This configuration is lightweight and offers superior cooling, ergonomics, and modularity, while maintaining the strength and durability of a heavier system. KeyMod is a recoil-resistant two-part direct-attachment method for accessories that provides an outstanding return-to-zero when accessories are removed and reinstalled.

The SLiM Rail features the battle-proven Bolt-Up System. This configuration provides modern flat-top upper receivers with a free-floating, continuous, uninterrupted upper rail platform for simplified alignment to the upper receiver of the host firearm. The long, 15-inch rail gives operators the option to have the support hand extended out close to the muzzle. This allows them to drive the gun more precisely and helps prevent overtravel when transitioning between multiple targets.

Ambidextrous sling-swivel attachment points are integrated into both the left and right side rails at 11 and 1 o'clock. The SLiM Rail is available in 12- and 15-inch models. SRP: \$279. Booth #20571. (866-554-4867; danieldefense.com)

Hunter's Specialties

► The Penny Snood Feeder decoy adds realism to any turkey hunter's decoy spread. The decoy's relaxed feeding position puts both gobblers and hens at ease as they come in to your calls. The lifelike lightweight decoy uses a realistic head and feather detail, and is painted with specially formulated no-flake paint for lasting durability season after season.

A built-in air valve allows the decoy to be quickly inflated and set up. The decoy is constructed with a durable, expanded rubber that resists creases and dents while allowing it to be folded for easy transport. It is engineered with a self-balancing stake tube for fast placement, even in the dark. SRP: \$79.99. Booth #14207. (319-395-0321; hunterspec.com)

Gunslick

► The new Gunslick Pro Ultrasonic Cleaner 3.2-quart stainless-steel tank holds firearm parts to remove grease, dirt, and fouling. Use the keypad and display to select one of five preset temperature settings, then set the timer from 5 to 30 minutes. For best results, use with Gunslick Pro Ultrasonic Weapons Cleaning Solution (sold separately). A sensor indicates when it's time to change the solution. SRP: \$179.95. Booth #14551. (800-379-1732; gunslick.com)

BROWNING PACKS

The Billy 1700RT lumbar pack, featuring the Hyposonic System, is perfect for the sneak in any hunt. The pack fabric is durable, ultra lightweight, and quiet.

All openings use Browning's Whisper Closure. This innovative zipper is water resistant and virtually silent due to welding methods and toothless fabrication. The Mountain Crawler asymmetrical belt design allows for cockpit belt access to key items while maintaining a balanced movement when hunting and hiking. Its durable range-of-motion belt technology allows for full dynamic movement and maximum comfort while on the move.

Features like the CG Lumbar create a center of gravity and enhance the wearer's ability to move with more comfort under a heavy load, which allows the individual to travel farther, longer, and faster. All padded areas use a tri-vent fabric system. This three-layer approach creates a breathable, comfortable, and cool back panel. The Billy is hydration ready with a water-bladder storage pocket. SRP: \$189.89. Booth: #15129. (800-553-1098; spgcompany.com)



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► IMR Powders has created a new line of temperature-tolerant extruded powders that feature a built-in copper-fouling eliminator. The powders use small-sized grains for easy flow. IMR 4166 is a versatile match-grade propellant for such cartridges as the .308 Win./7.62mm NATO, .22-250 Rem., and .257 Roberts, among others.

IMR 4451 offers top performance for .30/06, .270 Win., and .300 WSM. IMR 7977 is a true magnum-cartridge propellant for calibers such as the .300 Win. Mag., 7mm Rem. Mag., .338 Lapua, and more. SRP: \$29.99 per 1-pound canister; \$207.99 per 8-pound keg. Booth #16738. (913-362-9455; imrpowder.com)

Knight & Hale

► For 2015, Knight and Hale has created a realistic-sounding grunt call that looks like an antler. Da'Bone is an exhale-only call that produces the deep tones of a mature whitetail buck. The resonating high volume will reach great distances—even in windy conditions. The call is made of a soft, pliable material to eliminate unwanted noise in the stand. SRP: \$19.99. Booth #16123. (256-353-0634; knightandhale.com)

Leapers

► The UTG Pro Model 4 13-inch-long free-float handguard is designed to help improve the ergonomics of any modern sporting rifle. The lightweight rail system reduces fatigue while the slim contours eliminate snag points and provide comfortable hand support. The modular, removable rail sections can be placed anywhere along the length of the rail at the 3, 6, and 9 o'clock positions. This will allow countless accessory placements for shooters. Everything needed for installation can be found inside the package. Made in the USA, the Model 4 is available in carbine, mid, and rifle lengths with the option of black anodized or Cerakote FDE finishes. SRP: \$129.97. Booth #2246. (734-542-1500; leapers.com)

Minox

► The DTC 400 SLIM Wildlife Camera is only about 1 inch thick and is slightly curved so it fits



Phantom The Mini Phantom Remote operates on calls recorded on interchangeable Extreme Dimension Sound Sticks.

Primos High-density bamboo keeps yelps and cutts loud and crisp on the new Bamboozled pot call.



against tree trunks neatly and snugly. The camera features a MINOCTAR lens, ensuring a nearly distortion-free recording with every movement in sharp, high-contrast detail. It can record HD videos from 10 to 60 seconds long. Even at twilight, a powerful IR-flash with a range of up to 49 feet provides reliable images. The fast trigger-release (less than a second) and long battery life (up to six months) help make the DTC 400 a reliable recording device for prolonged outdoor use. All data is saved on an external SD memory card and can be displayed directly on the 2-inch true-color TFT display. The sturdy, waterproof plastic body helps protect interior electronics from moisture and dust. The camera comes with a fastening strap, an SD HC card, and a USB cable. Booth #15455. (866-469-3080; minox.com/usa)

MOJO Outdoors

► With help from the legendary Rob Roberts of Custom GunWorks, Mojo Outdoors has created the new Fatal Shot Choke line. The choke set, made of 17-4 stainless steel, can handle all shot types and sizes of pellets. The three chokes come in short, medium, and long to cover all types of upland game and waterfowl. All chokes are made in the USA with state-of-the-art CNC machining. Since the chokes are knurled, they do not require a wrench to install or remove. SRP: \$275, set of three. Booth #1452. (866-216-6656; mojooutdoors.com)

Moultrie Feeders

► Moultrie's latest deer attractant is the Camera Candy, developed specifically to help capture that perfect game-cam shot. Using strategically positioned Camera Candy in conjunction with your game camera will not only increase the number of photos you capture, but most important, the quality and angle of those photos. The 4-pound hard-cooked block attractant can easily be positioned at the exact level of the camera with the CamStrap. This allows the camera to capture a buck squarely in the center of the frame. SRP: \$19.99. Booth #16123. (800-653-3334; moultriefeeders.com)



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PRODUCTS

Phantom Calls

► With the Mini Phantom Remote, hunters are ready for any situation by using up to two interchangeable Mini Phantom Sound Sticks at a time. You can choose from up to a total of 10 sounds with the push of a button. Just slip in two of the Predator Sound Sticks and start calling. This remote caller can use any of the Extreme Dimension Sound Sticks, including Whitetail, three Predator sticks, two Deer, two Moose, Bear, Gobbler, Duck, Elk, Snow Goose, and Crow.

The Mini Phantom Remote has a 150-yard wireless range with up to 120db volume. The hand-held transmitter has an LCD display with easily navigated buttons. The receiver/speaker has a telescoping antenna for extended range as well as a decoy output port. SRP: \$89.99. Booth #3057. **(231-421-3810; phantomcalls.com)**

Pelican Products

► The lightweight Pelican 7000 LED weighs in at a mere 5.6 ounces, with batteries, but is capable of providing four lighting modes. Powered by two CR-123 lithium batteries (included), the high-efficiency LED shines a clear, brilliant light for up to 1.5 hours in high mode and up to 16 hours

in low mode. The flashlight can also be operated with optional rechargeable cells.

The Type II hard-anodized-aluminum construction, combined with a IPX7 water-resistance rating, makes the light extremely durable. The anti-slip, knurled pattern allows for all-weather usage. In addition, the Pelican 7000 LED offers a removable clip for convenient pocket storage and easy transport. SRP: \$99.95. Booth: #20221. **(855-604-8562; pelicanprogear.com)**

Primos

► Bamboo has a higher compression strength than wood, brick, or even concrete, and its density helps produce extremely loud and crisp yelps and cuts. That's the foundation of the new Bamboozled pot call, which combines bamboo and select hardwoods. Mounted on a crystal surface, the laminated wood striker makes for a nearly indestructible call. SRP: \$24.95. Booth #14551. **(601-879-9323; primos.com)**

SilencerCo

► For 2015, SilencerCo will add several models to its new aftermarket prethreaded pistol-barrel line.

YETI



YETI Coolers extends its commitment to creating durable, high-quality products with the introduction of the portable Hopper 30 cooler. Constructed of 840-denier DryHide fabric, similar to the material used in whitewater rafts, the Hopper has a capacity of 6.5 gallons. The HydroLok Zipper, borrowed from survival suits and HazMat protective gear, is the ultimate in waterproof and airtight zipper technology. ColdCell Insulation provides a deep and lasting chill thanks to 1 inch of insulation in the sides, 1.5 inches on the bottom. The heavy-duty EVA foam bottom and RF-welded seams provide waterproof construction and unmatched durability. SRP: \$349.99. Booth #2836. **(512-394-9384; yeticoolers.com)**

While rifle barrels can easily be threaded to accept a suppressor, most pistols require the purchase of a threaded aftermarket barrel to take advantage of the benefits that a silencer can offer. The barrels are milled from 416R stainless steel and are finished in black nitride. SilencerCo began sales with most common Glock models in 2014, and will add select SIG Sauer, Springfield XD, and Smith & Wesson M&P models in the first quarter of 2015. SRP: \$220. Booth #20205. (801-417-5384; silencerco.com)

Summit Treestands

► The Seat-O-the-Pants STS Fastback Harness is designed for both comfort and safety. Each harness includes a lineman-style climbing belt, an adjustable design, and leg straps that won't cause groin injury in the event of a fall. All harnesses also include a bungee tether, an elastic dummy line, and an ammunition holder. Using a prussic hitch, the safety rope is adjustable and can convert to a lineman's climbing belt. Available in three sizes (small, medium, and large) with a furnished extra clip. SRP: \$99.99. Booth #16123. (256-353-0634; summitstands.com)



Alps Outdoorz The Traverse X pack has two fleece-lined wing pockets to allow silent extraction of a spotting scope or other gear.

Trulock

► Trulock Super Waterfowl Extended Choke Tubes (.30, .40, and .50) are available in a black oxide finish. Specifically designed for use with steel and other alternative shot, the chokes are tough enough to handle the hardest tungsten or nickel specialty loads. Manufactured from 17-4 PH-grade

stainless steel, the heat-treated chokes resist staining and rust. SRP: \$139.99. Booth #15855. (800-293-9402; trulockchokes.com)

Uncle Eddies

► The new Big Game Gut Glove is a reusable glove made from tough, synthetic rubber. Designed to allow a hunter to work more quickly, firmly, and assuredly with less fear of accidental cuts during field dressing, the synthetic rubber also avoids the risk of latex allergies found in common medical-type gloves. An anti-microbial cotton liner is permanently attached to the glove's interior, providing extra comfort and warmth.

