



MEMBERS UPDATE

July, 2018

**Wilderness Survival Sagas
from Around the World**

Top 6 Tactical Revolvers

The Best Knives for Collectors

Safeguarding America's Gun Culture

HELLFIRE



DOUBLE YOUR ACCURACY INSTANTLY!

It's a combination tactical flashlight and high visibility green laser.

And it fits just about any handgun, rifle or shotgun.



www.mycrisisgear.com/Hellfire

CONTENT



02

Worldwide Wilderness Survival

What happens when your hot air balloon goes down in the Canadian wilderness? Or you get carjacked and left for dead in the Australian outback? A fight for survival... that's what! These real-life wilderness survival sagas read like epic fiction.



07

Top 6 Tactical Revolvers

Good news, it's now possible to combine your love of wheel guns with your love of tactical lights, lasers, and reflex sights. Even better news, this little-known class of revolvers features some of the most innovative, best-shooting handguns on the market from the most iconic manufacturers.



10

Best Collectible Knives You Can Buy

If you're a collector, you already know that the market for American-made knives is much larger than most would imagine, and borderline fanatical. We've put together a quick reference guide for anyone interested in these beautiful knives and this exciting hobby.



15

Safeguarding America's Gun Culture

With troubling headlines around every corner, many of us wonder what, if anything, we can do to prevent the next tragedy. There's no getting around it; we have some hard work ahead of us. Once again, times of great adversity will bring out the best in us as Americans.

Wilderness Survival Stories from Around the World



Bureau of Land Management/Public Domain

Welcome to the latest installment of our real-life series on wilderness survival! This time, we're going to branch out beyond the U.S. National Parks to take a close look at some of the most interesting stories from around the world. As always, this will provide some useful insight into not only how to survive in the wild but also how to avoid having these issues in the first place.

SPOILER ALERT: The answer isn't to avoid the outdoors altogether. Although in some cases, the people mentioned below had no idea they were going to end up anywhere near the woods.

1. Three Navy Lieutenants Survive Hydrogen Balloon Crash into the Canadian Wilderness



December 13, 1920, was a day that U.S. Navy Lieutenants Farrell, Hinton, and Kloor would never forget. It began innocently enough with a hydrogen balloon ride over New York City. Before long, they were far from this location, but they still had control over the balloon. In fact, at one point, they lowered the balloon enough to ask a bystander where they were.

This is when they made the fateful decision that would take them all the way from New York to 20 miles outside Moose Factory, Ontario in Canada. All three men agreed to keep going, even though it was dark and they were inexperienced with hydrogen balloons. A strong wind caught their craft and catapulted them quickly into Canada.

Approximately 24 hours after they began their trip, they all realized that they were in serious trouble. They'd been flying over dense woods for hours and had no idea where they were or if there'd be any civilization soon. What they did know, though, was that the hydrogen was running out. Their skills weren't up to this test, and they ended up crash landing 20 miles from the nearest town and 250 miles from a train station.

Their situation looked bleak. No one knew where they were, and their meager initial supplies (eight sandwiches, two thermoses of coffee, and no water) had already run out. They did still have two packs of cigarettes, a box of safety matches, and one penknife.

The men weren't properly dressed for the cold, snowy wilderness they'd crashed into. There wasn't a single overcoat among them, and two of the three men only had flying shoes on. Still, they thought they saw a farm in the far distance as they landed, and they also thought they heard a dog. Rationally, they headed in the direction of both of these things in search of help and shelter.



Four miles of walking later, they were still stuck deep in the forest and the sun had gone down. By the next morning, they killed and ate a pigeon, which provided them with only two bites each. They also drank forest water that was cold, but not clean. Their only other source of sustenance though the rest of that day was moss.

They were able to stay warm by a campfire during night two, but this led to a major problem in the morning. Two of the three had left their shoes too close to the fire, and they were now partially burned. They killed and ate another pigeon for breakfast and trudged wearily on with no way of knowing when, or even if, the wilderness was going to end.

On their third day, Lieutenant Farrell suffered from a minor injury, and none of them were able to find any food or water. By the morning of day four, they were severely weakened, exhausted from lack of sleep, and beginning to lose hope. Fortunately, they found a frozen river about one mile later, which gave them something to follow.

Finally, after following the river for five miles, they spotted an indigenous man. It took a while to gain that man's trust, but he eventually helped the group get to the Hudson Bay Trading Post. Less than a month after the entire incident began, they were not

only back in New York but had returned to active duty.

One of the most interesting aspects of this story is the fact that the three men made the conscious decision to not take water or additional supplies with them, even though they were planning to stay in the air for more than 18 hours. They reasoned that they didn't need water because they'd be on the ground the next morning. This quite simply doesn't make any sense. Sure, coffee is great. But if you're going to be unable to access any source of food or water for at least 18 hours, it shouldn't be prioritized over water.

Also, why in the world would three men pack only eight sandwiches for a full day? They didn't even have enough for everyone to get three meals. Finally, if you're going to be up in the air for an extended period of time, it makes sense to take an overcoat with you.

As you can see, tenacity may have helped them find help, but a little forethought could have made the situation much better. Always take food, water, and proper clothing with you. Heck, this is why we encourage you to keep those supplies in your car, too. You just never know when something might happen that can prevent you from accessing everything critical that we take for granted.

Finally, when it's dark and you don't know for certain where you are or where you're headed, don't keep moving. If they had set down the balloon that first night when they stopped to ask someone for directions, their subsequent ordeal would have been avoided.

