



NSSF

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SHOT DAILY

The Daily News of the 2013 Las Vegas SHOT Show Brought to You by The Bonnier Corporation and the NSSF

SHOT BUSINESS

'There Is Only One Side'

At the NSSF State of the Industry dinner on Tuesday night, NSSF president Steve Sanetti began on a somber note, saying, "The state of our industry is, in a word, misunderstood." In referring to the tragedy that occurred last month, he said, "Who among us has not been moved by the unspeakable tragedy that was inflicted by a deranged man upon the children of Newtown, Connecticut, our very home at the NSSF? What can possibly heal the wounds, silence the anguished outcries, and make rational discourse on such a heartfelt topic occur?"

"I submit that there are not two 'sides' to this debate. There is only one side—the good people of America, on all points of the political spectrum, united in their revulsion over this senseless, evil attack on our most helpless. Yes, there is only one side—the good side—the 'better angels of our nature,' as Lincoln said, 'opposing evil.'"

"We all must recognize that those who don't agree with us share in our desire to rid the world of such monstrous acts. And they must recognize that we are not the evildoers. Ours is a responsible industry that makes and sells lawful products to law-abiding citizens. Citizens who exercise their constitutional right to own, use, and enjoy firearms safely and responsibly for all lawful purposes. We are part



NSSF president Steve Sanetti praised the "consummate professionalism" of the NSSF staff, who were then honored with a standing ovation from the crowd.

of the fabric of American life, and we treasure our children, our heritage, and our traditions."

Sanetti then listed the many programs the shooting industry has undertaken over the years to improve the safe, responsible use of firearms. In doing so, he pointed out that over the past 30 years, despite the growth of firearms ownership in the United States, the homicide rate has declined by 50 percent.

He also noted that violent crime has dramatically decreased as well, to record lows not seen since the early 1960s.

"This baffles our friends who fear that more guns equal more crime, but thankfully, this is just not true."

He closed by saying, "We stand ready to participate in any constructive dialogue regarding the safe and lawful manufacture, distribution, sale, ownership, and use of firearms by law-abiding American citizens. But a prerequisite to such dialogue is an honest recognition of the legitimacy of what we do and the important part of the national culture which we represent. Hunting and the recreational shooting sports are here to stay. And so are we."



NEW PRODUCT REPORTS

SHOT Daily hits the floor to see what's new in the world of knives **P. 14**. Also, see what accessories are hot this year **P. 22**

NEWS

*GRITS GRESHAM AWARD PRESENTED

Doug Painter received the Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award. **SEE PAGE 4**

*SOG PIGS OUT

The company demonstrated the utility of its new line of specialty knives in a novel way—at a pig roast dinner. **SEE PAGE 10**

*S&W EXPANDS TACTICAL WEAR LINE

The developing trend in concealed-carry wear is "street appeal," especially for women. **SEE PAGE 62**

*HK OFFERS RIFLE ACCESSORY KIT

Heckler & Koch is packaging its popular MR72A1 rifle with a host of precision add-ons. **SEE PAGE 65**



FEATURES

*PASSING THE TORCH

You've spent years building your business. Consider these tips before handing over the reins. **SEE PAGE 44**

*WEATHERBY GOES ALL-IN

The company upgrades its Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic rifle packages. **SEE PAGE 48**

*STOCK MARKET

ATI's new Bennelli M4 stock features two innovations in adjustment. **SEE PAGE 56**

Gerber Aims to Help Retailers

Gerber, a leading global supplier of personal outdoor, tactical, and industrial gear, is using the 2013 SHOT Show to roll out its new Independent Dealer Programs, a set of distinct sales programs designed to meet the needs of independent and specialty retailers. The programs allow customers to choose from a number of pre-selected product assortments that include free display support, collateral, and signage.

"The Independent Dealer Program is a tailored solution created for the unique needs of independent dealers and specialty retailers," says Andrew Gritzbaugh, Gerber's marketing manager. "These programs underscore our commitment to our independent dealers and are designed to help establish a foundation for success by providing the right products, display support, and brand assets." The programs are available to new or existing accounts, and customers can take advantage of a special price incentive offered on all program orders placed at SHOT Show. Booth #13614. (503-639-6161; gerbergear.com)



Gerber is developing product assortments and free display support for independent and specialty retailers.

Jamie Czowski and Lori Hightower of Frank's Great Outdoors, accompanied by executives from Winchester Ammo, including (left to right, from far left) president Tom O'Keefe; Gregg Kostek, director of marketing; and Brett Flaughner, vice president of marketing.



Winchester Ammo Names Dealer of the Year

Winchester Ammunition announced on Tuesday that Frank's Great Outdoors, located in Linwood, Michigan, has been named the 2013 Winchester Ammunition Dealer of the Year. "Our Dealer of the Year award is our way of thanking Frank's Great Outdoors for working so hard to provide their customers with the best products we have to offer," said Brett Flaughner, Winchester Ammunition vice president of marketing, sales, and strategy.

Recipients of the Dealer of the Year award display high standards for customer service and product knowledge, and utilize all means of opportunities to promote the Winchester brand through advertising, sales promotions, and in-store merchandising. Award winners carry a complete line of Winchester products, conduct retail events, support industry programs, and actively support local efforts in various areas such as conservation and safety and hunter education.

"It's truly an honor to be named Dealer of the Year by Winchester Ammunition," said Jami Czowski, Frank's Great Outdoors general manager. "We've been a Winchester Ammunition dealer for more than 60 years because our customers believe Winchester produces trusted, reliable, high-quality products that have been proven in the field

and on the range for generations."

Frank's Great Outdoors was founded in 1945 by Frank and Margaret Gorske. Now under its third generation of Gorske ownership, Frank's Great Outdoors has answered its customers' demands for more high-quality goods and services with the construction of a 30,000-square-foot retail store that houses products in departments such as fishing, hunting, marine electronics, clothing, cooking, and gifts.

In 1989, Winchester Ammunition set the benchmark for partnering with independent dealers with the inception of the Winchester Ammunition Advisory Center program, and more than 20 years later, it continues to set the standard for dealer programs. To be nominated for the Dealer of the Year award, a company must participate in this program.

Painter Receives Grits Gresham Award

The Professional Outdoor Media Association (POMA) and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) have honored communications pioneer Doug Painter with the prestigious POMA/NSSF Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award. Tom Gresham presented Painter with the award during the Shooting Hunting Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show State of the Industry dinner Tuesday evening.

"So many of us in this business have been richly rewarded by our experiences, whether high atop a mountain peak or hunkered down in a duck blind. We have made our passion our profession. But as much as our honoree has received from a lifetime out of doors, he has given back much more. Year after year, he has brought his great talent, his wisdom, and his heart to bear in support and in defense of what all of us value so much and believe in," Gresham said during the presentation.

Gresham also called Painter one of the finest writers in the outdoors world, and cited the fact that Painter headed programs to put the shooting sports before millions of people. "I've worked with Doug on many projects, including the groundbreaking television series *Shooting Sports America* on ESPN two decades ago," Gresham said. "As the writer and producer of many public service announcements, featuring such stars as Bing Crosby and Robert Stack, Doug showed America that shooters and hunters are responsible citizens. Doug was a good friend of my father's, and they worked together on many projects over a 30-year span. I'm delighted that the committee selected him to receive this award."

Painter's selection brings the award full circle. It was Painter who, as president of the NSSF, presented Grits Gresham in 2006 with the NSSF Lifetime Achievement Award, which became the cornerstone for the development of the Grits Gresham Shooting Sports Communicator Award.



Student of the Gun Book Signing

It's fair to say Paul G. Markel has been a "student of the gun" nearly all his life. He began shooting when he was 11 years old, and continued to do so as a U.S. Marine. He also spent 17 years as a police officer before becoming a full-time small-arms and tactics instructor.

"Throughout the years, I've had the privilege and honor to train with some of the greatest firearms trainers in the world," he says. "One aspect that all the great trainers have is that

they never stop learning. Even after decades in the game, the good ones continue to be dedicated students."

As a way to help students of the gun, his new book, *A Student of the Gun*, represents a life's journey toward education, experience, and enjoyment of the use of firearms.

Markel's book touches on such several important subjects. Since practice makes perfect, one key chapter focuses on how to make the most of practice sessions, especially given the

high cost of ammo these days. He also urges shooters to "take yourself to the next level. The best instructors are dedicated students. Teaching others is one of the best ways to learn and grow as a student of the gun."

Retailers who serve customers interested in personal defense should take a close look at this book. To do so, stop by the DuraCoat booth between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m., where Markel will be signing copies. Booth #20243.



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Cannon Safe Branches Out

On a recent visit to the Cannon Safe manufacturing facility in San Bernadino, California, company president Aaron Baker told me, "I like guns. I like hunting." If that's so, why does Cannon's SHOT Show booth look so different?

Blame it on *Kaizen*, the Japanese word for "improvement." Often translated as "continuous improvement," and made famous by Toyota, Kaizen is a system whereby enlightened management empowers employees to help improve the quality of a manufacturer's products and improve the efficiency of its production facilities.

I saw evidence of that on the floor of the factory as I watched workers, many of whom have been with Cannon for more than 20 years, use self-designed ergonomic work stations to improve workflow. Baker is proud of his products and his employees, and justifiably so. He feels the company's approach to design helps deliver a superior product as well as superior customer service. "Let's look at just three reasons why I believe ours is a superior product," he says. "First, our patented Trulock internal hinges offer more protection than a safe with external hinges. Second, we use longer and wider bolts. Here, I like to say size does matter. Third, we use three layers of extra-hard steel plates to protect the lock from tampering."

As proof that Kaizen is working, Baker points out that "we've grown through the entire downturn of the economy." And that's true not only for the main business—Cannon Safe—but for Gun Vault and Cannon Security Products as well.

All well and good, but it's not enough for Baker.

As the company moves forward, he says, "We're not ignoring guns and hunters, but we're expanding our reach." That's why the new booth you'll see at SHOT Show looks different. The focus is on home security, and soon retailers and customers will start seeing security products designed specifically for storing household valuables. And, at least based on some prototypes I saw, these new products will fit more subtly into a home.

"They won't look like the typical gray, green, or black gun safe," Baker says. In fact, they'll look more like appliances—all part of his plan "to be on the leading edge of safe technology."

In his vision, the safe becomes the hub for a total home-security system, which will be bolstered by products developed by Cannon Security Products. This includes webcams that fit over an outer door's peephole, for example.

"It's all about controlling our environment," he says. Ultimately, Baker says, "we're in the people business." And he's betting big that Kaizen will help Cannon stay true to its roots while serving a new, and broader, market as well. Booth #12714. (800-222-1055; cannonsafe.com) —Slaton L. White



NSSF senior vice president and chief marketing officer Chris Dolnack (left) and Bob Delfay, of the Hunting Heritage Trust, recognized GunBroker.com CEO Steve Urvan (center) for the company's 10 years of unwavering support of the SHOT Show auction.



NSSF Recognizes GunBroker.com Partnership Milestone

Whether it is the four-millionth Marlin lever-action, a finely engraved shotgun to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Browning Auto 5, or a one-of-a-kind Colt 1911 to celebrate its centennial, milestone celebrations have been the foundation of the annual SHOT Show auction. At the 2013 SHOT Show, the National Shooting Sports Foundation marked another milestone, presenting GunBroker.com with an award that recognizes its 10 years of service as the exclusive online host of the SHOT Show Auction.

"The impact of GunBroker.com's involvement in the SHOT Show Auction has been tremendous," said Chris Dolnack, senior vice president and chief marketing officer. "Before GunBroker.com's involvement, the featured SHOT Show auction firearms were bid on by a relatively small number of SHOT Show attendees. With GunBroker.com's assistance, however, we immediately moved from a few active bidders to an audience of millions. We no longer have to search for bidders; they find us."

"For GunBroker.com, hosting the SHOT Show Auction is a great opportunity to support the future of the shooting sports at the same time that we offer something special to our users," said Steve Urvan, CEO of GunBroker.com. "Whether by bidding or just watching the auctions unfold, our users have become an integral part of the SHOT Show auction and everyone has benefited. It really adds excitement to our site."

ment to our site."

The 2013 SHOT Show auction items may be viewed on the show floor at the booths of participating exhibitors. Serial #TAR-000001 of the new Turnbull TAR-10 .308 semi-automatic can be viewed in the GunBroker.com booth (#15147); the Last Jack O'Connor Tribute Model 70 rifle can be seen in the Winchester Repeating Arms booth (#15929); two very special Smith & Wesson handguns commemorating the 100th anniversary of Smith & Wesson's manufacture of auto-loading handguns can be seen in the Smith & Wesson booth (#13731); and a "1 of 1" edition of the new Canal Street Cutlery High Country Skinner can be seen in the Canal Street Cutlery booth (#2048). All of these very special items can be viewed online and bids can be submitted at GunBroker.com or at the GunBroker.com booth (#15147).

John Barsness Awarded

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

The 2013 Bushnell Bill McRae Lifetime Achievement



Award recipient certainly fits that bill. During his 20-year career as a journalist and outdoor writer, John Barsness has been published in the majority of the hunting and shooting magazines on the market, as well as in titles such as *Sports Illustrated* and *National Geographic*. As the first optics columnist for *Petersen's Hunting*, Barsness educated thousands of readers on the subject.

In addition to hundreds of published articles, Barsness has authored 10 books.



SOG's Bladelight Hunt (top) has a folding blade; the Huntspoint line features rubber-molded (left) or wood handles.

SOG Pigs Out

Building on its award-winning history of producing specialty knives and tools for a wide variety of customers, SOG Specialty Knives & Tools is kicking off 2013 with a bang, launching a new line of knives built specifically for hunters. And what better way to demonstrate the utility of these knives than with last night's pig roast. Attendees got a chance to see just how well the knives worked on the main course, under the watchful eye of Steven Rinella, author, hunter, and television personality, known by many for his work on the Sportsman Channel's hit series *MeatEater*.

There are 10 new knives in SOG's hunting line, from fixed blades and folders designed for skinning and boning anything from moose to antelope to a pair of nifty folding knives perfect for turkeys, gamebirds, and smaller animals. The new line is highlighted by six models of "Huntspoint" knives, ranging in price from \$80 to \$140. Perfect for big-game hunters, Huntspoints are available in either skinning or boning blades. The fixed-blade Huntspoints come with either either co-molded rubber or wood handle scales. The crown jewel of the Huntspoints is a wood-handled model with a premium, made-in-the-USA S30V stainless-steel blade.

Just the right size to fit in a pack or vest, SOG's new Twitch wood-handled knives come in two hunting versions—The Twitch II (\$85) and the larger Twitch XL (\$120). These folders are quickly and easily opened with one hand, thanks to SOG Assisted Technology. Both feature AUS-8 stainless-steel blades.

There is also a new model in the 2013

"Revolver" series. This smaller version of SOG's already popular rotating blade Revolver comes with a boning blade on one end and a saw and a gut hook on the other. SRP: \$70.

The Bladelight Hunt, featuring a folding blade made from AUS-8 stainless steel, is equipped with six green LED lights molded into the handle. Powered by standard alkaline batteries and featuring push-button switches/circuitry, and boasting an IPX-7 rating for water resistance, the Bladelight provides hunters with two levels of functionality.

"SOG has enjoyed great success and customer loyalty in building our tactical, law enforcement, and outdoor knives," said Spencer Frazer, founder of SOG. "We now take what we've done well and enter a new market, one that expects and demands and uses smartly designed knives."

SOG will partner with Rinella in 2013 to help get the word out on these new products.

"Steven lives a lifestyle that represents the folks we know will be using our knives and tools in the woods and fields of North America," said Nando Zucchi, SOG's vice president of marketing. "We're sure he'll put our gear to the test, and push us as a company to continue to create quality knives and tools for hunters to use for years to come."

"When it comes to hunting, I'm a gear snob. I use the best and most reliable equipment out there. And that's what SOG makes," said Rinella. "From multi-tools to hatchets to hunting knives, their stuff performs without flaw. I'm looking forward to having SOG knives and tools in my pack for years to come." Booth #425. (888-405-6433; sogknives.com)

The Future of Affordable Plinkers?

Manufacturing a polymer handgun was unthinkable for a small company 20 years ago, according to USFA CEO and inventor of the ZiP .22 Doug Donnelly. But the acceptance and engineering progress of polymer components, and the advent of computer design programs such as CAD, have allowed Donnelly to build an innovative handgun for people who want to shoot often and on the cheap.

The semi-auto ZiP .22 has a bullpup configuration that

uses Ruger 10/22 magazines.

"This gun is unique because it has no slide, it has no extractor, and it has no ejector," says



The ZiP .22 has no slide, uses Ruger 10/22-style magazines, is chambered in .22LR, and features a 5.25-inch barrel.

Donnelly, who added that the pure blowback handgun uses the ejector already present on all 10/22 magazines. This allowed Donnelly to keep the number of parts to 25 and the price point at \$199, with several add-on accessories already available (a rail-attached stock is on the way).

Plus, no slide means that a rail and accessories can be mounted on top of the gun. The ZiP is sold exclusively through Davidson's Inc. Booth #13649. (zipfactory.com)

—David Maccarr

Reebok Unveils Tactical Line

A new line of Reebok-branded military and tactical boots is being introduced at the 2013 SHOT Show. Warson Brands, known for occupational and duty brands that include Knapp, Iron Age, and Converse, will be showing the entire Reebok duty uniform line of boots for men and women, as well as prototypes of new high-tech military boots in development.

"As one of the world's top athletic brands, Reebok is a perfect fit with our growing duty uniform footwear brand portfolio," says Warson Brands CEO Jim Maritz. "Reebok is committed to inspiring and enabling athletic performance and achievement through innovative product design. And since Reebok empowers people to be fit for life, I can think of no better fit for our military and tactical customers."

Warson is introducing three lines of Reebok military boots available for immediate delivery, including the Rapid Response RB, the Fusion 360, and the Hyper Velocity. The Rapid Response has been proven in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and features an aggressive mountain-trail rubber outsole. The boot has features such as a removable athletic cushion insole, a shock-eliminator heel cushion, and nylon-mesh lining. It also offers side zip and waterproof options, and is available in desert tan, black, and sage green.