These extra-long gloves come with a self-tightening shoulder grip to keep them from slipping down your sleeve. Available in five sizes, ranging from extra small to extra large. A sizing chart online shows how to measure your hand for proper fit. SRP: \$29.99. Booth #3057. (847-544-8806; biggameglove.com)

Wiley X

► Like all Wiley X Climate Control models, the new WX Tide features the company's patented, removable, soft-foam Facial Cavity

Seal. This exclusive design blocks out wind and dust and prevents reflected light from entering from any part of the frame. The result is improved visual performance for shooters, hunters, or tactical operatives. For times and situations where this additional protection is not needed, the Facial Cavity Seal can easily be removed and stored in the provided carrying case.

The WX Tide also meets stringent ANSI Z87.1 High Velocity and High Mass Impact Safety standards for protection against a wide range of hazards. The WX Tide comes in a Black Ops Collection model (#CCTID01) matching a matte black frame with versatile smoke-gray lenses. These glasses are a favorite of law enforcement officers and security details. For high-glare environments (such as hunting near water), Wiley X offers two WX Tide models that feature the company's advanced Filter 8 polarized lens technology. Model #CCTID09 combines a gloss black frame with Wiley X's polarized Blue Mirror lenses; model #CCTID04 pairs Gold Mirror lenses with a matte hickory brown frame. Like most Wiley X eyewear styles, the new WX Tide is also prescription-ready. SRP: \$100, non-polarized; \$150, polarized. Booth #32211. (800-776-7842; wileyx.com)



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The push for lead-free ammunition is not based on any scientific evidence, but is a tactic to end hunting completely.



False Claims

NSSF counters an attack on hunting **By David Draper**

As sportsmen well know, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) wants to put an end to all hunting, and it will use any means necessary to do so. Last summer, an internal HSUS document outlined just how the anti-hunting group planned to stop legal and sound wildlife management through infiltrating state wildlife agencies and deceiving the public with junk science and misinformation. The document also outlined their plans to petition the Department of the Interior to force a ban on the use of traditional lead ammunition for hunting on all property administered by the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The validity of the document was confirmed when HSUS, joined by other anti-hunting groups, filed just that exact petition.

Falsely claiming that the use of traditional ammunition is harmful to animal populations generally and to human health, the HSUS and others are attempting to use traditional ammunition as a wedge issue to mislead the general public, a vast majority of whom otherwise support hunting even if they don't hunt themselves. What the attack on tradi-

tional ammunition really constitutes is a complete and total end to all hunting, as the HSUS knows that a ban on traditional ammunition will significantly diminish hunting participation.

"The HSUS cannot say with a straight face that it supports hunting just so long as it's done with alternative lead-free ammunition," says Lawrence G.



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Keane, NSSF senior vice president and general counsel. "Their agenda is to end all hunting, and their lead-free campaign is a poor camouflage to gain a means to that end."

What the HSUS isn't talking about is how hunting actually supports wildlife and conservation. One of the major consequences of banning traditional ammunition is reduced hunter participation and hunting license sales, which is the major source of funding for conservation through taxes collected under the Pittman-Robertson Act. Fewer license and equipment sales results in less money available for wildlife conservation. "The very animals the HSUS purports to care about will suffer," says Keane.

The HSUS strategic plan to end all hunting also includes advancing the lead-free campaign on a state-by-state basis, something with which California sportsmen are all too familiar. In 2013, California governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 711 banning the use of traditional ammunition by hunters in the state. The measure was ushered into law by the HSUS, as well as other anti-hunting groups, including the California chapter of Audubon, on the back of emotional campaigns concerning lead

poisoning of condors and raptors.

"One problem with their argument is traditional ammo is the source of funding for wildlife conservation, including raptors," says Keane. "The HSUS, Audubon, and others also ignore the fact that eagle and raptor populations are soaring across the U.S. Hunters using traditional ammunition are not only supporting that recovery, but actually funding it."

Anti-lead campaigns also rely on unsupported claims regarding supposed risks to human health from traditional ammunition. This despite the Centers for Disease Control and other government agencies concerned with human health never having identified a single case of elevated lead levels in sportsman or others consuming game meat killed with traditional ammunition.

"A CDC study in North Dakota found no one had elevated lead levels. In fact, hunters had lead levels that were lower than that of the average person," says Keane. "The Iowa Department of Health has been testing lead levels in humans for decades. In a state filled with hunters, they would have expected to see some evidence, but there is not a single documented case of anyone having elevated

lead levels from eating venison. It's nothing but a scare tactic."

The HSUS has temporarily won in California, which has emboldened them to move the fight against traditional ammunition to Oregon and Washington. Hunters in Iowa have also had to fend off the deep pockets of out-of-state anti-hunting organizations attempting to legislate their way toward ending all hunting in the state. To stop them in the Pacific Northwest, Iowa, or anywhere, hunters need to get educated and, in the face of the HSUS petition to ban hunting on federal lands, oppose any effort to mandate the use of lead-free ammunition.

"Too many well-meaning sportsmen, including many in the outdoors media, are giving the HSUS air cover by insisting hunters should use lead-free ammunition," says Keane. "Critically evaluate these arguments and look at who is making them. The relevant scientific question is, 'Is hunters' use of traditional ammunition for well over a century adversely impacting wildlife populations?' Does anyone honestly believe an organization that has publicly stated it wants to end all hunting is okay with it if you use non-lead ammunition?"



"A CDC study in North Dakota found **no one** had elevated lead levels. In fact, hunters had lead levels that were **lower than** that of the average person," says Keane.

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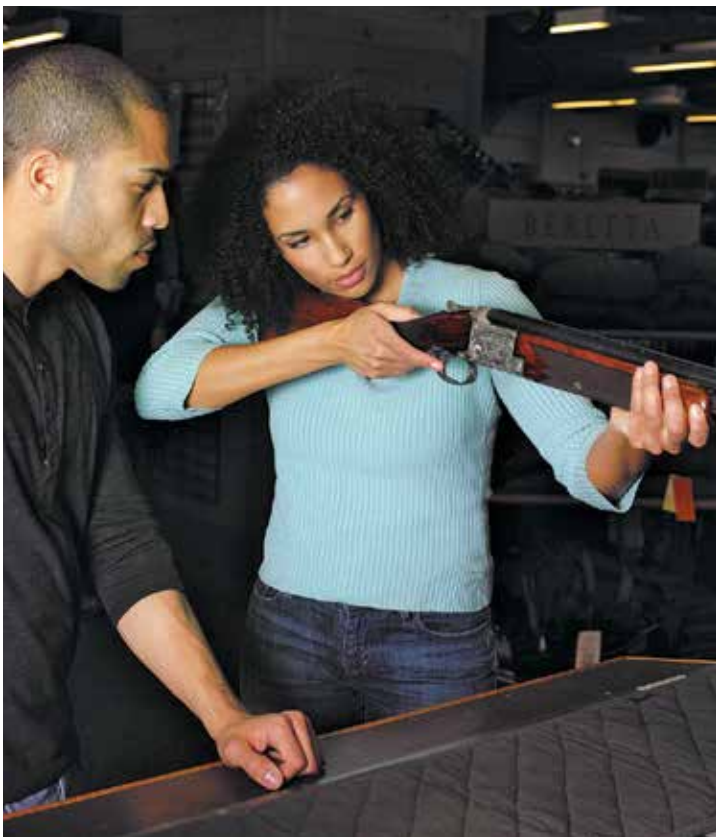
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The Women Gun Owners report investigates the factors that influence women when they choose to buy a firearm or decide to participate in the shooting sports.



What Women Want

NSSF report on women gun owners provides invaluable insight into this burgeoning market **By Christopher Cogley**

From gun stores and ranges to shooting competitions and hunting camps, women are becoming a natural, and increasingly prevalent, fixture in an industry that has traditionally been dominated by men. And while the majority of the industry has welcomed this change, it hasn't necessarily been quick to adapt to it. But there might be a very good reason for that.

"Our members have been telling us that the women's market was expanding and that they're seeing significantly more women in the stores and at the ranges," says Jim Curcuruto, industry research and analysis director for the National Shooting Sports Foundation. "They wanted to do a better job of marketing to women, but they didn't know the best way to do that because there was so little information available about women in the firearms market."

Thanks to a new report released by NSSF, however, that's no longer the case. The Women Gun Owners report not only outlines the priori-

ties of women gun owners, it also shows which factors are most influential for women when it comes to purchasing firearms and participating in the shooting sports.

"There were a lot of assumptions out there about what women wanted when it came to firearms, but there wasn't a lot of solid information," says Laura Kippen, owner of InfoManiacs, Inc., a market research firm that NSSF contracted to complete the study. "The data in this report gives us a nice snapshot of women gun owners and what they're looking for when they walk into a gun store or range."

The process to get that data began more than a year ago, when Kippen and NSSF started a listening tour of women gun owners. They conducted personal interviews at ranges and set up several focus groups at the 2014 SHOT Show. Based on the information collected through these efforts, the team put together an in-depth questionnaire that was sent out to women gun owners across the country. By combining the information gathered through the responses to that questionnaire with what they had learned during the listening tour, Curcuruto and Kippen were able to develop a

comprehensive Women Gun Owners report that NSSF could distribute to its members.

The preliminary findings of the report were presented in June at the 2014 Industry Summit, and the full report was released to NSSF members in August.

"Our focus was really to understand what influences purchasing and what drives participation," Kippen says. "And what we found was that one of the biggest factors that impacts both purchasing and participation is training."

Curcuruto says that the study showed that women who received even a small amount of training

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FEATURE

were spending about 30 percent more than women who had no training. "So, by promoting training classes, you're increasing the likelihood that they're going to be more engaged in the shooting sports and spend more in the long run," he says. "And that's one area that every retailer can affect."

Kippen adds that there are also many factors that influence women's purchasing and participation decisions that gun stores and ranges have little—or no—control over. "There's a lot of it that we can't drive as an industry because so many of the reasons why women buy firearms are intrinsic," she says. "We did find, however, that training also had an impact on those intrinsic qualities. Training increased their confidence, their enthusiasm, their independence—and that, in turn, had an impact on their spending."

The report also found that training isn't the only factor that influences women's decisions when it comes to firearms and shooting.

"A lot of women said that so much of their participation and spending is based on how they're treated by the men who are in the industry," Curcuruto says.

This is another area where well-intentioned assumptions might just be preventing increased purchasing and participation from this growing segment of the market.

"If a woman walks into your store, don't just assume that she knows nothing. She might be a beginner, but she might also be very experienced. You don't know until you start talking to her," Kippen says. "Treat her exactly as you would treat a man who walked into your store, and you'll get a much more positive response."

Kippen says that practice should also apply to the types of guns on your shelves and the selection of firearms you choose to show her. "Don't automatically pull that pink pistol out of the case and assume that's the one she's going to want,"

she says. "Not every woman wants a pink gun."

The Women Gun Owners report shows that though color and style are factors for many women when it comes to deciding which firearm they purchase, it's not anywhere near the top of the list. "What really drives sales for women are the exact same features that are important to men," Kippen says. "They are looking for function. They want a gun that fits in their hand and feels natural when they hold it. They want a gun that shoots well. The quality of a gun is one of the biggest considerations for most women."

