

## And So, I Began To “Carry”

When I was a kid I used to carry either a lever action .22 rifle or a 20 gauge single-shot with me in the woods. When I carried a gun. Carrying those long guns was inconvenient, and usually, when I needed a gun, I didn't have one with me. I always had a knife or two on me, but sometimes a knife is the wrong tool for the job. I once spent a few hours up a tree because I didn't have a gun when I should have.

In my late 20s I got a new job at a pet store in the ritzier part of town, and when they hired me they asked if I had a pistol I could carry, and if not, they strongly suggested I get one and carry it. (And, no, it wasn't “legal” there at that time. The boss mentioned this, while encouraging me to do so, anyway.) They preferred *all* their employees to carry while on the job. Nice!

But I'd never owned any handgun before. Nor had I ever really handled one. That was an oversight that needed to be fixed.

I went to my favorite gun store and immediately put a used 5-shot .38 SP Charter Arms snub-nosed revolver on layaway, picking it up a few weeks later. \$265.

I've carried every day- with a few exceptions- since.

I soon saw why the bosses made the request. The store was in a strip mall, and the Subway\* sandwich shop 2 or 3 doors down got robbed at gunpoint *twice* in the 6 months I had that particular job. Plus, employees had to go out back, after dark, to put trash in the dumpster that was in the shadows. If practical, no one went alone, but it wasn't always practical. It was good to be armed and situationally aware.

It was fun seeing what my coworkers carried. The big boss didn't only carry concealed; when he took the money bag to his car at night, he would stick a huge, heavy-barreled stainless steel revolver in his waistband.

At the other end of the gun spectrum, one co-worker carried a little .25 semi-auto in his back jeans pocket. I wondered about the definition of “concealed” since his pocket had a clear outline of that pistol worn into the denim, a-la the Skoal can ring so many guys of that time sported.

I moved on from that job, and although I never specifically mentioned to any subsequent boss that I carry, it was always the case that if there was any situation of danger that cropped up- and they *did*— I was placed on the front line. Maybe they knew I was armed, or maybe I was expendable. It doesn't really matter either way to me.

Because I care about you, I want you to be armed at all times. Just in case. That's the loving, civilized position to adopt with regard to my fellow human beings.

*\* I wonder if Subways are a popular target for armed robberies. When I lived in Colorado, a couple of armed robbers went down the highway across the state robbing Subways in each town they passed through, including the one across the street from my job. It was about an hour and a half between towns, and by the time anyone realized the pattern, they were finished. I never heard of them being caught.*