

How GUN SHOWS Changed My Life

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #40 —

A friend once introduced me as having a PhD in Gunology. Of course there is no such degree; but if there was, possibly I would be a candidate -- and one of the principle reasons is my having attended a great many gun shows, through the years.

My first show was in Rapid City, South Dakota, in the spring of 1975, while stationed at Ellsworth AFB. Frankly, at that time, I didn't know there were so many models of Winchester lever action rifles. Since that first show, I've had the opportunity to attend the Ohio Gun Collectors Show, the Louisville Show, the Las Vegas Antique Arms Show, the Kansas City National Show and of course my favorite of them all the Tulsa Gun

Show, put on by Joe Wanenmacher.

So, what's to learn at a gun show that could possibly change one's life? Well, consider this; at a gun show -- especially a large one -- there are literally thousands

of guns on display (for instance, in March of 2006, we did a pretty scientific estimate of the total number of guns on display at the Tulsa Gun Show and came up with 44,000); also, the man behind the table will likely be very knowledgeable about his guns and happy to share that knowledge with you; and finally, you're allowed to handle almost anything -- with permission, of course.

While I've learned a lot about guns at gun shows, a great deal of my learning has been at home, after having made a purchase. First would come a thorough cleaning and inspection, then shooting the gun, studying it and reading every book I could find. Also, there's been a lot of



This is the 'big' Tulsa Gun Show. I'm standing on the upper level (8 acres) with the lower level (4 acres) in the background, and holding a Winchester 101 in 28 gauge.

opportunity for gunsmithing and reloading for the guns I've brought home.

My interests continued to grow through the years, to include guns made by Winchester, Remington, Smith & Wesson, Colt,

"...I've learned a lot..."

WWI and WWII military arms, black powder cartridge rifles -- plus side by side shotguns, and lots more.

So, what's all of this gun knowledge worth practically, and what more will a PhD in Gunology and a dollar buy than a cup of coffee? In my case it's provided a great deal of credibility with Customers and Employees, helped with product development, and opened a lot of doors in the shooting sports industry that may have otherwise remained closed. Gun shows have definitely changed my life!

Midway USA

Larry Potterfield
Tulsa Gun Show
Tulsa, Oklahoma
6 April 2013



This Winchester 101 in 28 gauge didn't appear to have ever been shot, until it found its way into my collection.



At the big gun shows, there are racks of guns, tables of guns and often stacks of guns -- something for everyone.