It might seem like intuitive information, but now, thanks to this report, there's actual data to support that logic. And Curcuruto says retailers and range owners aren't the only ones who should pay attention to it.

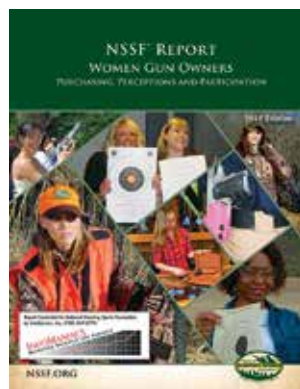
"If you're a manufacturer, you can see that if you're trying to appeal to the women's market, making one pink gun isn't enough. You need to consider their unique needs, and then you need to let them know that you've taken those factors into account," he says. "We can see that women are very brand loyal. The first companies that are catering to the needs of women will likely be the brands those women will continue to support."

And judging by the findings in the Women Gun Owners report, that support is going to become

more and more valuable.

"Women are half the population in this country, but they still represent a minority in the gun industry," Curcuruto says. "That's definitely changing. But if we want to get more women engaged, we have to learn more about them and exactly what it is they're looking for when it comes to guns and shooting."

And thanks to the NSSF, members now have the perfect tool to start learning that invaluable information. To get your copy of the Women Gun Owners report, visit nssf.org/research or contact Curcuruto at jcurcuruto@nssf.org.



Training—even a little—is a major factor in how engaged a woman is in the shooting sports. By offering training classes, you're increasing the likelihood that they'll spend more in the long run.



Major Milestone

NSSF First Shots program celebrates a decade of success

By Brian McCombie

It all started in 2005 at a shooting range in Springfield, Massachusetts. Created by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) and called the “First Shots” program, the event was originally designed as a promotional tool to increase foot traffic at commercial handgun ranges. Certainly, that was a worthy goal, but as First Shots events popped up across the country, and the feedback began coming in, NSSF staff realized that First Shots could serve another very crucial purpose: to bring new people into our shooting sports—and keep them here.

Now celebrating its 10th anniversary, First Shots has introduced thousands of people to the shooting sports and has become a cornerstone program for NSSF. And the future looks even brighter.

“The program is aimed at giving individuals an opportunity to try shooting for the first time without having to make a huge financial or time commitment,” says Tisma Juett, First Shots manager. “Our belief is that after taking these first

shots, people will be more inclined to continue to shoot at the host range. And there’s a very good chance they will become lifelong recreational shooters, hunters, and advocates for firearm safety and the shooting sports.”

Juett also notes that as the trade association for firearms and ammunition manufacturers, NSSF is able to provide the program with valuable support. “NSSF can offer First Shots the support of our members,

which includes manufacturers, shooting ranges, sporting goods retailers, and individuals who understand the need to continue to increase awareness for the shooting sports,” she says. “I think we all see the need to constantly recruit new shooters to the sport.”

For ranges hosting First Shots events, NSSF provides ammunition, targets, safety literature, and a complete instructor’s Power Point presentation, plus 50 percent in

cooperative advertising funds. But does it all work? The research says yes, it really does. It works for the new shooters, for the shooting sports, and for the host ranges.

Six-month follow-up surveys of First Shots participants reveal that 43 percent have returned to the host range an average of six times; 56 percent have met local requirements for handgun ownership; 53 percent have introduced another shooter to the sport; 49 percent have purchased an average of \$560 worth of equipment; and 44 percent have been female.

“The shooting industry is very involved in the support of the First Shots program,” says Juett. “For example, FMG Publications annually hosts a shooting competition for industry only, the Shooting Industry Masters, and for the last six years monies raised from Masters’ side-matches and special gun auctions have generated more than \$281,000 for the First Shots program. Last year alone, it came to \$70,000.”

First Shots continues to grow. Last year, the program launched an e-newsletter, First Shots News: The Newsletter for Beginner Shooters. To receive the newsletter, all you have to do is go to its website (nssf.blog.com/firstshotsnews) and enter your email address, whereupon the publication will be delivered to your computer, tablet, or cell phone. Articles explain basic shooting concepts, offer advice, and introduce readers to professional shooters. First Shots is also on Facebook.

“We have another component of First Shots called ‘First Shots Second Round,’” Juett says. “It can be anything a range owner can think of to do safely with a firearm. This program was created to help spark creative ideas with range owners to keep that new shooter engaged and coming back to the range. The First Shots program will continue to grow, as there will always be people who are unfamiliar with firearms and who want to satisfy a curiosity. With all the pro-gun, pro-shooting buzz in the country right now, we think there are many, many people who would like to be more educated about firearms and gun safety, and are just looking for a way to get involved. And that’s what First Shots is all about.”



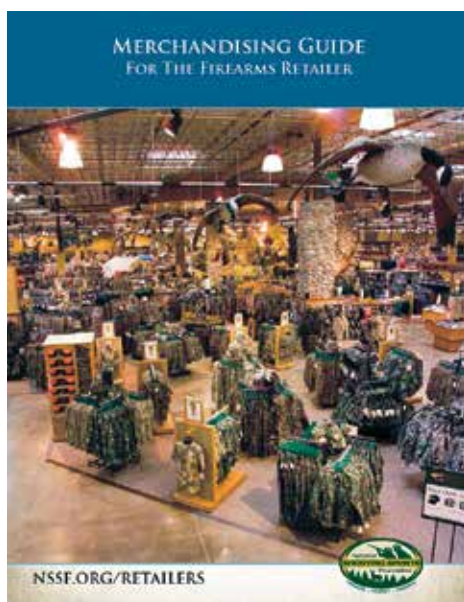
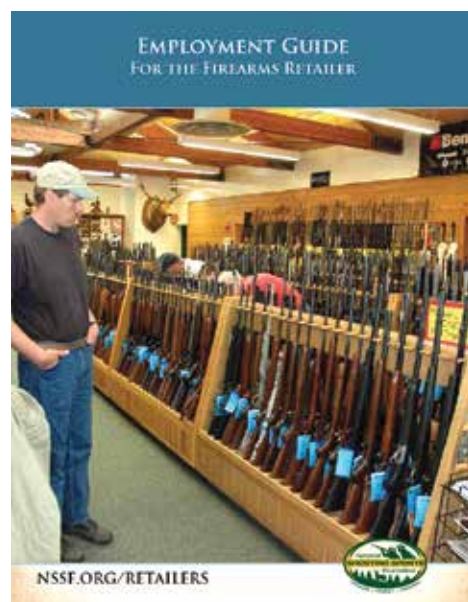
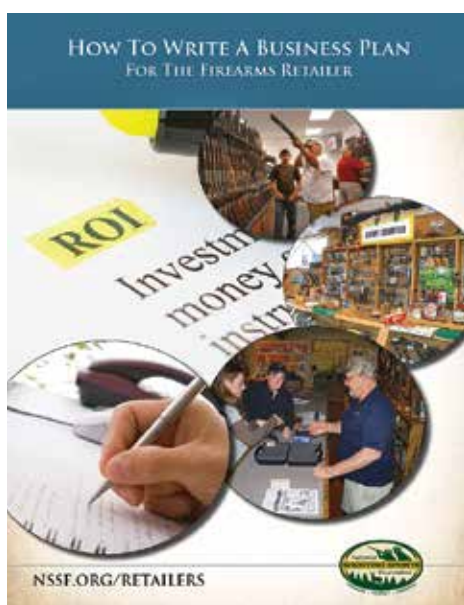
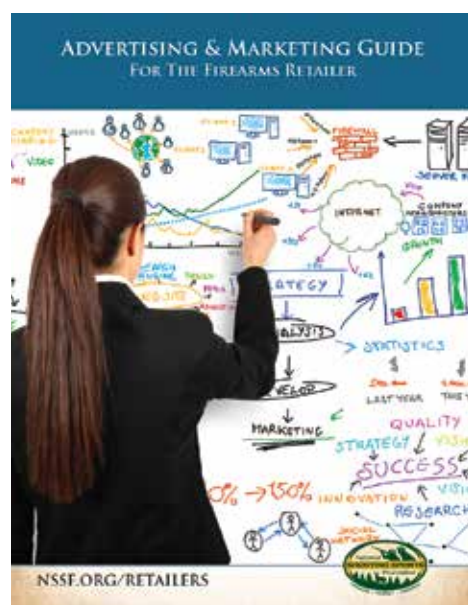
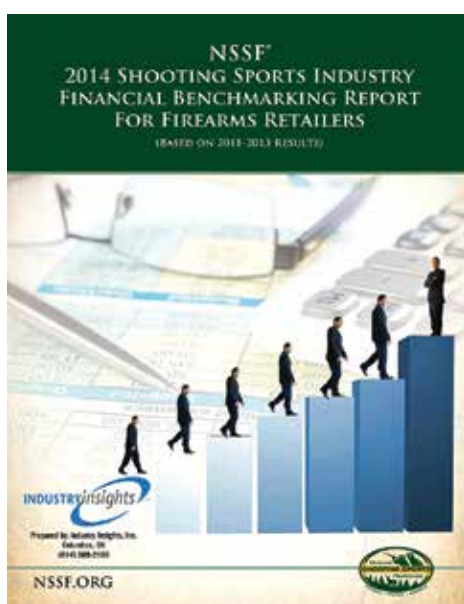
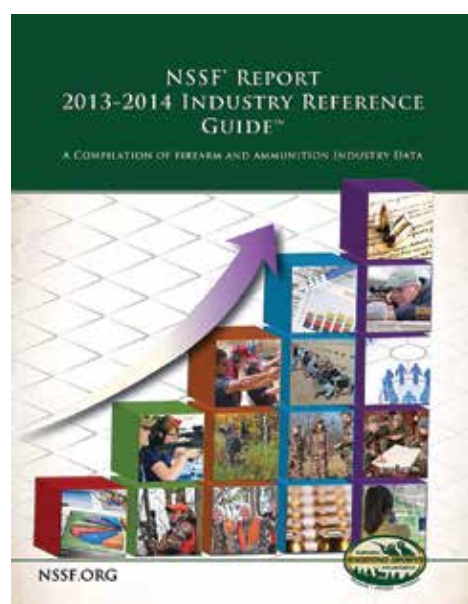
First Shots programs invite new shooters to participating ranges, which are supported with ammo, targets, safety literature, and co-op advertising funds. The program does an excellent job of getting newcomers excited about shooting.



Premium Membership Has Its Privileges

NSSF program provides peace of mind **By Robert F. Staeger**

Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst. That's sage advice, and it certainly applies to National Shooting Sports Foundation's new Premium Retailer Membership, introduced in late 2013. The membership level costs \$750, but it carries enough valuable perks that it pays for itself...and it's impossible to hang a price tag on the peace of mind it provides.



At the heart of the Premium Retailer Membership is compliance training and defense. "If you upgrade your membership, you get a great big box full of every compliance tool that we offer," says Patrick Shay, NSSF's director of retail development. "You'll receive a wealth of practical advice and recommendations from our team of former ATF officials with well over a hundred of years of experience."

NSSF also sends one of its compliance consultants—generally a former ATF manager or executive—for an inspection, free of charge. "They do a daylong audit of a retailer's store, simulating an actual ATF audit," says Shay. "They trace a firearm from the moment a retailer receives it all the way through their A&D books, the Form 4473s, and the retailer's inventory, and make sure the retailer's business practices comply with the law and ATF regulations, and that the staff understand the requirements."

