

# DISPLAYS 101



# Purpose

- Whether it is one special piece or a room full of examples, firearms (through their collectors) have a story to tell
- The purpose of this presentation is to give you the basic knowledge to successfully tell your firearms' story to others via a display

# Agenda

- Background
- Themes
- Tricks and Hints
- VGCA Incentives
- VGCA Display Grading Criteria
- VGCA Judging

# Background

- Displaying your collection and knowledge at VGCA Gun Shows does not have to be hard – and we actually try to make it easy
  - This presentation will provide basic information
  - Article in January 2022 VGCA Newsletter by Marc Gorelick & Rob Becker
- Benefits
  - Educate VGCA members and public on historical aspects of gun collecting
  - Members learn what you are interested in and can point you toward possible sources
- Can lead to Displays at Other Shows
  - Forks of the Delaware
  - Ohio Gun Collectors Association
  - Baltimore Antique Arms Show
  - NRA Annual Meetings

# Subject/Theme

- **Single Most Important Aspect of Your Display!**
- **Limited only by your collection and your imagination!**
- **Keep the subject narrow enough to adequately address in your display**
- **Theme Examples:**
  - **One Model by One Manufacturer**
  - **One Model of Firearm by Multiple Manufacturers**
  - **Various Models made by One Manufacturer/Designer**
  - **Various Types/Models made during a particular time period or during a specific event**
  - **Single Firearm**
  - **Accessories**

# Themes

- One Model by One Manufacturer



Fabulous Fifties – Winchester Rifles – Model 1876 & Model 1885  
Display Organization not recorded  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2019

The First Large Frame D.A. Revolver – The Colt Model 1878  
Baltimore Antique Arms Show – Mar 2016



# Themes

- One Model by One Manufacturer/Designer



John Dahlgren and the Plymouth Rifle –  
The U.S. Navy Model 1861 Rifle

VGCA Member Marc Gorelick  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2017

# Themes

- One Model of Firearm by Multiple Manufacturers



The German G43 Rifle  
Baltimore Antique Arms Show – Mar 2017



M1 Carbine  
Baltimore Antique Arms Show– Mar 2016

# Themes

- Various Models made by One Manufacturer/Designer



John M. Browning's Automatic .22 rim-fire rifle –  
An Inspired and Timeless Design 1914-2017  
VGCA Member Larry Hare  
VGCA Show – Nov 2017



David Leonard – Ohio Gunsmith 1825-1908 "Family"  
Sponsored by OGCA  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2017

# Themes

- Various Models made by One Manufacturer



Remington Model 580 and 590 Series Rifles  
VGCA Member Mike Alsop  
VGCA Show – Mar 2022



Seven Decades of Ruger – the Early Years  
Ruger Collectors Association  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2019

# Themes

- Various Models made by One Manufacturer



The Jenks Mule Ear

VGCA Member Marc Gorelick  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2023

# Themes

- Various Models made by One Manufacturer



F.B. Radom Vis  
VGCA Member Wally Ustupski  
VGCA Show – Mar 2018



Colt 1851, 1861, and Pocket Navy Revolvers of the Civil War Era 1861-1865  
VGCA Member John Babey  
VGCA Show – Nov 2016

# Themes

- Various Types/Models made during a particular time period or during a specific event



Signal Guns and Flare Projectors of the First World War  
VGCA Member Rob Becker  
VGCA Show – Mar 2021