The Reebok Fusion 360 Series features TCT Total Cushioning Technology—1½ inches of cushioning and impact resistance in the heel, with five layers of cushioning and shock absorption for comfort. Available in desert tan and sage green. The boots are made in the U.S. and are Berry Amendment-compliant (a federal requirement that the DOD give preference to domestically produced products).

The Reebok Hyper Velocity Series, a new line of high-performance, 8-inch military boots, weigh only 16 ounces per boot. These performance-training boots offer super-flexible uppers and outsoles, high-traction outsoles, a removable cushion athletic insert, and an optional side zip. Colors will include desert tan and sage green.

Three new high-tech prototypes will also be shown with seamless technology, synthetics, bruise plates, and new Gore-Tex extended-comfort systems.

"The Reebok brand on any shoe sets the highest expectations for comfort and performance," says Bill Mills, Warson Brands president and sales manager. "This new line of Reebok-branded military and tactical footwear will deliver on the Reebok brand promise—and then some. I hope everyone at SHOT will stop by our booth and check out the latest in military footwear technology."

The new line of Reebok military and tactical footwear is available now through select duty-uniform retailers throughout the United States. Mills, Maritz, and the entire Warson Brands sales team will be available at the booth to answer any questions about the new Reebok line. Booth #10179. (warsonbrands.com) —Peter B. Mathiesen



Claudia Olsen Wins Crosman Award



Claudia Olsen received the prestigious Crosman Champions of Youth Marksmanship Award for her work as the NRA's youth programs coordinator.

Last night, at the Crosman Corporation reception at the 2013 SHOT Show, Claudia Olsen, the National Rifle Association's youth programs coordinator, was presented with the prestigious 2013 Crosman Champions of Youth Marksmanship Award. Directing the NRA's youth programs and working with many other groups that foster the shooting sports for young people, Olsen's success is evident in the numbers and enthusiasm of the young people entering the sport.

The annual Crosman Champions of Youth Marksmanship Award recognizes an individual or individuals whose commitment to excellence in youth shooter education and dedication to a lifetime of safe shooting has enhanced the future of the sport.

"At a time when shooting's popularity is growing, we need the support of people like Claudia Olsen to chart a smart course for young people as they enter the sport for life," said Crosman president and CEO Phil Dolci. "Claudia manages the many initiatives that make shooting available and appealing to hundreds of thousands of young people from coast to coast. Her contributions, both past and present, and her attitude of inclusion are what the Crosman Champions of Youth Marksmanship Award is all about."

Olsen began her shooting life in Germany as part of a military family. Her mother, a Bavarian airgun champion, taught Claudia the ins and outs of airgunning. Then came children of her own, and together they became involved in the Virginia 4-H shooting program, where Olsen became an instructor for rifle, shotgun, and muzzleloader. In 2004, she attended the Running Target Coach School at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, and renewed her commitment to introducing youths to the shooting sports.

In 2008, she became the program coordinator of the NRA's Youth Programs department, where today she reaches upward of 750,000 youngsters annually. She creates teaching materials and organizes countless shooting events for organizations such as the National High School Rodeo Association, the 4-H Clubs of America, the Home School Association, the Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts of America, Safari Club International, FFA, and American Heritage Girls. The events are frequently both teaching and competitive affairs, all of which impart the love that she has for shooting as a lifetime sport.

A program that Olsen is particularly proud of is the Brownells/NRA Youth Shooting Sports Ambassador Program. The program accepts young people from participating youth organizations and takes them to major industry events, including the SHOT Show and the NRA's Annual Meeting. The program provides perspective on the shooting industry and encourage the ambassadors to share those experiences with other young people. The Ambassador Program has been highly successful as a recruiting tool and is being used as a template by other groups as they work to grow the shooting sports. Olsen's daughter, Samantha, was the program's very first ambassador.

"Claudia's dedication to making shooting for life a reality sets her apart," said Dolci. "She is, indeed, shooting's 'mom-in-chief' and well deserving of a place on the Crosman Champions of Youth Marksmanship Award roster. We congratulate and thank her for making the future of shooting sports richer, thanks to the legion of new shooters she has helped create." Booth #13940. (800-724-7486; crosman.com)

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Browning

The Black Label tactical line expands this year with the addition of the Backlash (top), which has a double-edge blade made of 440 stainless steel, and the Trip Wire, which has a 6-inch N690Co stainless-steel blade with a modified spear point. The Ross Kommer Signature line (bottom) will consist of five models, all of which feature injection-molded polymer handles.

Raising the Bar

New concepts and designs will help push the knife industry to new heights in 2013 **By Christopher Cogley**

New steel. New grips. New features. And, of course, new designs. Each year the knife industry raises the bar with the introductions that are launched at the SHOT Show, and 2013 is no exception. Here is a look at what you can expect to find at the booths of some of the top knife manufacturers at this year's show.

Boker USA

For 2013, Boker is introducing the Boker Plus Manaro folder with a titanium handle that features checkered patterning along the spine for a more secure grip. The stylized 440c stainless-steel blade is 3.75 inches long, and the overall length is 8.75 inches. SRP: \$210. Booth #13376. (303-462-0662; bokerusa.com)



is made from 420 stainless steel. All of the knives have injection-molded polymer handles and are laser-engraved with Kommer's signature. SRP: \$111 to \$142. Browning will also expand its line of Black Label tactical knives that it introduced last year. The Trip Wire has a 6-inch N690Co stainless-steel blade with a modified spear point and features a three-position pivoting wire-cutting system. SRP: \$393. The Backlash has a 5½-inch double-edge blade made of 440 stainless steel and is available with either a

Ontario The Decima is a personal-defense knife with a 3-inch steel blade. The ridged thumb ramp enhances control.

Camillus

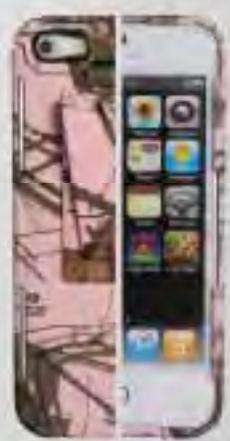
This year Camillus is introducing the new Bush Crafter, made from 1095 high-carbon steel. The 4-inch blade's deep belly, as well as its durable canvas Micarta handle, make it a great skinning or all-purpose knife. SRP: \$99.99. Camillus is also releasing the SK Jungle Survival Machete, which was designed in conjunction with survival expert Les Stroud. The machete features an 11¾-inch blade made from Carbonitried Titanium-bonded 440C stainless steel and a 6¼-inch handle with TPR rubber inserts for a secure grip. The Survival Machete comes complete with a nylon sheath, fire starter, and survival tips from Stroud. SRP: \$77.99. Booth #1410. (800-835-2263; camillusknives.com)



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PRODUCTS

Gerber Legendary Blades

In 2013, Gerber is expanding its popular line of Bear Grylls survival knives with the new Ultra Compact Fixed Blade that features a 3.25-inch fine-edge blade that locks into its molded sheath with multiple lash points so that it can be strapped to boots, packs, and belts, or even worn around the neck. The Ultra Compact has an overall length of 6.25 inches and weighs 4.5 ounces. SRP: \$40. Gerber is also releasing a new Outrigger clip knife that features Gerber's Assisted Opening 2.0 technology and a 7Cr17 stainless-steel blade. The handle has an open-frame design to cut down on weight, and a rubberized edge to provide a secure grip. The Outrigger is available in three sizes: Mini (5.88 inches overall; \$43), Standard (7 inches overall; \$49), and XL (7.88 inches; \$55). Booth #13614. (800-950-6161; gerbergear.com)



black or coyote tan G-10 handle with a stainless-steel pommel and hand guard. SRP: \$86. Booth #12740. (801-876-2711; browning.com)

Buck

Buck's new Model 620 tactical and survival knife features a textured nylon handle that's decorated in either a snakeskin or skull camo pattern to give the 620 a distinctively edgy look. But there's no mistaking that the 11-inch knife with a 6¾-inch black traction-coated 420HC stainless-steel blade is a formidable tool designed to stand up to the rigorous work of survivalists and outdoorsmen. SRP: \$90. Buck is also expanding its line of everyday pocket folders with the Model 721. The thin, stylish knife features a 3¼-inch 420HC stainless-steel blade with a thumbhole for one-handed opening and an anodized aluminum handle in multiple colors. SRP: \$52. Booth #14504. (800-326-2825; buckknives.com)

Columbia River Knife & Tool

Ken Onion has earned a reputation as one of the top designers in the industry, and the new Ken Onion Foresight folder that CRKT is releasing at this year's show proves that this reputation is well-deserved. With wide finger grooves and a large palm swell in the cold-forged aluminum handle, the Foresight is designed to give anyone a secure grip on the knife. The 3½-inch drop-point blade made with AUS 8 stainless steel is coated with Black Ti Nitride finish and is available in a fine edge or a partially serrated version. The Foresight has an overall length of 8.69 inches and weighs 6.3 ounces. SRP: \$140. Booths #414 and #10065. (800-891-3100; crkt.com)

Leatherman

Leatherman is expanding its selection of tools this year with the new Raptor Medical Shears, designed for first responders and the military. In addition to the 420HC stainless-steel shears, the Raptor includes a strap cutter, oxygen wrench, ring-cutter, and carbide-tip glass breaker. The shears can either be folded for easier transport or locked open for quick access. SRP: \$70. Leatherman is also expanding its line of newly acquired PocketToolX tools to include models for shotgun, handgun, rifle, and bow maintenance. The creative design of the tools allows them to incorporate a wide range of functions into a relatively simple package that is easy to use and carry. All of the tools feature stainless-steel construction. SRP: \$35 to \$45. Booth #14512. (800-847-8665; leatherman.com)

Leatherman Raptor Medical Shears have been designed for use by first responders and the military. The Piranha, offered by newly acquired PocketToolX, features stainless-steel construction.





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Lone Wolf

Lone Wolf expanded its Mountainside fixed-blade series this year with three new All-Weather additions. The Caper 2, Drop-Point, and Skinner all feature N680 steel and handles that are made with blaze orange santoprene that's perfect for field dressing in all weather conditions. The Caper 2 has a blade length of 2.35 inches and an overall length of 6.28 inches. SRP: \$75. The Drop-Point has a blade length of 4.23 inches and an overall length of 7.97 inches. SRP: \$80. The Skinner has a 4.23-inch blade, and the overall length is 7.97 inches. SRP: \$80. Booth #10357. (800-800-7427; lonewolfknives.com)



Puma The Blacktail is a 3.2-inch-long fixed blade (built of 440A German steel) set into a stag handle that features deep finger contours for improved handling.

Ontario Knife

The Decima is part of Ontario Knife's new Fortune Series of tactical knives designed for personal defense as well as a variety of field applications. The Decima features a 3-inch 420 steel blade with a gray texture-powder coat and a ridged thumb ramp for better control. The overall length is 8.1 inches. SRP: \$154.95.

Ontario Knife is also releasing the Wyvern Axe, which was designed for the Air Force Para Rescue team but has practical applications for any outdoorsman. The Wyvern features a cutting edge, pick, and breaching claw in a simple, effective design. The 5160 alloy steel body is 18.901 inches long and includes a leather cordura sheath. SRP: \$394.95. Booths #20305 and #15722. (800-222-5233; ontarioknife.com)

Puma

Puma is introducing two new stag-handled fixed-blade knives, both of which

feature Puma's 440A German steel blade. The Elk Hunter has traditional styling with 4.2-inch blade and an overall length of 8.5 inches. SRP: \$119.95. The Blacktail features deep finger cutouts in the handle and has a 3.2-inch blade and an overall length of 7 inches. SRP: \$87.95. Puma is also releasing its Pounce 3507 pocket-clip knife that features a black aluminum handle and Puma's spring-assisted opening for a quick, smooth deployment. The Pounce's 440A steel blade is 3.5 inches, and the overall length is 8 inches. SRP: \$34.95. Booth #520. (913-888-5524; pumaknifecompanyusa.com)



Western

Newly revived Western Knives celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2011, and to commemorate the occasion it's releasing the 100th Anniversary Edition of the Western Skinner. The Skinner, which is made in the U.S., features a canvas Micarta handle and a 1095 carbon steel blade. The knife is 4¾ inches long and is styled in the traditional design that has made Western knives popular with hunters for so many years. SRP: \$99. Booth #1410. (800-835-2263; camillusknives.com)

SOG

The JB02 is the first model that SOG is releasing in its new Brous Series of knives, designed in conjunction with up-and-coming knife designer Jason Brous. The 3.7-inch blade of 9Cr18MoC steel and the stylized fiberglass and glass-reinforced nylon handle give the JB02 the distinctive feel of a "functional fantasy" knife with extreme tactical applications. Overall length of the JB02 is 8.1 inches, and the knife comes with a molded nylon sheath with multiple lash points. SRP: \$120. Booth #425. (888-405-6433; sogknives.com)



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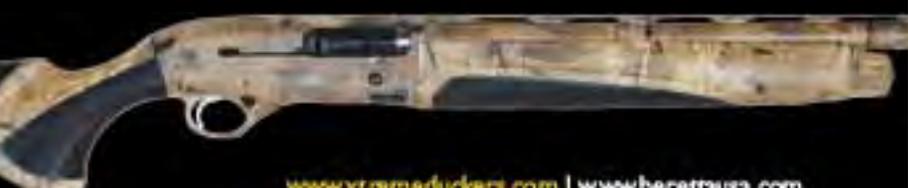
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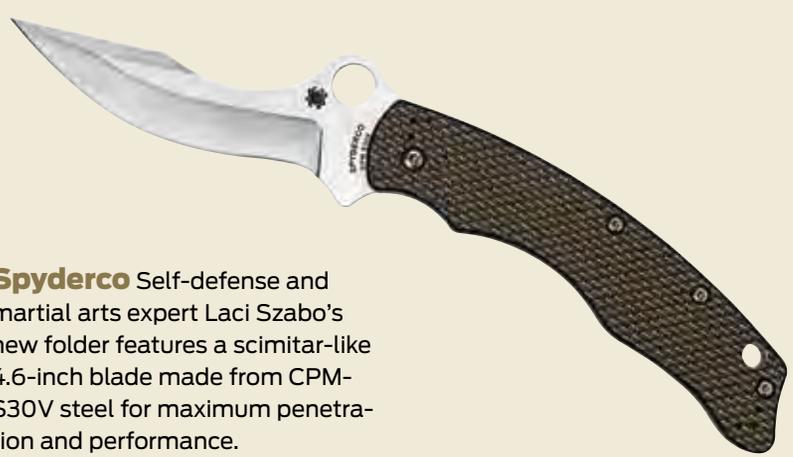
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KNIVES

Spyderco

In 2013, Spyderco is releasing its second knife designed by self-defense and martial arts expert Laci Szabo. The Laci Szabo folder has a scimitar-like shape for maximum penetration and performance. The 4.6-inch blade is made from CPM-S30V steel and is locked into place with Spyderco's Compression Lock. The overall length is 10.31 inches. SRP: \$299.95. Spyderco is also releasing another folder in its Chaparral series. The Chaparral Titanium features a titanium handle with a unique diamond stealth-like pattern. At 2.6 ounces, the Chaparral Titanium is Spyderco's lightest mid-size CLIPITs. It has a blade length of 2.8 inches, and an overall length of 6.375 inches. SRP: \$319.95. Booths #13113 and #10367. (800-525-7770; spyderco.com)



Spyderco Self-defense and martial arts expert Laci Szabo's new folder features a scimitar-like 4.6-inch blade made from CPM-S30V steel for maximum penetration and performance.

W.R. Case & Sons

Case's newest collaboration with award-winning custom knife maker Tony Bose is the Wharnccliffe Trapper. The Wharnccliffe Trapper will feature steel bolsters, a cut swedge blade, and milled liners to give it the distinctive feel of a custom knife. Case will limit the production to only 1,000 knives. SRP: \$375 to \$625. Case is adding to its Limited XX Edition Series with the Smooth Moss Green Bone family of knives. All eight models in the family feature smooth moss-green bone handles and Tru-Sharp surgical-steel blades with the Limited XX Edition artwork. SRP: \$67 to \$123. Booth #11349. (800-523-6350; wrcase.com)



W.R. Case Award-winning custom knife maker Tony Bose will complement the 2013 line with the Wharnccliffe Trapper. Case is also adding eight models to its Limited XX Edition series. All feature Tru-Sharp surgical-steel blades.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

STICKY HOLSTERS

Booth #617
Free Gift: Firearms retailers who visit the Sticky Holsters booth will receive a free sample holster. Bring a copy of your FFL, Tax ID, or a business card to take advantage of this SHOT Show 2013 offer.

RADIANS, INC.

Booth #842
Free Gift: Visitors to the Radians booth can use their smartphones to "shoot to win" free prizes, such as corded foam ear plugs, Rock X-Treme shooter's

glasses, Omni Electronic Earmuffs, and Radians Premium shooting glasses.

RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY

Booth #2720
Raffle: Purchase a raffle ticket for a chance to win an Orvis Uplander Deluxe Ltd. Edition Shotgun, a South Dakota Pheasant Hunt with Pine Shadows Daybreak, a Kansas Quail Hunt with Double Gun Bird Hunts, or a trip to our National Grouse & Woodcock Hunt in Minnesota. Tickets are \$20 and will be sold through June 27.

Browning The Blackout 9V, which features a Cree XM-L white LED that never needs replacing, is the manufacturer's brightest three-battery flashlight. The Platinum Plus safe has 28 locking bolts and can hold as many as 29 long guns.



Think Small

Accessories may not be as glamorous as firearms, but they often deliver a higher profit per item **By Peter B. Mathiesen**

The great gun run consumed most of everyone's attention this past year, as retailers recorded record sales. And though firearms got all the attention, it's the smaller items that often deliver the real goods—high profits. Fact is, accessories sell, and sell consistently. Here's a look at what's ready for the shelves in 2013.



Browning The Blackout 9V is Browning's brightest three-battery flashlight to date. It features a powerful Cree XM-L white LED that never needs replacing. The lock-out tailcap switch has momentary, continuous, and fast-strobe modes. The all-aluminum body offers a non-slip design with a finger retention ring. It's submersible to 3 feet for 30 minutes, and features an

Gerber The triangular design of the Bear Grylls Intense Torch emergency light keeps it from rolling away.

optically clear, scratch-resistant glass lens.