2. A Carjacking Turned into 71 Days Lost in the Australian Outback

What would you do if you woke up stranded in one of the harshest, most desolate places on earth? Imagine that your last memory is of being in your car, but now you're all alone, have no supplies, and absolutely no idea where you are or how to get home. To make matters even worse, you've woken up in a shallow grave.



Photo by Pixabay/walesjacqueline

This nightmare actually happened to Australian resident Ricky Megee in 2006. Megee encountered a group of three men who begged for his help. Their story was that they'd run out of fuel. Taking pity on them, Megee agreed to drive one of the men to the closest Aborigine camp. The two talked and shared a bottle of water. When it was time to open a new bottle, though, everything went to hell.

Megee is convinced that the hitchhiker slipped something into the fresh water. Shortly after taking a drink, Megee's grasp on the world began to fade. One of the last things he remembers is the man grabbing the steering wheel to prevent it from crashing. He also heard what he believes was the voices of the other two men nearby.



The car still crashed, though, and ended up stuck in a ravine. Megee slipped in and out of consciousness, but he does remember four people surrounding the car. He told them to take the car and whatever else they wanted. All he asked for in return was some water.

Unfortunately, his pleas fell on deaf ears. When he finally regained complete consciousness after the drug wore off, he discovered that he was under a tarpaulin in a shallow grave. The men had taken his shoes and socks. They left him there to die with nothing more than one pair of shorts, a t-shirt, a phone with a dead battery, a small amount of cash, and his car keys.

There was no food. There was no water. And there was no one around for miles. The Australian outback is larger than the combined landmass of Italy, France, and Spain, and his disorientation made it impossible to figure out which way to go. It was 104 degrees Fahrenheit and his thirst was already unbearable.

What followed was an epic, 71-day ordeal that sounds like it came straight from a Hollywood blockbuster. Megee started walking. He couldn't find water and resorted to drinking his own urine on the second day (as always, here's a reminder that this is actually a terrible idea). By day five, he began eating insects and grass.

As he walked, he was able to find some rainwater to drink. It was fortunate for Megee that he was lost in the outback during the wet season. Otherwise, there would have been zero rainwater to be found. Several days of walking on torn up, unprotected feet later, Megee stumbled upon a dam.

Here he found a steady supply of water and a larger selection of food. He soon found himself dining on flowers, frogs, leeches, and lizards. He also tried a cockroach but later told reporters that "it was disgusting" and "the taste stayed in my mouth for two days." Unsurprisingly, he stayed by the dam for several days in an attempt to regain his strength.

After nine days, though, he decided to keep moving. Megee only made it two more days before heat exhaustion and dehydration started causing him to black out. He was lucky, though; that's exactly when he found an even bigger dam that offered fresh water and access to lots of insects.

There was also a "humpy" at the dam. This is a steel feed trough that was fortified by mud and turned

into a small shelter. With his body rapidly becoming emaciated and his mind beginning to grasp the idea that no one was going to come find him, he turned to mentally re-watching his favorite episodes of *The Simpsons* to help retain his sanity.

Approximately seven weeks later, on the 71st day of his ordeal, Megee heard a car in the distance. He was able to flag down help from two station-hands.

His weight had dropped from 231 pounds to only 99 pounds. He eventually found out that the shallow grave he woke up in was located more than 18.5 miles from the ravine where his car crashed. But after his rescue, he not only needed emergency medical care but also needed the police to actually believe his story. Which they didn't.

Officially, the police have never confirmed or denied that Megee was carjacked or drugged. Police psychiatrists, though, attested in writing that Megee absolutely spent 71 days lost in the outback as the result of a traumatic incident. Despite this, there was never any serious effort to recover Megee's vehicle or to find the people who carjacked him, drugged him, and left him to die.



Megee couldn't have done anything to prepare himself for what happened, aside from not picking up the hitchhiker-turned-carjacker in the first place. But what his plight teaches survivalists is very interesting. His story is one of determination, pushing forward against all odds, and using whatever resources are on hand to survive.

No one wants to eat grass and bugs for more than two months, but Megee did what he had to do. As a result, he's still alive today. A book, "Left for Dead," details the entire 71-day nightmare.

Megee has said that he hopes people will no longer stop for hitchhikers in that area. This may seem harsh, but there is another way to help people who may be legitimately in need – call the local authorities and report their apparent misfortune.

3. *Two Teenagers Almost Died Due to an Inaccurate Weather Forecast*



Photo by trialsanderrors/Flicker

Let's return to the U.S. for the last story of this issue!

Matthew Smith and Tommy Hendricks loved hiking mountain trails together, so it's not surprising that they took advantage of the opportunity to hike the Mt. of the Holy Cross in November 2016. Located in Colorado, the mountain's Cross Couloir was snow-filled and steep. Based on their knowledge of the mountain and mountain climbing in general, they estimated that they could reach the summit within two hours.

The duo checked the local weather forecast, stashed some overnight supplies at their basecamp, and started their ascent. The weather forecast did indicate a snowstorm was on its way, but it wasn't supposed to hit the area for another 24 hours.

They climbed steadily, and although the snow was deeper than expected, they were making really good time. They also had an important lifeline: cell phone service that actually worked.

The higher they trekked, the worse things became. The snow on the trail was increasingly deeper and looser. This slowed them down considerably, but

they still believed they'd make it to the summit before dark. Unfortunately, it started to snow during the afternoon, and by 5:30 p.m., they were trying to climb through a windy, snowy mess.

This was do or die time. They had to make a decision. They both wanted to bail on the climb, but the conditions below them were so slick that they didn't think they'd make it. Instead, they pushed on until 7 p.m. when they finally decided to stop for the night. They were 200 feet below the summit and somewhat protected by an overhang. The plan was to bail in the morning by taking a different – and believed to be much easier – path home.

