



## Collection, Possession, and Use of Arms by Responsible Persons

On March 15, 2025, at 11:06 am there was an accidental discharge of a rifle in .308 Winchester laying on a table at our March meeting. Two people were injured. Neither member injured was in any way responsible for the gun being fired and any rumor that they somehow contributed to this situation is completely false.

An email was sent to members on Friday asking for help in identifying subjects in a photograph. Members who came forward as a result of Friday's email were of great assistance in the investigation, and from this information the subjects have been identified by Detective Abbitt of the Clinton County Sheriff's Office. Detective Abbitt noted she appreciates everyone's cooperation.

This occurrence is intolerable to the OGCA Board and to the Roberts Centre. I know that it is intolerable to you too. The OGCA Board has amended the OGCA Rules to address this further which will be set forth in the next newsletter and Rule Book.

Why did this happen? Of course, the answer is because someone brought a loaded gun into the meeting. Bringing a loaded gun into one of our meetings is irresponsible, a violation of OGCA rules, and sets one up for civil and criminal penalties. But most of all it is morally wrong. You have a moral obligation whenever you handle a firearm to do so in such a way that you ensure you will not harm others. It is that simple! It is your obligation to check and recheck, if necessary, that your guns are not loaded. This is a moral obligation of bringing a gun into a crowded area that is to be handled by many. Introducing a loaded gun into such a situation and having others handle it, is just a horribly bad idea. No one reading these words is disagreeing with this statement. So, then what is the issue? The issue is complacency with guns and magazines. Complacency that the gun is not loaded and does not need to be checked etc.

At the gun tie table, we are often presented with guns that have ties already on them and we cut them off and recheck the gun. This conduct frequently is met with a bit of dismay. The issue is not that the gun was tied wrong, the issue is we want to check the gun ourselves, and do the best we can to ensure that it is not loaded. Like the old Ronald Reagan saying "trust but verify." Recently we cut a tie off of a lever action 30-30 at the gun tie table and the owner was shocked to learn it was loaded. When a table holder puts a tie on a gun, they are not only seeking to disable the gun, but they ARE verifying to all that the gun is safe and they have checked that it is unloaded. This is an absolute obligation of any table holder. Yes, before you put a tie on a gun you need to make sure it is unloaded. Do not just tie it. Open the action and check. To do otherwise is reckless.

Also, let's all remember that guns do not fire themselves. As we have all been told **"keep your finger off of the trigger until you are ready to shoot the gun."** **So do not put your finger on the trigger of the guns at the meetings!!!** We all need to be reminded, no matter how young or old, the 3 basic principles of gun safety:

- Keep the gun unloaded until you need to use it.
- Keep your finger off of the trigger until you intend to fire the gun.
- Keep the gun always pointed in a safe direction.

If these rules are vigilantly followed accidental discharges and injuries will be eliminated. We all know this, we have all been told this since we were young. But the time has come that we reflect on these obligations when we are at our meetings and handling guns around so many. We owe each other the obligation of safe gun handling. It is a moral obligation of coming to our meetings and being with others. No one intended for two of our members to be injured, but it happened. We all have to do better.

**- Sean A. McCarter, President**





Try email marketing for free today!