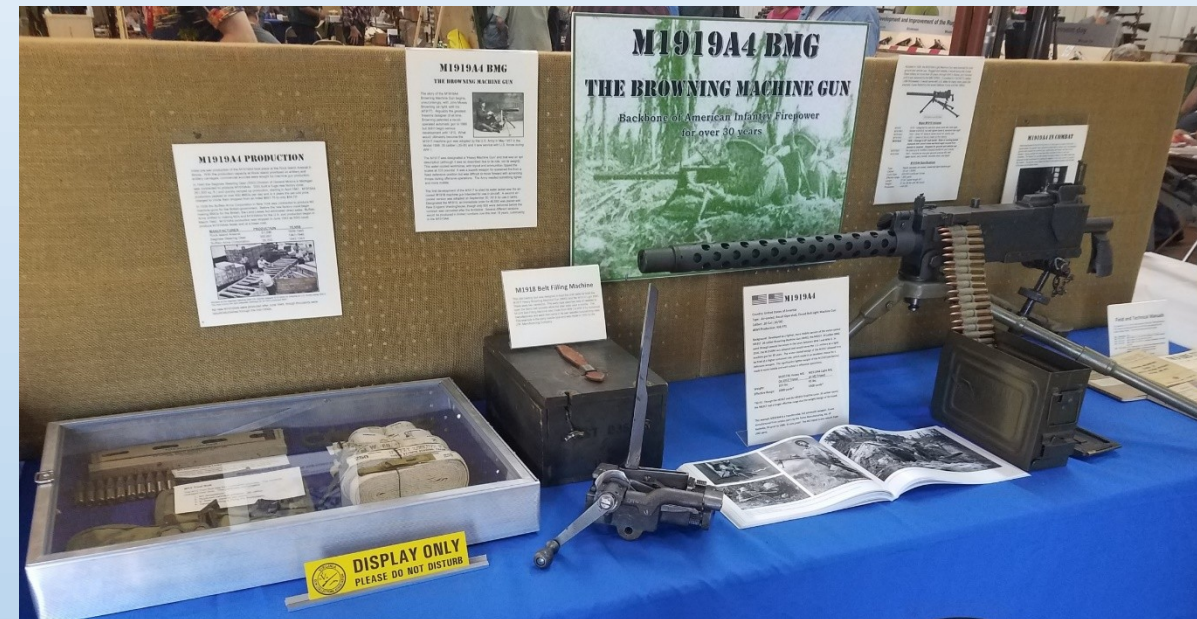


The Lee Enfield in WWII - Protecting the Commonwealth Once Again  
VGCA Member Rob Becker  
VGCA Show – Mar 2017

# Themes

- Single Firearm

**M1919A4 BMG – The Browning Machine Gun**  
**Backbone of American Infantry Firepower for Over 30 Years**  
**VGCA Member Rob Becker**  
**VGCA Show – Nov 2020**



**Colt Thompson Submachine Gun**  
**Serial 201, Model 1921**  
**Purchased 100 Years Ago by Baldwin Locomotive**  
**OGCA Show – May 2021**

# Themes

- Accessories

The Tools Behind the Guns -  
Original Tool Kits Used  
During the WWII Era  
Baltimore Antique Arms Show – Mar 2018



"A withering  
Hail of Iron"  
Grape and  
Canister in  
the Civil War

Baltimore  
Antique Arms  
Show –  
Mar 2019

# Themes

- Accessories

M1 Rifle Sights, Grenade Launching Attachments, and Practice Rifle Launched Grenades  
VGCA Member Larry Babcock  
VGCA Show – Nov 2022



# Themes

- Other

A Soldier's Basic Equipment – Civil War to WW2  
Baltimore Antique Arms Show – Mar 2016



# Themes

- Other



Spanish Gold – The Art of Gold Damascening  
Sponsored by OGCA  
NRA Annual Meeting – Apr 2019

# Tricks and Hints

- **DO - Make your Display “Pop”**

- Make sure your display title is clearly visible and distinctive
- Make sure items are clearly visible (have enough room to clearly display everything)
- Keep background (table cover, backboard, etc.) neutral and simple
- Label everything - and place the label close to the item described
- “Dry run” your display at home – consider “curb appeal”
- Use period photographs, commercial advertisements, or promotional materials
- Use off-white, ivory or cream-colored heavy stock paper for signage (avoid standard white paper)
- Use a glass case to display/protect small items and any live ammunition

- **DO – of a more extravagant nature**

- Use mirror behind a piece to show features/markings of the reverse side
- Use lights to draw attention to a specific piece or area
- Use motorized stand to rotate small items/handguns
- Have handouts available that summarize key elements of the display
- Use video monitor to provide multi-media learning experience

# Tricks and Hints

- **DO NOT**

- Don't leave firearms unsecured
- Don't include items that do not directly support your title/theme
- Don't "write a book" on labels/placards. 2-4 sentences is a good rule of thumb and font size should be large enough to be easily read from several feet away
- Don't crowd your display/appear cluttered – get enough table space to spread items out so they can be clearly seen
- Don't just copy references/descriptions out of books
- Don't use books as a substitute for labels, text, or graphics
- Don't build your display too big to be easily transported!

# VGCA Incentives

- **Up to two free tables per show per member for display**
  - Displays can be more than two tables, but must pay for additional tables
  - No sales from display tables
- **\$100 Stipend for first-time displayer**
  - Designed to offset cost of building display
- **Judged Displays can win Cash Prizes**
  - \$300 for 1<sup>st</sup> Place, \$200 for 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, and \$100 for 3<sup>rd</sup> Place
  - \$50 for Judges Choice
- **Will subsidize selected displays to represent VGCA at the NRA Annual Meetings**
  - Up to \$2500

# VGCA Grading Criteria

- **Ten Graded Areas worth up to 10 points each = Maximum of 100 Points**
  1. **Clear & simple title/theme is evident**
  2. **Displayed firearms & related items support title/theme**
  3. **Completeness of presentation: Full scope of subject represented**
  4. **All displayed items are adequately labeled & described**
  5. **Text & labeling are clear, concise & readable**
  6. **Historical importance / collector interest**
  7. **Significance adequately explained in display and/or in handouts**
  8. **Condition: Quality/originality of displayed items**
  9. **Rarity: Relative availability of displayed items**
  10. **General Appearance: Neatness, creativity in design, construction workmanship & unobtrusive security safeguards**

# VGCA Judging

- **Jim Burgess is in charge of judging – tracks grade sheets and adds points**
- **Former Process**
  - **Displayers judged all other displays except their own**
- **New Process**
  - **Three selected VGCA Officers or Directors will judge displays**
- **Results announced on Sunday afternoon of the Show**

# QUESTIONS?