Their cellphones did work, so they called their families and let them know that they were okay. They had a little food and water left, and they were covered by gloves, hats, insulated pants, and ski jackets. But as the wind picked up and the windchill plummeted to -20 F, their meager shelter and clothing proved to be insufficient. Frostbite began attacking their feet, and the numbness shook their confidence. It was at this point that they acknowledged they might be about to die.

Still, they were able to rappel down what they thought was the correct side of the mountain the next morning. They soon discovered they'd made a mistake. They had chosen the opposite side of the mountain from where they wanted to be. This was compounded by their rapidly dwindling supplies and the fact that they now had no cellphone reception.

With no other choice, they used their compass and tried to follow a trail. But they ended up walking in circles due to iron in the rocks. Known locally as the “Bermuda Triangle,” this area is notorious for messing up compasses.

Night fell again without any sign of help. This time, their lighter no longer worked, so they couldn't even light a fire to help them stay warm. The two friends made a bed from pine branches and cuddled to share body heat. Hypothermia began to set in, and Matt's thumb became frostbitten.

On day three, they began yet another weary, painful

trudge toward safety. Soon, they saw a helicopter.



The two sat down, gave up, and sobbed. This story could have had a very tragic ending if it wasn't for one fortuitous thing; the helicopter pilot did see them. But there wasn't enough fuel to land and then get the teens to safety. The rescue copter returned one hour later and got them to a hospital. One of the first things that pilot said was, “we were told to look for bodies.” But despite harsh conditions that no one should have been able to survive, the two young men would both live to see another day.

This is an exciting story with a happy ending. But it never needed to go this way. First, you always need to be prepared for the potential that weather reports will change quickly. In other words, if a blizzard is forecast within 24 hours of your plan to hike a mountain, it's probably best to reschedule. Also, they might have gotten better advice about the time frame for the hike if they'd spoken to some of their fellow mountain climbers.

Once they were stuck in the situation, though, Matt and Tommy did a good job of surviving. They had some food and water with them, which was very smart, but it sounds like they could have used some more.

Another thing that might have been a difference maker would have been not just telling their family they were okay. Instead, they could have asked for help to be sent after daybreak. It's rare in these stories to have the chance to call for help, so if that happens to you, take advantage of it!



6 Awesome Tactical Revolvers You Didn't Know Had Rails

We're big fans of wheel guns here at the NSRA. It's hard to say exactly why revolver junkies have this particular affliction, when there are so many amazing semi-automatic pistols on the market.

For some, it's just a simplicity thing. For others, it's an issue of familiarity.

Plus, there's just the cool factor...

John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Charles Bronson, etc... When you see these guys in the movies, what type of pistol are they packing? It's almost always a revolver.

One question we get over and over here is, are there any revolvers that have accessory rails? You know, to attach tactical lights, laser sights, etc.

It's not something we'd looked into much, since we assumed most dyed-in-the-wool revolver fans wouldn't want extra hardware on their sleek and functional wheel guns. Based on how often this topic comes up, however, it's clear we were just dead wrong.

Quite a few shooters who enjoy the power, simplicity, and recoil-eating characteristics of a full frame revolver do, in fact, want the ability to mount some hardware. Not just scopes, either; some folks prefer revolvers for their home security or tactical shooting sport needs.

Turns out, several household names in the world of revolvers already knew this. And revolver fanatics don't have to miss out on the fun of lasers, LED torches, etc. Now, without further ado, here are the 6 revolvers that come with factory-equipped accessory rails...

S&W Thunder Ranch 325

This revolver, designed by the S&W Performance Center in collaboration with Thunder



Ranch President, Clint Smith, is just a damn cool .45ACP revolver from start to finish.

For starters, yes, it does come equipped with a factory accessory rail. Clint teaches techniques in which shooters can utilize a quick-connect rail light that can be easily attached or removed in seconds. But the fact is there are lots of other light/laser sights combinations that would work with this system as well.

As a S&W Performance Center firearm, the designers have added a few premium upgrades that aren't as easy to spot as the rail. The hammer is forged as well as the trigger, with a built-in trigger stop.

This is a scandium framed revolver, making it a little lighter than most. The front sight is easily interchangeable, allowing you to substitute a fiber optic for the standard gold dot. Other upgrades include a very smooth hand-tuned action (which comes standard with all Performance Center firearms) and the removal of the locking bolt allowing the cylinder to spin more freely.

Rhino 40DS - .40S&W

If you want something that turns heads at the range, but not



necessarily because it's sleek and elegant (because this certainly isn't), the Chiappa (pronounced "Key-ahh-puh") Rhino 40DS may just be for you.

It's blocky, it's esoteric-looking, and it's a little difficult to figure out where the barrel is from the side (it's actually where the push rod would typically be). But it also comes standard with an accessory rail.

But we suppose beauty is in the eye of the beholder. And if you're holding the Rhino 40DS, you most certainly have a 6-shot revolver that's ready for some tactical hardware straight out of the box.

In fact, this unusual looking revolver is just begging for a laser sight, in our opinion -- to buck tradition, if for no other reason...

A high-tech looking laser/light combo like the MCG HellFire seems fitting for a revolver that fires from the bottom of the cylinder. Yes, probably the most unusual characteristic of the Rhino is, apart from its looks, the fact that the recoil goes straight into your palm, reducing that old "muzzle flip."

Taurus Judge with Rail

Like many judges out there in our judicial system, this revolver is no lightweight (1.76 pounds), literally or figuratively. The Judge also packs an interesting capacity for versatility; it's able to deal in both .45 LC and .410 cartridges (5 of them).



