

20 Ahern Under the Gun: Always Hope



This Midland emergency radio is a good choice.



Left: A fully decked out Remington 870 with extended magazine and plenty of extra ammo.

Right: Handgun choices, a SIG 229 in .40; a Detonics Model 9-11-01 full-size .45 ACP 1911; a Glock 22 in .40, with Crimson Trace Laser-Grips and Surefire 300 Weapon Light.



By Jerry Ahern, Photos by Sharon Ahern

As I write this installment of *AHERN UNDER THE GUN*, Christmas has come and gone. Because of the fact that 2012 is just around the corner and there are such dire predictions for December 21, 2012 – the Mayan Calendar end of the world – there are some who assuredly feel this may well have been the last Christmas humankind will be alive to celebrate. Let's clear the air a bit. If the world is truly going to end this coming December, there is nothing we can do to prepare for it, except to spend as much time as we can with our loved ones and friends and clear our consciences. Chances are, however, that the world is not going to end. Yet, any time large numbers of people start preparing for disaster, still more people are affected.

What December 21, 2012 will do, however, is cause more and more people to prepare for individual/family/community survival, or what has come to be known as "prepping." Prepping is a good thing, albeit some persons might not view it as such. To some, persons who have even a modest supply of extra food, water and ammunition are to be suspect. Why anyone would feel that way is a mystery to me, I'll confess.

Circumstances allowing, Sharon and I have always tried to plan ahead. In *SURVIVE! THE DISASTER, CRISIS AND EMERGENCY HANDBOOK*, which I wrote in 2010 for F-W Pubs/Gun Digest Books (www.gundigeststore.com), I focus on practical means by which individuals, families and communities can get through a crisis of limited duration, be the time involved days, weeks or even months.

So, assuming the planet will still be here and habitable for humans after December 21, 2012, here is what I would recommend to those interested in preparing for problems. And, problems there well may be. As the date draws near and already strong media and internet hype grows and grows, more and more people will convince themselves to grab a few things for "just in case." So, you don't want to wait too long, or many items you might wish to have will be in short supply – meaning really high prices – or just gone.

Since there will be some persons who can't or won't prepare, in the event of even a few days' disruption of the norm, plan for the possibility of outbreaks of civil disobedience, violence and theft of goods. In other words, you don't have to be prepared to take on armies of violent idiots or flee to some

mountain redoubt, but you should be prepared to defend your family and your home from looters and, where possible, work in concert with like-minded individuals and families in order to preserve what all of you have. That means you'll need guns. Regular hunting rifles and sporting shotguns can be fine, of course, but civilian-legal versions of military rifles are vastly better suited to defensive scenarios. Clearly, the two best caliber choices are 5.56 x 45mm NATO (.223 Remington can substitute) and 7.62 x 39mm (.30 Russian). Most commonly, these calibers will be found in AR-15 and AK-47 platforms.

Persons have their own preferences, of course. Of late, I've gotten more and more hooked on the harder hitting 7.62 x 39mm with its larger capacity magazines that still – as this is written – can be had pretty inexpensively. I very much like the all-American made Century International Arms Centurion 39 (www.centuryarms.com) semi-auto version of the AK-47. In a true marksman's hands, 5.56 x 45mm will be more accurate. I'm not that great a marksman, so the difference in accuracy potential concerns me not at all.

If your budget allows, a good pump shotgun (preferably with an extended magazine) is potentially useful, primarily because many people somehow have a greater fear of a shotgun than a rifle. My preference is a Remington 870 12-gauge. Double-0 Buck and Brenneke Slugs are best for potential anti-personnel use.

Handguns can always be on you, so you'll want at least one for each armed member of the family or group. An easily and quickly reloadable semi-automatic pistol – whatever your preference of centerfire caliber – with which you are familiar and comfortable is your best choice. If possible, when it comes to firearms in a defensive scenario involving various individuals, whatever ammunition standardization can be possible should be striven for.

You'll want fire extinguishers and, if circumstances permit, a water source that is not dependent upon "city" water, which can be used for fire prevention/fighting. Practice good fire safety and don't do silly things, like trying to use a charcoal grill indoors, leaving heavy shrubbery or tree branches too near to the house, etc.

For drinking water, unless you have a well and a reliable means to pump, you'll want to have two separate water supplies. One is for actual drinking and cooking while the second is for other needs, such as