After the self-inspection, the consultant gives the retailer a report, again similar to what the ATF would do, detailing any issues the retailer should work on and practical advice on how to make sure no mistakes are made. "Our goal is to help retailers make sure they are in full compliance so they can pass an actual ATF inspection with flying colors," says Shay.

Premium retailer members

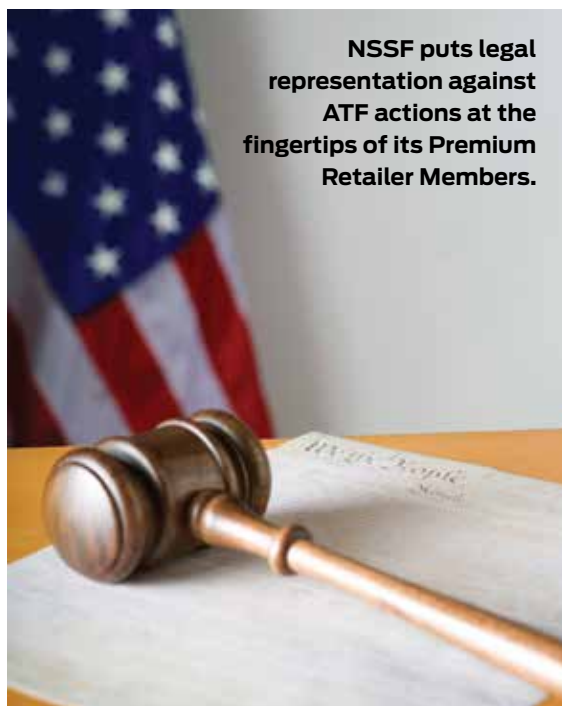
can also call the consultant when compliance questions arise in the course of business, as well as the NSSF retailer hotline. If they have a question about a transaction or an ATF regulation, an answer is just a phone call away. "We really stress the relationship between the retailer and the NSSF ATF consultant, but there are times when their consultant is unavailable," says Shay. "Those are the times when we suggest that they call the hotline. We look out for our retailer members to make sure they're doing everything possible to stay in compliance."

And then comes the jaw-dropping part of the membership benefits: Once all the compliance steps are in order, NSSF will provide a Premium Retailer Member with legal defense in the unlikely event that ATF takes enforcement actions against the retailer's license, e.g. notice of revocation or a warning conference. "Our goal is to provide educational resources to help retailers achieve full compliance, but if they've partnered with us and get into trouble with ATF, we'll provide them with a lawyer to defend them," says Shay. NSSF has attorneys on retainer who are experienced in dealing with ATF regulatory issues available to represent premium retailer members.

And that's the real key to the membership level, says NSSF senior vice president and chief



NSSF Premium Retailer Members are sent industry research reports, and a set of five operational books—*Financials*, *How to Write a Business Plan*, *the Merchandising Guide*, *the Employment Guide*, and *the Advertising & Marketing Guide*—all geared specifically to help firearms retailers improve their business operations.



marketing officer Chris Dolnack. It's in response to members who were seeking additional protection in terms of regulatory or legal representation in dealing with ATF, and programs that were available were quite expensive. Some programs cost about \$2,500 per year, just to put an attorney on retainer; any actual legal fees would be extra. NSSF was able to offer a much better deal, at a price that could put protection in reach for a lot more businesses.

"Because we're a not-for-profit trade association—unlike for-profit entities—we were able to price it at \$750," he says. At that price, can any retailer really afford not to be an NSSF Premium Retailer Member?

Those aren't the only benefits Premium Retailer Members get, however. They also are sent a set of five operational books—on financials, merchandising, hiring, and more—geared specifically to help firearms retailers improve their business operations.

"We like to think of these members as the elite retailers in the industry, so we provide them with not only compliance materials, but also training materials, operational materials, and research materials, so they can truly be a premium retailer," Shay says.

In addition, Premium Members get three key pieces of NSSF research for free: the Industry Reference Guide, the Financial Benchmarking Report, and the Firearms Retailer Survey. "Those three pieces really paint a picture of where the industry has been, what product groups are selling, and what the trends are," says Shay.

In addition, the benchmarking report allows retailers to compare their business metrics to other retailers of comparable size, so they can see where they're ahead of the pack, and where they might need to pick up the pace. And to help them figure out just how to do that is the last premium benefit: a free ticket to SHOT Show University. For regular NSSF members, the ticket is \$250, so that's one-third of the cost of premium membership right there. SHOT Show University was capped at 400 this year, so Premium Members are part of an elite few who can attend.

So far the organization has signed up several hundred Premium Retailer Memberships to its roster in just the short time the program has been available. "We have people call in every week," says Dolnack. "I sense that there's disbelief—that it's \$750 with unlimited representation. But the way I see it, if you defend one retailer against an unwarranted revocation, you're defending the whole industry." ■

Higher Profile

O.F. Mossberg & Sons repositions itself in the marketplace **By Brian McCombie**

With our ever-changing shooting-sports landscape, firearms manufacturers frequently make adjustments to fit the market. But, you may have noticed that O.F. Mossberg and Sons, Inc., has made some rather big changes—ones that go far beyond tinkering with a product line here and there. From marketing partnerships with Duck Commander and Deer THUGS to working with industry manufacturers like Magpul, Mossberg has taken a very cutting-edge approach to the firearms they make and the ways they market them. Mossberg has beefed up its efforts to help its retailing partners, too.

"We feel we're setting the pace—and so do our customers," says Tom Taylor, Mossberg's senior vice president of sales and marketing.

To cite just one example, Taylor notes that Mossberg won the "Innovator of the Year" award given by the National Association of Sporting Goods Wholesalers in 2012—and did it again last year. "This is a very important award to us, because it is voted upon by most of our largest customers, the ones who get the entire breadth of new products from all manufacturers in the industry. And they decided we were tops at innovation."

Over the last couple of years, Mossberg not only has brought to market its groundbreaking MVP Series of bolt-action rifles, but added new 20-gauge shotgun and .22LR offerings to the FLEX System of shotguns and rifles. For marketing and promotional efforts, Mossberg has joined forces with the likes of the Duck Commanders and professional shooters Jerry, Kay, and Lena Miculek, all of which bring much-higher visibility to the Mossberg product lines. And last year, Mossberg embraced a major youth focus when it debuted a dedicated catalog featuring nearly 45 youth-specific products.

"We are actively involved in new branding and company positioning," Taylor says.

He cites recent branding efforts such as "Mossberg... Built Rugged. Proudly American," as well as the company marketing itself as the largest shotgun manufacturing company in the world. The latter is no idle boast; in 2013, the 10 millionth Mossberg 500 rolled off the line.

"This has created extremely positive responses from our customers and retailers," says Taylor. "And 2015 will be our biggest, most innovative year yet, with multiple introductions across many categories."

Case in point: the new Mossberg Patriot bolt action rifle.

"The Patriot is a great exam-

ple of how Mossberg listens to their customers," says Linda Powell, Mossberg's director of media relations. "We are bringing a feature-rich, accurate, classic hunting rifle to the marketplace at an affordable price. The Mossberg Patriot incorporates many desirable features from our ATR/4x4 rifles, such as our Lightning Bolt Action (LBA) adjustable trigger, yet it also incorporates features of classic American rifles like the Model 70."

The Patriot employs a fluted bolt for smoother cycling and faster follow-up shots, and a 22-inch fluted barrel for weight reduction. It also offers a box magazine, previously not available on Mossberg's opening-price-point rifles. The classically styled stock, available in walnut, laminate, and synthetic, features a rich stippling for enhanced grip. And—a first for Mossberg—the Patriot is available in the increasingly popular .375 Ruger.

Retailers have very much been included in Mossberg's rebranding efforts, too.

"To help bring more customers through the doors, we've expanded our marketing within all media formats," Taylor notes. "Television, print, social media—we have made major commitments across the board. We beefed up our dealer program to make sure retailers are carrying a wide variety of Mossberg products, and not just core shotguns. We've also greatly expanded in-store point-of-sale material."

Yet, even with all these changes, the Mossberg foundation remains firmly in place.

"At Mossberg, we are proud to be America's largest and oldest family-owned firearms company," says Mossberg president and CEO Iver Mossberg. "We are also focused on delivering the most dependable and innovative products on the market today." Booth #12734. **(203-230-5300; mossberg.com)** ■



The Patriot bolt-action is available with a walnut stock (shown here) or matte synthetic stock. The rifle also comes with the Lightning Bolt Action adjustable trigger.



Cam Edwards says he is “constantly questioning reporting on issues because the media constantly gets gun stories wrong.”

Constitutional Matters

Defending the Second Amendment is a full-time job

Cam Edwards is host of NRA News Cam & Co., a one-hour show on the Sportsman Channel that features in-depth news and views on the Second Amendment and other freedom-related issues.

Q Can you tell us why you decided to become one of the Second Amendment's biggest advocates?

A Growing up in Oklahoma, I was naturally inclined toward gun ownership, even if you grow up in a family that doesn't own guns—as I did. It wasn't until I was an adult that I even really thought about gun-control laws. But when I fell in love with, and later married, a woman who lived in the crime-ridden city of Camden, New Jersey, I learned firsthand how little gun-control laws really protect good people in bad neighborhoods.

When I had the opportunity to start Cam & Co., I leapt at the chance. Gun owners are severely underserved in our media, and I'm glad to host a show that provides folks with news that's important to them and unavailable elsewhere.

Q You've hosted Cam & Co. on NRA News online and Sirius/XM for several years and just recently crossed over to air on Sportsman Channel with an hour of Cam & Co. on TV. Have you found your TV audience to be different from your satellite radio or online audience?

A We certainly have a portion of the audience that watches or listens to our three-hour radio show/webcast who also tune into Sportsman Channel every afternoon. We're all about making the information accessible to as many people as possible in a variety of formats. We do highlight more outdoors stories on the Sportsman Channel show, but every program that we do, no matter the delivery system, is going to feature the biggest Second Amendment stories of the day.

Q Over the years, what have been your most controversial pieces? Has

there ever been a time when you questioned reporting on a certain issue?

A I'm constantly questioning reporting on issues because the media constantly gets gun stories wrong. Most of the mainstream media is largely ignorant on gun issues. So, a big part of what we do on NRA News Cam & Co. is to correct the misinformation. Over the years, we've been able to point out egregious examples of media misbehavior, like Mike Wallace emceeding a Brady Campaign fundraiser at the French Embassy or Fareed Zakaria's plagiarizing portions of a pro-gun-control column.

Q Where do you find the news to report? How do you “hunt and gather”?

A Emails, instant messages, tweets, Facebook comments, and other contacts with viewers provide a lot of our material, and I'm lucky to work with a great team

that's constantly scouring the internet for interesting and timely news stories. These days, with the rise of social media, the problem we increasingly have is too many stories and not enough time to tell them.

Q How has your life changed since becoming the voice for Second Amendment issues?

