

ATA article for March 2017

Greetings from Ontario, Canada.

Someone sent me the picture (enclosed) that illustrates how some Canadians shoot winter clays.



Looks like fun – eh?

Canadian firearm owners seem to be constantly facing the threat of government intervention in restructuring our firearm heritage. At one point in time we were at the mercy of the federal government in power as to which guns were “prohibited”. Putting a firearm on the “prohibited” list was the kiss of death for that gun as it could not be used for hunting or traditional target shooting purposes. The value was decimated and marketability was restricted. All that was required was to have the federal cabinet pass an “order in council” and the gun was prohibited – no discussion, no debate in Parliament.

As bad as that once was, now our Royal Canadian Mounted Police have the delegated authority to determine what guns are “prohibited”. One would think that public safety would be the ultimate determining factor. Not necessarily so. Have you ever heard of the ancient Greek phrase “*molon labe*”? According to Plutarch, Xerxes, King of Persia, demanded that the Spartans surrender their weapons. However King Leonidas I had no intention of giving up that easily. He responded “*molon labe*” which when translated means “come and take them”. This is a classical expression of defiance. So, at the ensuing battle of Thermopylae (480 B.C.) 600,000 Persians, the fiercest fighting troops in the world, attacked little Greece, then the center and birthplace of civilization as we know it. The 300 brave Spartans

sacrificed their lives but with the use of their weapons, delayed the progress of the Persians and ultimately saved Greece.

Why is all of this important in modern day Canada? Well here is what recently happened – a popular hunting rifle was marketed with the phrase “*molon labe*” and a Canadian maple leaf both engraved on the rifle itself. The R.C.M.P. didn’t like the “name” and put this rifle on the “prohibited list”. This further illustrates that our system of gun control is in fact “out of control”. Firearms get prohibited based on functionality, appearance and now based on their “name”.

While at the Dixie Grand shooters were saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Christopher Vendell (Jr.). Christopher was a great trap shooter, but more importantly, he was a friend. Our sincere condolences to the Vendell family at this tragic loss. Our thoughts and prayers will be with you.

I had the pleasure of shooting with Ken Darroch for many events at the Dixie. One morning Ken and his wife Pam reminded me of an incident that happened about four or five years ago at Tarpon Springs during either the Dixie or Southern Grand. My wife and I had just got our Australian Sheppard puppy from a cattle ranch in southern Illinois during the Grand American the previous August. “Griggys” was a true herding dog and a real fire cracker. She could run like the wind and seemed to be alert to any and all new experiences. The Darrochs and Bev and I were, as I recall, leaving an eating establishment one evening when suddenly Griggys managed to pull her collar off and litterly “took off”. Ken went one way, I went another. She seemed to enjoy evading us which she easily did. We were concerned she could dash onto a busy nearby street and get smoked by a car. The chase went on to no avail. Suddenly she darted towards a restaurant and coincidentally just as she arrived the door opened, Griggys darted in and disappeared inside. Ken and I entered the restaurant (Paul’s Shrimp House). We asked patrons if they had seen a black and white dog. The crowd inside pointed to the bar area. There, to our shock, was Griggys with both paws on the bar squeezed in between two bar patrons sitting on the bar stools on each side of her.

The location of Paul’s Shrimp House has changed since that time but Ken and Pam visited the “new” location and asked staff if they remembered the “Griggys” incident. Two staff members commented that they would never forget it. That “black and white dog” they recalled darted like a streak right through the kitchen and out to the main restaurant area. Restaurant workers and patrons were equally shocked. Now, in hindsight, we can chuckle about it. Pets have a habit of leaving their “humans” with fond memories, don’t they?

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