Also versatile is the number of configurations and barrel lengths offered by Taurus. If you're searching for the Judge with a factory rail, it will be outfitted with a 3.5" barrel.

Since this gun is bulky, it's a good choice for a home defense weapon. As such, we believe a tactical rail system is almost mandatory for lights and/or accessories. It's late, you can't find your readers, and you need your vision more than ever... think about it.

As of this writing, there were 13 different configurations of the Judge listed for sale on the Taurus website, some with very long barrels, some with large comfy grips. Customizations will probably inflate the price tag a bit, but some upgrades may be worth the money.

With a 3-inch barrel, the Judge isn't going to replace your shotgun. It will turn some heads at the range, however.

Dan Wesson 715

This might just be the coolest revolver on the whole list... for a real deal wheel gun junkie.



The Dan Wesson 715 is the latest in the esteemed DW revolver lineage, which includes the classic Model 15. For shooters who favor a simple yet elegant (and extra-large) piece of stainless steel sculpture, the 715 is hard to beat.

With a noticeably short double action pull, this gun barely blinks when you put .38 Specials through it. Of course, the .357 Mag is a significantly livelier cartridge, but this 47oz weapon mutes the recoil with ease, a key reason we love big revolvers in the first place.

While it doesn't have a Picatinny style rail under the barrel as the others on this list do, the 715 sports a nice stainless raised rail on the barrel. As many 715 shooters have discovered, this ribbed rail is perfect for mounting a scope or... a red dot (one of our favorite toys).

S&W Model 327 TRR8/M&P R8

These two eccentric wheel guns are examples of the love it or leave class of revolvers,



especially when you consider it's from the Smith & Wesson lineage.

If you're a tactical or combat shooting gear head, this revolver is right up your alley. As you can see, they're kinda perfect for mounting all sorts of lights and sights.

If you're more of a traditionalist, you may be wondering why S&W would build a big N-Frame revolver like this with a clunky tactical rail that will probably dramatically alter its holster compatibility (particularly with a laser or light attached).

The answer is simple, these two guns were designed with a specific law enforcement user in mind: SWAT shield carriers.



As the story goes, many of the most heralded semi-autos (Glock, H&K, Colt 1911s) were standard issue for the shield carrier for many years based on their rock-solid reliability and stout firepower. There was just one problem; these weapons proved highly unreliable in this one very specific application.

Why? The slide action would get interrupted by slapping into the shield. Thus, misfires and other malfunctions were common for the man (or woman) with the shield. SWAT folks asked S&W if they could come up with a revolver that could build a gun specifically for the point man on their entry teams.

Now, back to these two revolvers themselves. For starters, they're more or less interchangeable. Both have the same Performance Center pedigree, both share a scandium alloy N-Frame, and both support accessory rails. They also both have 8-round cylinders to house -- .357 Mag or .38 Special rounds.



There are a few subtle differences between the TRR8 and R8, but the primary difference is the R8

has an integrated accessory rail, while the TRR8 is tapped out for a rail. Both of these weapons are tapped out for an accessory rail atop the barrel.



Korth Super Sport .357

This big honkin' German made wheel gun is nothing short of a conversation starter... or finisher, depending on the situation.



One thing is for sure, it's a very unique weapon, almost to the point of novelty. But if you're wondering, does it have a tactical rail from the factory, the answer is, well... it's got three of them.

The Super Sport has 3 fairly long rails, one on each side and along the top. What's more, it also comes with 2 interchangeable cylinders; one the tried and true .357 Mag/38 Spl combo and another for 9mm ammo.

What's the actual benefit of having 3 accessory rails and the ability to fire 3 calibers? On top of making this revolver look extremely unique, we suppose they help to justify the \$2500 price tag.

Don't get us wrong, we'd love to shoot this high-quality piece. It's a bit pricey for the collection, though, and figuring out what to do with all those rails might be a bit of a chore too.



7 of the Best Collectible Knives You Can Buy



Whether you're new to knives or have been collecting them for a while, there's always something new and exciting waiting to catch your attention. Of course, some of the very best collectible knives are classic styles that come from American made brands you can trust.

Here's a primer to some of the best of the best for any beginner. This can serve as a shopping guide, both for building your own collection and for finding the ideal gift for a knife collecting friend or loved one. This is primarily intended to help newcomers to the world of knife collecting, but seasoned vets should take a look as well, to ensure they have all of the best basic brands and styles.

Remember: knives are much more than just a cool-looking collectible piece. If you learn how to use them and keep them properly sharpened, they could also save your life during a self-defense or survival scenario. Therefore, assembling a nice collection now is a great investment in your future.

1. Case Knives



Picking a single Case knife to recommend is borderline impossible because this company has so many styles to choose from. They've also been the bedrock of the collectible knives industry for more than 125 years. In fact, it's probably not too hyperbolic to suggest that without Case, we might not be exploring this topic at all right now.

Case offers camp folding knives, hunting knives, and basic shop knives. These knives are then broken into a wide variety of patterns. Some of the most popular patterns include the Copperhead, Stockman, and Folding Hunter.

Once you've made your style and pattern choices, you'll get to select from an almost equally long list of handle materials. The main categories are Stag, Celluloid, Synthetic, Bone, Micarta, Abalone, and a diverse list of Various Woods.

Each decision you make will have a dramatic impact on the look, feel, usability, and price of your Case collectible. With so many to choose from, it's no wonder that a lot of people focus exclusively on Case knives. Each knife is date stamped, which makes them an even hotter collectible as they begin to age.

Case has been producing knives since 1889, so you'd have to be rich and very lucky to get a complete set. However, picking a recent starting point will give you the opportunity to build a nice collection of knives that can also come in very handy during an emergency.

