

Dear Friends,

Greetings from **Rapid City, South Dakota.**

We are settled into our favorite RV park, i.e., **Hart Ranch RV Camping Resort** in Rapid City. As most of you know, this has been a most unusual year in terms of weather. South Dakota received much more rain than usual, and as a result, is now quite green. Some of the natives tell us that they've never seen it this green this late in July. Ah well, whatever the reasons, Rapid City and the Black Hills are absolutely gorgeous. We have had about a week of unusually hot weather and, in fact, a few days ago, it hit a high of 104. On the other hand, today is overcast and cool and probably won't reach the projected high of 84. But enough of the weather.

We are back giving our financial retirement seminars every Wednesday here in the park from 4:30 to 6:00. If you're in the area, drop into the Pool Pavillion, but be prompt as we start right on time.

The excitement this year has been the death and destruction of clay pigeons. We are totally fascinated with the art and science of trap shooting with 12 gauge shotguns. I became enamored with this sport last season and bought a single shot Browning trap gun. I had the stock of my gun shortened by **Jarrold**, the head gunsmith at a very interesting gun oriented business in Rapid by the name of **Jack First Gunshop**. Donna didn't enjoy shooting my gun as it just didn't fit her. With trap, you must always employ a gun that's right for you. If you try to adapt to a gun that doesn't fit you, it won't be fun and you won't break many birds. With hindsight, it became obvious. Donna needed her own gun and it had to be set up to fit her.

If you would like to see trap shooting in action, please come with us to the Rapid City club. We try to get there at 4:30 on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and 1:00 on Sundays. We can't always make it, but that's our goal.



Chuck and Donna at the motorhome.

No, we do not look like Bonnie and Clyde. Do we? As you might guess, these very specialized shotguns can get rather pricey. It's not fun to buy the wrong gun. We needed help. We knew that whatever gun Donna selected would end up being worked on by Jarrod so it made a lot of sense to ask Jarrod to go shopping with us. Happily, he and his significant other, **Nancy First**, agreed to shop with us. It became clear that Donna needed a gun that was lighter than mine and with a shorter barrel. Jarrod felt that we could accomplish that goal with a Benelli semi-auto. As luck would have it, we found a good used Benelli at the local Cabela's sporting goods store. The stock needed to be shortened by about 1.5 inches to fit Donna. Jarrod took it apart right there at Cabela's and determined that he could, indeed, cut that much off. It was Friday night and Donna bought her first shotgun right then and there. Sunday afternoon, she shot 50 rounds through it and everything worked well. Monday morning, the gun went to Jarrod who luckily had another job that lacked parts. So bless his heart, Jarrod went to work and Monday night Donna had her new gun all modified to fit her. Tuesday night, she was breaking clay pigeons and Chuck was so excited he could hardly talk.



Donna trying to shoot Chuck's gun.



Chuck at the Rapid City Trap Range.

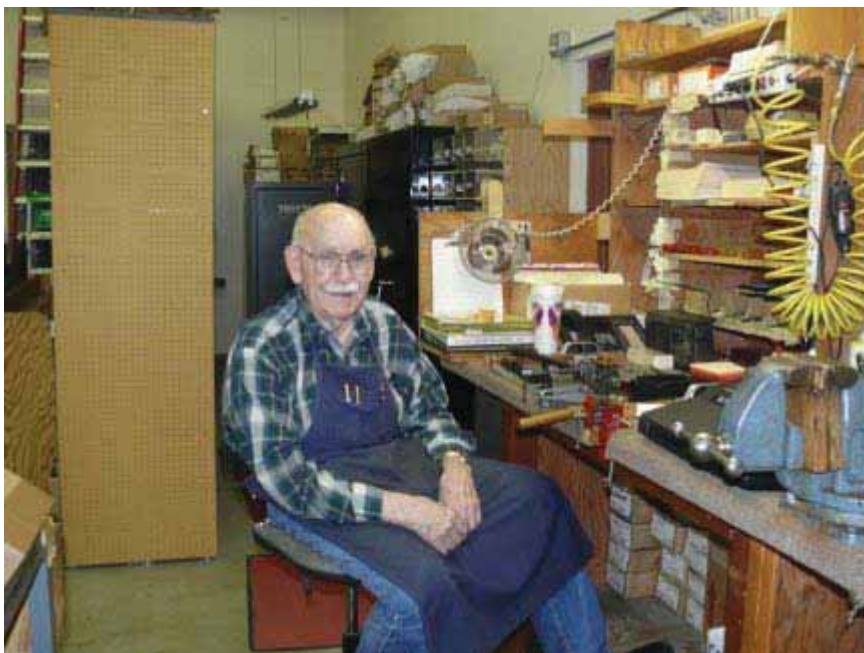
But Donna's new shotgun isn't really the primary story of this travelogue. The real story is Jack First Gunshop. It's an extremely interesting and unique business. If you ever need a part for a gun that's no longer in production, then you need to know about Jack First Gunshop. They have an unbelievable inventory of rare parts for handguns, rifles, and shotguns; probably more rare parts than anyone else in the world. They don't sell guns, just gun parts. It's also a family business with three generations coming to work every day.

