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# RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS  
FOR THE **REAL** WORLD

*Firearms Training Services*

**MONTHLY NEWSLETTER**

A couple of weeks ago, a nationally recognized senior trainer, for whom I have utmost respect, had a student shoot himself in the leg during day one of a two-day pistol course. In fact, many of the better known trainers have had this same misfortune at least once during a class under their tutelage.

If you ask someone outside the training community how this happens, the guessed answer you get quite often would be “while drawing their gun.” It turns out this is fairly rarely the case. I have looked at several accidental range shootings over the years, and only two involved drawing the gun. The vast majority occurred while putting the gun back in the holster. There are a number of reasons for this. Here are some tips to keep this major faux pas from happening to you.

## Self-Inflicted Wounds

by Tom Givens

**1** The single most common underlying factor in these shootings seems to be the process called “speed holstering.” Some people seem to be in an enormous hurry to get the gun back in the holster once the required number of shots have been fired. The same guys tend to shove the gun forcefully into the holster as soon as the gun approaches the holster’s opening. If this describes you, STOP IT, right now.

Any time you fire what you think is the last shot in a drill, come down to a hard ready, full firing grip maintained, trigger finger in register, away from

the trigger guard, and stop. Assess the need for any further firing. Take a deep breath, and get your feces coagulated. If you have a DA/SA pistol, decock it. If your pistol has a manual safety, engage it. Only then do you start the pistol toward the holster.

**2** Use your sense of touch to feel what is going on with the pistol while holstering. If your pistol has a hammer, place your thumb on the hammer to feel any movement. If using a Glock or other handgun without a hammer, placing your thumb on the back plate of the slide helps keep the slide in battery and moves your trigger finger further away from the trigger.

**3** If you feel resistance when holstering the pistol, STOP! Don’t push harder. Bunched up undershirts, drawstring adjusters, and other items sometimes find their way into the trigger guard, and pushing down will simply fire the gun into the holster/your leg. If you feel resistance, stop, see what the problem is and fix it.

**4** Use properly designed, well made equipment. Shooters often spend lavish amounts of money on spiffy pistols, then scrimp on the holster. This is false economy. The holster is almost as important a piece of defensive equipment as the pistol is. Make sure there are no floppy straps

around the mouth of the holster; that the holster stays in the same place on the belt and at the same angle all of the time; and that the holster mouth stays fully open and does not collapse while the pistol is out. One reason I have come to prefer Kydex for an inside the waistband holster is not worrying about the holster collapsing while the gun is in hand.

**5** Think in terms of only wanting to draw the gun once in an incident. It is a sound tactical habit to assess and make sure we don't need the gun out any longer, then holster deliberately, or even reluctantly.

Friends don't let friends speed holster! ■

# CONGRATULATIONS YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN

by Tom Givens

**T**o borrow a phrase from trainer Darryl Bolke, when someone breaks into your home or pulls a gun on you in a street robbery, YOU are the first responder. The police are secondary responders, who will arrive long after the event is over. According to a 2009 article in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, Atlanta police were the slowest to answer high-priority, life-threatening situations, such as armed robberies, assaults, shootings in progress, and similar high priority emergency calls among police departments from seven similar-sized cities. In Atlanta, on average it took over 11 minutes from the time a high-priority 911 call was received until an Atlanta police officer showed up at the scene. The El Paso (Texas) response times were only one second quicker than Atlanta's. This is sadly typical in just about all large cities. According to the U.S. Justice Department, the average duration of a violent crime is about 90 seconds. This means the police will be showing up, on average, about ten minutes after the incident is over, IF someone called them at the very first instant the incident began. They simply cannot get in a time machine, go back in time ten minutes, and take care of the problem for you. You're on your own! ■

*"Determined wrongdoers, already ignoring existing statutes and safety measures, are unlikely to be convinced to adopt safe practices by a new overlay of regulations."*

**Whose words are these?**

- A. Governor Scott Walker
- B. Journalist Dan Rather
- C. Author Dinesh D'Souza
- D. Justice Stephen Breyer

Be the first to post the right answer on the Rangemaster Facebook page, and you'll be this month's...