The overall length is 8.4 inches, and with 725 lumens of brightness, the flashlight has an effective illuminating distance of 500 yards. The new Blackout 9V is offered in black. SRP: \$204.

The large, wide-body Platinum Plus PP36 safe measures 72 by 57 by 26 inches and weighs 1,815 pounds. It features 28 locking bolts and a long-gun capacity of 59. Standard features include a massive 3/16-inch steel body, pry-stop corner bolts at all four corners, 1 1/2-inch chromed locking bolts with four-sided coverage, a Uni-Force locking system with anti-pry tabs and extension arms, and a fully reinforced integrated door frame.

Other features include a Premium DPX storage system with simulated leather trim on the door and an interior cedar ceiling and walls, plus an interior LED light package.

The fire protection rating is 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit for 120 minutes.

It is available in hunter green, gloss black, black cherry, sand metallic, or silver metallic, and there are several game scenes to choose from to adorn the safe door. SRP: \$7,900. Booth #12740. (800-322-4626; browning.com)

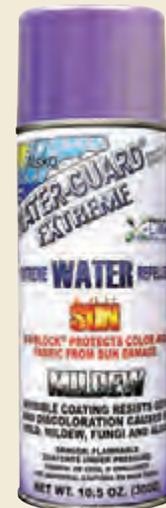
Do-All Outdoors

For 2013, Do-All Outdoors will release the Shooting Star, a highly reactive, ground-bouncing gun target for rifles, handguns, and shotguns. Made with a technologically advanced, impact-seal material, the Shooting Star should last for years.

Rated for calibers .22 to .50, shooters can make it spin, flip, roll, and jump. Set it up close at 25 yards or hundreds of yards downrange for an extraordinary shooting experience. Ideal for young shooters, the target is mentally engaging and fun. SRP: \$39.99. Booth #3249. (615-269-4889; do-alltraps.com)

Atsko

Water-Guard Extreme is a light but effective silicone spray formula that protects shoes and boots with no risk of color change. It dries quickly to eliminate staining and provides invisible waterproof protection for any kind of boot. It also works as a stain preventer, and can be used on ties, jackets, and holsters. SRP: \$7. Booth #10959. (803-531-1820; atsko.com)



LaserLyte The Kryptonite Center Mass Laser was developed to decrease target acquisition time and increase levels of accuracy. The device projects a circle of eight green laser dots, with one in the center as the aiming point.



Gerber

When you're in a survival situation, a bright light may just be your best friend. The Gerber Bear Grylls Intense Torch boasts a maximum output of 140 lumens and a maximum runtime of 15 hours. It features four modes: high, medium, low, and S.O.S. With a triangular design that keeps it from rolling away, and a large rubber grip around an anodized aluminum body, the Intense Torch is easy to keep tabs on in all conditions, even when wet. The light's tail cap features a push button with a momentary "on" for easy signaling. It's powered by two AA batteries and is rated IPX7 waterproof. The Intense Torch comes with a lanyard and survival guide, and weighs 3.89 ounces, SRP: \$63. Booth #13614. (800-950-6161; gerbergear.com)

LaserLyte

The Kryptonite Center Mass Laser displays an outer ring of laser dots that surrounds a center aiming point for rifles and shotguns. Developed to decrease target-acquisition time and increase levels of accuracy for long guns with Picatinny rails, the LaserLyte CM-15 helps the user quickly center the shot within the ring, using the circle of green laser dots. The profile grows 1 inch per yard, approximately the same configuration as a shotgun aimed at a moving target. The green laser, which aids in daylight visibility, gives the user a wide field of view while allowing him to use both eyes for aiming.

The user-friendly, military-styled laser uses a recessed activation selector that can be switched to off, constant on, and momentary on. The remote is used with a 2-inch tape switch that sports a durable copper braided cord.

The compact and lightweight Kryptonite Center

Goex

The manufacturer of the only American-made authentic black powder is setting a new standard of precision with the introduction of Olde Eynsford. The gunpowder is crafted with select-grade materials and precision-refined processes. Its uniformly tight-grain size ensures consistent shot-to-shot performance and higher velocities. The powder is ideal for cartridge and round-ball competitors. Olde Eynsford will retail in 1-pound plastic cans. SRP: \$18.95. Booth #16738. (913-362-9455; goexpowder.com)



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LED Lenser

LED Lenser, a Leatherman Tool Group company, is launching a new lineup of handheld high-end LED flashlights, including the M7RX and M14X. The M7RX features easy-to-use stow-and-go recharging. Touch the tail switch to the floating charge magnet or plug the USB adapter into a laptop, and you're good to go. The Advanced Focus System, Smart Light Technology, and Rapid Focus allow the user to set individualized lighting programs and quickly utilize clear lighting for both up-close reading and long-distance viewing. The M7RX weighs in at just over 7 ounces, making it one of LED Lenser's most powerful compact lights.

The LED Lenser M14X is the brightest flashlight in the M Series and includes the Advanced Focus System and Smart Light Technology that allow impressive beam distance and clarity of light in the focused position. With 650 lumens, it also has more than enough lighting power to illuminate the landscape outside of the focused area. The LED Lenser M14X boasts remarkable technology and light performance in a small (12.9-ounce), 6.4-inch handheld light. The lights are backed by a no-questions-asked five-year warranty. SRP: \$300. Booth #14512. (800 650-1245; ledlenser.com)



Mass Laser is made from aircraft-grade 6061 aluminum with a T3 hardness and black anodized to level 2 hardness for durability. The laser is fully adjustable with hex drive screws protected by sealed turret caps. The offset design of the CM-15 allows for a variety of mounting options. SRP: \$284.95. Booth #341. (928-649-3201; laserlyte.com)

MasterPiece Arms

The new 9mm Combat Muzzle Brake is made from 8620 steel and uses a heavy black oxide coating. It comes with two Belleville Washers for proper installation and orientation as well as an aggressive muzzle-end surface to break glass and angled porting holes to reduce muzzle rise.

The 9mm Combat Muzzle Brake will fit any 1/2x28-threaded barrel. Like all MasterPiece Arms products, the Combat Muzzle Brake is made in America and offers a lifetime guarantee. SRP: \$55.95. Booth #2716. (866-803-0000; masterpiecearms.com)

MOJO Outdoors

Mojo teamed with world-champion turkey caller and hunter Preston Pittman to develop the first full-body full-motion turkey decoy, which Mojo calls the Shake-n-Jake.

The company has a history of

Motorola The Talkabout MS355 radio boasts a range of up to 35 miles. The radio has also been designed to float if dropped out of duck blind.



POCKET-SIZED POWERHOUSE

Tighten a bolt, adjust a scope, or crack a cold one. No project is too small for Leatherman's new line of multi-purpose pocket tools.

Visit the Leatherman booth (#14512) to check them out!





Uncle Mike's The Reflex concealed-carry holster is a dual-retention model that features Integrated Retention Technology.

marketing multiple-motion decoys that not only attract game, but also divert attention away from the waiting hunter. This decoy has real turkey motion. Configured in the jake-style in the off position, the tail is down and collapsed. Remote-controlled up to 150 feet, the decoy can raise its tail and fan while simultaneously turning its body, just like a real gobbler.

The decoy operates on four AA batteries (not included) and mounts on a steel-mounting stake that stores inside. A blaze orange carry pack is

included. SRP \$149.99. Booth #1452. (866-216-6656; mojooutdoors.com)

Motorola

The ultra-durable waterproof, two-way Talkabout MS355 radio is ideal for extreme outdoor conditions and boasts a range of up to 35 miles. The IP-67 standard withstands constant submersion of up to one meter for 30 minutes and repels the heaviest raindrops. The radio will float, and is colored to be visible on the water's surface.

Designed to comfortably fit in your ear, the earbud connector plugs into your MS355 radio and snaps onto your lapel or shirt. The hourglass shape fits snugly into the palm of your hand to reduce fatigue and discomfort. The non-slip ridges on its base housing help eliminate annoying hand slips.

Weather alerts provide warnings of incoming storms or dangerous conditions. By tuning into one of seven NOAA channels (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), the MS355 will alert you about what to pack with continuous local and regional weather broadcasting.

With the built-in repeater channels, the MS355 will work with local repeater station to carry a signal farther (a GMRS license is required). The packaging includes two radios, two belt clips, two PTT earbuds, one

dual drop-in charger, one charging adaptor, two NiMH rechargeable battery packs, one emergency preparedness checklist sheet, and one user guide. Available in Realtree AP and yellow. SRP: \$109.99. Booth #4026. (847-576-5000; motorola.com)

Pelican Products/ Elite Coolers

Whether you're protecting game meat or supplies for a wilderness excursion, Elite coolers are engineered to withstand any adverse situation. Elite Coolers are built to exacting military standards with secure press-and-pull latches. There is a freezer-grade O-ring seal and dual handles for easy transportation. Ideal for camping, tailgating, and keeping game meat, the new Elite Coolers come in three sizes—35, 45, and 65 quarts. Designed with a 2-inch uninterrupted solid wall construction, these coolers that will retain ice from 7 to 10 days.

Manufactured in the company's Massachusetts facility, the Pelican ProGear Elite Coolers come with a lifetime guarantee. SRP: starts at \$259.95. Booth #3048. (855-604-8562; pelicanprogear.com)

Radians

Shooters enhance their performance when their eyes can quickly adjust to

M-Pro 7

The combat-proven gun-cleaning formula from M-Pro 7 is now available in an easy-to-use, fast-acting foam cleaner. The deep-cleaning spray-on foam penetrates quickly to remove layers of embedded carbon, copper, and lead fouling. In addition to its cleaning power, the foaming solution conditions the bore to help prevent future buildup.

The M-Pro 7 Foaming Gun Cleaner is odorless, nontoxic, non-flammable, and biodegradable. This safe-to-travel 4-ounce pump-operated bottle complies with state and federal transit regulations. SRP \$13.95. Booth #12519. (800-937-4677; mpro7.com)



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light fluctuations in their environment.

Eclipse shooting glasses feature photochromic technology that allows the lenses to darken or lighten within seconds, depending on the amount of UV they are exposed to.

The Eclipse line is tested to exceed ANSI Z87.1+ impact standards. The scratch-resistant, hard-coat, impact-resistant polycarbonate lenses are designed to protect the shooter's eyes against discharge debris. The lenses filter 99.9 percent of harmful UV rays, and when the lens color lightens, they will enhance vision in dimmer environments.

The glasses also include aluminum-alloy temples for lightweight comfort, three lens color choices, and a black protective carry case with belt clip. SRP: \$89.99. Booth #842. (877-732-4267; radians.com)

SKB

The iSeries injection-molded 3614 M4/Short Rifle case is constructed of ultra-strong polypropylene copolymer resin. It features a waterproof gasket, stainless-steel hinges, recessed in-line skate-style wheels, comfortable snap-down over-molded grip handles, and a "trigger-release" latch system for easy opening and closing. Booth #14305. (800-654-5992; skbcases.com/sports)



Wiley X The WX Saint offers heavyweight vision protection in a lightweight half-frame design. The user can easily switch lenses to suit changing light conditions or shooting situations.

Uncle Mike's

The Reflex holster offers M&P Shield owners a dependable, dual-retention concealed-carry holster. Featuring exclusive Integrated Retention Technology (IRT), the Reflex Holster securely retains the firearm by combining a retention lug on the outer wall and a press arm on the body side of the holster. This simple retention system is designed to allow users to easily draw a firearm when an individual's fine motor skills have diminished during a stressful or threatening situation.

While the IRT secures the firearm in the holster, the technology allows the shooter to easily release the firearm by slight rotation of the firearm toward the body. Constructed with injection-molded impact-modified polymer, the Reflex holster includes a paddle attachment and a pancake-

style belt loop to fit belts up to 1 3/4 inches wide. The Uncle Mike's Reflex holster fits both the 9mm and .40 caliber Smith & Wesson M&P Shield. SRP: \$38.95. Booth #12519. (800-423-3537; unclerikes.com)

Wiley X

While the new WX Saint offers heavyweight vision protection, its half-frame design is lightweight and comfortable for all-day wear. The design allows easy lens switching in the field, ensuring the clearest, sharpest vision in changing light conditions and tactical situations.

Certified to the updated GL-PD 10-12 MCEP Standard, which supersedes the MIL-PRF-31013 Ballistic Standard, the WX Saint meets U.S. military ballistic requirements for Combat Protective Eyewear. It also

meets OSHA-grade specs for Certified Occupational Eye Protection. With shatterproof lenses and virtually indestructible frames, the eyewear provides all wearers with advanced protection.

Available configurations include a stealth "Black Ops" version (model CHSAI08), featuring a matte black frame with neutral smoke gray lenses or a gloss black frame with polarized smoke green lenses. Other models include a gloss white frame with gray silver lenses (CHSAI01), and a Tactical Shooter Kit (CHSAI07) that combines a matte black frame with clear and smoke-gray lenses.

The WX Saint carries a limited lifetime warranty against manufacturing defects in material and workmanship. Each pair includes a hard zipper case, a lanyard, and a lens-cleaning cloth. SRP: Starts at \$75. Booth #20220. (800-776-7842; wileyx.com)



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Who You Gonna Call?

Range operators who need specialized help can call on the NSSF

By Cathy Glazer

Increased operating costs, new environmental regulations, and getting along with “not in my backyard” neighbors are among the challenges shooting ranges must grapple with in order to be successful today. To help member ranges deal with these and other challenges, two years ago the National Shooting Sports Foundation created the Range Action Specialists program, a unique group of experienced consultants with proven problem-solving track records.



The Range Action Specialists program helps NSSF member ranges deal with modern challenges, such as environmental regulations.

Because bringing in consultants can be expensive, NSSF subsidizes some of the cost. “We receive so many calls from range owners in need of assistance,” says Zach Snow, NSSF manager of shooting promotions. “NSSF created this program to help ranges with existing problems

and to encourage the range community to become more proactive, with best management practices and environmental stewardship plans.”

Each of the six members of the Range Action Specialists team brings a different area of expertise to the program. They are: Ken Lewis, National

Protective Services; Richard Peddicord, Ph.D., environmental consultant; Ed Santos, Tactical Services Group, Inc.; Don Turner, Don Turner LLC, range developer and consultant; Scott Kranz, URS Corporation; and Leo Dombrowski, attorney.

Among the many ranges that can attest to the program’s effectiveness is Seattle Skeet & Trap. Last year it began the process to amend its lease to allow additional range development. It sought help from the Range Action Specialists program.

“We used the range-design assessment produced by Scott Kranz to support our request to the county for expansion of our lease,” says Seattle Skeet & Trap board member Kathy Hernandez-Bell. “We are most grateful that the NSSF provided us with funds to produce the range design. It was one of the major factors in convincing the King County Division of Facilities Management to finalize the lease amendment with us.”

When the program began in 2010, the North Whidbey Sportsmen’s Association was one of the first ranges

to take advantage of it. Located on Puget Sound’s premier island, the facility has been enjoyed by shooters and archers since 1933. In recent years, its 325 members have watched development from the nearby town of Oak Harbor spread closer to their corner of the island. To head off future problems and to make sure the community saw them as responsible stewards of the land, the group contacted Snow for help.

The Range Action team helped them develop an Environmental Stewardship Plan. An NSSF Range Action Grant helped defray the cost.

“It was very cost-effective for us,” says Frank Bergschneider, a member of the association’s board of trustees. “Ranges have enough problems. This is a good program for all ranges to get out ahead of problems.”

The NSSF Range Action Specialists are available to all NSSF member ranges. For details, visit the Industry section of the NSSF website (nssf.org) and look for Resources for Ranges. Or contact Zach Snow, at zsnow@nssf.org.

The Range Action Specialists

LEO DOMBROWSKI

Attorney with Sanchez Daniels & Hoffman LLP. Dombrowski has more than 20 years experience in the legal fields of environmental, health and safety, and toxic tort matters. He regularly counsels and represents industrial and commercial clients.

- » Appears in state and federal courts on behalf of range owners, operators and users
- » Negotiates permits and range management issues
- » Expert on application of noise ordinances and health and safety requirements regarding ranges

SCOTT KRANZ

Senior Project Manager, URS Corporation, Portland, Oregon

- » More than 18 years of environmental and engineering consulting experience in the areas of waste management, environmental compliance, land-use regulations, and the shooting sports
- » Expertise in range safety and

environmental best practices

- » Indoor and outdoor range design, retrofitting, lead-management plans
- » Land-use planning and permitting, wetland services

KEN LEWIS

National Protective Services team leader, and training area and range consultant

- » More than 24 years of active military and law enforcement experience
- » Training in range operational capabilities and management, safety, employee management, and management through standard operating procedures
- » Assistance with writing BMPs, SOPs, policies, procedures, plans, etc.

RICHARD K. PEDDICORD, PH.D.

Dr. Peddicord is recognized as one of the country’s most experienced leaders in the area of environmental evaluation and

management of outdoor shooting ranges.

- » Assistance to range designers, engineers, architects to optimize environmental management
- » Analysis of applicable regulations and advice about implications and compliance
- » Scientific investigation and evaluation of implications of specific issues

ED SANTOS

Founder and president of Center Target Sports and the Tactical Services Group, Inc. (TSG). Santos is a threat-management specialist and serves as an expert witness on matters of shooting range operations, design and safety, and personal and industrial security.

- » Named SHOT Business magazine’s “Range of the Year,” 2010
- » Named “Best Indoor Range in the USA” by Glock Sport Shooting Foundation
- » Offers a complete package of

consulting services for opening a shooting range and retail store

- » Planning and zoning process understanding and presentations

DON TURNER

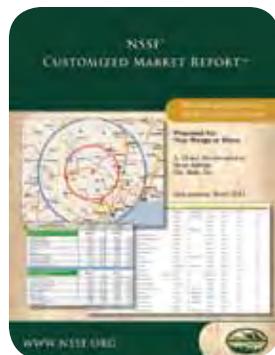
Don Turner LLC provides innovative solutions for existing and developing ranges. Turner redeveloped and managed the Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Arizona, where he served as project leader for shooting ranges statewide, and developed the Clark County Shooting Park in Nevada.

