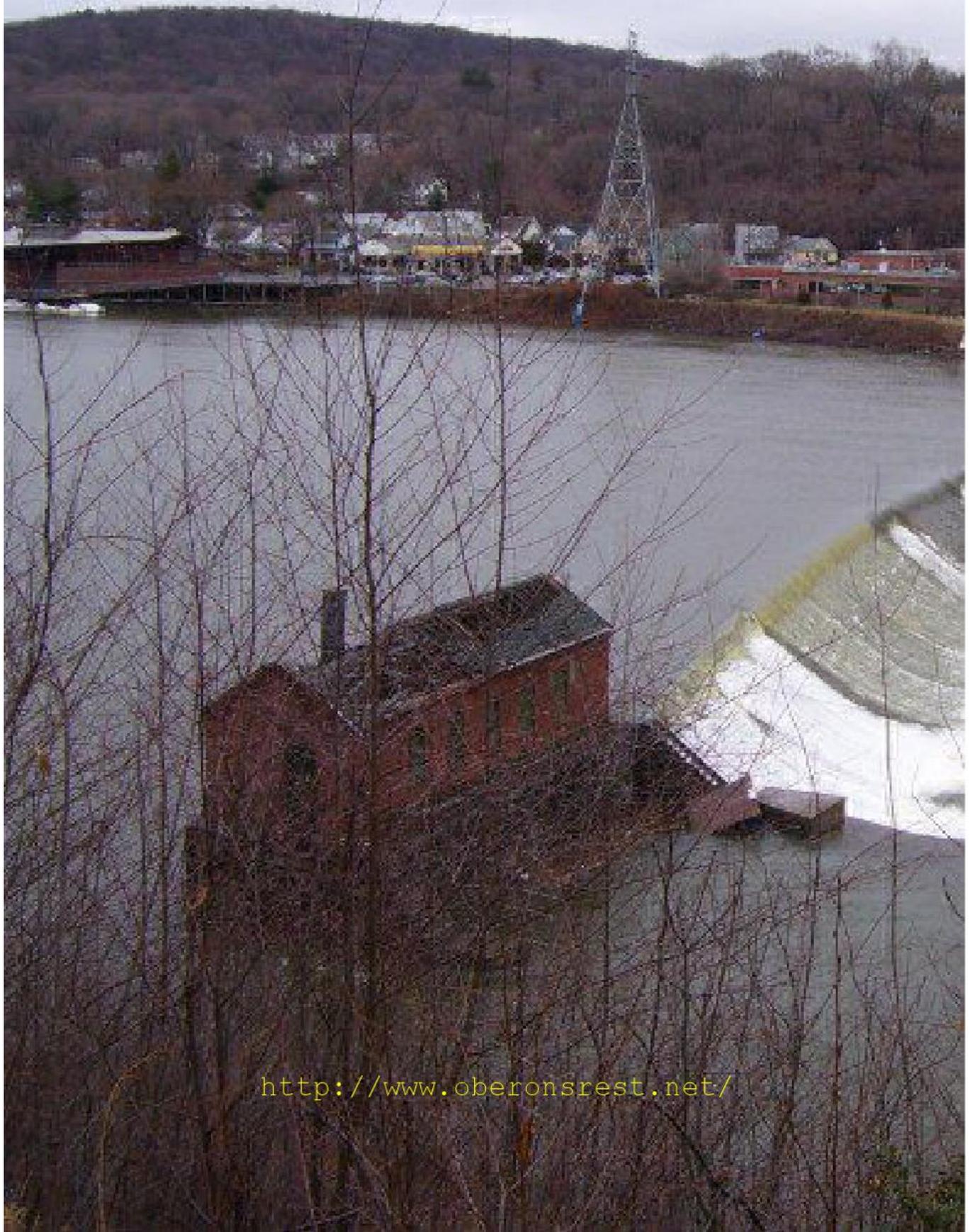


# THE DYSTONAUT

NUMBER 6



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DON'T TREAD ON ME



## Going Galt In the Berkshires: One Person's Story

One might say that it was very appropriate we were meeting next to a railroad yard. CSX was busy moving cars when I showed up at the Harbor Freight in West Springfield, MA to visit a modern-day *Galt's Gulch* that an individual had set up hidden in the Berkshire Mountains. John (not his real name) sent an actual written letter to the newsletter's mail drop giving a little of his background and his current project. Formerly a resident of the Boston area, after reading Ayn Rand's novel Atlas Shrugged he took a long, hard look at himself and the world around him, and decided it was time to

