

Making a Difference



*By Genie Jennings,
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“You are only helpless while your nail polish is wet...and, even then, you could pull a trigger if you need to.” This, superimposed on the picture of a Gibson Girl, is the poster I hang on the registration table for our Introducing Women to the Shooting Sports event.

Guns are serious. Restoring and protecting our rights and liberty is serious. However, almost everyone who takes up this pastime immediately learns that shooting is simply a lot of fun. No matter how important our mission, we can relax and enjoy ourselves during the process.

Although my fingernails rarely make me helpless, I did find a nail polish the exact color of my ski boots, and maintain that I ski better with my toes painted to match them, thus improving my balance. Many of my guests enjoy, if not believe, the idea. The silliness helps as I lead them to and

Lighthearted...Or Airheaded?

beyond the boundaries of their comfort zones.

In that carefree frame of mind I requested a “Hello! Kitty” handgun as one of the 30 prizes of my rod and gun club’s annual raffle. I did not consider it any different than the request two years ago for an “assault rifle” as the grand prize. Despite the fact that there is no such thing as an “assault rifle,” I insisted on calling the beautiful, big, black creation exactly that, because my opponents do so. That was a statement.

So was the glitzed pistol. The gun buyer at our supplier said he would not purchase guns that looked like toys. My written response was, “Thank you,” although my mental one was, “Surely, you jest?” I felt foolish for the suggestion.

Our reactions have made me think a lot about safety issues. Lately, my almost-three-year-old granddaughter has been very interested in the commercial characters such as Mickey Mouse, and Minions, and Hello! Kitty. Although I had never wanted such a gun, myself (it is a friend of a very dear friend who is enamored with the little feline), would owning one be putting my granddaughter at greater risk? John Lott would know if there have been children who have been involved with accidents because the guns looked like toys, but I doubt it has happened because I have never heard

of one and that is something that would likely be publicized. Quite often toy guns are made to look like their real models, but I know of no cases of the reverse.

I am from a generation that grew up with cap pistols and water pistols. We played “war” and “cowboys and Indians.” And, by “we” I mean my friends and I. This is an area in which I have personal knowledge. I shot my first .22 when I was 6. It belonged to my 12-year-old neighbor who taught me both to shoot it and to respect it and be very careful with it. You did not play with BB guns or .22s. You did not even touch the guns that belonged to older siblings and parents. No one in my family owned a gun, but they were in other homes. When we moved to North Dakota almost everyone in my school had relatives with guns.

My children were raised with guns in the house. When the children were small, the guns were stored in a locked cabinet. Our daughters were taught not to touch unless we were with them. It was never an issue.

Would a “Hello! Kitty” handgun entice my granddaughter? It might. Would it be more appealing to her and would she be more likely to want to touch it than any other handgun? Probably. But, there would never be a time that it would be accessible to her. Until she is old enough to comprehend the consequences of us-

ing a firearm, they will be secured away from her. There will be no opportunity for tragedy. I believe that there are no accidents, only ignorance and negligence, but I will be guilty of neither where she is concerned.

What of others? Do I have responsibility for their actions? I truly believe not. I have a lot of respect for the ability of people to make sound judgements. Knowing that not everyone does all of the time, I still believe in their right to make their own choices. Like the majority of people, I want everyone to have the necessary information to make sound decisions, and do what I can to help provide that information. Then, I trust in their providing for their own self-interest.

Adults without children can and do live in environments that are quite different from adults with children. As we progress through the life cycle we change our habits and our habitats. My home since my grandchild's birth is different from my home before her birth, which was different from my home when her mother was a child. It is called "child-proofing." We make our homes safe places in which a child lives. Adults can do many things that children cannot. That means adults cannot do many things when there are children present.

We cannot leave medicines within reach; neither can we leave caustic materials where they can be handled. We might change the location of furniture, certainly that of breakable objects. I shifted the contents of drawers in the kitchen, so the sharp knives and

flatware were in the highest drawers, things that would not harm or be harmed within baby reach. She is almost three and I am almost used to getting knives from their new location, and seldom open that drawer looking for a dishtowel.

We make decisions based on our particular lives, and most of us do a fairly good job of it. Therefore, we do not and should not feel a responsibility for someone else's actions. Still, there is a perception of responsibility and I sympathize with the buyer who must think of the public reaction to a lethal tool bearing a children's character on its handle. This is not about reality, but that semblance of reality, that artificial reality called public opinion.

I would not want anyone to walk into one of my favorite stores and be shocked and horrified at seeing a "Hello! Kitty" handgun in the case. I can understand that there could be negative ramifications. I know that there are people just panting to find something that can be decried as endangering children. I know that people on my side of the control argument have been fighting the misinformation and mischaracterizations for decades.

There is no way that I would contribute to the problems.

However, if you are a 45-year-old woman who absolutely loves everything "Hello! Kitty" and you are considering taking up a new hobby, and after attending an introductory class on firearms you see a cute little handgun with your favorite logo that you just absolutely cannot resist, and

positively have to have, and, you buy that pistol and want to leave it on a table in the house you live in alone... Well, there are people who would have a problem with several of those decisions and actions. And, personally, I think neither you nor I is the airhead. Enjoy!

W&G

Winchester Recall On Certain SXP Pump Shotguns

Winchester Repeating Arms has announced a recall on a limited number of SXP (also called the "Super X Pump) shotguns chambered for 3½-inch 12-gauge magnum shells.

According to the Winchester notice, this shotgun may, "under certain circumstances, unintentionally discharge while closing the action."

"Failure to return any affected shotguns for inspection and/or repair may create a risk of harm, including serious personal injury or death," Winchester cautioned.

If you own one of the affected shotguns, call the Winchester Consumer Administrative Center immediately. Check your serial number and contact these folks for instructions.

This alert applies to the following models: SXP Waterfowl Hunter, 26 or 28-inch barrel; SXP Black Shadow, 26 or 28-inch barrel; SXP Turkey Hunter, 24-inch barrel, and SXP long Beard, 24-inch barrel

You may contact Winchester at 800-945-5372 or send an e-mail to: SXP@winchesterguns.com.

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