2. Buck Knives

Much like Case, Buck Knives has been producing collectible knives for more than 115 years. These blades are made in the USA and are typically created for the sports and field categories.



Buck Knives improved the world of survival by inventing folding hunting knives. As a result, the company's name is now often used to describe any folding hunting knife, regardless of the knife's actual manufacturer. With such a strong recognition factor, it's not surprising in the least that Buck Knives continue to be a sought-after collectible.

One of the most popular styles available today is the 0119 Special Fixed Blade Knife pictured above. This 6" steel blade's clip point is notable. The knife is also well-balanced and comfortable to grip. And, as with every other Buck Knife, it's made in the USA and has a lifetime warranty.

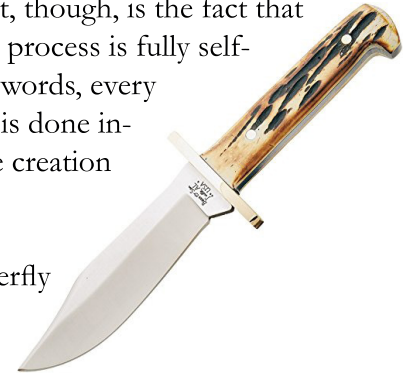
If you prefer a folding knife, another current model that's very popular is the 248 Bantam. This beauty can be opened with one hand. It's also lightweight, easy to carry, and razor sharp. You can choose from a nice variety of handles, ranging from basic black to mossy oak pink camo.

Another thing Buck has in common with Case is such a nice, long list of options that you could work on collecting them for the rest of your life without getting a complete set. And isn't constantly being able to get a new knife part of the fun?

3. Bear & Son Cutlery

11 Bear & Son is yet another USA based manufacturer that makes quality, collectible knives. One thing that

truly sets them apart, though, is the fact that their manufacturing process is fully self-contained. In other words, every step of the process is done in-house, including the creation of blanking dies.



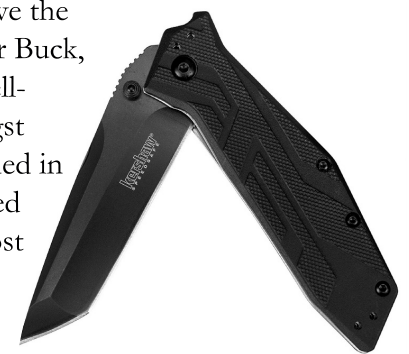
Do you want a butterfly knife, a three-blade stockman, and a baby bowie knife in your collection? You can get all three from Bear & Son. This level of diversity makes them a good choice for loyalists who want to choose one company and stick with them.

Bear & Son is also a nice option for those who want to collect knives and use them for hunting purposes. Their collection includes numerous knives designed specifically for working with deer, birds, and fish. A prime example is the 751 Stag Delrin Bird & Trout Knife.

Anyone who lives near, or visits, Jacksonville, Alabama, can visit the Bear & Son Cutlery plant and showroom. This is a nice touch for people who like to plan their vacations around their hobbies. There's nothing quite like going directly to the source to pick up some new collectibles!

4. Kershaw Knives

Kershaw might not have the long history of Case or Buck, but it has become a well-respected name amongst knife collectors. Founded in 1974, this Oregon based company handles almost any type of knife you can think of, including sporting knives, pocketknives, and even kitchen cutlery.



Most of their blades have a black or steel colored case, but it is possible to get different colors. They also work with a variety of knife designers to give collectors a lot of intriguing options. For example, designer Rick Hinderer came up with the Cryo 1555TI. This four-position pocketknife is perfect

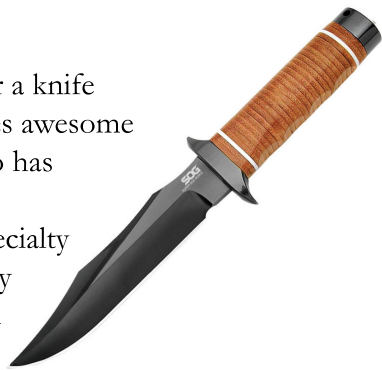
for everyday carry, but it also looks nice in a display case.

Another great Kershaw choice is the Brawler 1990, which is pictured on the previous page. This folding pocketknife has an oxide finished blade and serves as a very useful utility knife.

We love the diversity of Kershaw's knives and the company's commitment to employing more than 400 American workers. There's just something kind of cool about being able to use the same brand for everything from hunting to cooking a nice meal.

5. SOG Specialty Knives & Tools

Are you looking for a knife company that makes awesome collectibles and also has unique self-defense products? SOG Specialty Knives & Tools may be exactly what you need.



Let's begin by taking a gander at the awesome self-defense tool pictured nearby. Yes, that's exactly what it looks like; a "key" with a retractable blade that can be kept on your keyring. With this bad boy, you can truly have a knife with you practically anywhere, anytime. It's a best seller on Amazon, too, so you know it's actually useful in a pinch.



When it comes to building a display case full of collectibles, you can also get a lot of beautiful products from SOG. We love SOG's long list of folding knives such as the FF25-CP Escape Folding Knife and the TFSAT8-CP Assisted Folding Knife. These products are solid and perform admirably. They're also cool-looking, which is always a consideration for a collectible.

SOG's knives can easily be used for self-defense, hunting, and other tactical purposes. At the same time, they're made for display. If you're looking for something a bit different, we suggest checking

12 out SOG's GB1001-CP Gambit Fixed Blade. The

forward and backward grip, combined with the ergonomic handle and full tang design, make this a knife that will work well in anyone's collection.