- » Develops and reviews all aspects of shooting range operations, including best management practices
- » Develops/recommends public and member services, customer service programs
- » Grant-writing services
- » Reviews existing range operations, safety procedures, services, personnel policies
- » Specializes in governmental interactions with ranges, codes, etc.

Putting the Numbers to Work

NSSF's Customized Market Reports should be a key part of your business plan **By Brian McCombie**

NSSF's Customized Market Reports (CMRs) are being ordered at a record pace, and for very good reasons. CMRs provide businesspeople who want to open new gun shops or shooting ranges a customized analysis of the geographic and demographic market in which they are considering opening their new business. These reports have proven vital to successful business plans, and are valued by banks and other investors.



NSSF Customized Market Reports have received positive feedback from member companies and banks alike. The CMRs have helped people get loans.

According to Jim Curcuruto, NSSF director, industry research and analysis, in 2009 NSSF members ordered 70 CMRs. That figure more than doubled to more than 150 CMRs ordered in 2012.

"Banks expect you to have a business plan when you approach them for financing," says Curcuruto. "But, more and more, they also want you to have a market analysis. We created the CMRs to give people a third-party study, an objective analysis to assist them in their own research and in creating their business plan."

"Many banks now require the information found in our CMRs before they will consider a construction or start-up loan," says Chris Dolnack, NSSF senior vice president and chief marketing officer. "The same goes for existing firearms retailers looking to expand their footprint or to add a shooting range."

To create a CMR, an entrepreneur first provides either the exact address or the zip code of where they hope to open (or expand) their business. NSSF's industry and analysis department starts by drawing a radius around the address. Radius size is usually dependent upon local population—a smaller radius is used in a higher-population area, a larger one in more sparsely populated locales. (Many people who order CMRs select a core radius of 10 miles and a second, expanded radius of 20 or 30 or more miles.)

Then, with the radius as a starting point, NSSF uses computer mapping systems, U.S. Census, and other data to provide you with demographic information, household trends, effective buying income, and the number of potential shooters and hunters. Your CMR will also contain maps and a listing of ranges, shooting facilities, and shooting preserves as listed in NSSF's Where-to-Shoot and WingshootingUSA databases. (NSSF's national range database currently contains more than 7,000 range listings.) Shooting-sports-related businesses, law enforcement locations, and FFL holders, Type 1 & 2 (on the ATF FFL list), are also included.

For example, a 2011 sample CMR (created by using NSSF headquarters' address as the location of a possible new business) found 205,000 people within

a 10-mile radius and 1.236 million people within a 20-mile radius. The report then summarized various demographic elements, including number of households, average household incomes, percentages of people employed and their various employment categories (blue collar, white collar, etc.) as well as educational levels—again, using a 10-mile radius and then a 20-mile radius. With data provided by National Sporting Goods Association participation reports and current Census population figures, the CMR estimates the potential number of shooters. Within a 10-mile radius of NSSF HQ, for example, there were an estimated 12,500 potential handgun target shooters, 6,800 potential gun hunters, and 1,270 potential bowhunters. Plug in the 20-mile radius, and those numbers jumped to 75,000 potential handgun shooters, 40,800 potential gun hunters, and 7,600 potential bowhunters. Numerous other "potential" categories were also included.

Of note, Curcuruto points out that the CMRs don't make any recommendations or offer any advice. The CMRs are essentially pure data. "The CMRs complement and add to people's own research," he says.

It isn't only new businesses that use CMRs.

"The industry has experienced record sales in the last several years," says Dolnack. "But highly successful and recognized retailers and shooting ranges are always looking forward, and a number of them commission CMRs every three to five years so that they can stay abreast of the changing demographics in their market area."

CMRs cost NSSF members \$500 (\$5,000 for non-members), and it may be the best investment a hopeful business owner can make.

"All our research products are done with the intent of helping our member companies make better data-driven business decisions so that they can grow their markets," Dolnack says. "It's why NSSF exists as the industry's trade association and why it's grown to more than 7,500 members today."

Visit nssf.org/research for additional information on this and other industry research. ■

Clearview Purchases Battenfeld

Big changes are afoot for Battenfeld Technologies, an industry-leading manufacturer of shooting, reloading, gunsmithing, and gun-cleaning supplies, which manufactures various accessories under several popular brands: Caldwell Shooting Supplies, Wheeler Engineering, Tipton Gun Cleaning Supplies, Lockdown Vault Accessories, Past Recoil Protection, Non-Typical Wildlife Solutions, and others. The Potterfield family, former owners of Battenfeld, sold their entire interest in the company to Clearview Capital, a private-equity group based in Connecticut, and members of the existing Battenfeld management team in June 2012. Battenfeld will continue to operate at its current Missouri facility and all contact information will stay the same. The management team and workforce will also remain unchanged.

Battenfeld Technologies was started as a division within MidwayUSA, and in 2000 was spun off into its own company. One of the contributing factors to the Potterfield family's decision to sell the business was to allow their family members to focus on other business opportunities. Russell Potterfield, former CEO of Battenfeld, said at the time of the sale, "I'm hugely proud of what the Battenfeld team has been able to accomplish and what they will accomplish as an entity outside of the Potterfield Group umbrella of companies."

"We have experienced no real changes to the way we operate the business, and we remain passionately dedicated to building innovative, high-quality shooting accessories and supporting our dealers with top-notch customer service and a very aggressive advertising campaign," says Jim Gianladis, vice-president of products and marketing for Battenfeld Technologies.

Bob Zara, vice president of sales for Battenfeld, adds, "Respecting our customers' loyalty and making their needs the top priority remains our focus. As a result, there has not been any disruption to customer service or shipping."

Battenfeld has a long-standing history of not only expanding within its core categories, but also launching entirely new brands in adjacent market segments. "Steady, organic growth of our existing products, as well as possible brand acquisitions, are both major components of our strategic planning," says Gianladis. "Clearview and Battenfeld management are excited about the direction of the company and the growth opportunities ahead." —W. H. Gross

Bushnell's Bulletproof Promise

In the world of sporting optics, consumers face an eye-watering array of choices, from value-priced introductory models to top-quality glass costing thousands. Manufacturers face great difficulty differentiating themselves from the competition without a giant ad spend, which today's savvy consumers often take with a grain of salt anyway.

Yet Bushnell, a well-known maker of binoculars, scopes, and other optics for hunters and shooters, stands out from the crowded optics field by standing behind its products, offering a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee on its Elite, Legend, and Trophy XLT optics and full line of hunting laser rangefinders.

Once a tried-and-true way to gain customer loyalty, the 100 percent satisfaction guarantee has become all but extinct in the modern world. Bucking the trend, Bushnell implemented its Bulletproof 100% Money Back Guarantee in 2011 to cover its Legend Ultra HD line, but, according to director of marketing Aaron Oelger, not without some trepidation.

"Back in 2011, we were challenged to get our Legend line in customers' hands," says Oelger. "Someone threw out the idea of a money-back guarantee, and there were a lot of questions raised. Would it work? How many would be returned? Ultimately, we decided to go for it and the consumer responded really, really well. And in terms of returns, the reality was they were extremely low, even below our expectations."

Though backing a single product line 100 percent was a bold move by Bushnell, it was still just a toe in the pool when you consider the broad line of optics the company carries. With the initial success of the program, along with the low return rate, as support, Oelger and the Bushnell team decided to expand the Bulletproof Guarantee in 2012 to cover its Elite and Trophy XLT line, as well as a long list of laser rangefinders. This builds consumer confidence and gives retailers a leg up.

"Bushnell's Bulletproof Guarantee really makes our optics an easy sell," says Oelger. "When consumers are in a retail store, they're faced with optics from a lot of manufacturers, both established companies and new players in the game. A retailer can say all these products are good, but only Bushnell believes in their product so much they put their money where their mouth is. It's pretty compelling."

To further help retailers, Bushnell supported the 100 percent promise in 2012 with a cross-platform advertising campaign, complete with mobile marketing unit that visited retailers around the U.S. The push helped educate consumers and retail associates about Bushnell's products and the strength of the guarantee.

"The message is pretty simple," says Oelger. "Bushnell makes great optics and you're going to be happy with them. In fact, we promise you'll be happy with them, and if not, we'll refund your money. No questions asked." Booth #12519. (800-221-9035; bushnell.com) —David Draper

At the Touch of a Finger

NSSF's WhereToShoot.org website and app are an important digital resource for shooters, retailers, and ranges **By Brian McCombie**

NSSF launched the WhereToShoot.org website in 2002, and today it is the largest database of shooting ranges in the nation. WhereToShoot.org has gone through some significant changes over the years, changes designed to make it even a better resource for anyone involved in the shooting industry. If you're a range owner/operator or the owner/manager of a firearms-related retail outlet, you owe it to yourself and your customers to use and promote this great shooting resource.

Among the larger changes of late: In March 2012, WhereToShoot.org launched a mobile application for iPhones and a mobile-friendly website. The effect of the first app was felt almost immediately.

"In July 2012, we had 121,000 total visits to WhereToShoot.org," says Bill Dunn, NSSF managing director, marketing communications. "The July before that, without the app? We had 80,000 visits. The whole switch to mobile has really helped increase traffic to the site. Today, there are so many more people who are accessing websites on their mobile devices, and the WhereToShoot.org app makes it so easy to find a place to shoot. You can pull up a listing by state or zip code and customize your search by the type of facility you'd like or the type of shooting you want to do. You can actually target where you are with the 'Near Me' function and find a place to shoot that way. It will even give you directions to that range."

Over the years, WhereToShoot.org has changed in two other important ways. First, it has collected information about thousands of new ranges since its inception. You don't have to be an NSSF member to have your shooting facility listed on the website, though your range will come up higher in the listings and appear in boldface if you are. NSSF Five Star Ranges will be listed right at the top of these range searches. Five Star Ranges are among the best ranges in the nation based on an NSSF evaluation of appearance, customer/member focus, customer/member development, management, community relations, and facility amenities.

Second, WhereToShoot.org has added a great deal of helpful shooting information to the site's content. For example, click on the "Resources for Shooters" tab, and you will find shooting news and events in your area. You can also access programs



WhereToShoot.org launched apps last year for the iPhone and Android, providing a big boost to Web traffic.

for young and new shooters here, read the 10 Rules of Firearms Safety, use links to many shooting and Second Amendment organizations, and pull up listings of NSSF-member firearms retailers by state.

Under this tab, you also have access to nearly 200 short videos that cover a host of shooting tips and techniques. You can even print up free targets here. All of this content, of course, is also accessible via the WhereToShoot.org mobile app.

WhereToShoot.org adds new shooting facilities almost daily. Yet, there are still many, many ranges not listed here. "If you own or operate a range, and you are not listed, we really encourage you to do so," says Dunn.

Adding your facility is easy. On the WhereToShoot.org site, just click on "List Your Range," and a facility information form will come up. Fill this out online. If

your facility is already listed, but you've made changes to the facility itself or the shooting programs you offer, click on "Update Your Range" and follow the instructions.

Dunn also suggests that state game agency officials list their public ranges on the WhereToShoot.org site. If a shooter goes to a range and discovers it is not listed on WhereToShoot.org, he should consider informing the owner/operator of the database and how easy it is to be included. The larger WhereToShoot.org becomes, the greater its benefit to all of us in the shooting industry.

As Dunn says, "WhereToShoot.org is a great resource for anyone who shoots. But it's also a real plus for the ranges, which can advertise their presence for free, and for firearms retailers who want to provide their customers with places where they can shoot."

All of this information is as near as your computer's mouse, or your mobile unit's touch screen. ■



"WhereToShoot.org is a great resource for anyone who shoots," says Bill Dunn of NSSF. "But it's also a plus for the ranges, which can advertise their presence for free, and for firearms retailers."

Traditions Performance Firearms Ups the Ante

The people behind Traditions Performance Firearms don't like to rest on their laurels. They'd rather stir the pot and keep the competition on the run. And they think the new Vortek Strikerfire muzzleloader, which is being introduced at the 2013 SHOT Show, will do exactly that.

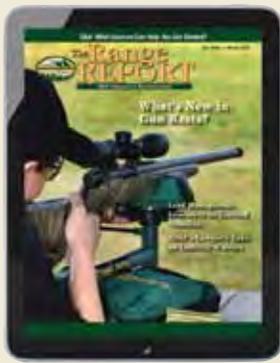
In development since 2008, this patent-pending rifle takes features from the popular Vortek series but incorporates a StrikerFire system, the most interesting facet of which is the lack of an external hammer. "The system is easy to use," says Tom Hall, president of Traditions. "Just slide the striker button forward until it locks and then shoot. Eliminating an external hammer improves the rifle in three key ways. First, you get faster lock time; second, you get the ability to mount the scope closer to the bore; and third, you can build a crisp-breaking two-stage trigger, which we have set at 3 pounds."

Hall says de-cocking the firearm is simple. "The recessed de-cocking button allows for quick and quiet de-cocking of the firearm. And, when you break open the gun, an automatic de-cocking occurs."

The rifle is also equipped with two safeties—a trigger-block safety and a striker-block safety. The overall design saves some weight, as well. The new rifles comes in at a svelte 6.25 pounds.

Other features include a 28-inch tapered and fluted magnum chromoly barrel and a Speed Load system in the barrel that enables easier loading and more consistent groups. A one-piece stainless-steel Accelerator Breech Plug allows the user to fire both loose and pellet powder without changing the breech plug, and a removable butt pad (which releases with the touch of a button) helps allow for convenient storage.

When asked why it took five years to get to market, Hall says four factors were at work. "First, during the stages of development we kept adding features, such as the manual safety and removable butt pad, which delayed introduction. Second, we also were trying to determine whether it was better to introduce it in a cartridge platform, but ultimately decided the muzzleloader platform was the right way to go. Third, we had other products in front of this rifle that needed to be introduced. Finally, we wanted to be sure we introduced the StrikerFire at the right time—when the market was ready. We feel this is now the right time." Booth #16532. (800-388-4656; traditionsfirearms.com)



Published by NSSF since 1998, *The Range Report* has gone exclusively digital with the Summer 2012 issue, available for console, tablet, and smartphone. The new format puts not only articles, but also videos and links, right at subscribers' fingertips.

The New Range Report

The digital version offers an expanded format

By David Draper

Among the biggest challenges leading businesses face is not only knowing about the latest trends, but getting in front of them. Invariably, successful businesses are those whose leaders and employees take the time to get ahead of the curve by staying abreast of every facet of their industry. For shooting range owners, managers, and employees, the National Shooting Sports Foundation makes this ongoing education easier with the new, all-digital *Range Report* magazine and interactive website.

"The *Range Report* has a great history as 'the' trade magazine for the shooting range industry, and this next step in its evolution makes it more available to more people who thirst for the information the magazine and the website can present," said Bill Dunn, NSSF managing director, marketing communications.

Launched this past summer, the new *Range Report* portal takes the popular magazine exclusively online in both a flip-through e-magazine format and as a downloadable PDF that can be easily printed out as a hard copy. Inside these virtual pages, you'll still find leading research, industry news, legislative alerts, informative articles, real-world experiences, and popular recurring features such as Q&A and The Undercover Shooter. And by going exclusively digital the new *Range Report* magazine offers so much more, including the ability to expand its number of pages as needed. Each issue offers links to more information in addition to value-added content in the form of educational videos, archived articles from past issues, and instant access to range-relevant news.

"The magazine is both an end unto itself as well as a portal to ever more information and entertainment," said *Range Report* editor Glenn Sapir in his letter introducing the Summer 2012 digital issue. "You can bet that as technology improves and you, the reader, and we, the publisher, keep looking for ways to make this magazine even better, *The Range Report* will continue to evolve, never forgetting its mission to serve the shooting facilities that are its intended beneficiary."

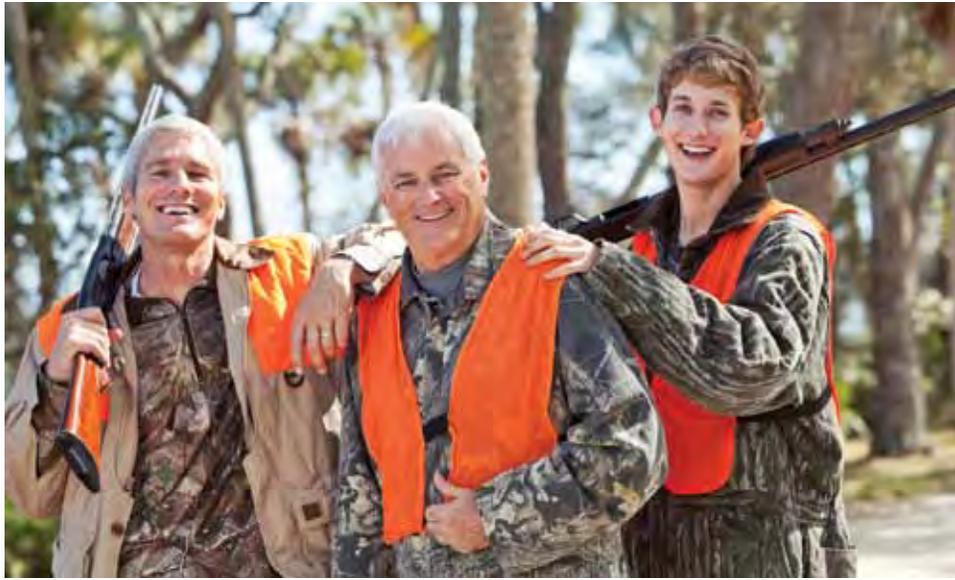
Supporting this leading range-centric digital magazine, which is still produced on a quarterly basis, the new *Range Report* website allows the NSSF to keep range owners and managers up to date about developments in the industry. The site is continuously refreshed with information and news as it happens, and provides an easy-to-use



The new digital *Range Report* has favorite features like Q&A and The Undercover Shooter, but can also provide new content, such as educational videos.

communication channel to Sapir, the NSSF Range Advisory Committee, and other experts. The new digital *Range Report* magazine and website also offer many exciting new opportunities for advertisers to reach core consumers.