**POP QUIZ**  
TRIVIA

## COMBATIVE PISTOL

**L**ynn and I had a great time teaching a Combative Pistol Course in Wisconsin in July. Here we are at the Racine Rifle Club (below). On August 13-14, 2016, we have another Combative Pistol I course near Franklin, TN. This will be conducted on a very nice private range in a scenic hollow outside of town. This is our only course in Tennessee this year. Come train with us. There are only a few slots left. For those further north, August also takes us to Indiana and New Hampshire for even more great classes. Check out Rangemaster.com for details or visit our Eventbrite page to register today!

**Eventbrite**

www.Rangemaster.com





# CH-CH-CH-CHANGES!



(to the 12-Gauge)

Here's another great article by our friend and frequent student, Sherman A. House, DDS. You can follow Sherman at [RevolverScience.com](http://RevolverScience.com), and this is adapted from his March 21, 2016 blog post.

- Tom

**A**fter running this Remington 870 Wingmaster (pictured above) through a block of Tom Givens' Defensive Shotgun course, I made a few simple changes to the gun, to allow myself to run it better. Tom mentioned these modifications in the course, and I finished them over the past week. Total investment? \$310.00. And that's in US dollars. A workable, high quality solution doesn't need to cost \$2100...

## Change #1

I ditched the OEM magazine cap with the integrated sling loop, and the OEM magazine tube spring and cheap plastic follower. I replaced the cap, spring and follower with a unit from Wilson Combat/Scattergun Technologies. This magazine "extension" allows one more round to fit into the magazine, for a total of five rounds. I leave it loaded with four rounds, to allow the spring to have a bit more "oomph" instead of leaving it fully loaded. I keep it in "cruiser ready" condition with a loaded magazine tube, hammer down (action unlocked), and the safety off. If I need it, I can pick it up, rack a round in, and fire.

Why not a longer extension tube, you ask? I'm not convinced that the longer tube is the way to go... They are basically unprotected and hang out underneath the gun where they are susceptible to dents and dings. Dent one deep enough and you can prevent the follower from traversing the tube unimpeded, as it should. I'd hate to turn my repeating shotgun into a manually operated (albeit a fast one) single-shot weapon.

The basic bead works well for me. I do have other guns that have ghost ring sights, rifle sights, or express sights, but the longest shot in our home is 15 yards. The bead accomplishes that shot at that range with a minimum of fidgeting or alignment. If you have a good cheek weld, the bead is right on what will get clobbered when the trigger is pressed. So while advanced sights have their place, until I amass enough wealth to purchase Wayne Manor, the basic bead will work fine.







## Change #2

Five round nylon/elastic shell strip, attached with heavy duty Velcro to the right side of the stock. This configuration gives me 9 rounds in/ on the gun, which should be MORE than enough ammo to statistically handle ANY civilian-context threat. This wood stock came from the factory, with a 14" length of pull. Awhile back, I had Taylor Mock at the Texas Brigade Armory shorten the stock, and refit the recoil pad, to give a total length of pull of 12". Don't freak out tall folks...you can still use this length stock, easily. So can your smaller family members.

## Change #3

Federal Flite Control, "Personal Defense," OO Buckshot. I bought a bunch of this ammunition. It is my new, "go-to," round. It runs in whatever guns I've tried it in, and turns in patterns that I previously thought were only possible with a Vang Comp type modification. Pretty great. The flight control wad makes keeping 9 out of 9 pellets on the bad guy at 25 yards easy. Each of those 9 projectiles MUST be accounted for in a defensive shooting, and keeping them closer to each other, and on the target, makes that easier. You might win the battle, but lose the war, if you effectively down the bad guy, but have an errant pellet hit a family member or a neighbor



## Change #4

What, no light? In short, no. While I *do* have a Surefire forend in my gear box for an 870, I don't have it mounted on this home defense shotgun. Your experience and opinion may vary, but here's mine. Surefire forends were designed for law enforcement use. Law

enforcement officers find themselves in situations where they need to search for a bad guy inside a structure, or outdoors in low light. I keep my carry handgun, and flashlight available to address situations like a, "bump," in the night. My family loves in a multi floor, loft type of dwelling, with 180 degrees of floor to ceiling windows. Even with the blinds down, there is still enough ambient light to be able to see well. A flashlight would absolutely confirm the identity of the noise/intruder. With my flashlight, I can illuminate said disturbance, then decide if a firearm solution is necessary. With the shotgun, I cannot illuminate the target and decide if a firearm solution is required... because with the integrated light, that's already being done! With the flashlight/pistol combo, I still have the option to electively point the gun at the possible bad guy. With the shotgun/light system, I do not.