6. Randall Made Knives



Are you serious about creating a knife collection? If you have the money and time to put together a Randall Made Knives collection case, you just might become the envy of all of your friends.

These knives are quite simply stunning, but they're also priced accordingly. For example, the Model 1 All-Purpose Fighting Knife pictured above retails for more than \$400. You can't merely hop onto Amazon and acquire these, either. Your best bet is to go straight to the source via RandallKnives.com.

Established in 1938, this Florida based company makes knives for a wide variety of uses. If you want to take your knife off display, you can get an appropriate model for survival, hunting, skinning, utility, carving, fishing, diving, and even military purposes. It won't come cheap, but it will be solidly made and should last a lifetime if you take proper care of it.

The company's founder, W.D. Randall, based his original, fixed blade design on a handmade knife crafted by W.W. Scagel. There are now 28 fixed blade models, but Randall has been quoted as saying #3 is his favorite – that's the scientifically designed Hunter that's meant to provide optimal performance during outdoor usage.

7. Ka-Bar Knives

Have you ever wanted to check out a United States Marine Corps knife? How about a law enforcement knife or a blade that's used by the United States Army? Ka-Bar specializes in these collectible offerings, which makes them high on the list for many collectors.



Unfortunately, these knives are imported, unlike most of the styles in the rest of this article. If you're okay with that, though, you can pick up some stunning knives that will look great in a case and in your hand. The Straight blade, Full Size US Marine Corps Knife pictured above is one of their most classic, and popular, options.

There's also a modified, serrated edge fighter knife for the USMC known as KA1218-BRK. If you're looking for something truly heavy duty, you may also want to consider adding the Ka-Bar 1282 D2 Extreme Fighting Knife to your collection.

Do you want a knife that's strictly for display purposes? Ka-Bar has commemorative blades for the Vietnam War, Operation Iraqi Freedom, OEF Afghanistan, and the Purple Heart. These knives are made strong enough to actually be used, but most people wouldn't do that unless they had no other choice. Instead, you're most likely to find these in ornate wooden display cases.

How to Care for Your Collectible Knives



Now that your appetite has been whetted for knife collectibles, it's critical to spend some time thinking about how to best care for any knives you decide to purchase. After all, knives aren't a simple case of 'buy it and forget it.' They need to be properly maintained if you want them to continue looking gorgeous for years to come.

This is even more important if you plan to actually use them at any point in the future (and remember, none of us can ever know when a natural disaster

into a major portion of our self-defense plans). To help ensure you get the best out of your collectibles, here's a quick, easy to use guide to caring for them.

Basic Care Tips

1. Keep the Blades Dry – Allowing moisture to collect on your blades can cause damage over the long-term. Yes, you can cut things that are wet with your knife, but you should always wipe the blade off with a dry towel or cloth afterwards.

2. Keep the Blades Waxed – One of the easiest ways to protect your blades from moisture related damage is by regularly applying wax or a thin layer of oil.

3. Treat Any Stains Immediately – If a stain does develop, be sure to use metal cleaner or polish on the blade. The tip of another knife or a piece of sandpaper can help remove rust. Be aware that some collectibles will lose value if they're cleaned up in this manner, so if you have an older, valuable knife, be sure to check with a professional first.

4. Be Aware of the Pros and Cons of Knife Sharpening – We all want to keep our blades super sharp. But should we? Sharpening a knife does come at a cost; most notably, it reduces the steel and can also reduce the knife's value. At the same time, a sharp knife is much easier to use. Consider the pros and cons carefully.

5. Keep Folding Mechanisms Clean – If you have folding knives, you'll want to keep the mechanisms clean and free of any debris.

Storage Tips

Now that your knife is properly cared for, how are you going to store it? You'll need to pay close attention to your storage solution to avoid causing issues such as letting the blade become moist. Here are some of the most important things to keep a close eye on while storing collectible (and non-collectible) knives.

1. Light – Are your collectible blades decorative? The materials used to create these blades may have a weakness to UV light exposure. Over time, these

materials can become discolored. Not only does this reduce your visual pleasure but it also causes the value of each afflicted knife to plummet.

2. Humidity – As we’ve established, moisture is the enemy. Corrosion and rust are serious problems in overly humid environments. As a result, it’s best not to store a knife in its sheath. The opposite problem – too little humidity – can also wreak havoc on your collectibles. Any wood or leather used in the knife can dry out in an overly dry environment, thereby causing lots of damage and a diminished value.

3. Temperature – Improper regulation of temperature often leads to hairline fractures. Once this happens, your knife will lose most – or all – of its value. The blade and the handle are most at risk during drastic temperature changes or while being stored in extremely cold or hot conditions.

4. Other Objects – Do you carry your favorite pocketknife? Do you keep your collectibles stored with other objects? It’s necessary to separate your knives from everything else in order to keep them safe. For example, a pocketknife in your pocket can be easily scratched up by keys and coins.

Create a Collection to Be Proud Of!

Everyone has their own opinion about which brands are best to collect. What matters most is that you choose a brand or style that appeals to you. As long as you enjoy looking at – and playing with – your knives, then you’ll have a collection to be proud of!





We Deserve a Better Gun Culture

By Oli Fisher

In the wake of yet another senseless massacre, this time in Southeast Texas, Americans of all political stripes have been plunged into a fresh round of soul-searching with the hope of finding a better, clearer understanding. What is driving this violence? How can we keep our children safe? What, if anything, could have prevented this obviously disturbed young man from carrying out this attack?

I don't know about you, but something felt different about the Santa Fe High School shooting. It was hard to put my finger on why I felt this way, because in many ways the scenario shared an awful lot in common with the all-too-common storyline. Another young man attacks another suburban school, troubling signs on his social media accounts, parents who can't believe their son was capable of such an atrocity.