But, we need to digress just a little bit. On Friday night after Jarrod and Nancy helped us buy Donna's gun, we offered to take them to the local Elks Lodge for dinner. Happily they accepted, and we talked guns for hours. Oh my golly, this wonderful couple didn't think we were nuts. All four of us were carrying concealed weapons, are skilled shots, and have a strong belief in the right to self defense. We felt an instant camaraderie. These were our people and we wanted to know more about their lifestyle, and an interesting lifestyle it turned out to be.

First thing first. If you need gun parts or gunsmithing, we strongly recommend:

Jack First Gunshop
1201 Turbine Drive
Rapid City, SD 57703
(605) 343-9544 Phone
(605) 343-9420 FAX
www.jackfirstgun.com

Jack First started the business in Lancaster, California, in 1954. In 1994, the family moved the business to Rapid City, South Dakota where it is to this day. Jack's daughter, Nancy, has worked in the business since she was 13 years old. Jack, who is now 89, still comes to work every day. When we met him, he was disassembling old rifles and cataloguing the parts to be used as templates for creating new parts. We asked him about retirement, and with a very warm smile, he said he planned to retire when he turns 100. We're not sure he was kidding. What an inspiration.



Jack First at work.

Today the business is owned by Jack's daughter, Nancy First, who is clearly the boss. Jack told us, "we all work for Nancy." If you like competent, self-confident women who are not hesitant to state an opinion, you'll love Nancy. Nancy and three other gals live on the phone taking and shipping orders all over the world.



Nancy First in the parts department.

Nancy is, of course, pro guns and politically active toward that end. But she is particularly interested in guns for women. She is extremely active in helping women learn to shoot. Nancy is a Director and the South Dakota State Coordinator of a wonderful organization called, **Second Amendment Sisters, Inc.** She also sponsors an event called, **Ladies' Handgun Shoot.** It's a low pressure handgun class for women only. No experience of any kind is needed. Nancy supplies a wide array of handguns, all the ammunition, and the use of ear and eye protection. The cost is only \$40 and that includes a one year membership in Second Amendment Sisters. This year there are four of these events and without a doubt, they will all fill up. Contact Nancy immediately if you'd like to participate: (605) 343-8481 days, or (605) 721-5860 evenings. Where else can you try handguns without buying them? Here are this year's dates:

Saturday, August 6, 9:00 A.M.
Saturday, August 20, 9:00 A.M.
Sunday, August 28, 9:00 A.M.
Saturday, September 17, 9:00 A.M.

All four ladies' shoots are held at the Rapid City National Guard range. When you contact Nancy, you will get more details.



Sheila Green with her Ladies' Shoot target and Nancy First beside her.

Sheila Green was an enthusiastic first time shooter at one of the Ladies' Shoots. She started with a .22, moved to a 9mm and then a .38 and quite quickly mastered a .45. A .45 auto is one serious equalizer. If Sheila is carrying a .45, she need fear no man or beast.

Nancy's son, **Brian**, also works at Jack First. Brian does all of the computer aided design work to turn part samples into machine drawings.



Brian working at the computer aided design station.

Nancy's long time boyfriend, Jarrod, is the head gunsmith and has two more gunsmiths reporting to him. Jarrod has modified my shotgun, Donna's shotgun, and changed the sights on one of Donna's pistols. All of the work was first rate, fast, and reasonably priced. Jarrod is a large and strong man and an avid hunter. He is also kind, very generous with his time, and a fine teacher.



Jarrod at his gunsmithing bench.

Well, we are running out of space, but we need to tell you that there is also a crew of machinists running computer controlled mills and lathes producing the rare parts for which Jack First Gunshop is famous throughout the world.

Needless to say, we are very pleased to have found this business and lucky to call this unusual family our friends.

Until next time, home is where we park it.

Chuck & Donna Cole

(530) 524-5020

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