Also, my shotgun fits into my home defense system like this: the shotgun is placed in the safe room, where all the occupants of our home will retreat to, in the event of an emergency. If we are behind the door, shotgun at the ready, anyone that forcibly kicks down the door isn't there to offer us foot massages...in that case, there would be enough light to see that the behemoth that just kicked the door down isn't Aunt Edna looking for the last of the Girl Scout Thin Mints! Their intent/ability/opportunity to cause grave bodily injury or death to me and my family will be obvious. The police can



brandish/point guns at people that they do not know or who occupy areas where calls for service have been made to. That's part of their job... If you're a good guy in a building where a bad guy is known to be, and the police are searching for him, you WILL get guns pointed at you. Civilians cannot do that. Sure, you could make the argument that The Castle Doctrine will protect you if someone is an unauthorized party in your own home, but how often are the circumstances THAT apparent? The chance of a negative outcome seems to be much greater when guns are pointed at questionable/unidentified threats. So for me, adequate ambient lighting is a good thing, and having a search light separate from the weapon is, too.

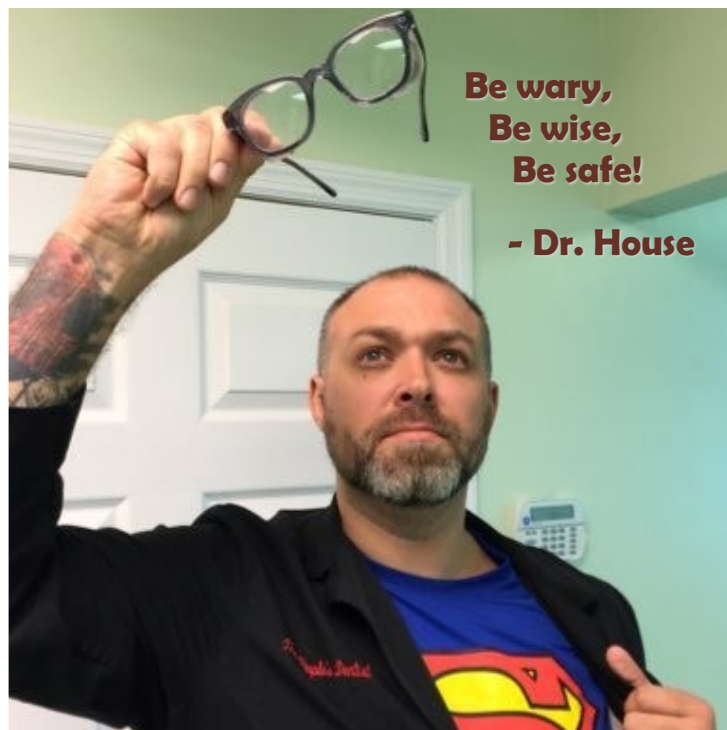
## Conclusion:

There has been a strange cognitive error occurring in the civilian defense

industry lately. Regular folks look at military and law enforcement equipment and techniques and then adopt them, prima facie, without considering that the police, the military, and the civilian all have completely different missions. There is little overlap between the three.

One area of pure overlap is in ammunition selection. I've heard Tom Givens, Massad Ayoob and other instructors say that using the same caliber, brand/weight ammunition as the local police force can be a wise move. Here, the purpose of the civilian and the LE antipersonnel ammunition is the same...accurately fire projectiles that will quickly stop a bad guy from causing any further harm, with as few rounds as possible. If you're being attacked at a gas station by a man demanding your cash and keys with a switchblade held inches from your face, and you shoot him, and he drops the knife and runs away, you've accomplished your mission. If you were the police, and the same scenario occurred (hey, nobody said crooks were smart), that would just be the start of your mission, as now the bad guy has to be apprehended. But as Joe Civilian, your part is done. Thus, the ammunition commonality analogy makes sense. The choice of carry pistol could also carry over from LE circles, if one is willing to carry a full-size/G19 or G23 size gun.