A The best thing that's happened to me since NRA News Cam & Co. launched has been the chance to meet and interact with some of the best folks the U.S. has to offer. From Medal of Honor recipients Clinton Romesha and Dakota Meyer to brave activists like Amanda Collins and Kimberly Weeks, the list of gun owners and Second Amendment supporters I've had the pleasure of meeting could fill this publication and then some.

Perhaps the biggest change for me was leaving the suburbs of Washington, D.C., at the end of 2012 and moving my family to a small farm in central Virginia. I'm a suburban guy, or at least I was raised that way, so it's been a big learning curve living in the country and raising my own food, learning to hunt, and more. In May 2014, we officially opened the Farmville, Virginia, studios of NRA News Cam & Co. It's a chance for us to

tell the stories from the part of America that's looked down on by our supposed betters—the media epicenters of New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, D.C. I'm Main Street, not mainstream, media, and I think we could use a lot more of us.

That's not to say we've left D.C. behind completely. You always have to keep an eye on them, so we still have our studio in Alexandria, Virginia. That allows us to bring in D.C.-based guests, but we're also bringing guests down to Farmville for extended appearances, range segments, and more. I feel like we're just now scratching the surface of what the show is capable of: Not just the day's top Second Amendment headlines, but a celebration of and for America's gun owners and good guys.

Q What's the deal with the baseball caps?

A It pre-dates NRA News Cam & Co. by a good six or seven years. When I was first starting out in local news, I never knew what my day would be like. It only takes one sunburn on a bald head before you start packing a ball cap. After a while, it just became part of the uniform, and when I moved into the talk show host side of radio, it stayed with me.

I used to wear hats from my favorite sports teams, but for the past couple of years I've been wearing Minor League baseball hats. It's a silent shout out to all the small towns across the country that are home to these teams. I love a good small town, and I thank the good people that live in them.

Q NRA News is based in a studio, but you're on the road quite a bit. Where will you be heading this year?

A We haven't figured out our final travel schedule yet, and we're constantly adding events throughout the year, but we'll be heading to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the Great American Outdoor Show before long. The NRA Annual Meeting always feels like a big family reunion to me. This year in Nashville is going to be amazing. I'd love to get back to the NRA Whittington Center and make it to the Bianchi Cup as well. We've been able to send correspondents there in the past, but I want to see the competition for myself this year.

Q Looking into your crystal ball, what or who do you see as the future of conservative news reporting?

A Conservatives are doing a lot of really interesting things online. For a while, I was concerned that we were losing our ability to produce good long-form journalism, as the attention span of the average consumer seems to be getting shorter and shorter. Recently, we're seeing websites like The Federalist, Washington Free Beacon, and others go beyond the sound bite. We're also seeing great broadcast journalism from people like my colleague Ginny Simone, and technology is allowing greater quality in online broadcasting every day.

Q Give us a couple of up-and-coming conservative news talk, bloggers, TV hosts, or others that we should pay attention to.

A Dana Loesch is a great voice. Her platform is only going to get bigger as time goes on. Charles C.W. Cooke at National Review online is a brilliant writer and an incredibly fun interview. Actually, there are a lot of great personalities who are in "conservative" media these days but not all of them know or care a lot about Second Amendment issues. For Dana and Charles, along with reporters like Katie Pavlich, gun ownership isn't just an issue they're covering—it's a right they're exercising, too.



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Q What three news sources do you suggest all SHOT Show attendees read, listen to, or watch daily?

A Of course, you should be listening to all three hours of the NRA News Cam & Co. radio/web show and watching an hour of NRA News Cam & Co. on Sportsman Channel every weekday. I'm proud of the product that we put out, and so glad to be a part of our community of viewers, listeners, and contributors to the show.

BearingArms.com is a must-read for me daily. Bob Owens does a great job of compiling news and reviews, gun tips and more. Instapundit.com is also a site I visit. Run by University of Tennessee law professor and Second Amendment supporter Glenn Reynolds, it's where you'll find important stories others have missed.

Q Your studio is full of history books. Who's one of your favorite obscure figures from history and why?

A The Audie Murphy (and maybe a little Paul Bunyan) of the American Revolution grew up not far from our Farmville studios. At 6 feet 8 inches, Peter Francisco was a giant of a man. There are



Edwards opens every show with a recitation of the Second Amendment. "These words aren't just faded ink on a crumbling piece of paper. These words live in us."

plenty of larger-than-life tales about him, but his record is amazing without embellishment. He served with bravery in battles from Brandywine to Guilford Courthouse throughout the war. Washington even commissioned a special broadsword for him. He'd make for a great movie, but instead Hollywood seems more interested in stuff like a gritty reboot of *Weekend At Bernie's*.

Q Every show you open with giving a voice to the Second Amendment by reading it to your audience. Why do you do that and what prompted you to start?

A The recitation of the Second Amendment began when I got an email from a listener asking if it would be possible to begin every show with it, just like we used to start our school day with the Pledge of Allegiance. I thought it was a great idea and we started soon afterward. These words aren't just faded ink on crumbling paper, on display as a piece of history or a part of our past. These words live in us. They gain weight and heft when we exercise our rights, and that includes using our First Amendment rights to protect and promote our Second Amendment rights. Booth #13923. (thesportsmanchannel.com)

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SHOT SHOW

Breaking the Mold

MTM Case-Gard specializes in making products they want to see themselves **By Robert F. Staeger**

It's funny, but we mostly just make stuff we want to use," says Al Minneman, MTM Case-Gard's vice president of marketing. "We're shooters, okay? We do some research on what people want, but most of the time, it gets down to, 'Hey, I made one of these at home. You think we can make one out of plastic?' You'd be surprised how many of our most successful items have been made that way."

Among the innovations that came out of this backyard necessity are MTM's plastic clay-target thrower, its target stands, and its ammo cans. "Basically, we said, 'I'm sick of these darn metal things. Let's make 'em out of plastic,'" says Minneman. "So we did."

Another product is the company's Universal

Powder Funnel Set, a reloading tool that consists of two powder funnels and a number of different-size adapters. "We wanted something we could use on a bunch of different rounds of ammunition. Just put on little adapters for the different calibers, and that way the powder would pour just as fast as you wanted it to," says Minneman. "You want a bigger hole for a .30 than you would for a .22."

The company sets itself apart by its attention to detail. "There's a lot of people that research and copy us," says Minneman. But making the ammo boxes is not as easy as finding out the SAAMI spec on a piece of ammunition and building from there. "We try to find out if the competitive shooters are seating those bullets out a little bit



MTM Case-Gard promises more molded plastic ammo cases for 2015, tracking new loads for a perfect fit.

farther, so we may make the box a little bit longer, just for that reason. We're big on trying to make sure that one box fits a bunch of different rounds."

The object is to have every round sit securely, but not too tightly. That ends up happening sometimes anyway, says

Minneman. "People try to put ammunition that doesn't belong in a particular container, or a new caliber comes out and we just don't have a box for it."

All of this meticulous craftsmanship comes from a love of the sport. "We're trigger-pullers," says Minneman. "We do hunt, but we compete. That's something that Dad [MTM founder Bill Minneman] instilled in us that's always stuck."

Up next are products driven more by practical necessity than a sense of fun. "We're working on a new loading device for military surplus guns like the Mosin-Nagant and the SKSs, which all require a stripper clip to load them," says Minneman. MTM also has plans for a new ammo crate. "Not an ammo can, but an ammo

crate. You've seen the wooden crates for years; now we've got one coming out in plastic."

People can stop by the MTM booth to see them. "If they're not finished by then, we'll definitely have prototypes," says Minneman. "We're usually about two weeks behind the SHOT Show, when it gets down to being able to deliver product."

As for upcoming trends, Minneman thinks a less-fanciful craze is in store. "I think reloading is going to get bigger," he says. "The price of ammo is high, and it's staying high. And you can reload now for almost 30 percent less than what you buy the ammo for. I think that's the key number—30 percent."

Minneman isn't planning any big moves to capitalize on what he sees as the coming trend, though. With MTM's huge array of reloading products, he doesn't have to. "We basically have that segment covered." Booth #16120.

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The new Federal Premium Trophy Copper muzzle-loader bullet has been designed to deliver enhanced accuracy.

Bullet Breakthrough

Not a sabot, not a belted bullet, the new Federal Premium Trophy Copper muzzleloader bullet is rewriting the blackpowder rule book

Muzzleloading rifles have arguably changed more in the past 20 years than bolt-action centerfires have in the past 100. Every aspect of the modern in-line—from its ignition system to sights—has evolved dramatically. The same can be said for the powders and primers that power them. Everything has been optimized to make the most of the muzzleloading platform.

There's one glaring exception. The bullets these modern in-line guns propel are at least fundamentally the same as those used decades ago—and some are barely distinguishable from those used at Gettysburg. Federal Premium is changing this with its all-new Trophy Copper muzzleloader bullet. Its exclusive B.O.R. Lock MZ system provides outstanding accuracy in a non-sabot design that is easy to load, scrubs fouling from the breech, and allows consistent bullet seating.

Sabots, Conicals, And Complications

► The trick with muzzleloaders has always been that in order to produce high velocities and good accuracy, the bullet must fit tightly in the bore to engage the rifling and provide a seal for the gases propelling it. The problem is you also need to push that same projectile down the barrel in the first place during loading. This is why grossly inaccurate smoothbore muskets remained the

battlefield firearm of choice long after the invention of rifling—they could be reloaded quickly because the bullet didn't need to be carefully forced down a tight-fitting barrel while enemy bullets whizzed past.

In those early days, when accuracy rather than volume was needed, shooters wrapped round lead balls in a tight-fitting cloth patch—essentially a primitive sabot. The patch formed a relatively tight seal and gripped the lands and grooves of the rifling to impart spin as the bullet left the barrel. But the time and effort required to get the bullet from muzzle to breech, and the need to swab the bore between shots to remove fouling, largely kept rifles and bullets like these off the battlefield.

Then came Claude-Etienne Minié, a French army officer who in 1847 created a bullet design that would ultimately bear his name and change firearms forever. The cone-shaped lead projectile, the Minié Ball, was smaller than the rifle bore to ease loading, but its concave base expanded during ignition. This sealed the bore and engaged

the rifling, resulting in unprecedented accuracy.

Despite the passage of nearly 170 years, the bullets most muzzleloaders use today basically still follow one of these two principles; they use either a plastic sabot or an expanding base to seal the bore. And though both improve accuracy and overall performance, they also carry baggage.

One downfall is the force required to load. Because the whole purpose of a sabot is to fit tightly, that means it is also difficult to push down the bore. And it only gets harder if you fire multiple shots with an increasingly dirty barrel. Another concern from a hunting standpoint is legality. Muzzleloader regulations vary widely, and one of the biggest sticking points is bullet design, as some areas outlaw sabots or anything else that separates from the bullet.

Although legal in more areas, belted bullets that feature an expanding base—usually a soft plastic flange—struggle because the flange can separate from the bullet if the gun is dropped or jarred. This can result in the projectile sitting a

distance down the barrel from the powder charge without the hunter's knowledge. The softness of the flange is also prone to rupturing during the shot, degrading accuracy and velocity. Such bullets are also usually made of soft lead, minimizing terminal performance.

A New System

► Federal Premium recently decided to address these issues and develop a new class of projectile—the Trophy Copper muzzleloader bullet.

