

FROM THE EDITOR

You may have seen the Liberty Mutual TV ad that touts the value of its roadside assistance plan as part of the company's auto insurance coverage. There's a scene in the ad that shows two teenage boys who are stranded on the side of the road at night with a flat tire. One of the teens is on his cell phone speaking to his father and says, "Don't worry Dad, I know what a lug wrench looks like." Covering the phone with one hand and holding up a pry bar in his other hand, he turns to his friend and says, "Is this a lug wrench?" His friend replies, "Uh, maybe."

I'm certainly not trying to poke fun at today's teens. Frankly, it's been more than a few decades since many of us spent a Saturday morning under the hood of our Chevy or Ford, changing points and plugs and setting the timing. And, back in the day of bi-as-ply tires, flats were fairly common. Not so much anymore. I know I'm going to jinx myself by saying so, but I can't remember the last time I had

a flat. Indeed, according to the AAA, almost a third of all new cars no longer even come with a spare tire.

Like so many of you, I grew up with a gun in hand. As a kid I was able to set up a BB gun range in the backyard to practice with my Daisy Red Ryder. We had a place in the country where I could blast away at tin cans with my .22, and I learned to shoot clay targets at a nearby military base trap and skeet range. By the time I was ready to hunt, I had been taught the basics of firearms safety and knew how to handle and properly load and unload any gun I owned. I was, of course, no expert, but to borrow the analogy, I knew what a lug wrench was and how to use it.

With concern about hunter numbers, there has been a renewed call for mentorship, encouraging today's hunters to help newcomers get started in hunting. That's great. We need to keep in mind that for many of today's youngsters, the starting point for mentorship is not in the field but at the shooting range.

Let's get that lug wrench in their hands and show them how to use it.

Spring and summer are the perfect time to head out to the range whether it's with youngsters, friends or co-workers in tow. And, if you're looking for a place to shoot, check out the National Shooting Sports Foundation's website, wheretoshoot.org. The site provides a state-by-state directory of open-to-the-public facilities, including types of shooting available at each location.

In some distant future, I hate to think there would be an ad with a teen holding a Model 70 or Model 700 and turning to his friend asking, "Is this a rifle?"

Speaking of ways through which we can help ensure a strong future for our outdoor traditions, I'm happy to pass along some information on a new Boone and Crockett Club initiative called **Guns for Conservation**. This program provides all of us with the opportunity to support the Club by donating firearms, sporting collectibles, wildlife



Doug Painter
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art and hunting books from our own collections. Contributions can be made at any time, scheduled over a designated period or formally integrated into the estate planning process (see the ad on page 25).

Funds raised through the Guns for Conservation program are placed in the Boone and Crockett Club Foundation endowment, a fund where the principal remains intact. Annual interest income generated is then dedicated to vital conservation programs.

For additional information regarding the program or to discuss a contribution, please contact Jodi Bishop at Jodi@boone-crockett.org or (406) 542-1888.

Hope to see you down the trail. ■



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