Successful businesses stay that way through constant education and evolution, and successful magazines do the same. By going exclusively digital with an online e-zine and informative Web portal, the *Range Report* has upheld its mission "to provide information in an entertaining manner to help shooting facilities run their operations more financially, legally, and environmentally sound, and, ultimately, to provide their customers and club members the most enjoyable experience possible." ■



Families Afield, an effort to encourage states to pass laws that make it easier for newcomers to get into hunting, has been a huge success. In 2011, more than 175,000 apprentice hunter licenses were sold, bringing the total number of apprentice licenses to 782,604.

New Boots, Old Ground

Thanks to Families Afield, opportunities for apprentice hunters are expanding **By Robert Staeger**

Of all the various programs to bring new hunters into the fold, Families Afield is one of the most widespread and successful. Created in 2005 by the National Shooting Sports Foundation in partnership with the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance and the National Wild Turkey Federation, and working with the Congressional Sportsmen's Alliance and the National Rifle Association, the legislative initiative introduces an increasing number of apprentice hunters to the sport every year. In 2011, 176,080 apprentice hunter licenses were sold throughout the 34 Families Afield states.

"It's truly fantastic," says Melissa Schilling, NSSF's director of recruitment and retention. "We saw a huge increase in 2011. That brings our apprentice hunting license numbers to 782,604 to date."

In a nutshell, Families Afield is an effort to get states to pass laws that break down barriers to allow newcomers to experience hunting, no matter what age. "It's try-before-you-buy," says Schilling. "It allows people to experience apprentice hunting prior to taking a hunter education class. You have the opportunity to decide whether hunting is for you before taking that next step."

And if you worry about the safety issues of introducing these newcomers to the sport, rest easy. The active attention of a mentor makes safety for apprentice hunters paramount. "Our safety statistics continue to show that the safest hunter in the field is the supervised new hunter," says Schilling. "That still holds true."

Last year, Florida lengthened the duration of its apprentice hunting program from two years to three. And New Mexico became the 34th state to pass Families Afield legislation.

"Originally we were focused on youth," says Schilling. "In recent years we've seen the need for adults to take part in the apprentice opportunity."

When the outdoors can make an early impression on kids, that's always a wonderful thing. But much of the payoff to that experience is down the line, a long-term investment that assures hunting a robust future. Mentored adults, on the other hand, can become the hunters of the present, able to participate in the sport autonomously as soon as they wish, and to whatever extent they like.

"It's not enough to get the youth involved," says Chris Dolnack, NSSF's senior vice president and chief marketing officer. "Some states have seen that from the get-go and have included adults, while others are very reluctant to do it."

"A youngster is still dependent on an adult taking him. You can take a kid out hunting, and if he enjoys it, he's still dependent," explains Dolnack.

"He just can't get out and go. But if you took adults and introduced them to hunting and they enjoyed it? They have a job, they have a car...they have the means and wherewithal that they could go take a hunter safety course, they could buy a hunting license, and they could go hunting. And they could take a youngster."

The adult initiative is making progress. "A good portion of the apprentice license sales in states are actually sold to adults," says Schilling. Fifteen states were able to break out their 2011 apprentice hunting data to differentiate between youth and adults. Out of those 15 states, adult license sales account for 35 percent. More than 52,000 apprentice licenses were sold to adults in 2011. "A new hunter is a new hunter. They could be eight years old, or they could be 80. I think that's great."

NSSF is currently doing studies on Families Afield follow-through, to discover how many apprentices end up enrolling in hunter education classes. But one thing they've already noted is that there's an advantage for states to promote Families Afield opportunities. "When you look at states that actually promote that they have an apprentice opportunity, their apprentice license sales are always significantly higher," says Schilling. That's good for the state agency, and good for the sport.

As for the future of Families Afield, the work is still not done. The initiative plans to strengthen its efforts in the Northeast, but plans are afoot to move into uncharted territory as well.

"We're looking at additional states for 2013," she says. "If you look at a map of the states that have passed Families Afield, in the West we don't have such a large footprint. But central, south, and east, we've had a huge impact already. So we're really going to start looking at Western states."

Every state has its own unique regulations and legislative hurdles, and those can take time to overcome. But if you're a kid or an adult in the West, looking to dip your toe into the hunting pool, 2013 might just be your year. ■

Barnes Site Makes Bullet Buying Easy

Reloading is purely a numbers game. Bullet weights and lengths, case capacity, powder charges—deciphering all that information can be confusing. Packaging and presenting all this data also presents a challenge for manufacturers who strive to give consumers the product information they need without bogging things down with confusing charts or hard-to-navigate websites.

One company that has tackled that challenge head-on is Utah-based Barnes Bullets, which has introduced two new Web-based initiatives designed to cut through the clutter. According to Barnes public relations specialist Brett Throckmorton, these efforts are designed to help consumers and retailers by giving them easier access to the information they want.

"Our previous Web pages were primarily just text, listing lots of data in a format that wasn't user friendly," says Throckmorton. "The combination of our new product-specific Web portals and Barnes ProvinGround site deliver an attractive, visual introduction to Barnes Bullets with the data and testing information serious reloaders need and want."

Late last October Barnes introduced the first of its new Web portals specific to each line of its component bullets. At barnesbullets.com, users can choose the component they're interested in from a drop-down menu. With one click they're taken to a product-specific page that features not only a brief description and history of the product, but also a short video that illustrates how the bullets expand and react to the target. An easy-to-decipher scroll bar on the side of the page lists calibers and corresponding data, including bullet weight, diameter, and—new to the site—length.

Additional information now available to consumers are the reams of data Barnes has collected over the years, along with photos and high-action videos to be featured on the new Barnes ProvinGround section of the company's website. "We test bullets like crazy and, because of all that testing in the lab and field, we feel we have the best hunting bullet out there," says Throckmorton. "And we figured since we're already doing the testing, we might as well share it with our customers."

Although they were designed with the end-user in mind, these new Web initiatives from Barnes also provide a valuable resource for retailers. "The most important aspect of the retail business is having sales people with strong product knowledge," says Throckmorton. "Our Web portals serve as a handy reference guide to answer customer questions."

Throckmorton believes the ProvinGround will be extremely valuable resource for retailers to educate their salespeople. "When a person is knowledgeable about a product, they're better equipped to make the sale," he says. "A retailer's sales force is the gateway to the consumer, and the ProvinGround is an easy way to get them informed and excited about our products."

No matter where you fall on the bullet-buying spectrum, these new Web initiatives secure Barnes as a leader in the reloading component business, a position they've long been comfortable with. Booth #14229. (435-856-1000; barnesbullets.com) —David Draper

Passing the Torch

You've spent years building your business. Consider these tips before handing over the reins **By William F. Kendy**

Whether you purchased a store, took over the reins from a family member, or started your business from scratch, one of the furthest things from your mind when you took control was how to exit. Still, all things come to an end, and there will come a time when you will want to—or have to—call it a day. Determining an exit strategy is no easy task. Many independent business owners want to keep the family heritage intact and “pass the torch” to a relative rather than selling it to an outsider. Regardless of what exit option you take, here are some things to consider.

Start Early

Planning your business exit should start the day you open the front door and hang that framed first dollar bill on the wall. The actual plans may change based on your personal and professional progression, but it is critical that you have a plan in place to ensure a smooth transition.

Know Your Wants

When the time comes, do you want to leave immediately or hang around for a while? Do you want to work only a few days a week or just specific times of the year? If the business was largely

business sense. It is advised that owners start the exit process at least three to five years out to make sure the business is in an attractive and saleable shape, the books are up to date, it has a profitable track record, and an exit plan is in place.

Set Up a Team

Selling and passing along a business isn't easy and encompasses many issues, ranging from tax planning and estate management to insurance options and buy-out options. That's the short list. There's a lot more. Assemble a team that includes an accountant, a tax professional, a financial planner, a valuation expert, and a trusted confidant.

Value the Company

Company valuations are “snapshots in time” of the financial holdings and worth of a business. Not only is it important in establishing the worth of the company (obviously affecting its selling price), the process also identifies loans, debts, and liens. It also makes cleaning up the financials easier and establishes a figure to be used for tax and inheritance planning.

Who should you use

to do a valuation? You could use an accountant, commercial business broker, or a consultant.

“We use an investment-banking and corporate-financial advisory firm for our valuations, because they have the experience to look at earnings, expectations, and the core of our business,” says Kevin Adams, vice president of Kittery Trading Post in Kittery, Maine. “We do a valuation every year to make sure that the stakeholder's interest is in good shape.”

Valuing your business also can have additional ramifications, depending on how you want to structure the finances. If you identify a family member as your successor and bring him on board to work, you could craft a plan that

allows that person to use the increase in business that results from his efforts as a down payment.

“The parent and the child value the business on the day that the child comes to work,” says small-business consultant and former retail store owner Tom Shay. “The business is revalued on the day that the parent wants out. If they agree at the beginning that the child would get 50 percent of the increase during that time period, then the difference goes toward a down payment. It's basically a self-funding down-payment plan.”

A Full Accounting

As a businessperson, it is your obligation to take every legal tax deduction available. Having said that, you may have some expenses on your books that may not be attractive to a new owner. Keeping Aunt Matilda on the payroll may keep the clan happy, but if she isn't making a business contribution, it might be time to retire her. The decision, however, is ultimately best for the business and worth the grief, because the more profit you make, the more attractive your business becomes.

“Run your business as a cash business so you know your real status all the time,” says Miles Hall, president of H & H Gun Range in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. “Know what money you have left over at any period and stay on top of return on investment. It is important that business owners keep in mind that their impression of their financial and business pyramid as an owner is different from the prospective buyer's viewpoint.”

Find a Successor

You may have children who have the desire and passion to run the business but don't have the talent or skill set to get the job done. There also may be relatives who have all the required skills but no passion for it.

George Romanoff is the owner of Ace Sporting Goods in Washington, Pennsylvania. He purchased the business from his father and uncle and then bought out his brother. In addition to capability, he believes that the person running the operation has to have a true devotion to making the business a greater success. “Their commitment has to be not only to run

the business, but to be willing to put in the hours it takes to grow it.”

What if two children have equal talent, skills, vision, and commitment?

“If the business is going to be turned over to two family members, everything has to be decided in advance, and included in the buy-sell agreement,” says Shay. “You need to make a decision as to who will be in charge of what and how decisions will be made and disagreements settled.”

Without such a plan in place, the co-owner who always votes “no” wins.

What if no family members are qualified? In this case, you could “trash and travel” the store by selling inventory and assets, cleaning up all obligations, and then heading to parts unknown with the remainder (kissing away all your brand equity, reputation, and goodwill). You also could package and market the business to an outside buyer or put top management in place and still maintain control.

It really boils down to this: Are you determined to have a family member run your business no matter what results? Or are you willing to put someone else in charge in order to continue your business legacy?

Train Your Successor

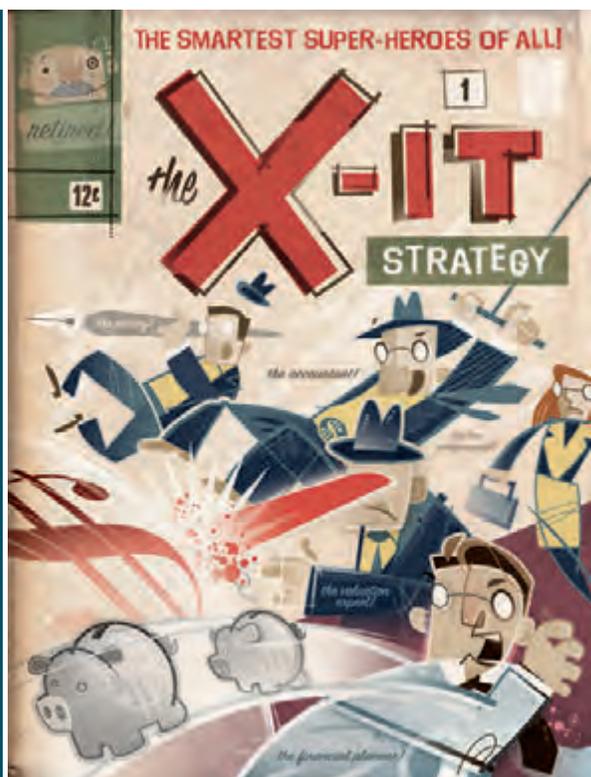
However you decide to divide up the business, don't expect a family member with no business experience whatsoever to be able to run it successfully. You need to train your successor.

“I know of a fifth-generation jewelry retailer who mandates that all family members start out at the lowest levels, doing tasks like taking out the trash and filling water pitchers,” says Hall. “They have to graduate from college and get a job outside the company. Then they are allowed to come into the business, but only on a lower level. The biggest thing owners need to ingrain in their replacements is to get them into the ‘why’ mode. While it's important to understand *what* they have to do, if they're going to direct the business they need to know *why* they are doing what they are doing.”

Family Style

Keeping the business in the family and maintaining good relationships can be dicey. You want to make sure that you are fair to your children or relatives who aren't really interested in being part of the business, but who expect some sort of payout anyway. You can handle that by providing life insurance for people who won't benefit from the business, “gifting” relatives, or, if you're incorporated, awarding non-voting stock shares to non-participating family members.

Whatever you ultimately decide to do, decide to do something. Life has a way of getting “in the way,” and the world is full of examples of people who waited too long to start the process of passing the torch. Don't be that guy. **■**



built on your presence and your business is named after you (or yours), you may have to stay in the store for a certain period of time to make the deal work. Accept the fact that you won't have complete control. You may have always been the captain of your ship, but once you sign the buy-sell agreement you most likely will no longer be the master and commander.

Time Your Exit

If you have an epiphany about becoming a hunting guide and think you can get out of the business in six months—good luck. Can it happen? I'm sure it has, but a quick, unconsidered exit doesn't make very good busi-



Blackhawk's Diversion concealed-carry options include (from left) the Racquet Bag, the Range Bag, and the Carry Sling Pack.

Blackhawk Diversion Bags Offer Various Concealment Options

Blackhawk's new carrier bags keep your firearm properly concealed and secure, no matter where you go or what you do **By Doug Howlett**

With a continued explosion of interest in concealed carry, Blackhawk has recognized that many Americans desire more options in keeping a firearm handy than simply wearing it somewhere on their person. For that purpose, the company is introducing a complete line of bags, packs, and gun cases made to look and function like everyday backpacks or gym bags but with the added feature of easy-access hidden compartments for storing, transporting, and/or accessing long or short firearms.

Leading off the Diversion line of bags and cases is the Diversion Board Pack, a single-pocket pack capable of transporting long guns with folding or collapsible stocks. The pack will also accommodate short-barrel long arms as well as broken-down MSRs. The interior is lined with webbing for a holster, pouch, and accessory attachments, and includes a muzzle retainer, retention strap, and padded divider. Available in black/red, gray/black, gray/blue, and ranger green/coyote tan standard bag color schemes. SRP: \$145.

The Carry Backpack is a larger pack made of 420-denier velocity nylon. It boasts a half-moon pad on the back panel for ready access to a carry gun. A padded divider separates contents in the main compartment, which is readily accessible with an ambidextrous zipper. Padded straps and additional pockets, compartments and loop panels for attaching hook-back holsters, pouches, and accessories round out this pack that comes in four color combinations. SRP: \$135. The Courier Bag is a messenger-bag design, which includes a dual-access, loop-lined hidden compartment on

the rear, pass-through zipper access on the main compartment flap, a configurable front pocket, and enough side and internal pockets to provide ample portage of gun acces-

sories and gear. SRP: \$140.

The Racquet Bag is designed to look like an ordinary tennis racquet case. The padded bag allows for the concealment and transport of up to

two firearms or the separated upper/lower of an MSR. The zipper sliders allow for the attachment of a lock for added security. SRP: \$65. The Workout Bag looks just like a standard gym bag, but can carry multiple firearms along with additional items. The main compartment can be extended into the end pockets for more room to carry long arms, while a removable compartment divider protects guns when carrying more than one. SRP: \$175.

The Range Bag is a complete range bag with the capability of keeping handguns, ammunition, and other shooting accessories organized, but in a design that resembles an ordinary gym bag. SRP: \$150.

The Carry Sling Pack is a super-compact carry option. The teardrop-shaped, single-strap sling pack can keep a handgun hidden, yet allow ample room for transporting other necessary everyday items. The bag is adjustable for ambidextrous wear and boasts a front-zipper main compartment with a key lanyard and two smaller pockets. SRP: \$55. Booth #14562. (800-694-5263; blackhawk.com)

The Padded Weapon Transport Insert

Don't want to spring for a dedicated Diversion bag or have another bag that will work fine with just a little help? Slide in the padded insert, which transforms any container into a carry pack. The insert includes multiple pockets covering up to 21 inches for separated upper and lower MSR halves (SRP: \$25). Made to complement all Diversion bags and packs, the Adjustable Hook-Back Holster is covered in hook material for ready mounting on loop panels. The 3-inch webbing can be resized to fit a variety of handguns. SRP: \$14.



Weatherby Goes All-In

The company upgrades the Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic rifle package

One-stop shopping is something time-pressed consumers appreciate. Retailers like it, too, because when you tell the consumer that a single purchase will give him everything he needs to go hunting (except ammo), chances are the guy on the other side of the counter will say yes. That's why Weatherby's popular Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic rifle now comes in a hunting-ready package that includes a mounted and bore-sighted Redfield Revenge riflescope, a sling, and a carrying case.

Like all Vanguard Series 2 rifles, the Synthetic is guaranteed to shoot sub-MOA (a three-shot group under .99 inches) with Weatherby factory or premium ammo. The 3-9x42mm Redfield Revenge scope has a four-plex reticle and is fixed atop the rifle with Talley-designed Weatherby Vanguard mounts. An adjustable nylon sling and injection-molded rifle case complete the package.

"Our new Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic Package is a tremendous value for hunters," says company president Ed Weatherby. "The quality and performance are outstanding as well, especially considering the written sub-MOA accuracy guarantee."

All Vanguard Series 2 rifles feature a match-quality two-stage trigger and a three-position safety. In addition, the adjustable trigger (down to 2.5 pounds) has an auxiliary sear for a creep-free consistent let-off.

"The Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic's stock has the traditional Weatherby

profile that allows quick eye-to-scope alignment and fast target acquisition," says marketing coordinator Tim Frampton. "Special Griptonite pistol grip and forend inserts provide a firm non-slip grip, and a right-side palm swell helps improve handling and control."