“The time was right. We weren't going to get into the muzzleloader market with the same sort of bullet designs that have been around for decades,” says Mike Holm, ammunition product line manager for Federal Premium. “Instead, we used our 90-plus years of ammunition manufacturing expertise to create something special—something that would let muzzleloaders hunt legally in more places, and with better accuracy, dependability, and ease. It's a true 200-yard muzzleloader bullet.”

The result was the exclusive B.O.R. Lock MZ system. Unlike sabots or belted bullets, it features a polymer cup permanently attached to the bullet base. The unfired bullet and cup are slightly smaller than the bore, but the force of ignition pushes the cup forward onto two raised bands along the bullet shank, which essentially increases the diameter of the projectile. This engages the rifling and seals the bore, optimizing velocity and accuracy.

“B.O.R. stands for ‘Bullet Obturating Ramp,’” says Bryan Peterson, Federal Premium's senior product development engineer. “The walls of the polymer cup get pushed up and out, into the

rifling. You get an excellent seal—and that means better ballistics and downrange performance.”

The rear of the B.O.R. Lock cup features a hard, fiber-reinforced polymer ring that scours fouling from the breech as the bullet is pushed into place. This decreases the need to clean between shots and makes it easy to seat the bullet at the exact same depth. Because there's no bulky sabot (only the fouling-cutting ring of an unfired bullet engages the rifling), the loading force required averages about half that of most sabot bullets.

“Without cleaning between shots, you quickly build up a crud layer that not only makes it difficult to load the next bullet, but can also physically prevent a bullet from being seated at the same depth as the one before,” says Peterson. “When this happens, accuracy and consistency can really start to degrade. The glass fiber we've built into the back of the B.O.R. Lock cup, however, shaves right through this fouling.”

The bullet itself is also a giant leap forward in muzzleloader technology. Built around Federal Premium's proven Trophy Copper rifle bullet and shotgun slug, the all-copper projectile features a polymer tip, with a deep, hollow cavity and skiving that provides consistent, devastating expansion. Its high ballistic coefficient produces a flat trajectory and minimal wind drift.

“For the first time ever, muzzleloader hunters can get ragged-hole sorts of groups at long range, with bullet performance—the weight retention, expansion, and penetration—they expect out of their centerfire ammunition,” Holm says. “We've created a whole new class of bullet.” SRP: \$24.95, per pack of 15. Booth #14551. (federalpremium.com)



The B.O.R. Lock MZ system uses a polymer cup permanently attached to the base of the bullet. One result is easier bullet seating in the barrel.

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Top of Their Game

PROOF Research aims to help warfighters shoot better **By Bill Miller**

John Clements did not serve in the military, but he has an extraordinary knowledge of special weapons used by elite military units. Clements is the new director of research, development, and testing at PROOF Research. The company, based in Columbia Falls, Montana, makes light but very stiff carbon-fiber barrels widely known for consistent accuracy after multiple rounds fired. But before joining PROOF, Clements served 16 years as weapons program manager at Naval Special Warfare Development Group, supporting U.S. Navy SEALs.

“Everything that had a trigger, we were responsible for it,” Clements says. “Everything from pistol systems to suppressors and on up through long-range sniper components—every weapon that was available to an operator.”

True to the nature of the special operations community, Clements will not say more about the SEALs. However, he does go on to note, “They’re the greatest guys in the world, the bravest and greatest warriors—the quiet professionals. It was an honor to have been a part of their support team,

being their gun guy for 16 years.”

Performance Standards

► Clements’ association with the Navy began in Indiana, his home state, far from any coastline. The lifelong outdoorsman graduated from high school at Loogootee and studied machine trades, technology, and design at Vincennes University. He worked as a tool and die maker in the early 1980s, but later became a machinist at the Naval Surface



One of the company’s greatest assets is its very sophisticated manufacturing machinery.

Warfare Center Crane Division, a shore command about 18 miles north of Loogootee.

One of his early Crane Division projects, he recalls, was building precision tools and test rigs for the massive 16-inch, large-caliber ship-board guns on the retooled battleships *Iowa* and *Missouri*. “The biggest rifles afloat,” he says.

Next, he worked on much smaller systems for the Navy’s marksmanship team, including .22-caliber target pistols, 1911 pistols, and the M1 Garand and M14 rifles.

Clements later moved into general design and machine support for special-operator sniper rifles and other weapons used by SEALs and other units in the U.S. Special Operations Command.

By the late 1990s, Clements was at the Naval Special Warfare Development Group in Virginia Beach, Virginia, maintaining the most sophisticated small arms used in special operations. But soon, he also was in charge of “providing critical technical support for acquiring and testing all non-

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service standard tactical and precision weapons at the command." In that role, Clements learned that the Navy had a longtime interest in lightweight carbon-fiber barrels, but early test models lacked the performance demanded by SEALs. "The technology was not mature enough," he says. "The performance over cost was hard to invest in, so we turned away and stayed pretty conventional."

Cracking the Code

► Clements says his interest in carbon-fiber barrels "was dormant until I met up with the PROOF guys in 2012. We had a meet-and-greet at the SHOT Show. They were taking a different approach to what we were seeing years ago."

PROOF's goal is to "ensure the safety and success of our warfighters," says company spokesman Derek McDonald. But, he notes, the company is also passionate about hunting and other shooting sports. Therefore, he says, PROOF is revolutionizing the firearms industry with its integration of carbon fibers, resins, and metal.

PROOF makes its own reduced-contoured stainless-steel barrels, which are wrapped with carbon fibers. But, the carbon material is also impregnated with a special

resin that has "high-thermal conductivity." The result is a tough, stiff, lightweight barrel that ensures accuracy by diffusing heat and dampening harmonic vibrations. The barrels are also used in the company's lines of bolt-action rifles made for either tactical snipers or civilian hunters.

"Groups fired through our barrels do not shift," McDonald says. "Shoot 30 rounds in rapid succession, and the first shot and the last shot will be to the same point of impact."

Clements says PROOF was the first company to "crack the code" of combining fiber, resin, and steel to make accurate, lightweight barrels. He also says PROOF barrels became the Navy's choice because of "minimized and reduced POI shift and the obvious advantage of the reduction in weight. Improved thermal attributes were a major plus as well."

"Right Down My Lane"

► Clements says there was tremendous satisfaction in knowing he helped procure weapons that SEALs depended on to complete their missions and get home. Leaving that job was tough, but he got an interesting offer.



PROOF's reduced-contoured stainless-steel barrels are wrapped with carbon fibers impregnated with a special resin that has "high-thermal conductivity." The result is a lightweight but tough barrel that maintains accuracy.

"PROOF came to me and said, 'Why don't you come work with us?'" Clements says. "I knew quite a bit about them from their test products, and I really liked where the company was going. It was right down my lane, working with advanced materials and precision rifles."

PROOF's CEO, Larry Murphy, says Clements is an excellent choice to lead the company's research, development, and testing. "His vast experience supporting the special operations community is an

incredible asset to further advance our core mission to provide the highest quality carbon-fiber barrels and weapon system components to both the U.S. military and our consumer market customers."

But, Clements notes, "I'm still learning, and I have a lot of energy and excitement for the company. The goal is to build that next special-application, advanced carbon-fiber rifle, one that will allow the most skilled special operators to stay at the top of their game." Booth #1017. (proofresearch.com)

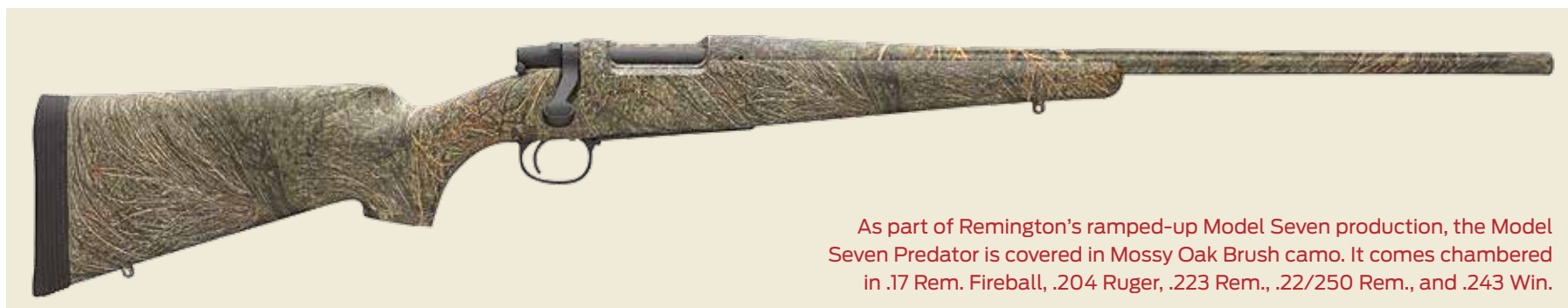
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As part of Remington's ramped-up Model Seven production, the Model Seven Predator is covered in Mossy Oak Brush camo. It comes chambered in .17 Rem. Fireball, .204 Ruger, .223 Rem., .22/250 Rem., and .243 Win.

Remington Bolsters Model Seven Line

As business waxes and wanes, products come and go. The firearms business is not immune from this business rule, which is why consumers often see a particular model disappear from the line. Then when conditions are right, it may make a comeback. Such is the story of the Remington Model Seven.

The Model Seven has been in the line since 1983, but capacity restraints at Ilion forced Remington to halt production of the better-selling Model 700 to manufacture Model Sevens. Last year, Remington remedied the situation by installing machinery dedicated solely to the Model Seven line. "We can now make them throughout the year," says rifle product manager Eric Lundgren. The increased capacity is also allowing Remington to bring back the stainless-steel version.

Created to appeal to smaller-statured shooters, the Model Seven Stainless comes with a 20-inch light-

contour barrel, a black synthetic stock with hinged floorplate, and an X-Mark Pro externally adjustable trigger. Its weight of 6.5 pounds makes for quick handling.

"The receiver is half an inch shorter than a short-action 700 receiver," Lundgren says. "It's very much like a 700, just shrunk down a little bit." The Model Seven Stainless is chambered in .223 Rem., .243 Win., .260 Rem., 7mm-08 Rem., .308 Win., and .300 WSM. SRP: \$837.67.

In addition, Remington is debuting the Model Seven LS (Laminated Stock) Carbine. It sports the same

receiver and rings as the Stainless, and the 18.5-inch barrel is sure to appeal to women and youth hunters.

The Model Seven LS carbine is chambered in .223 Rem., .243 Win., 7mm-08 Rem., and .308 Win. SRP: \$1,039.35. Both guns come with a SuperCell recoil pad, which reduces the felt recoil by up to 54 percent.

The new offerings join the other two remaining models. "The Model Seven Black Synthetic is offered in a true compact version with an 18.5-inch barrel and a length-of-pull that is a full inch shorter than the full-size version [12 ³/₈ inches vs. 13 ³/₈ inches]," says Lundgren. "This com-

pact version of an already compact rifle comes with a black synthetic stock and a matte-blued barreled action, and is offered in 7mm-08 Rem. and .243 Win." SRP: \$731.

