

The Gun Doctor: Full Auto Safety

By Wolfgang Rotbart

I recently attended the annual Albany Full Auto Shoot just south of Albany, Oregon. In case you haven't heard of this, it is a gathering where vendors who own full auto firearms, more popularly known as machine guns, and those of us less fortunate can come together to enjoy our shared enthusiasm. Attendees can purchase magazines of ammo and turn money into loud noise and a great deal of fun very quickly.

There is a public perception that machine guns are illegal except for military or law enforcement use. The fact of the matter is that anyone who can pass a background check, about the same as needed for a concealed handgun permit, can purchase a machine gun for a one-time tax of \$200. The difficult part is coming up with the money to buy the machine gun itself. Because of supply and demand, machine guns generally go from about \$3,000 to well over \$100,000.

Almost anyone who shoots, and many who don't, enjoys cutting loose with a full auto. The rate of fire ranges from a few hundred to about 1,200 rounds per minute – that's 20 rounds per second. Putting that much firepower downrange that quickly is mind-boggling for most folks. I saw many ear-to-ear grins and

quite a few wide-eyed-WOW! faces after emptying a 40 or even 100 round magazine. I can't recall anyone coming off the firing line wearing a frown.

The Shoot was from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM over an entire weekend. I can't say with certainty how many rounds were fired, but it was certainly in the tens, and probably in the hundreds, of thousands. The calibers ranged from the familiar diminutive .22 long rifle to a few rounds of 76-millimeter (3" diameter) shells fired from a restored World War II tank. That was literally and figuratively a blast!

Why am I writing about this? Simple – safety. In the two days of full auto fire, occasionally by folks who had never shot a firearm, and especially not a full auto, there were exactly zero casualties from gunfire. The youngest shooter appeared to be about 10 years of age and the most elderly was old enough to be my mother. And I'm 56.

I think this shows a significant feature about firearm usage - although they are inherently dangerous like cars, airplane travel, and sharp knives, firearms can be utilized and enjoyed with a very high degree of safety when proper safety rules are observed.

In this case, there were Range Safety Officers at each of the approximately 25 vendor tables to en-

force firing range safety rules. There were only a few simple rules that were rigidly adhered to with the desired result of zero casualties.

I saw many families enjoying a fine outing during this event. The shooting sports are certainly not for everyone, but are one in which young and old, male and female can safely participate.

I took some video of the event, which I will edit and post on YouTube as time permits.

Follow-up information to topics in this and other articles can be found on the "Resources" page on The Gun Doctor home page (www.wolfgangthegun-doctor.com).

I welcome ideas for topics for these articles. Please email them to: Wolfgang@WolfgangTheGunDoctor.com or call me at 503-429-7342 between 10:00 – 5:00 M – F.

Wolfgang Rotbart is an AGI-certified Master Gunsmith and a NRA-certified Basic Pistol Course Instructor. He works as a gunsmith and as an Oregon Concealed Handgun Safety Course Instructor. You may visit The Gun Doctor website for more information at: <http://www.wolfgangthegundoctor.com/>

Oregon Equestrians Announce 2012 Malarkey Trail Ride Event

Columbia County Chapter of the Oregon Equestrian Trails (OET) is announcing their 11th annual Malarkey Trail Ride on Saturday, August 18th, 2012. This is an event open to all levels of horseback riders, and to the general community of Columbia County and neighboring areas. Horses are not required to come and enjoy the event as there is a huge used tack sale and open air lunch.

Look for the entrance across from Fullerton Road on Highway 30, north of Scappoose. Announcement signs in the communities of Scappoose and St. Helens will display by August 11th, with the entrance gate sign going up early on the 18th. The access road is narrow and one way, with cattle guards so no ride-in participants are allowed; trailer in only. This is a day event, no camping available.

A no-host BBQ with tasty burgers and hotdogs, and large used tack sale, with a big selection of raffle items adds to this full day of horse and country fun. Bring the kids and friends to enjoy the country setting in the open pastures with Scappoose Creek running through it. Bring your picnic basket and chairs, though this is an alcohol free event. Bathrooms and water for the horses are also available. Ample

free parking is available for all.

Event registration begins at 9:00 AM, last ride out is at High Noon. Fee is \$10 per rider, or \$25 for families or youth groups of 3 or more. The registration fee includes one raffle ticket. You must be in attendance to pick your prize. Ride time is approximately 2 hours at a leisurely pace. Please leave the dogs at home. This is an easy flat ride on a well marked trail. However there are cows, bees, and mud to be aware of. Horses do not need to be shod or wear boots. An obstacle skill course is being built for those who want to put their mount to the test, with flags, in and outs, and step-overs. Participants will register and sign a no-fault waiver before beginning their ride.

This annual fundraiser for OET supports the many trails in our county with building new trails, yearly maintenance, horse and trailer access areas, stalls and campsites. Your donations are tax deductible as Oregon Equestrian Trails is a registered non-profit organization. More information about this organization is available at the website: oregonequestriantrails.org. Click on the Columbia County Chapter link to find the chapter's Facebook page. Please come and join us for a day of riding and country fun.

Banks Library Renovation

The Banks Public Library is up and running at full steam again after several months of renovations. The community now have a beautiful, newly renovated library to share with their patrons. The library staff wishes to thank everyone for the patience they have shown as library staff have dealt with changes in their plans due to delays in product shipping. Staff plan to return to their regular hours on Thursday July 5th. To celebrate the completion of the renovation,

The Banks Library is having a grand re-opening on Saturday July 14 from 10:00 AM to 12 :00 PM Everyone is invited to come and see the new space.

The renovation has resulted in the addition of about 900 square feet to the library space. This new space allows for the collection to be housed more comfortably and also provides more space for patrons to sit and read or use the Wi-Fi. Since the library has absorbed the former community room space, plans are underway for a Phase 2 project which would construct a new meeting space and allow for future growth of the library. In the meantime, City Hall is available for community meetings.


Coincidentally to the library renovation, there have been several other changes to operations. The first of

these is that Banks Public Library has joined the rest of the WCCLS libraries in using radio frequency tags to check items in and out. This greatly streamlines circulation for staff and also paves the way for the library to have a self-check machine, which should happen later this summer. Currently, patrons pick up their holds from the holds shelf and bring them to the front desk to check out. In the future, patrons will either bring them to the front desk or check them out themselves.

There is also a new phone system which will allow for voicemail messages. Finally, the library will be able to accept credit cards in the near future.

The City of Banks provided the funding for the renovation portion of this two-phase project. The second phase, construction of new space to allow for future growth of the library and to reinstate a community room for public meeting use, will be financed through various funding sources, including grants and donations. The Friends of the Library and a group of interested citizens have started the fundraising campaign. The Library Expansion Team received fundraising training through a grant from The Ford Family Foundation.


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