Retailers should emphasize that this year's package is a substantial upgrade over packages that were offered last year.

"The reason we upgraded the

package was that we wanted to emphasize quality," says Frampton. "We wanted to make every component of the package nicer. So, we upgraded the stock, the scope, and the rings. The hard case is considerably better, as well. In all, it's just a better all-round package."

Frampton notes that retailers should stress quality. "This way the buyer knows he's getting a nicer scope and a very good hard case with metal latches. Many times, packages

like this offer cheaper accessories. We didn't want to do that."

As a further inducement, Frampton says to mention that the rifle comes bore-sighted. "All the customer has to do is go to the range and fine-tune it."

Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic Package caliber options range from .223 Remington to .338 Winchester Mag., including the .257 Wby. Mag. and .300 Wby. Mag. SRP: \$999. Booth #12729. (805-227-2600; weatherby.com)

Weatherby's Vanguard Series 2 Synthetic rifle now comes with a mounted and bore-sighted Redfield Revenge riflescope, a sling, and a carrying case.



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Bill Raczkowski
Category Marketing Manager,
Gerber Legendary Blades

For as long as humans have been hunting, knives have been our most valuable tool. Even as every other element of hunting has evolved with time and technology, knives have remained largely unchanged from the basic design concept that helped early man skin saber-toothed tigers. Today, in the face of an ever-changing industry, knives seem to remain one of the few constants. But as a wise Greek philosopher once said, The only thing that's truly constant is change. And the knife industry is no exception.

To get a perspective on just how the knife business is changing, and what the future might hold for this vital segment of the shooting, hunting, and outdoors industry, *SHOT Daily* turned to Bill Raczkowski, category marketing manager at Gerber Legendary Blades and current president of the American Knife and Tool Institute (AKTI).

SHOT Daily: How did you become involved with AKTI?

Bill Raczkowski: Gerber has been part of the organization since 1998, but I became involved in 2008 as Gerber's representative on the Board of Regents, which was made up of eight other industry leaders: A.G. Russell Knives, Benchmade Knife Co., Buck Knives, Kershaw Knives, Meyerco, CRKT, United Cutlery, and the Knifemaker's Guild. I became vice president in 2009 and then president in 2011. I plan to be involved for many years to come because I truly believe in the cause.

SD: For those people who aren't familiar with AKTI, maybe you can provide a little background on the organization and its mission.

BR: AKTI was formed in the mid-1990s when C.J. Buck of Buck Knives and Les De Asis of Benchmade recognized the need to form an organization to protect the rights of knife owners, dealers, and manufacturers after an incident in California regarding the aggressive interpretation of the "dirk and dagger" and "switchblade" statutes.

AKTI was formed because C.J. and Les realized that a team of voices would be more powerful than the voices of many individuals when it comes to protecting the rights to carry, sell, and manufacture knives. We all recognize that even though we are fierce competitors, we must band together to fight for a larger cause.

SD: Your role as president of the AKTI, as well as your position at Gerber, provides you with a unique perspective on the knife industry as a whole. What would you say is the current state of the knife industry?

BR: I believe the industry is on very solid ground at the moment, and the future looks even brighter. Even with a slow economy over the past three to four years, our industry remained vibrant and relevant. With increased innovation and utility—two of our industry's collective driving forces—not to mention the trend toward personal preparedness, we are strong and getting stronger.

The other thing that is helping strengthen our industry is that rules and regulations continue to be clarified and strengthened. A few years ago there was a scare when U.S. Customs misunderstood a mechanism that could have stopped the importation of hundreds of thousands of folding knives. But, with the help of that department and many other organizations and lobbyists, we were able to amend the 1958 Federal Switchblade law to include language that gave customs agents a better understanding of what constituted a switchblade versus a non-switchblade knife. Every few years we run into obstacles like that. Yet, as a family and an organization of like minds, we overcome them and continue to prosper and thrive.

SD: What do you see as the biggest challenges facing the industry in the next five years?

BR: One of our bigger challenges lies with teaching consumers—especially the younger generation—that knives are not weapons, but rather tools of utility that should be handled, maintained, and used properly. Without this education, many kids (and ultimately adults) won't ever realize the value of cutting instruments, and this leads to misunderstanding and a fear of knives that will ultimately threaten the industry. There are already countries around the world that severely restrict or prohibit its citizens from carrying and using knives. The U.K. restricts the carry of many common knives—like any folding knife with a locking blade. This is disturbing and something we do not want to see happening in the U.S.

AKTI is becoming proactive with legislators across the country to show them how the knife industry is good



Bill Raczkowski is category marketing manager at Gerber Legendary Blades, and current president of the American Knife and Tool Institute (AKTI).

for the economy—good for jobs and good for consumers.

SD: What is your forecast for the industry for 2013?

BR: In talking with my peers at the AKTI, I feel confident we will see stronger sales in 2013 than we saw in 2012. Custom knifemakers are continuing to push the envelope, and larger companies are embracing many new technologies that allow them to create affordable knife and tool options for a broad array of consumers.

I also see a resurgence of U.S.-made products, something Gerber is actively embracing in our Portland, Oregon, facility.

SD: What aspect of the industry are retailers not embracing yet, but should be?

BR: With the new federal laws regarding assisted-opening knives, retailers can really set themselves apart from the competition by becoming a valuable resource for their consumers. By understanding rules and regulations inside and out, retailers can help educate their consumers on the local, state, and federal laws, and really capitalize on the chance to stand out from their competition through superior customer service.

SD: Are there any big trends that haven't caught on yet that retailers should look for?

BR: At Gerber, we subscribe to an end-use-activity sales approach and think it represents the way consum-

ers truly shop for knives and tools. Finding out how a customer intends to use a product they are purchasing will help the retailer guide them toward a knife or tool suited for that use—ultimately making customers happy with their purchase.

This approach is in the process of being adopted at many retailers but has a way to go before being widespread. It's a fresh way of thinking, but it gets back to customer—and even community—service, which is always a trend that's worth embracing.

SD: What do you see as the biggest innovations that will be hitting the industry in 2013?

BR: Every year I see more exciting innovations, and I am constantly blown away by all the exciting mechanisms, creative blade shapes, and ground-breaking blade and handle materials coming to market.

At SHOT, there is no shortage of innovation, of course, but I think of some of the biggest innovations revolve around how consumers purchase knives. I believe many retailers and manufacturers will start being more creative with smartphone technology and social media to get consumers to buy knives and tools.

SD: What are you most excited about for 2013?

BR: From the Gerber point of view, I'm really excited about how we're stepping up our game to meet the challenge of seamlessly integrating knives and tools into our customers' lifestyles with our new Gerber Daily Carry (GDC) collection. At the same time, I think the new military and tactical products we've got coming out are really going to turn some heads for the professional market.

From an AKTI standpoint, continuing our important work in safeguarding our rights so manufacturers and consumers can make, sell, buy, and carry knives and tools without the worry of reprisal—as well as working with the passionate individuals who help make up the AKTI network—energizes me every day. Booth #13614. (800-950-6161; gerbergear.com)

On the Mark

Blackhawk's clothing features performance as well as casual design **By Doug Howlett**

Blackhawk has rolled out a line of clothing sure to please seekers of quality performance apparel, as well as men and women who still want to look good and feel comfortable in more casual situations.

Heading up Blackhawk's new offerings is its Advanced collection of waterproof and water-resistant outerwear. Included in the collection is the Advanced Soft Shell Jacket, a 100 percent polyester soft-shell jacket with a bonded fleece interior. Sealed seams block against wind and water for bulk-free warmth and protection. Pockets for keeping vital items protected abound.

For complete waterproof protection, the Advanced line includes a Waterproof Jacket and Waterproof Pants (sold separately). Like the Soft Shell, the waterproof offerings have a sleek design, allowing for freedom of motion without snagging on surrounding obstacles. Both the pant and jacket are made of 100 percent nylon three-layer waterproof and breathable fabric underlaid with another 2.5 layers of another waterproof, yet breathable, fabric. The jacket boasts an

adjustable foldaway hood. The pants also offer zippered side seams, as well as double layering in the seat and knees. SRP: \$250, Advanced Soft Shell Jacket; \$300, Waterproof Jacket; \$170, Waterproof Pants.

For layering or as an outer garment, Blackhawk is also offering a new Heavyweight Fleece Jacket made of 100 percent polyester fleece with elastic binding on the cuffs, waist, and pockets for a conforming fit. The jacket will retail for \$80. A Windproof Fleece Jacket, made of 100 percent polyester microfleece and boasting a dropped tail for added protection against wind and cold, will be available for \$90.

Women's Designs

Blackhawk's 2013 offerings include a Women's WR Quilted Jacket—a lightweight design tapered for a better

fit on women—that can be worn as a water-repellent stand-alone garment or snaps easily into the company's Women's Waterproof Jacket (also new). The Quilted Jacket features front storm flaps, a front zipper garage to protect the wearer's neck and chin from being rubbed by the zipper when pulled all the way up, side back seams with inline pockets, and drop shoulder seams for a better, sleeker fit. SRP: \$110.

The Women's Waterproof Jacket is constructed of the same quality materials and shares many of the features found on the men's Advanced Waterproof Jacket, but offers a more tapered midsection to better fit a woman's shape. SRP: \$300.

Casual Offerings

Not every day is spent battling the elements, and Blackhawk has its cus-



Blackhawk's Women's Waterproof Jacket is available in burgundy, black, navy, and green.

tomers covered on those precious "days off" as well. The new Casual Short Sleeve Knit Shirt is made with a relaxed fit from lightweight, wrinkle-resistant fabric, so it stays looking good all day—or night. The tropical patterned shirt is available in green, wine, and gray. (SRP: \$70.) High-tech features include a new technology in the pockets that protects electronic devices from radio-frequency identification scans, while the low side slits make this a great concealed-carry shirt. Booth #14562. **(800-694-5263; blackhawk.com)**

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Real Avid made a splash in 2009 with its Gun Tool, left—now it's reinventing twilight field-dressing with the Revelation Amp, a folding knife with an LED in the handle.

Finding Problems, Building Solutions

At Real Avid, innovation is job one **By Robert F. Staeger**

In 2009, Avid Design's Gun Tool raised eyebrows by offering 18 commonly used gunsmithing implements in one Swiss Army-style device. Handy and versatile, the Gun Tool proved extremely popular and helped to put Real Avid on the map. "We're humbled by the success of that product," says Howard Tripp, the company's co-founder. "We hit a real sweet spot, and the consumers who buy it love it. We get more comments than you can imagine."

It's emblematic of Real Avid's mission, which is all about making things easier for outdoorsmen. "When we spend the time to evaluate the customer experience, and thoughtfully address ways to make that experience better, we get satisfied results," says Tripp.

Shedding Light on the Problem

One example of this is the company's Revelation knife, a 4-inch fixed-blade knife with a water-sealed LED incorporated into the handle. "It's a product that comes out of personal experience," says Tripp. "I've been in the dark woods, trying to gut a deer with a flashlight in my mouth, and I'm not alone on that front, believe me."

A sharp blade and low visibility is a bad combination. "We started to think about a hunter in that situation," says Tripp. "How we could improve his lot in life and make field dressing easier and safer?" In retrospect, it seems like an obvious marriage of technology.

The second line of Revelation knives—folding versions this time, with a more contemporary look, called Revelation Amp—are now being released. "We've had a lot of demand for folding versions. It seems that you either like a fixed blade, or you like a folder as your primary hunting knife. It's either one or the other." One of the new knives, a two-blade folder coming out called the Revelation Amp 3 in 1, has a skin-

ning and gutting 3-inch blade, but also a separate bone saw with an oversize gut hook on it. The bulb has been moved to the bottom of the handle, along the bottom of the blade, making for a better use of the light overall.

"It's way more contemporary than our first knife," says Tripp. "The first knife is a very good knife, you can do anything you would ever want to with it, but it's not very remarkable looking. The Revelation Amp, on the other hand, is much more designed. The feedback has been overwhelming. Everybody says this is the best knife they've ever used for hunting."

A Cleaner Solution

Illumination while dressing a deer isn't the only problem Real Avid has seen a solution for. Too many hunters and shooters, Tripp says, don't really know how to clean their guns. The realization came to him at camp one evening, as he was cleaning his shotgun after a day of hunting pheasants. "I had a guy last year who asked if he could watch. He was embarrassed to tell me that he'd been duck hunting and pheasant hunting for eight years, and had never cleaned his shotgun once," says Tripp. And that guy wasn't the only one. Soon, Tripp had a small crowd around him, as he conducted an impromptu workshop on gun cleaning for the other guys at camp.

"Combine that with the fact that gun cleaning is kind of tedious," says Tripp. "It's no fun—the fun is out in

the field, shooting. You get back home, and even if you have good intentions, you often don't do an adequate job of cleaning your gun. So we've been looking at the gun cleaning experience and asking, 'Is there a way that we can make the experience better for the consumer?'"

The company's solution is the Zipwire cable-based cleaning kit. Instead of the constant screwing and unscrewing of brushes, jags, and swabs, each tool connects with a spring-loaded Quick Connect. "You can literally just click a button to disconnect and take your components apart and put it back together," says Tripp of the patented connector.

"The second thing we've done is we've changed the whole patch system, and created a new style of patch," says Tripp. "The patch hasn't changed since the Civil War—it's just a piece of fabric. We've got a synthetic patch that's cut in a unique shape so it will drape on a jag without bunching."

Tripp explains why the kit's bow-tie-shaped patches are more effective. "When a patch bunches, you have areas where it's not adequately putting solvent or oil into the lands and grooves inside the barrel of the gun. With this kind of new, no-bunch design, we're getting better coverage, which means fewer passes through the gun. It goes easier and it's faster." The kit also contains a new jag to replace the traditional slotted tip. "It's designed to force the patch against the bore of the gun and really

get your chemicals to penetrate like they're supposed to."

"That's the opening salvo," says Tripp. "We've got a two- to three-year pipeline of new ideas that we're working on to improve the gun-cleaning experience."

Working Better Together

There's one other innovation Real Avid has in store—one decidedly less rugged, but still very hands-on. "We think we've got a pretty good handle on how to use social media to build our brand," says Tripp. "We're at 40,000 fans now, and not one of those fans was bought. We didn't go out and advertise with gimmicks to get lots of likes. We recruited, and our fans have recruited new members, and we've got one of the highest levels of engagement of any site that we look at in terms of a fan base."

From there, the brand has developed a core field staff of enthusiasts who evangelize the products and the brand. "Part of our success is the amount of grassroots support we've been able to build since January for our brand," says Tripp. "It's been so successful for us that another bunch of manufacturers has now asked us to do that for them, so now we're actually managing, full-time, their social media marketing, everything from Facebook and YouTube to Twitter. We're doing 100 percent of their activity for those companies. We're building a network of brands we don't compete with that we're cooperating with, and as a group accomplishing good things together."

Among those brands is Zippo Outdoors. "We're assisting them in developing a line of really innovative camping and outdoor products—grills, a stove, a new tool for the outdoors called the Woodsman—it's a very innovative process. We've helped them develop those products, and then we're marketing them, and we're managing all their online media."

Real Avid has also helped Thompson/Center launch the Dimension rifle. "Our business is an interesting model. We're helping other manufacturers while we build our own brand."

Helping other companies innovate is one way Real Avid staves off the bane of aggressive young companies—a tendency to bite off more than they can chew. "We have more new ideas than we have the resources to bring to market," says Tripp. "It's kind of frustrating, because we see open spaces everywhere, but we have to be careful. You can't be overly exuberant. It takes a lot of money and time to get a new product to market."

"One of things we continue to learn is that it's one thing to have an idea, and it's another thing to turn that idea into a functioning product that you can ship and sell at a profit." Booth #2117. (800-286-0567; realavid.com)

ATI's new stock for the Benelli M4 includes two new patents: an adjustable cheekpiece and an adjustable length-of-pull mechanism.



Stock Market

ATI's new Benelli M4 stock features two innovations in adjustment **By Robert F. Staeger**

Five years ago, John Chvala and Eric Pflieger stepped out of the truck and into the woods when they purchased Advanced Technology International (ATI), a manufacturer best known for its aftermarket gun stocks. Coming from the auto industry, the firearms enthusiasts brought more than experience in plastic mold injection to the company. "I think we've provided a new perspective," says Jon Shaffer, the company's director of business development. "That's one of the things that's made us successful."

ATI boasts one of the largest product lines of any aftermarket manufacturer. "The largest in the world, in fact," says Shaffer. "We cover more product lines than any other stock manufacturer out

there. But we're constantly expanding our line."

With such a wide variety of guns being made, how does the company prioritize which stocks it's going to tackle next? "We base it on demand," says

Shaffer, who then admits, "There's also a little bit of a 'cool factor' involved."

The cool factor is now cranked to 11, as ATI will be displaying a variety of new products at the SHOT Show. But the crown jewel of the bunch will be its new stock for the Benelli M4 shotgun.

"There've been limitations with how to get your hands on those, and who can get their hands on those, outside of military and law enforcement," says Shaffer. "But we really wanted to work with Benelli, and we think the M4 is a great shotgun, so we just designed a stock and package for that."

ATI has almost 30 patents that either have been recently approved or are in the pipeline, and you can get your first look at two of them on the M4 stock. "We're going to be using a lot of these patents for future projects," says Shaffer. "Our customers will be very surprised at the innovation."

The first of these patents is an adjustable length-of-pull mechanism that allows the end user to adjust the tension on the buffer tube. Although the industry is familiar with locking mechanisms and friction pads to tighten the fit on stocks and buffer tubes, ATI considered the M4's classic stocks and designed from that, opting for a more traditional approach.

"The idea we fed off was the 1911, where the slides were hand-fitted to provide the most reliable functionality possible," says Shaffer. "We wanted to incorporate that idea into our stocks, so we designed a length-of-pull lever that allows the end user to adjust the tightness of the drag and the buffer tubes to his exact preference."

Another feature of the M4 stock is a new adjustable cheekrest. "The assembly beneath the cheekrest is loosely based on a scissor jack," says Shaffer. "Basically there's a knob that you rotate with your fingers, and you can adjust the cheekrest as high or low as you want, without tools of any kind."