Remington offers a Model Seven Predator, too. "It has a heavier, but fluted, barrel, and is covered in Mossy Oak Brush camo. It's pretty cool," he says. The Predator comes chambered in .17 Rem. Fireball, .204 Ruger, .223 Rem., .22/250 Rem., and .243 Win. SRP: \$799.99. Customized Model Sevens are available through the Custom Shop. Booth #15427. **(800-243-9700; remington.com)** —*Barbara Baird*

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Nitro-Steel Line Gets Overhauled

Remington's Nitro-Steel is undergoing a transformation. Matt Ohlson, Remington's senior product manager for shotshell and rimfire ammunition, is a pattern nut. By his own admission, he's the shotgunner who actually enjoys patterning shotgun loads, counting all those little holes, and figuring out if a payload really delivers the goods.

So if upper management believes that maybe it's time to revamp a semi-dormant brand of steel shot ammo, he's just the guy. That brings us to Nitro-Steel, which under Ohlson's thumb is undergoing a transformation for 2015.

"What we see is that waterfowl hunting is growing," he says. "My guess is that snow goose hunting is providing a second season for hunters and retailers."

Ohlson says the steel shot market divides into three sectors. "You have the premium segment, which is somewhere around 10 to 20

percent," he says. "Next is performance, which is about 40 percent. Finally, there is value, and that's about 40 to 50 percent."

Where does Remington currently stand?

"Four years of feedback from official field testers, consumers, and sales data tell us that Hypersonic is a winner in the premium price segment," he says. "And yet, the premium price and stout recoil of these loads limits the appeal to some waterfowlers. Sportsman Steel is a winner in the value category. It's relevant and appealing, and it's priced right. Nitro Steel is the challenge. We know experienced hunters respect it, but it suffers from obsolete payloads and velocities, tired packaging, and a high price in a category that has been reshaped by competitors."

So, Remington has decided to do some reshaping itself. "Remington lives in that big middle," Ohlson says, "and the

complete remake of Nitro Steel is designed to make Nitro Steel the Core-Lokt of waterfowl loads."

In all, four new SKUS will be offered: 3 1/2-in 10-gauge (1 1/2-ounce No. 2, BB, and BBB), 3 1/2-in 12-gauge (1 1/2-ounce No. 2), 3 1/2-in 12 gauge (1 1/2-ounce BBs), and 3-inch 20-gauge (1-ounce No. 4).

"We decided to offer 10 gauge because even though it's a small market, it delivers high margins. We also see 20-gauge growing and felt we needed to be here as well," he says.

Remington is also redesigning the packaging. "It's old and dry," Ohlson says. "The competition has done a great job here, and we intend to meet that challenge."

Ohlson notes that retailers should look for more offerings in 2016. "All this is laying the ground for something bigger and better." Booth #15427. **(800-243-9700; remington.com)** — Slaton L. White



Remington is giving its languishing Nitro-Steel waterfowl line of shotgun ammo a complete overhaul this year, from payload to packaging.



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Own the Night

FLIR is making thermal technology more affordable for hunters and shooters **By Brian McCombie**

Last year's SHOT Show saw the introduction of a major new product from FLIR Personal Vision Systems, the FLIR ThermoSight RS Series of thermal night-vision riflescopes. "Last year's SHOT provided a great launch for the RS Series," says Angelo Brewer, FLIR's sales and distribution manager for the Personal Vision System line. "We got a good deal of attention for the optic at the show. And, with the RS's unique price point, we think it brought a lot of new people to thermal technology."

InfraRed imaging. What such devices do is create images based on emitted heat. All objects have a certain temperature; the hotter an object is compared to its background, the greater the difference in the amount of heat it emanates. Sensors within a thermal-imaging device spot these heat energy (or thermal) waves and translate them into an image.

Other night-vision devices, it should be noted, require a light source to work at their best, whether that is starlight or moonlight, or an infrared illuminator. Thermal devices, however, require no outside illumination and can detect heat sources at hundreds of yards, depending on the unit and model features.

It wasn't that long ago that the cost determined that a thermal riflescope was pretty much available only to the military or law enforcement market. You could expect to pay \$12,000 to \$15,000 for such a scope just six years ago, Brewer notes, and the thermal-imaging and sen-

The ThermoSight RS uses thermal imaging to let users see targets in pitch blackness. Heat sources can appear white, black, or red.



FLIR is introducing several updates to its product lines at this year's SHOT Show. The company will also continue to do what it has done for years (and, in fact, did with the RS scopes): make thermal, heat-detecting technology better and more affordable. FLIR has also beefed up its retailer's assistance program and continues to expand its marketing presence across various media.

Based in Wilsonville, Oregon, FLIR takes its name from the technology used to manufacture instruments such as the RS scope—Forward-Looking

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sor quality were half or less of what's possible today.

The SRP on the FLIR ThermoSight RS? It starts at just \$3,500 and goes up to \$8,999.

"That is not inexpensive," Brewer adds. "But we've been able to improve the technology and in the process bring down the price. At the same time, the thermal market keeps expanding into all sorts of areas—from shooting and hunting to construction, industrial applications, and even use by first responders. The growth in these markets has lowered costs, as economies of scale have come into play."

The key to this technology and its associated products is the thermal sensors, and FLIR keeps working to make these better, more precise, and smaller. Brewer says it's not impossible that the next thermal shooting-sports breakthrough could be a thermal optic for a handgun.

As this market has grown, FLIR continues to help its retailers. For example, FLIR provides coun-

tertop displays of its products and an on-demand video loop that explains thermal technology and presents various FLIR products. Brochures and signage are also available.

"Our company is big into education," says Brewer. "So, we're glad to send a representative to our retailers to educate the staff about thermal technology and ways to sell it. We also offer a number of webinars."

For marketing, FLIR runs ads on a wide variety of hunting- and shooting-related websites. Print ads also appear in various niche publications.

Hollywood and television are helping to promote the technology, too. According to Haley Ellison, FLIR's global public relations manager, recent movies and TV programs that feature FLIR products or FLIR-derived technology include the new *Robocop*, *Transformers 4*, *Hawaii Five-O*, *NCIS LA*, and *America the Wild* (on Nat Geo Wild). Booth #2014. (flir.com)

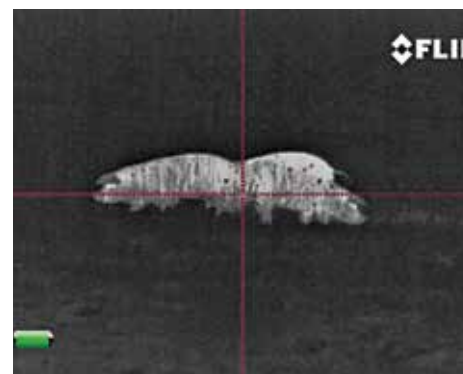
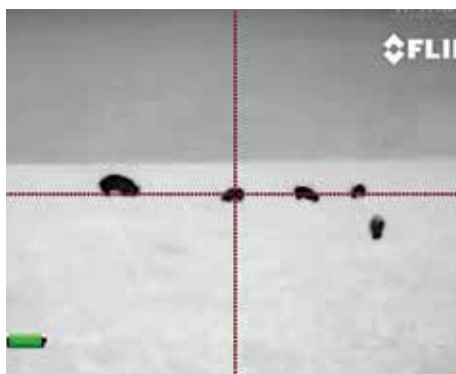
USING FLIR'S RS SCOPE IN THE FIELD

I had a chance to use a modern sporting rifle equipped with a FLIR ThermoSight RS scope Model RS64, 1.1–9X (SRP: \$6,499) on a Florida hog hunt. Using the unit as a spotter, I was able to recognize the heat signatures of animals in pitch-black dark out to 600 yards. At 300 yards, I could easily make out the outline of wild animals, and was able to determine if I was seeing, for example, a wild hog or a deer at that distance.

Used as a scope, the crosshairs on the ThermoSight were easy to see and use, helping me bag three hogs at distances between 40 and 70 yards—again, in total darkness

where I could not see a hog with the naked eye to save my life. The ThermoSight attached easily to the Picatinny rail of my MSR via a LaRue Tactical RCO LT681 mount (included). It recharges with a 110-volt wall unit. I didn't keep the scope on the whole time but I'd switch it on every 10 minutes or so—sooner if I heard something—and it remained well-charged through six hours of night hunting. The four-button control keypad along the top works well, though it requires some practice.

But, hey, if you can figure out a smartphone, you'll do fine with the ThermoSight. —B.M.



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The Light Touch

When Melvin Forbes decided to take the weight out of a rifle, magic happened **By David E. Petzal**

If someone asks you what sets a Forbes rifle apart from other semi-production big-game rifles on the market, you can tell them this: “It’s the design of a guy who spent his first 20 years in the gun business fixing other people’s mistakes.” Melvin Forbes got his start as a country gunsmith in Morgantown, West Virginia, and got to see just about every way in which a gun could break. He also took note of how much sporting rifles weighed, and how much unneeded steel and wood they carried. So when a customer brought in a Remington Model 600 and asked Forbes to put it on a diet, he was ready. But he wondered, ‘What could you do if you started from scratch? How light could you make a full-size rifle?’

He decided to find out. Forbes gave up his gunsmithing business, got a job as a high school shop teacher to pay the bills, and set about re-thinking the bolt-action rifle as we knew it in the early 1980s. He looked at everything, right down to the screws in the scope bases, and enlisted the help of two friends in the aerospace industry—“the string guy,” an expert with synthetic fibers, and “the glue guy,” a magician with adhesives.

Between them they created a carbon-reinforced Kevlar/graphite stock that weighs 16 ounces and is so strong that pickup trucks have run over it and done no more than scratch the paint. Then Forbes designed a minimal-dimension tubular receiver, a small-diameter bolt to run in it, and super-lightweight scope rings. He selected the Douglas #1 contour barrel as standard, and the Timney as his trigger. The completed rifle, a .308, weighed 4¾ pounds, which was about 2 pounds less than the lightest rifles you could then buy. He produced his new rifles by hand in

Morgantown and called them Ultra Light Arms (now New Ultra Light Arms, or NULA).

Not only were his guns light, they were extremely tough and extremely accurate. Forbes designed them to be stress-free. There is nothing in a NULA pushing against anything else. He once sighted in a completed rifle, took the scope out of the rings, took the rings off the receiver, took the barreled action out of the stock, took the barrel out of the receiver, then put it all back together again. The reassembled gun shot into the same group as before.

So good are NULAs that Forbes’ company has been one of the very few semi-custom gun builders to survive from the 1980s, or any other decade. But a few years ago, Forbes realized that he was not getting any younger. He had no one to take over his company, but he wanted to provide service for his customers even after he was no longer working.

To do this, he turned to Titan Machine in

Westbrook, Maine, a company that already had experience building automatic weapons for the armed forces. Titan works to the same aerospace dimensions that Forbes does, and the match worked. The new company, a subsidiary of Titan, is Forbes Rifle. What they produce by machine in Maine is dimensionally identical to what Melvin Forbes makes by hand in West Virginia.

Each company makes its own receivers. Each company makes its own Kevlar stocks. Forbes’ barrels still come from Douglas. Titan uses those that are made by E.R. Shaw. Most of the difference lies in available options, and in price. Melvin Forbes will build you damn near anything from a .22 LR to a .416 Rigby, right- or left-hand, paint it any color you want, blue it shiny or flat, and install just about any barrel that takes your fancy (if you don’t want a Douglas). His rifles start at around \$3,500 for the centerfires.

