

Making a Difference



**By Genie Jennings,
Contributing Editor**

For the first time since joining the writing staff at *Women & Guns* Magazine, I was offered an “assignment.” What are five of the most important innovations for women in the gun world over the past 25 years? Just so you don’t waste your time, this is a warning that I am not the Hardware Woman. I am the Political Woman. That means I am not even the nuts-and-bolts Legal Woman, just an Idea Woman. Still I am a woman, and as such I am observant.

The Number One innovation in my opinion is the laser sight. Male or female, big or small, being able to see exactly where one’s gun is pointed is incredible. This is especially true for the sight challenged by which I am not implying impaired. I have always been near-sighted, and as time progresses I am relying more and more on reading glasses. My clearest vision is just where my front sight is located with

Accessorize! Basic Black! (Sigh) Still No Shoes! The Stylish Woman’s Guide

my arms extended. We all adjust either our sights or our shooting to accommodate to the way a particular gun “shoots,” but it is fantastic to have a device that lets one know precisely where the barrel is aimed.

Hands down the greatest innovation for women, and Number Two on my list is the Concealed Carry Purse. CCPs come in a variety of styles and sizes and are the most sensible, usable accessory available. Bulky sweaters and jackets, fanny packs are things of the past for the woman who needs protection. Obviously, there are serious considerations of how to carry a gun in one’s purse and be able to observe the safety rules of always having the gun pointed in a safe direction and knowing your target and what is beyond. However, there are always serious considerations when carrying.

I am predominately a handgun shooter, although friends are constantly encouraging me to branch out. Finally, I have found a long gun that meets my needs. As a small, very, very late middle-aged (my designation not actuarial) female I have several requirements to make a rifle something I would relish owning and using.

First, a pistol grip gives me more control. I have found it extremely

difficult to hold a longgun on the same hand that I am using to pull the trigger. A pistol grip is held in the same manner as my handgun, and totally secure. I can fire the rifle almost as if it were a handgun, with only a slight change in the way I use my supporting hand.

Second, lightweight materials and a process that provides energy-absorption to reduce the kickback after firing are now available. Weight is a critical factor in the comfort of shooting various firearms. A heavier gun absorbs more of the energy created by the explosion that sends the bullet hurtling through the barrel. There is that “equal and opposite” force we learned about in physics class with which to contend. For a smaller person with less upper-body strength it is very important to find a gun that is light enough to hold but still capable of absorbing enough of the forces so that it remains in control

Third, an adjustable length is beneficial. Manufacturers have always offered custom made stocks so consumers can be fit perfectly, but it is very difficult to share a longgun, when one is small. A delightful aspect of the gun community is the willingness of so many to let others try their firearms. However, size matters

both in length and weight, and it is rarely possible to get a good idea of what a particular item would be like when it is too long to hold properly.

Happily, my innovations Numbers One, Three, Four, and Five can all be found in one lovely product: the AR-style rifle. (I chose the Sig Sauer R716 .308 for the Grand Prize in my gun club's annual 30 Guns in 30 Days Raffle precisely for these features although at over 9 pounds, I thought it too big for me. It was also, and, I will admit, primarily as a strong political statement, because I am, after all, the Political Woman) The Bushmaster C-15 at 5.1 pounds is the number one item on my personal Wish List. After all, every woman should have a Basic Black gun.

Innovations that make life nicer for women are not necessarily created with women in mind. Except for the carry purse, everything on my list is unisex in nature. It is not necessary to make things specifically for us; we find what we need.

However, manufacturers, do not make us wait another quarter century! We need shoes!

If we are to maintain our right to keep and bear arms, we must have the support of the women of the country. At this time the majority of women are against gun owners. Slowly, they are being awakened, but there has been a concerted effort for decades to inculcate fear of guns and by extension those who own and use them.

Normalizing gun ownership has been my goal from the time I realized I had to do more than just know what was right; that it was imperative to do something about

Three Anti-Gun Mayors Lose Reelection Bids

Outgoing New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, co-founder and financial angel for Mayors Against Illegal Guns (MAIG), may claim he helped an anti-gunner win the governor's race in Virginia. However, he has to have some private concerns about losses among the ranks of his followers.

The National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action reported on at least three races—two in Pennsylvania and one in North Carolina—where mayors who aligned themselves with Bloomberg

it. Introducing Women to the Shooting Sports events, writing and speaking about gun rights and the women who own guns, have been modestly effective. Showing that the people who use guns are normal, every day people is the main thrust of my arguments. Still, we win converts only one at a time.

If we want more women involved in an activity it must have shoes. Sure, if you hunt there are boots; if you engage in Cowboy Action there are myriad foot coverings. But, imagine if there were shooting shoes. When I was young, we had "sneakers." They morphed into "tennis shoes." When running became the rage, things exploded. Now there are "running shoes" for inside, outside, on pavement, off-road, up hill, walking, jogging, jogging on various surfaces. Imagine if you walked into a shoe store and there were "shooting shoes" on the racks on the wall!

lost their reelection bids on Nov. 5.

Tom Donaldson won the Butler, PA, mayoral race by earning 66% of the popular vote and handily defeating anti-gun incumbent Mayor Margaret D. Stock. "The defeat of this anti-gun extremist marks a huge victory for Second Amendment supporters and sportsmen," the NRA reported.

As mayor, Maggie Stock proudly aligned herself with an anti-gun MAIG, that promotes gun bans and increased restrictions on law-abiding gunowners.

By contrast, Mayor-elect Tom Donaldson is a retired law enforcement officer who is committed to advancing public safety. But he also understands that law enforcement cannot be there all the time and law-abiding citizens should be able to own and possess firearms that will help protect themselves and their loved ones.

And in Chambersburg, PA, after a highly contested mayoral race, pro-gun candidate Darren Brown defeated anti-gun incumbent Mayor Pete Lagiovane, a huge victory for Second Amendment supporters.

Mayor-elect Brown stated "the very, very first thing I'd like to do is get Chambersburg off the Mayors Against Illegal Guns list."

In North Carolina, Morrisville City Councilman Mark Stohlman defeated anti-gun incumbent Mayor Jackie Holcombe, another MAIG supporter.

Mayor-elect Stohlman has pledged to defend the Second Amendment rights of responsible gunowners in Morrisville, and can be counted on to oppose efforts for increased restrictions on the right to keep and bear arms.

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