

Hixson BUSINESS

Gunslingers unite at Sportsman's Supply & Services

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Oh my gosh, they let me shoot a gun. I'm not quite sure what happened, but a regular interview at Sportsman's Supply & Services turned into target practice with a Glock 9 mm pistol.

"This isn't what we usually start beginners with," commented instructor Randy Harris, who was showing me how to hold the gun.

After I fired the first round, I understood why. I had never fired a real gun before, and as I pulled the trigger, the heavy piece of metal almost flew out of my hand.

"Hold it lower in your hand," Mr. Harris explained. "You have to show it who's in control."

I fired round after round, as bullet casings whizzed by my head and the acrid smell of gunpowder filled my nostrils. Despite my protective headphones, each shot was still deafeningly loud.

When the clip was empty, we pulled the target up from its perch 10 feet away. "Are you sure you've never shot a gun before?" Mr. Harris asked.

All of the bullet holes were within a few inches of each other in the center of the target. Mr. Harris held up the piece of paper over his chest.

"If this was a person trying to hurt you ... well, you can see," Mr. Harris said. The holes speckled his ribcage.

As I exited the shooting range, Carl Poston, the owner of the store, stopped me.

"You did really well. It's funny; women generally learn to shoot a lot easier than men," Mr. Poston said.

Mr. Poston would know. He grew up helping his parents run the Montlake Shooting Center. He served in the Army and then the reserves, where he was in charge of marksmanship training.

After working in the textile and aviation industries, Mr. Poston decided to return to his roots. He opened Sports-

Need some gift-giving ideas? How about a gun?

FOR HIM

■ Cowboy Action Shooting is all the rage, so how about a quick-draw Western outfit and a matching old-timey pistol?

FOR HER

■ A cute, lightweight, compact handgun — and a bag to carry it in.

FOR THE KIDS

■ A .22-caliber rifle is the perfect introduction to hunting.

FOR EVERYONE

■ Give the gift that lasts an entire year — a membership to the shooting range.

— Suggestions by Carl Poston



Carl Poston shows off some of the wide range of shotguns he sells at Sportsman's Supply & Services. Photos by Cari Gervin



Randy Harris practices his aim during a round of target practice in the downstairs shooting range at Sportsman's Supply & Services.

range provides an invaluable training resource.

"When we sell a gun, they get time on the range with it, so they are not a danger to themselves or anyone else," Mr. Poston said.

And yet he let me, with no experience, shoot a gun with real bullets?

"You did a whole lot better than most people do," Mr. Poston said.

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