Previous ATI innovations are spreading across the line, too. The company released the Triton system—a dovetailed locking mechanism that allows the end user to change stocks on a firearm with just one screw—in 2010. "That's pretty new for us, and we're continuing to move that across new product lines each year as well," says Shaffer.

ATI sells its stocks and accessories in packages, where you can get everything you need for a particular firearm. But the company also recognizes the inevitable desire to mix and match. "Sometimes customers don't have the money, especially in tough economic times, to just drop \$300 on a package of stocks and accessories," says Shaffer. "We also provide individual parts, where you can put it together piece by piece or all at once if you like."

Ease of assembly is key. After all, a stock that a shooter can't install himself runs the risk of sitting in the box. "That's one of the things we look at when we're engineering these products," says Shaffer. "We're making prototypes, and we're assembling them on the firearm. And if we think there's something that's a little too difficult, or just too time-consuming, for our customers, then we're going to adjust our design to make it as easy for them as possible on the installation side of things."

ATI stocks also enjoy the benefit of DyeHard coloring, a color-impregnating process introduced after the 2008 purchase that's made camouflaged stocks better able to take punishment. "If you scratch or scuff your stock, your pattern is still there. You're not just going to see black underneath."

"We're always looking to expand the line, for any present- or past-manufactured gun and whatever's coming in the future," says Shaffer. It could be a new grip for tomorrow's hot MSR or a stock for a rifle that first saw action in World War II. "There's always something new out there, or something old that hasn't been covered yet."

Booth #620. (800-925-2522; atigunstocks.com)

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Winchester AA Tracker Loads Help Shooters Hit More

Imagine a training load that allows shooters and coaches to see exactly where they missed. Winchester's new AA Tracker does just that. It's almost a tracer, but without using incendiary material. The Tracker's high-visibility wad travels up to 45 yards in the center of a shot pattern, allowing you to call your shots as never before.

"We looked at all kinds of technologies to help shotgunners see where they were shooting," says shotshell product manager Brad Criner. "We wanted one that was visible in all light

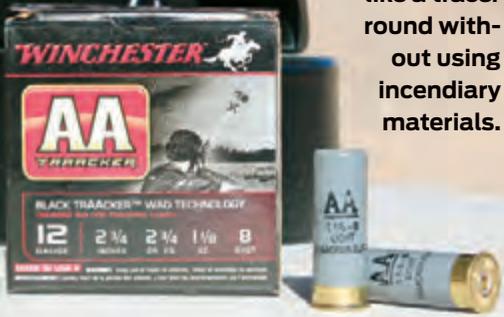
conditions, but didn't cost \$2 to \$3 per shell, and stayed with the pattern out to the 35- to 45-yard range."

The new Tracker uses a specially designed wad that has helical, notched petals that spin the wad like vanes on an arrow to keep it flying straight. A unique shot trap in the base of the wad captures 1/8 ounce of shot as ballast. Criner says the Tracker wads have proven very accurate in testing, consistently staying within 3 inches of the center of the pattern out to 45 yards. Although some shooters have watched wads for years, standard wads rarely stay with the pattern center for long, and the results are misleading. The Tracker wad solves that problem.

The shells come with bright-orange wads for overcast conditions and nighttime shooting, and with black for clear skies. The loads will duplicate two popular 12-gauge AA offerings, the 1 1/8-ounce handicap and the 2 3/4-dram 1 1/8-ounce target load. The Trackers come in the reloadable AA hull and will sell for \$1 to \$1.50 per box more than regular AA loads.

Booth #13329. (618-258-2000; winchester.com) —Phil Bourjaily

Winchester's new wad acts like a tracer round without using incendiary materials.



Motorola Earmuffs: High-Tech Benefits

Motorola International unveiled its first series of hearing-protection earmuffs that connect with the company's TALKABOUT two-way radios. The earmuffs include a cable with a Push-to-Talk microphone, allowing hunters in the field and shooters at the range to communicate and protect their hearing at the same time. The new lineup features the MHP61 Isolation Earmuff and the MHP71 (shown at right) and MHP81 Electronic Earmuffs.

The three models provide maximum ear protection while allowing hunters and shooters to communicate with their instructor at the range or even answer calls on their iPhone with the MHP81 model.

"The Motorola TALKABOUT MH series of earmuffs are designed for a large variety of consumers that operate in noisy environments, but they are especially suited for hunters, providing maximum safety and convenience in the outdoors," says Marjon De Groot, business director, Giant International, Motorola Solutions Licensee. "We understand the importance of hearing safety and reliable FRS/GMRS communication for hunters, and we designed our hearing protector headsets to be compatible."

The MHP61 Isolation Earmuff combines passive hearing protection with the ability to communicate through two-way radios. The MHP71 and MHP81 Electronic Earmuffs are ideal for serious hunters. They protect hearing by compressing harmful sounds and also feature amplification, which means hunters can hear normal human voice tones, but harmful noises are filtered out. SRP: starts at \$49.99. Booth #4026. (motorolasolutions.com/talkabout) —David Maccar



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“The Father of Rambo” at SHOT Show

A panel of accomplished novelists isn't typically what one expects to encounter at the SHOT Show. But 5.11 Tactical presented an open discussion on Tuesday with five authors who have something in common—they all write about people in the tactical or military world, fictitious or otherwise. The panel included Andrew Peterson, who pens the popular Nathan McBride series; Dr. Jim Loehr, author of *The Only Way to Win*, a non-fiction work about conditioning and building strong character; Grant Blackwood, a well-known ghostwriter who has worked with authors such as Clive Cussler and Tom Clancy as well as writing the Briggs Tanner series; Kathleen Antrim, the award-winning author of the best-selling political thriller *Capital Offense*; and, finally, David Morrell, who has written 28 novels in his career but is best known for his 1972 work *First Blood*, the novel that introduced John Rambo.

Morrell credits the character's ubiquitous cultural status (“Rambo” is even listed in some dictionaries) to the extremely successful series of Sylvester Stallone films, but he says it's always surprising to him how much the character has influenced



5.11 Tactical presented a panel discussion with five authors: (L-R) Andrew Peterson, Kathleen Antrim, Dr. Jim Loehr, David Morrell, and Grant Blackwood.

the military personnel he has met. In 2010, Morrell traveled with the USO to Iraq for a pilot program called Operation Thriller, which brought authors in the genre to interact with deployed and wounded soldiers.

“I was kind of a test case, because they figured the guy who created Rambo—at least they would have heard of him,” Morrell said. “And there's an issue here, something I also heard a lot while signing books this morning. A lot of the folks [at

Operation Thriller] said they joined the military because of me [and the character I created]. So, I carry a lot of responsibility. It's a humbling thing. It was one of the most harrowing and honoring experiences I've had.”

Since U.S. service members on active duty often have to deal with long bouts of boredom far from modern conveniences, they tend to read a lot. Operation Thriller was a success—and continues to be.

Peterson visited Bagram Air Base

in Afghanistan on his trip, along with the author of *Blackhawk Down*, Mark Bowden.

“That ended up being Bowden's first Blackhawk ride. He'd never been in one before, and I said, ‘How ironic would it be if we were to get shot down with the author of *Blackhawk Down*,’ Peterson said. “The pilot, once he realized he had the author of *Blackhawk Down* on his ship, said, ‘Well, you have to sign my helicopter.’ And he did.”

All the authors said sharing experiences with the pros who do the jobs they often write about is an invaluable tool for getting the right feel. “Coming here and meeting with operators and law enforcement, you can just feel the authenticity,” Blackwood said.

“My books are about professionals, and I really love coming to a place like this and dealing with a company like 5.11 at the range, to deal with people who are in professions where lives are on the line,” Morrell said. “In my work, I try to turn it around so maybe people can learn—a dentist or someone in a different line of work—qualities of awareness, let us say, so their own lives are affected in a way that maybe makes them safer.”

—David Maccar

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Safariland Poised For New Growth

Just before the opening of SHOT Show 2013, Safariland—known for brands such as ABA, Second Chance, Safariland, Bianchi, and Break Free—announced its decision to begin doing business under a new name, “The Safariland Group.” The new name will better clarify the relationship and distinction between its corporate entity and its industry-leading law-enforcement and consumer-sporting brands. In addition, doing business as the Safariland Group will allow the company to further pursue its commitment for planned acquisitions and innovative engineering of new product lines.

“This new name builds upon the foundation of the Safariland brand, yet also recognizes and highlights that our company is made up of many industry-leading brands,” says Scott O’Brien, president of the Safariland Group. “It also clarifies the distinction between The Safariland Group as our corporate trade name and the longstanding and highly recognized Safariland brand of holsters, duty gear, and accessories.”

Safariland, LLC, was sold in 2012 by BAE Systems to Kanders & Company, a Stamford, Connecticut, private investment firm. No change of ownership or legal entity occurs with this name change. Instead, the Safariland Group name helps to strategically position the company, and its 19 brands, for its next phase of growth. “All products will continue to be manufactured by the same associates who take ownership and pride in their work with the heartfelt belief in their mission of “Together, We Save Lives,”” says O’Brien.

Team Safariland members will participate in a series of product demonstrations today and tomorrow at 11 a.m. that will feature the newest holster product lines from Safariland and Bianchi, including the new Safariland Cordura nylon-wrapped Model 6354DO tactical rig for guns with optics and the Model 6378USN hip holster, both also available in a variety of finishes, including camouflage.

You may also want to check out the popular Bianchi Allusion series of concealment holsters and the Model 30 Allusion Magazine Pouch, in addition to other new offerings. Finally, the new Safariland/Kona Patrol Bike in white will also be unveiled. Booth #12762. (800-347-1200; safariland.com)



Safariland will be doing business under a new moniker, The Safariland Group, to better clarify relationships between its corporate entity and brands.

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Aimpoint Launches New Retailer Education Program

Aimpoint, the Sweden-based manufacturer of electronic red-dot sighting technology, is expanding its dealer support program in the United States. The key components of this support involve a partnership with eXperticity (an online training specialist that uses the 3point5.com platform to help retail staff more effectively serve customers), as well as new point-of-purchase fixtures and expanded marketing collateral designed to increase retailer product knowledge and provide more effective brand presentation at the retail level. eXperticity's 3point5.com service is founded in

an understanding that creating experts is a powerful tool in enhancing the sales process. The website provides a vehicle for more than 300 manufacturers to extend product training to more than 46,000 retailers. This online training teaches retailers about products and brands via customized training modules in a fun learning environment, using company-designed tutorials and quizzes. Sales associates also receive incentives after completing a manufacturer's training module. The site provides feedback to manufacturers, tracking the number of users and course completion rates to measure the effectiveness of the training.

Aimpoint will utilize 3point5.com's online training to educate retail managers and sales associates in its hunting and tactical products. "By offering such engaging and thorough product training from such a broad selection of sporting goods manufacturers, eXperticity is able to connect with retailers in a unique and exciting way," says Kristi Drawe, Aimpoint's marketing director. "Online training allows Aimpoint to reach thousands more retailers than we ever could in person, and allows us to customize our sales materials instantly, and with far less effort and expense than we could with printed materials. It's an advantage for everyone involved."

In addition to online training, Aimpoint is introducing new point-of-purchase fixtures for dealer showrooms and sales counters, as well as an expanded catalog of dealer-marketing collateral and Aimpoint brand-identification materials. Booth #14573. (877-246-7646; aimpoint.com)



Aimpoint, working with online-training specialist eXperticity, is expanding its dealer-support program.

ROK Straps Rock

ROK Straps, a manufacturer of a wide variety of adjustable straps, is debuting an Urban Tactical Bicycle (UTB) at the 2013 SHOT Show. The UTB is a Yuba Mundo Cargo Bicycle fitted with various boxes and cases, all of which are secured with ROK Straps' newest adjustable straps in ROKcam, Coyote Tan, and Tactical Black.

Since urban warfare, carbon-free transportation, and zombies are all topics of enduring popular interest, the manufacturer decided to create the UTB to showcase the practical use of its straps, many of which have been used by outdoorsmen and tactical operators for years.

"ROK Straps use a braided polyester outer material that will last six times longer than a typical cheap bungee strap," says Karen Weiss, CEO of ROK Straps America. "Our straps consist of a solid-rubber stretch core, coupled with webbing of different lengths. We believe no stretch strap on the market offers comparable strength, adjustability, or quality. That's why ROK Straps are the number-one-selling tie-downs for motorcycles, trucks, and offroad vehicles."

The adjustable straps are available with hook ends as well as loop ends. The company also makes fixed-length straps. All are available in many colors, including hi-visibility, reflective, Tactical Black, ROKCam, Coyote Tan, and more. Booth #2053. (585-244-6451; rokstraps.com)

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Browning Camping Introduces New Pop-Up Ground Blinds

Browning Camping unveiled its new line of pop-up ground blinds, consisting of four different hub-style models (the Mirage, Phantom, Phantom PC, and Powerhouse), yesterday at a press conference at the 2013 SHOT Show. To those who may wonder how blinds fit into a camping line, Zach Scheidigger, product manager for Browning Camping, said, "Actually, it's a natural fit, especially as we are a company known for being 'The Best There Is,' in the hunting and shooting sports."

Scheidigger said that research and development of the blinds has been in progress for more than a year. "We didn't want to rush the process. We wanted to be sure that we listened to consumers' concerns so we could make this new product category better than the competition. We found that people are frustrated with many of the models currently offered. They said that even simple things such as stakes and carry bags weren't done correctly. So, we've worked hard to design a line of pop-up blinds with new fea-



Browning Camping's line of pop-up ground blinds features heavier-than-normal mesh, durable 600D fabric, and oversize zippers.

tures that will make ours stand out."

To achieve that goal, Scheidigger says the new blinds use strong and durable components such as 600D fabric, heavier-than-normal mesh, aluminum hubs with engineered steel tips and pins, strong and flexible fiberglass poles, and oversize No. 10 zippers. Each corner uses extra fabric for rein-

forcement and bartacks for added strength and durability. "We didn't want to just make some of the parts better," he says. "We wanted to make them all better."

He believes that attention to detail will pay off big. "The window flaps on the Shadow series can be adjusted to multiple positions, and the Phantoms and Powerhouse include carry bags with padded shoulder straps, compression straps for holding a bow or rifle, and an extra pocket for carrying a blind chair. The stakes for the Mirage are larger and stronger than most competitors' stakes, but the stakes for the Phantoms and Powerhouse are even longer and stronger still, and include a handle to help in placing and removing them. In addition, the Phantoms and Powerhouse include a blind skirt that helps control scent and keeps light from coming through the bottom of the blind. Finally, the Powerhouse includes camera windows, enough center height so you can stand up, and a center support that can double as a monopod shooting stick." Booth #15538. (browningcamping.com)

MUCK GETS COOL

The Muck Boot Company will add a new technical fabric liner for improved comfort in warmer weather to nearly a dozen models starting in spring 2013. The boots feature Muck's exclusive XpressCool lining.

"XpressCool is a significant breakthrough in moisture management and makes a boot far more comfortable to wear in early-season hunts. The material rapidly redistributes perspiration away from the wearer, resulting in a dry, comfortable experience, even in warm, summer-like temperatures,"

says Ari Mintz, Muck Boot senior product manager.

Boots that include XpressCool will cover more than 10 configurations suitable for hunters, construction workers, and farmers. Most models will see improved comfort ratings as well. Booth #10951. (muckbootcompany.com) —Peter B. Mathiesen



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Smith & Wesson Expands Tactical Apparel Line for Men and Women

Building on last year's successful launch of its first concealed-carry apparel line, Wild Things, LLC, licensee for Smith & Wesson, is unveiling its second line of apparel for men and women at SHOT Show 2013. The Spring 2013 line will feature an expanded women's collection that combines performance, function, and classic American styling and will be available at smithandwessonapparel.com or wildthingsgear.com as of March 2013. Barn Jackets headline the line, along with a men's updated cargo pant and short. The women's line will add a Cargo Shooting Skirt and Cargo Pants, along with upgrades to tactical features.

"This line addresses the growing needs of those consumers and law-enforcement professionals who carry concealed firearms and require easy access as well as the ability to blend into their surroundings without appearing 'tactical,'" says Kim Pingaro, vice president of merchandising. "The women's line provides clear choices far beyond the sea of black and khaki that we see today, and will be unlike anything else in the tactical market."

All Smith & Wesson Barn Jackets incorporate numerous tactical features, such as internal concealed-carry pockets, oversize front bottom pockets large enough for a small firearm, hand-warmer pockets, and an adjustable cuff closure for easier movement. In addition, garments use signature gun-hammer zipper pulls, Smith & Wesson branded snaps, and an embroidered logo on the back.

There are two styles of barn jackets, the basic



The developing trend in concealed-carry wear is "street appeal" clothing, especially garments for women, which combine fashion and functionality.

Shooting Barn Jacket and the Quilted Range Barn Jacket with distinctive styling and a quilted shoulder overlay for a Western look. The men's Shooting Barn Jacket (SRP: \$170) is available in eclipse, black/olive, and lager, while the women's (SRP: \$170) is available in smoke, seneca, and lager. The women's style features a corduroy collar. Sizes include S to 2XL.

Features of the Quilted Barn Jacket for women (SRP: \$180) include lightweight cotton canvas for durability, pigment print over a khaki-dyed base cloth for a rich, contrasting texture, and quilted

water-repellent nylon canvas overlays. It is available in eclipse, black, and seneca, and in XS to 2XL sizes. The men's version (SRP: \$180) is the same basic style as the women's and features a corduroy collar. It is available in eclipse, seneca, and lager in S to 2XL sizes. Both men's and women's styles have a two-tone color design for added street appeal.

The women's Cargo Shooting Skirt easily transitions from off-duty to casual wear and includes internal elastics to keep a firearm secure in the front pocket in addition to a special cut in the pocket, enabling a knife to rest upright. It is available in eclipse, stone, and olive in sizes 4 to 16. SRP: \$68.

Lightweight cargo pants, with definite street appeal, have oversize front pockets with internal elastics to keep firearms secure, and a revamped, flatter knife rest. Available colors for both men and women are eclipse and olive (SRP: \$84, men; \$96, women). Sizes for men include 30 to 42; for women, 4 to 16. A new style of range pant for women, with Western-style details, is available in smoke and seneca, sizes 4 to 16. SRP: \$84.