Then I realized what it was. None of the typical talking points or so-called "common sense" regulations would have done anything to prevent this attack. Not a one... and it made something abundantly clear:

After all the hand wringing, we don't have any real answers. That's what chilled me to the bone.

This kid wasn't allowed to purchase an "assault rifle," as the gun control factions like to call them. The much-maligned military inspired weapons with 20 round magazines and bump stocks weren't a factor here, and no "assault weapons ban" would have mattered.

The shooter didn't have a criminal record, wasn't diagnosed with a mental illness, nor was he a considered a nuisance at school. What's more, universal background checks were irrelevant in his case because he was too young to legally purchase a firearm.

The weapons he used were his father's, a shotgun and a .38 revolver, neither of which have factored into the gun control discussions thus far. The reason is simple: They're not considered to be even remotely as effective as more modern designs. Unfortunately,



this didn't prevent the psychopath from ending 10 lives that day.

The Smear Campaign

Clearly, many powerful politicians and their allies in the



media have a pre-determined, boiler plate response to these senseless massacres: Blame guns and gun owners.

Even in cases where their solutions are completely irrelevant, the target is clear. These folks are looking for excuses to attack the 2nd Amendment and the rights of private citizens to own firearms. Most recently, they've found it easiest to go after the NRA, because it's easier to target a large organization than it is to condemn the millions of American citizens who support it.

What they're really trying to say is that you and I are violent, heartless people who put guns above everything else... including human lives. I don't know about you, but my decades of experience tell me that America's gun owners are the complete opposite.

We care about the safety of our loved ones just as much or more than anyone else. In fact, protecting our families is one of the primary reasons many gun owners became gun owners in the first place. Go

figure. The last thing any of us wants to do is actually use lethal force against another person.

These folks have it 100% wrong about America's gun owners. You and I know that. But the truth is... they don't care about the truth. They don't particularly care if their policies save lives or not. They're only out to further their agenda.

All the What Ifs in the World

I've often wondered how things might be different if one of these attackers were confronted. In fact, I'll admit that at times I've taken some comfort in the belief these gunmen are so cowardly, they wouldn't even want to fight back.

But this 17-year-old was engaged by school resource officers within the first 4 minutes of his attack and cornered. In fact, he held out and exchanged gunfire with law enforcement officers for a reported 25 minutes before surrendering.

Another common suggestion often put forth is the idea of arming teachers, but there are some enormous holes in this line of thinking as well. For starters, do you remember your high school teachers very well? If so, you probably had one or a few who had no business handling a deadly weapon anywhere, much less inside of a high school.



But there are many other conflicts to the “arm the teachers” concept as well. From a practical standpoint, these individuals went into the field of teaching with a certain background, skillset, and mindset. I hate to break it to you, but these are not by and large candidates for a career in law enforcement.

For the teachers who are willing to carry a firearm and go through the necessary training, there’s still this troubling fact. In the Santa Fe High School attack, officers were on site and engaged in a gun battle with the maniac within 4 minutes. If a half-dozen teachers were packing, it’s impossible to speculate about how things may have played out. But chances are they wouldn’t have located the shooter much faster than the police officers did.

I’m not dismissing the what-ifs. They are valid and they’re an important part of upgrading our security measures in all sorts of arenas. We must all do some soul searching and gut checks after these tragedies.

However, what we can’t afford to do is allow ourselves to take comfort in scapegoats. This is one scenario that really showcases the complexity of this problem; there were very few red flags, zero criminal history, and no failures on the part of law enforcement. Gut checks and soul-searching, on a personal level, is exactly what we must do.

The Profile is Becoming Clear



One thing is true, and you’re probably not going to like it. America’s mass-shooters, school shooters, and even recently a terrorist bomber fit a fairly predictable profile: Males age 17 to 27.

This not an indictment of our children, nephews, and grandsons, but perhaps it is a needed wake up call. There is clearly a very dangerous mixture present in our society these days that wasn’t fully there before.

As we all may remember, adolescence (and now the infamous “prolonged-adolescence”) is one of life’s most difficult stages. Young people with fragile self-esteem assemble into a massive herd each day inside of public schools and then begin to factionalize. Some are popular, some are confused, and some are ostracized completely.

Add to that mix the internet, social media, violent video games, and the widespread use of prescription psychotropic drugs, and you have anything but a shortage of factors to blame. Of all the demographics, however, it’s the young men that our society is failing to reach, en masse.

The fact of the matter is, far too many of these young men are coming to the same conclusion about their various types of suffering: They want to take as many lives as they can.

It’s painful to imagine, but it’s also undeniably true. These young men all-too-often turn into monsters.

How Can We Protect Our Loved Ones?

After events like these, we often see a surge in protests, calls for new legislation, and ballooning interest in concealed handgun licenses. These are people who want to save lives and prevent these things from happening again. And I, of course, encourage anyone who’s truly interested to get a concealed weapons license and carry every day.

There’s just one problem with all of this, from gun control to CHLs. That is, it’s all focusing on the simple solutions. You know, the solutions that make us feel a little better and give us a sense that we have more control over things again (but we don’t).

The problem is so deep and dark, these simple fixes can only scratch the surface. That’s not to say

that nothing can be done. I absolutely do believe something can be done. But banning semi-automatic rifles won't do it. Arming teachers won't do it, either. How's gun control going to stop a maniac running people down with his car? How is an armed teacher going to stop a package bomber?



There are several very important things we can do. The first of these is to simply acknowledge that young men in this age group often have severe psychological problems, depression, and feelings of helplessness – and they don't get or seek out help. Often, they even try to avoid it.