The analogy falls apart with conclusions like this: "The local Police carry M4s loaded with Hornady TAP ammo for active killer threats in the trunk of their squad cars, therefore I, the friendly neighborhood dentist, *should also* keep an M4 in my trunk, to better prepare for active killer threats!" While a police patrolman might very well interdict a bad guy trying to hack up patrons of a second-run movie theatre with his M4, the more likely scenario for the civilian user is that the M4 would be stolen from my unattended vehicle and then end up in the bad guy's hands. Since the majority of the guns that are taken from bad guys are in fact stolen, it makes good sense for us, the citizen sentinels, to keep them out of their hands as well as we can. So, while the missions are different, the context of equipment utilization can overlap, but it doesn't, automatically. ■



## Everything's Bigger...

Due to high demand in the Lone Star State, we'll be spending September 10-19, 2016 conducting four consecutive training courses at Karl Rehn's excellent training facility, KR Training, in Lincoln, TX (near Austin). There is a modern, air conditioned classroom with real restroom and a nice outdoor range. We begin with a two-day Combative Pistol Course. This is our signature defensive pistol course, covering all the essential skills involved in carrying and using a handgun in self-defense. Next, we have our three-day Firearms Instructor Development Course. Whether you plan to teach or not, the best way to master a subject is to learn to teach it.

Rounding off the week will be two iterations of our Advanced Firearms Instructor Course, which offers two more days of education beyond the basic instructor course. In true Texas style, this is what you might call "Training +P." For more information or to register, please visit Rangemaster.com or click the dates below.

### Sept 10-11

Combative Pistol I  
Austin, TX

### Sept 13-15

Instructor Development  
Austin, TX

### Sept 16-17

Advanced Instructor Course  
Austin, TX

### Sept 18-19

Advanced Instructor Course  
Austin, TX



# THE SNUB-NOSE SHOTGUN

BY  
TOM GIVENS

In the June 2016 edition of this newsletter, I extolled the merits of the Short Barrel Shotgun (SBS, regulated by the National Firearms Act, or NFA). I find the 14" barreled pump shotgun to be one of the easiest long guns to maneuver in tight indoor spaces, or to easily dismount from a vehicle with the gun in hand.

The M1 Carbine is a very compact shoulder gun, originally designed as a substitute for the pistol for artillerymen, tankers, vehicle drivers, supply personnel and other military troops who did not have room for a full size battle rifle. The M-1 Carbine's small size makes it

very maneuverable and suitable for small females, trained teenage members of the household, etc.

Below is a pic of my 14" barrel 870 beside an unaltered M-1 Carbine. The shotgun is actually a bit more compact, as you can see. ■



## Now or Never by Tom Givens

**S**o far we are only half way through 2016, and it has been a very rough year for us.

In March, we lost Todd Louis Green, who passed away after a long and heroic struggle against cancer. Todd was told about a year and a half before his death that he had six weeks to live. His courage, sense of humor and fierce determination kept him in the fight much longer. Todd worked in a variety of roles in the shooting industry, having been employed by SIG and Beretta, among other firms, but he was best known as a trainer. Todd was one of the best trainers in the field for pure technical shooting skills and he made many contributions to the art.

In May, we lost Pat Rogers, one of the best and most respected carbine trainers in the business. Service as a combat Marine in Viet Nam was followed by a long and glorious career in the NYPD, with decorations for valor and some damn funny war stories. Pat taught for years at

Gunsite, then on his own all over the country, offering handgun, carbine and shoot-house training courses.

In July, Walt Rauch passed away after struggling with the effects of a stroke a few months ago. Walt served in US Army Intelligence, in the US Secret Service and as an officer with the Philadelphia police warrant squad, hunting down dangerous fugitives. He wrote a couple of books and numerous magazine articles, and served on the IDPA Board of Directors for several years. Walt was passionate about passing on his hard won lessons to new handgunners.



Tom and Todd Green laugh about some smart-ass comment at one of Tom's classes. Todd had great skills, and a great sense of humor.

Many of the Old Guard trainers — like Farnam, Hackathorn, Ayoob, Smith, and others — are in their late sixties, or even in their seventies. Uninformed new shooters often call their training “antiquated.” I prefer to think of it as time-tested and combat-proven. If you want to train with these repositories of valid information, better get off your duff and do it. ■