Forbes Rifles come, for the moment, in .30/06 or .308, right- or left-hand, Parkerized chrome

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moly or all stainless, with Timney triggers (sorry, no Jewells). Available stock colors are green, gray, coyote, and no fewer than 11 camo patterns. Prices run from \$1,500 to \$1,700.

What you get are the same qualities that have kept Melvin Forbes in business: Extreme light weight, top-level accuracy, absolute reliability, and surprisingly light recoil, considering how few ounces you have in your hand. All this is possible because these are not standard-weight guns that were chopped, channeled, hacked, and drilled into being light. The weight was never there in the first place.

Is there a downside to Forbes Rifle guns? Depends on your customer. Because they weigh so little, they're sensitive to how they're handled, and unskilled or beginning shooters may have an easier time with something that weighs more. For a competent rifleman, however, no problems.

At one time or another I've owned 13 NULAs, in calibers from .22 LR to .340 Weatherby, and I think the rifles do best in the lighter-kicking rounds. My favorite of all of them is a 6.5 Swede, which has minimal recoil and does not require that you shoot twice at anything. If you're asked for something less ancient, Forbes Rifle chambers guns in .270, .25/06, .308, .243, and 7mm/08, all light kickers and proven takers of game.

They are remarkable rifles, and the end result of a remarkable success story. Melvin Forbes has an absolute horror of things that are not built right, so he made his rifles as they should be made. Titan Machine builds weapons that people stake their lives on, so they do the exact same thing—but at a price that any serious rifleman can afford. Booth #16142. (newultralight.com). Booth #16143. (forbesrifle.com)



Melvin Forbes, of New Ultra Light Arms, builds light and incredibly accurate rifles. Recently he partnered with Titan Machine to form a new company, Forbes Rifles.

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TRCP and Remington recently announced a partnership to help expand hunting access for sportsmen.

Working for Conservation at SHOT

It's not exactly news that all sorts of business is done during the SHOT Show. But some people probably don't realize that wildlife conservation—and its very important connection to our shooting sports—is actually some of the “business” that gets accomplished at each and every show. In fact, the SHOT Show is among the best places to talk conservation.

“As the SHOT Show continues to expand, I think we'll see more and more groups taking advantage of this unequaled concentration of industry members, not to mention outdoor media members, to cover these conservation topics closely related to shooting and hunting,” says Katie McCalip, media relations director for the Teddy Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP).

TRCP highlights those topics at the SHOT Show during the group's annual Sportsmen's Conservation Forum. The Sportsmen's Conservation Forum includes some of the top minds in conservation, including CEOs, policy experts, and influential members of the media, who meet to discuss federal and state policies affecting sportsmen and the shooting-sports industry.

Initially conceived of as an

ad hoc gathering of staffers, the TRCP meetings at the SHOT Show now draw a more influential group of attendees. “The hunting and shooting industries have never been stronger in America, with NSSF data showing that spending by hunters and shooters had a total impact of more than \$110 billion on the U.S. economy in 2011,” McCalip says. “This supports more than 866,000 jobs. These numbers won't surprise many in our community, including the TRCP and our partner groups. TRCP has been responding to legislative attacks on programs important to hunters and anglers, fish and wildlife, and conservation in America, in part by citing data that illustrates the economic value of hunting, fishing, and other forms of outdoor recreation.”

Among the accomplishments

that will be celebrated at this year's forum is the recently inked partnership between the Remington Outdoor Company (Booth #14229) and TRCP to expand hunting access for sportsmen. Inability to access land, both publicly and privately owned, is the number-one reason cited by sportsmen for why they stopped hunting. The new partnership also focuses on strengthening and diversifying sportsmen's awareness of issues affecting wildlife habitat conservation.

“TRCP and the Remington Outdoor Company recognize our significant obligation to responsibly manage our natural resources,” says Remington CEO George Kollitides. “Like the TRCP, preserving America's distinctive hunting grounds and fishing holes for future generations is a top priority for Remington.”

—Brian McCombie

PROIS AWARD

In their fourth annual award presentation to spotlight women who are passionate about hunting and who demonstrate a commitment to wildlife conservation, Prois selected Christine Cunningham of south-central Alaska for this year's top honor. Cunningham is dedicated to sharing her enthusiasm for waterfowl and upland hunting with new hunters—especially women and children—as a volunteer hunter-education instructor and mentor for youth hunts through Safari Club International, Delta Waterfowlers, and the NRA. In her 2012 book, *Women Hunting Alaska*, she takes a look at the motivations of 17 women who have made hunting a major part of their lifestyle in the state where Cunningham was born and raised.

She is also a strong advocate for responsible wildlife management. “When you are hunting animals, you are engaged in that environment and you become responsible for the health and sustainability of those populations,” Cunningham said in her entry materials, which were considered by a panel of judges that included Diana Rupp, Guy Eastman, Julie Golob, Craig Boddington, Ron Spomer, and the previous three years' award recipients.

As the 2014 Prois Award winner, Cunningham will enjoy a five-day, two-species hunt in Namibia with Mogwadiri Hunting Safaris. She'll be fully outfitted with the latest gear from Prois Hunting Apparel, Swarovski Optik, Bowtech, Weatherby, Buck Knives, Icebreaker, and other sponsors. She hopes this award will provide her a platform for continuing to reach out to women about hunting.

“I believe women are the future of hunting, and it's an exciting time to be a part of this industry,” Cunningham said as she accepted the award on Tuesday. “We aren't just harvesting game; we're creating communities and taking on the things that really matter.” —Kristyn Brady



Christine Cunningham (right) is the winner of the 2015 Prois Award.

“

Inability to access land, both publicly and privately owned, is the number one reason why sportsmen stop hunting.

Sweet Spot

Remington's new autoloading shotgun is priced in the heart of the market **By Phil Bourjaily**

Remington's new V3 semi-auto is more than just a 3-inch version of the 3½-inch Versa Max. It's a new design aimed at helping Remington reclaim its share of the semi-auto market, now dominated by imports. It's also a terrific shotgun, as I learned when I had a chance to hunt pheasants and ducks with the V3 last fall. Though lighter and better-handling than the Versa Max, I found recoil to be surprisingly mild—even with 3-inch 1,500 fps duck loads. My test gun functioned perfectly with heavy duck loads, upland loads, target loads, and all but the lightest 7/8-ounce reloads. The V3 carried easily through the uplands, and it shot straight for me at feathers and clays alike.

The V3 makes use of the same Versa Port gas system that is the heart of the Versa Max, but it actually shares no common parts with Versa Max. "This is an all-new gun," says Mike Vrooman, senior shotgun manager. "We didn't take a 3 ½-inch gun and shrink it down." The V3's shorter alloy receiver and light-contour barrel give it a weight of around 7¼ pounds. Moreover, I noticed right away how much slimmer this gun felt in my hands compared to the Versa Max. With the action springs in the receiver and the gas block underneath the chamber, the V3 concentrates all its weight between the shooter's hands in the manner of a classic double

gun. The very short piston stroke of the Versa Port action helps make that balance possible. "Not only did [the short piston stroke] allow for that more compact gas system," Vrooman says, "it helped us optimize forend geometry, balance, and swing characteristics."

The gun has a number of selling points. The twin action springs are housed in the receiver where they are easy to inspect and clean. Since there is no action spring tube in the stock, Remington will be free to offer the V3 in a number of stock configurations, possibly even including a folding stock model. The unique trigger-guard-mounted magazine cutoff switch is very

handy. I found it easy to use in the field when I needed to clear the chamber to climb down a creek bank or water my dog. The stock will come with shims allowing customers to tailor the fit of the gun through a wide range of drop-and-cast adjustments. The alloy receiver saves weight. Hand it to a customer expecting the familiar heft of an 11-87 and you'll see a look of surprise. The V3 weighs a pound less. Overall, the V3 consists of six models, with 26- and 28-inch barrels.

The best news of all about the V3 is its price. Listing for \$895 in black and \$995 in wood or camo, Vrooman figures real-world street pricing will probably be about \$50



Remington's new V3 semi-auto shotgun uses a shorter alloy receiver and a light-contour barrel to reduce weight and improve handling. Recoil is surprisingly mild.

to \$150 below SRP. To him, the gun hits a "sweet spot" in the semi-auto market.

"The 11-87 carved out a very nice niche in the marketplace, and we sell a lot of guns at \$650 and below," he says. "Then we have a lot of guns that are \$900 and above, but we didn't have anything in that \$700 to \$800 price point."

Remington will support the V3 through a vigorous new ad campaign. "Our marketing team has put together a very nice campaign for this gun," Vrooman says. "It's going to be centered on a built-in-America-by-Americans theme."

Booth #15427. **(800-243-9700; remington.com)**

ASK OUR CUSTOMERS

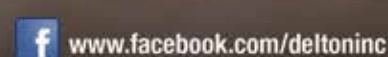
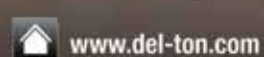
It's human nature to complain first and sing praises later. Not so among Del-Ton customers. Our customers give us a nearly perfect score on performance, service, and quality.

Selling Del-Ton rifles gives you the opportunity to sell a quality rifle backed by great customer service and a lifetime warranty to the original owner. You'll have fewer returns, less hassles, greater profitability and happier customers.

Ask your distributor about stocking Del-Ton rifles.

**PLEASE STOP BY SHOT SHOW
BOOTH # 30407**

DEL-TON
INCORPORATED



NEW PRODUCTS

1. Wildgame Innovations

➤ You get 3 fluid ounces of 100 percent deer urine in a handy squirt pouch. The big valve can be easily turned while you're wearing gloves, keeping the treasured liquid fresh and uncontaminated. The bag can last most of the season at only four drips per hour. SRP: \$14.99. Booth #15527 (225-438-4016; wildgameinnovations.com)

2. Counter Assault

➤ Ride with confidence in bear country with your own bear Mace in a bottle. Fits on any bicycle, ATV, boat, or off-road vehicle. Easy to grab with gloves on and ready to use in seconds. SRP: \$59. Booth #20220. (800-695-3394; counterassault.com)

3. Talon Ordnance

➤ Don't fear the heat, dirt, or powder buildup. Designed for use in extreme temperatures, this lubricant will work in conditions of up to 1,000 degrees F and not break down or gum up. The spray-on cleaner actually lifts powder particles and other blow-by chemicals off the finish, suspending them in liquid and eliminating the need for brushing. SRP: \$14.99. Booth #16628. (601-345-8678; taonordnance.com)

4. SPG

➤ The aerodynamic spoiler keeps the wind from disturbing the windshield wiper and allows for a perfect spot to display camo. Just make sure you don't confuse them with fallen twigs. SRP: \$19.95. Booth #15129. (spgcompany.com)

5. Kenetrek

➤ This first-class mountaineering boot has been built for guides that routinely travel in brutally rugged terrain. The construction includes a stiffer midsole combined with the fully crampon-compatible Vibram Vertige outsole. The Leather uppers are full-grain 3 mm leather with padded leather collars. Waterproof and breathable Windtex membranes and 400 grams of Thinsulate insulation keep you warm and dry no matter what the weather. One of the most supportive and comfortable boots Kenetrek has built. SRP: \$525. Booth #131. (800 232-6064; kenetrek.com)



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