Khaki shorts and pants for men and khaki pants for women round out the line. Men's pant colors (SRP: \$80) include olive and stone; the shorts (SRP: \$70) are available in heat and stone. Women's pants (SRP: \$80) come in pumice stone, seneca, and eclipse. Booth #26003. (wildthingsgear.com)

Details That Matter

#18: BRANDED COMPONENTS

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INDUSTRY OFFICIALS MEET ON IMPORT/EXPORT

The current status of Export Control Reforms as they relate to the firearms industry and proposed changes under both the ITAR and EAR regulations were main topics of discussion at the annual meeting of the National Shooting Sports Foundation's Import/Export Committee held Tuesday.

The Import/Export Committee was formed to give NSSF voting members a resource to resolve issues and work for constructive changes with U.S. Government export control agencies such as the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls (DDTC) under the State Department and the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) under the Commerce Department. The committee is chaired by Kim Pritula, president of KMP Global Consulting LLC.

Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF senior vice president and general counsel, is a member of the DDTC's Defense Trade Advisory Group (DTAG). Pritula is a member of the President's Export Council's Subcommittee on Export Administration, which advises BIS. Together these important contacts provide the committee members with current information on any rulings and revisions that impact the international business of the committee's members.

"It's crucial to stay on top of the shifting sands of import and export regulations," Keane said. "In our increasingly global economy, the industry can only gain from being aware of and engaged in the regulatory process."



The lightweight (less than 7 pounds) UTAS-15 pump shotgun features a rectangular, stacked two-chamber feed system ideal for urban tactical use.

Unconventional Shotguns

When business gets challenging, it pays to think out of the box

By Peter B. Mathiesen

With a history as an OEM supplier, and benefitting from a new state-of-the-art facility in the Turkish mountains, UTAS has developed a reputation as one of the premier sporting shotgun makers of the European-Mediterranean Rim. In 2008, when sporting shotgun sales stagnated, the company moved to more out-of-the-box thinking.

In late 2012, after extensive research and development, UTAS released its first branded tactical shotgun for distribution in the U.S. This pump shotgun is visually dynamic and completely unconventional, featuring a rectangular, stacked two-chamber feed system ideal for combat and urban tactical use. The UTS-15 pump has a long list of exclusives as well as design and materials that are new to the firearms industry.

The shotgun weighs a scant 6.9 pounds (empty) and can hold up to 15 rounds (with one in the chamber). It is the first shotgun made with a 100 percent polymer receiver. The gun's overall length is only 28.5 inches, and the UTS-15 is chambered for 2 3/4- and 3-inch magnum ammunition. Built in Chicago, of all places, it comes rail-ready for accessories and for distribution in the U.S. Other options include flash suppressor screw-in chokes, a built-in laser sight system, and a spotlight laminator.

"We started with a clean slate, and the only goal was to create a completely new kind of tactical shotgun that featured a capacity of 12 rounds with a targeted weight of 8 pounds," says Ted Hatfield, director of research and development. "We beat every goal—and then some. It was a team effort taking thousands of hours and working with engineers with specialties in aerospace fibers to achieve what would have been impossible just a few years ago. The result is a completely new kind of shotgun."

Introduced at the NRA Show in 2012, the firearm has been getting more than 1,000 orders a month in dealer-direct sales. Orders are climbing steadily, and manufacturing continues to ramp up at the Chicago facility.

The 2013 SHOT Show will see the introduction the UTS-15 Navy, which incorporates a specially formulated dark marine blue base camo coat over black-and-gray non-glare digital camouflage. There is special corrosion-resistant satin-nickel plating that is impervious to saltwater, and all metal parts are black chromed or treated to use at sea with a minimum of maintenance. The UTS-15 was designed to meet the demands of OBS24, one of the world leaders in providing security onboard commercial vessels passing through the pirate-infested waters off Somalia.

The new Hunter UTS-15 is a 12-gauge pump

ideal for dangerous, fast-action, big-game hunting. The gun utilizes fully adjustable sights and dual magazine selection, and is well suited for night predator and hog hunting. Options include a push-button high-intensity spotlight and a laser sight that installs inside the UTS-15 just under the barrel.

UTAS is also receiving its share of attention from the entertainment community; the UTS-15 is appearing in an HBO series as well as two upcoming Hollywood feature films in Thailand and Eastern Europe. Booth #15064. (847-768-1011; utas-usa.com)

Details That Matter

#7: RAPPELLING ARCH

We took our patented MONOWRAP® construction and beefed it up with a medial sole wrap to protect against rope abrasion on rappels. We also toughened up the MONOWRAP® design with a heavy duty frame, then added a full length nylon stabilizer and an aggressive rubber outsole for extra stability and protection underfoot. The result is the new Zyklorne GTX® Hi, a technical high performance for today's demanding new conditions.



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A surprising amount of camaraderie and lack of competition developed at Winchester's ladies-only shooting event, highlighting the differences between male and female shooters, allowing for a better understanding of how to connect with them.



means it reduces the chances of over-penetration in small spaces. It also delivers greater knockdown power. (If you'd like to see what the Winchester PDX1 Defender Segmented slug is capable of, watch me demolish a watermelon at [youtube.com/watch?v=xolER1xz5ag&feature=picp](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xolER1xz5ag&feature=picp).)

Then we picked up our Smith & Wesson M&P9s and participated in a training session from well-known personal defense instructor Rob Pincus.

Carry Small, Shoot Big

For most of us, the biggest "wow" came from the smallest cartridge. Winchester's PDX1 Defender .22 Magnum traveled at 1,295 fps and created a 3-inch-deep channel in the gel. This innovative magnum rimfire round provides the low recoil of a rimfire cartridge while depositing energy on target that approaches that of the .380 ACP, a popular centerfire personal-defense caliber. All of a sudden, the world became a brighter place as we realized we could carry small and shoot big. For active women runners, hikers, bicyclists, and even hunters, this means we can conceal and still move fast.

The second day found us running through more drills with our handguns and MSRs at a local gun range. We ran, we shot, we competed a little in good fun, and compared a lot.

Can You Hear Us?

When I talked to one engineer after the event, he told me, "This is so different from when men from the media come out here." In other words, he saw camaraderie, not competition. That's the kind of "aha" moment that can help manufacturers better understand how to connect with women shooters, whether it is delivering products for personal defense, big-game hunting, or clay targets.

As we were leaving the range, Karen Lee, editor of *Turkey Country* magazine, said, "I was familiar with guns as far as hunting and target shooting go, but I never had really thought how that differs from shooting for personal defense. Learning the concepts behind instinctive shooting, and practicing drills that program my brain and body to react to a defensive situation, was a real eye-opener."

She also learned that finding a balance between reaction time, effectiveness, and accuracy is the key to defending yourself with a firearm. "The training we received from Rob Pincus taught me to view shooting in a whole new manner—and made me realize that time at the gun range is vital to improving performance."

I couldn't agree more—and more retailers need to understand this mindset as well. Women shooters want to be part of the conversation. Are you listening? Booth #13329. (618-258-2000; winchester.com)

Winchester Ammo Targets Women

Ladies-only media event opens eyes for both shooters and manufacturer **By Barbara Baird**

We came. We saw. We shot. We shot a lot. According to recent NSSF research, female participation in target shooting rose from 3.3 million in 2008 to nearly 4.8 million in 2010, a 46.5 percent increase. At the same time, the number of women who hunted rose from 1.8 million to nearly 2.5 million, an increase of more than 36 percent. And a 2011 Gallup poll showed a 10 percent increase in gun ownership among American women in the six-year period between 2005 and 2011.

The problem? The shooting industry has been slow to adequately serve this emerging market. According to the most recent NSSF Firearms Retailer Survey Report, retailers need to pay more attention to the unique needs of female hunters and shooters.

Winchester Ammunition met the problem head-on last summer when it hosted its first ever "Ladies Only" Personal Defense Media Event at the manufacturer's headquarters in East Alton, Illinois, to highlight its flagship line of personal defense ammo, PDX1 Defender. Participants included editors from *Field & Stream*, *Outdoor Life*, *Turkey Country*, *Women's Outdoor News*, and the *Washington Times*. Shooting experience varied from seasoned industry veterans to a fresh-out-of-college Web editor.

In order to show off the capabilities of its newly engineered line of ammo, Winchester built an itinerary full of firsts for most of the attendees. "The rise of social media and shareable content pushed Chevalier,

Winchester's media relations agency, and the manufacturer to find ways to design the event around fun, visual elements to use on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube," said Michael Turbyfill, Chevalier's public relations specialist who handles the Winchester Ammunition account.

"We did the gel test, fruit shooting, slow-motion video camera, and other photo/video opportunities so attendees would get good content for social media and online content."

And Tweet we did. When off the firing line, we posted to their Facebook Fan Pages, tweeted to our active Twitter accounts, interacted with followers, and interviewed each other.

Winchester also brought its engineering brain trust out from the laboratories to present, with Power Point and whiteboard drawings, the anatomy of the full line of PDX1 Defender personal-defense ammunition. Time in the classroom allowed participants to understand shot patterns, velocity, and expansion before our hands gripped the guns.

Back on the Farm

Then, we went to the farm—in this case, the 640-acre Nilo Farms in Brighton, considered to be one of the finest hunting preserves and shooting facilities in the country. John M. Olin established Nilo Farms in 1952; he hunted with dignitaries from around the world there and conducted business between shots. The old farmhouse remains unchanged, and sitting down to pheasant pie on the old-time jalousied porch at noon, you almost expected Olin to walk in from a hunt.

Within this atmosphere, truly an inclusive "you're one of us, too" setting, we visited the gel-test range to witness the effects of handgun, rifle, and shotgun ammo as it tore into chilled bricks of ballistic gelatin. We were able to see (and judge the effects of) each type of ammo by analyzing the path each took through the gel. It became clear, to me at least, that long arms for personal defense outranked a handgun. Of particular note is the 12-gauge PDX1 Defender Segmented Slug. Upon impact the slug breaks into three equal projectiles, which



Heckler & Koch is packaging its popular MR72A1 rifle with a host of precision add-ons, including a Leupold scope, an HK G28 stock, and a bipod.

HK Offers Proven Rifle With Top-Notch Precision Accessory Kit

The MR72A1 rifle from Heckler & Koch is a direct descendant of the company's fully automatic HK416/417 series chambered in 7.62 x 51mm, only in a semi-auto configuration developed for civilians. Now, HK has elevated the capability of this proven rifle platform with an accessory pack, dubbed the Long Rifle Package (LRP), that turns the MR72A1 into an out-of-the-box precision rifle.

The rifle itself is gas-operated and uses a piston and a solid operating "pusher" rod in place of the common gas tube normally employed in AR-style rifles. This greatly reduces malfunctions common to direct impingement gas systems, since hot carbon fouling and waste gasses do not enter the receiver area.

"This package of accessories really makes this a true precision rifle and utilizes the capabilities of the rifle to their fullest for precise shooting," says Johannes Wolber, HK operations coordination manager.

So what comes in the box? Well, first of all, the LRP package comes in a 42-inch Model 1720 Pelican case, not a box. Mounted to the rifle is a Leupold 3-9VX-R Patrol 3-9 x 40mm scope along with a HK G28 adjustable cheek-piece buttstock and a LaRue Tactical BRM-6 bipod. Throw in an ERGO pistol grip from Falcon Industries, an OTIS cleaning kit and a

Blue Force Gear sling, one 20-round magazine and one 10-round magazine, and the LRP is truly a complete package.

But let's not forget the rifle itself. The MR72A1 LRP uses a barrel produced by HK's cold-hammer-forging process. The highest quality steel is used in this manufacturing process, producing a long-life barrel that provides superior performance with minimal degradation of accuracy and muzzle velocity after prolonged use. The barrels are manufactured in Germany and finished in the U.S.

HK had this rifle ready to shoot at this year's Media Day at the Range and, in short, it was a pleasure. The five-position adjustable stock with a moveable cheek rest absorbed plenty of recoil, allowing for quick second-shot target acquisition. As expected, the Leupold scope was clear and bright. Coupled with the sturdy bipod, hitting the 100-yard target was nearly effortless. This rifle would make a great medium-range hunter as well as a tactical/law enforcement firearm, with greatly expanded capabilities over a typical AR-style rifle. It has all the features sought by civilian precision shooters as well as law enforcement organizations seeking an alternative to the HK G28 series of designated marksman rifles. LRP Package SRP: \$5,995 Booth #13172. (hk-usa.com) —David Maccar

The Great Debate

A panel of experts debated the merits of the Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act at yesterday's Field & Stream Heroes of Conservation Roundtable. Editor-in-Chief Anthony Licata (right) prefaced the discussion by describing the Heroes of Conservation award and grant program, sponsored by Toyota Motors, U.S.A., which spotlights extraordinary volunteers working on the grassroots level. "A lot of people talk about conservation, but sportsmen actually do something about it," Licata said.

The same sense of responsibility for fish, wildlife, and the American sporting tradition drove the debate. Joel Webster (far left), director of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership's Center for Western Lands, said, "I think *wilderness* is a toxic word in a lot of conversations, so we need people to picture something in between putting lands in a jar, not to be touched, and total industrialization." Safari Club International's director of government affairs and science-based conservation, Melissa Simpson (second from right), argued that the Act is a positive update to outdated legislation. "The acres deemed unsuitable for roadless and wilderness areas, by looking at updated maps and science, should be released so the public can engage in the discussion of how to manage their local lands." Colorado is one of two states that have passed a roadless rule, and panelist Mike King (second from left), executive director of the Colorado DNR, said, "There's no question that unfragmented land is best for wildlife, but limited access is the trade-off. In Colorado, we evaluated which types of activities were happening in roadless areas, and I think history will vindicate us on that approach." —Kristyn Brady



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Silencerco The 7.62 Specwar joins the company's line of centerfire rifle suppressors.

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The 7.62 Specwar joins the company's line of centerfire rifle suppressors. Features include the patented Active Spring Retention locking collar that ensures the device will not come loose under heavy fire and the Specwar Resonance Suppression flash hider. SRP: \$899. Booth #8403. (801-417-5384; silencerco.com)

Browning

The new A-Bolt III is designed to deliver precision performance at a budget price. For 2013, the rifle will be available in a Composite Stalker model in four different calibers (.30/06, .270 Win., .300 Win. Mag., and 7mm Rem. Mag.). Features include a bolt-unlock button that allows users to unload the firearm with the safety on, a removable box magazine, and a matte-black composite stock with textured grip areas. The steel receiver is drilled and tapped for scope mounts, and the hand-chambered free-floated barrel boasts a target crown. SRP: \$599. Booth #12740. (801-876-2711; browning.com)

Celestron

Celestron's rugged Cavalry Binocular Series is fully waterproof and nitrogen purged to prevent internal fogging. The housing is protected by durable rubber armor, making the binoculars easy to grip while protecting them from hard use.

Features include high-grade BaK4 prisms and fully multicoated optics. Several models in the series have an integrated compass and reticle. Models include an 8x42 monocular, 7x30mm, 7x50mm, 10x50mm, and 15x70mm. Booth #1859. (310-328-9560; celestron.com)

Stanley Vidmar

The Vertical Weapon Storage System from Stanley Vidmar is designed to meet the unique needs of military and law enforcement, and can hold up to 18 M4s, M16s, or M870 shotguns. It can also be custom-configured to store various combinations of small arms, ammunition, and equipment.

It offers easy deployment with a mobile pallet base, handle, or optional lifting eye; multiple units also can be stacked or integrated with other Vidmar systems.

There are also several different configurations of internal shelves and racks available.

The VWS is available in four colors, including beige, olive drab, bright blue, and dark blue. Booth #25009. (800-523-9462; stanleyvidmar.com)



Vero Vellini

Available in two stylish designs of either a bounce-absorbing Air-Cushion neoprene with hand-stitched piping or a lavishly padded premium Napa leather, the Vero Vellini Binocular/Camera slings, which wrap around the shoulders and neck to evenly distribute weight, allow hunters carry binoculars comfortably, while remaining within easy reach.

The slip-proof slings are available in two color combinations: forest green with brown piping or black with black piping. The Napa-leather version is available with two-tone finely finished leather and a soft slip-proof suede backing. SRP: starts at \$44.99 Booth #14521. (800-257-7742; pioneer-research.com)

Sandpiper of California

There are overnight bags, and then there are go bags. With that in mind, Sandpiper of California has introduced the limited edition "Zombie Apocalypse" Bug Out Bag. It's airline carry-on friendly, but large enough to pack several days' worth of clothing and anything else you might need should the end of the world arrive unexpectedly.

The pack is hydration-compatible, and features a padded waist belt, MOLLE/PALS panel, and Tuck-away shoulder harness. Booth #25311. (866-424-6622; sandpiperca.com)

specific chamber of the firearm) and safer shooting through the elimination of excessive headspace that may lead to case separation. The core components are a body and three interchangeable dials that, when used in a repeatable manner with a caliper, are used to measure relative distances between selected points on cases, bullets, and cartridges. SRP: starts at \$107. Booth #16449. (815-493-6360; forsterproducts.com)

Traditions Performance Firearms

The Frontier Series of Pietta 1873 single-action revolvers is available in several different calibers as well as three and barrel lengths: 4.75, 5.5, and 7.5 inches. All have steel frames, but the selection of available finishes include color-case-hardened, blued, and nickel. Grip options are walnut or white PVC. All models come with a transfer bar safety system. The more affordable Rawhide Series offers today's single-action shooters quality and features at an affordable price. The revolver's matte-black finish is attractive and provides excellent corrosion resistance, and all models are equipped with a transfer bar safety. Booth #16532. (860-388-4656; traditionsfirearms.com)



Celestron The Cavalry Binocular Series is fully waterproof and nitrogen-purged to prevent internal fogging.

Forster Products

The Datum Dial Ammunition Measurement System is an easy-to-use and versatile tool that provides the data a reloader needs to refine case-sizing and bullet-seating operations. Benefits from gathering and analyzing reloading component data include better accuracy (because the cartridge's headspace is tailored to the



Browning The new A-Bolt III will be available in a Composite Stalker model in four calibers: .30/06, .270 Win., .300 Win. Mag., and 7mm Rem. Mag. The steel receiver is drilled and tapped for scope mounts.