We Must Engage with Them

If you have any family members going through this difficult stage in life, invest in their well-being. Check in on them and communicate with them. Let them know you are accessible and you're here to help. Let them know that being a confused teenager is a difficult phase that will pass in time.

Building relationships with young people isn't easy. In fact, it may be like pulling teeth, but it's so very important to their well-being and self-confidence. It's also the channel where you can get information, including updates on friends or classmates who may be going through some dark times.

The tunnel vision today's young people are experiencing is immense and there are more ways than ever to get sucked into the downward spiral of it all. To live on the internet, game consoles, and social media, allows young men to super-serve the

It's not easy to intervene, but the fact is we must. If you're a firm believer that government rarely solves problems, you know that schools, law-enforcement, and the criminal justice system aren't going to be enough.

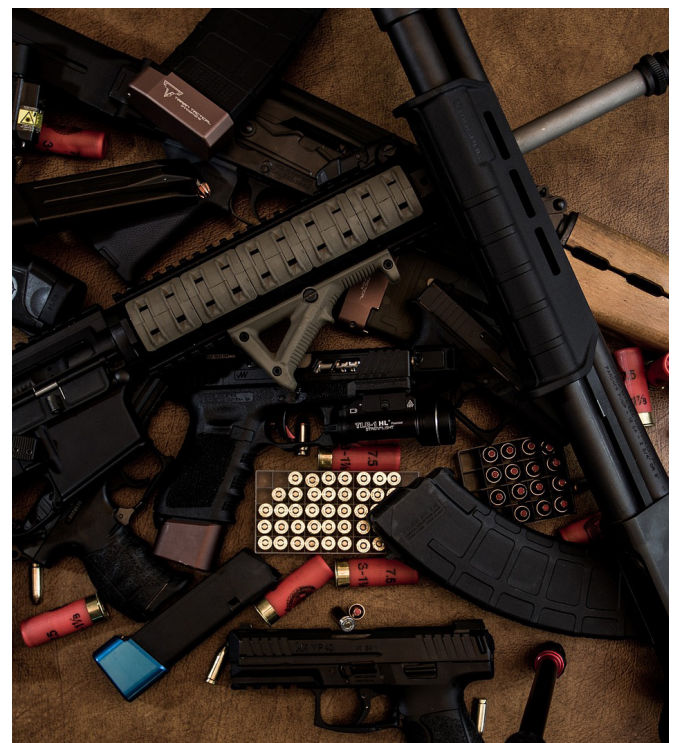
Do They Have Access to Weapons?

This is one of the first questions that should be asked regarding those who you've determined as showing "red flags" of some kind, be it a loved one or one of their friends/classmates.

Now, depending on how you define the word "weapon," that could include anyone with a Bowie knife, a machete, or car keys. As it pertains to our gun culture, however, weapon clearly means firearms. And by access, we mean known access to any firearms, including a family member's.

If you've ever had a relative struggling with a mental illness, you know just how uncomfortable this question can be. The fact is, the Santa Fe High School shooting is a stark reminder of just how critical it is to prevent unauthorized users from accessing your weapons.

Would that have prevented this tragedy? It's really impossible to know that for sure. I'm willing to bet the shooter's father has asked himself that question countless times, though.





Oil on Canvas: Howard Chandler Christy

The simple fact is the boy's father didn't secure his weapons properly to prevent them from being accessed by an unauthorized user, or he made a tragic miscalculation by allowing his son to have access. It may not be the most exciting topic at the gun range, but securing your firearms is absolutely critical and this tragedy serves as a cautionary tale.

Gun safes and trigger locks can be annoying, but they're also the only thing securing your firearms when you're not around. For that reason, I've always been of the opinion that the only safe place to store a ready-to-use firearm is in your holster.

Some people don't realize this, but firearms are high on this list of items most targeted by burglars. In fact, surprising as it seems, gun stores are quite often targeted by thieves. Suffice it to say, if you haven't taken the time to secure your firearms properly, there's no better time than the present.

We can never stop all the violence perpetrated by crazy people; it's true. But we can make sure our personal weapons are not used in carrying them out. We can check in on the young people in our lives. We can report those we believe are planning some type of attack. We can keep a heightened level of readiness.

With freedom comes responsibility. These homicidal outliers aren't representative of America's firearm culture. They don't respect the US Constitution nor the 2nd Amendment. In fact, they are truly the greatest enemies of the rights we hold sacred: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

IT'S LIKE HAVING YOUR VERY OWN **HUBBLE TELESCOPE** FOR HUNTING & SHOOTING!

You're looking at one of the most trusted tools by our nation's top snipers.

With the Ranger Spotting Scope you can find and hit targets hundreds of yards out. You can use it to practice your long distance target shooting or of course, looking for that prized six point buck.

The Ranger is both shockproof and water resistant.

When you look through the prism you'll enjoy rich 3D images with an anti-fog lens with no loss of light.

Also, each Ranger Spotting Scope comes equipped with a carrying case and tripod for easy deployment and packing.



RANGER SPOTTING SCOPE

SPECIFICATIONS

- 15x — 40x Magnification
See 400% more detail than with standard binoculars
- 50mm Objective Lens with focus adjustment
- Shock-absorbing rubber armor
- Small, ultraportable form factor
Only 9.5" long, with foldable mini-tripod
- Includes rugged carrying case
- Weather-resistant
- Anti-fog lens




MY CRISIS GEAR

ORDER YOURS TODAY!

Phone: **800-370-8660** or Online: www.mycrisisgear.com/ranger



 **INSRA**
Liberty. Independence. Patriotism.