

GUN: The machine gun did much to shape the modern world

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region for 400 years.

And nations continue to seek to arm themselves with the most advanced and lethal technology they can access in order to defend themselves in a world that is once again as dangerous as it was in the immediate wake of the First World War.

Last week, *Nugget* columnist Craig Rullman and I attended the Bushmaster User's Conference at the Big Sandy Range in north-central Arizona, which Craig was covering on a magazine assignment. On display there were the latest in fighting vehicles, computerized targeting systems, and firepower — the most advanced iterations of an arms race that began with carriage-mounted Maxims in the Victorian Age.

The showpiece of the event, which brought military personnel and procurement agents from 21 countries to the middle of the Arizona desert, was the Bushmaster chain gun. The chain gun is designed to be mounted on vehicles — ranging from Navy ships to Apache attack helicopters to big fighting vehicles and on down to a Toyota truck. It is an electric-powered weapon that uses a chain rather than recoil or gas to cycle rounds. The guns — ranging in caliber from the NATO standard 7.62mm rifle cartridge on up to 40mm cannon rounds — are extremely fast, accurate and reliable. And with advances in

munitions, targeting systems, and vehicles, they can be fired with astounding range, accuracy and lethality while on the move.

Critically, no longer is a gunner exposed in a turret to operate his weapon — a powerful automatic cannon can be fired rapidly and accurately by a gunner safely ensconced in the crew cabin of his vehicle.

The goal, as it has always been, is to be able to reach out and strike an enemy at a distance and with enough accuracy and lethality that the enemy cannot effectively strike back. The gunner inside an LAV (Light Armored Vehicle) is operating on the same principle that the British South Africa Company gunner operated on from inside the laager along the Shangani River in 1893: Hit the enemy with overwhelming firepower before he can get close enough to deploy his inferior weaponry.

Whatever happens, we have got The Maxim Gun — and they have not...

Of course, "they" will always eventually acquire the Maxim gun, as they must. Which means you'd best have the finest engineers in the world developing upgrades — or a whole new generation of weapons — to keep your edge with the gun that shook the world and in many respects *made* the world in which we live.

More on the Matabele Wars may be found in the author's book "Warriors of the Wildlands: True Tales of the Frontier Partisans," available at Paulina Springs Books in Sisters and at Pegasus Books in Bend.

FUNK: Singer has a new lease on life — to pursue dreams

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independent project — and first country album — late last year before her surgery, and is back working full-time on writing and working with her newly formed band and producers who are helping her take her music as far as it can go.

I decided to try out for The Voice because I felt it would be a great place for me to make connections.
— Rhonda Funk

"I decided to try out for The Voice because I felt it would be a great place for me to make connections," said Funk. "My goal is not to be a famous star, I actually am more interested in writing songs for the industry. However, if I get to take a run at it for a few years or more, well, then I am ready and open to whatever God allows to happen!"

Funk has been asked to sing the National Anthem at the High Desert Stampede PRCA Rodeo in Redmond, on Saturday, April 1, and will be singing the U.S. and



PHOTO PROVIDED

Rhonda Funk took a shot at 'The Voice.'

Canadian National Anthems on Father's Day, Sunday, June 18 for the Chicago Cubs Triple-A affiliate, the Eugene Emeralds, at PK Park in Eugene when they face a team from British Columbia. Her first local concert to promote her upcoming country album, "Someday," will be Friday, February 17, at 7 p.m. at Sisters Coffee Company, located at 273 W. Hood Ave. Suggested donation is \$10 at the door.

If you would like to reserve your signed copy of "Someday" and help Funk to complete the project by the May 2017 release date, you can do so by visiting www.rhondafunk.com. To hear samples of Rhonda's work and to support her as a

fan, visit www.reverbNation.com/rhondafunk. To book Rhonda, email bookings@rhondafunk.com.

Rhonda Funk's music is available for digital download on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon, ReverbNation and many more.

Previous Christian music projects include a self-titled promo "Rhonda Funk" (1999), "The Waiting" (2003), and "Refined" (2009).

"Someday," her first country album, is set to release in May of 2017.

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