"Go Galt". After reading the letter and giving him a call, it turns out that we were already acquainted with one another from the Boston hacker scene of the late 1990s, when 2600 Magazine meetings were held at the food court of the Pru. (They are now held at MIT in the Stratton Student Center.) John now lives part-time in the Springfield area while he finishes his residence in the Berkshires. He had a few days off, and was stopping off at Harbor Freight for supplies before heading home.

When John made the decision to go Galt, his first moves were to generate a large enough amount of capital to be able to move when the opportunity presented itself, and divest himself of such material that would only load him down during the move. Selling off items that were excess to needs enabled him to initially move from an apartment to a rented room, and be able to save more money by cutting rent and utility costs. From there it was only a matter of time until a viable property became available. A former

"hunting cabin" in the Berkshires went up for sale. After an inspection of the property and some haggling, he was able to buy the property outright, eliminating a mortgage. John said that the lessons learned here were to be ready for an opportunity, jump on it when it arises, and that having cash on hand makes things go a lot easier. When asked about alternative locations in a more free state such as Vermont or New Hampshire, John gave several good points as to why he chose the Berkshires:

1. He was very familiar with the Berkshires from numerous family outings as a kid.
2. The price for property was right.
3. The tax burden on the property was acceptable.
4. Firearms ownership, while not as easy as NH or VT, is still easier than on the Eastern side of the state.
5. The property suited his needs.
6. The opportunity was good enough to not pass up.

7. He didn't think he'd find a another comparable property any time soon.

8. The Berkshires were good enough for Ayn Rand's female protagonist in Atlas Shrugged.

I have been in communication with other survivalist-types who have chosen Western Massachusetts and Adirondacks in Northern New York for similar reasons. Personally not my choices, but as long as the individuals picked their respective locations in a logical manner based on their particular set of circumstances and requirements, who is anyone to argue?

Upon arriving at the location, I understood why John snapped it up when the opportunity arose. It is a spacious (roughly 12 ft. by 20 ft.) two-room cabin on the shore of a large pond (or small lake) with a year-round stream and close access to hundreds of acres of state hunting land. What was immediately apparent was that the location had access to adequate food and water. Another immediate observation was that it didn't look like much of anything. It's the type of

place that hides in the noise floor. When John bought his hideaway, it had rudimentary plumbing, no electricity, no insulation, fireplace heating, a manual well pump, small wood stove, and an outhouse. While adequate for part-time summer use, the place was definitely in the "fixer-upper" category for year-round use.

When asked about his most useful tool since buying the property, his reply was his Ford pick-up truck as it would be difficult to transport building materials, tools, and supplies to the place without it. His other vehicle is a late-model Yamaha motorcycle he bought for routine local travel during good weather. When asked about tools in general he replied that his two favorite brands are Craftsman (Sears) and Harbor Freight. He purchases the later when he needs something for a one-time or infrequent use, and the former when looking for long-term frequent use tools. He also keeps an eye open for older quality (American-made) tools at tag sales and the like that he can buy used at a reasonable price. Towards that end, he told me that the late Eric

Soane's books A Museum Of Early American Tools and A Reverence For Wood are very useful. For his power tools, he uses a Honda EU2000i Generator, and said that it was bullet-proof.



When asked about guns, John showed me a small but quite adequate collection of firearms, and said that his focus for the most part was acquiring reliable working guns that used common civilian ammunition. Despite Massachusetts' reputation with gun laws, he was able to acquire a Class A LTC from his town. He said that some towns in the Berkshires are easier than others, but that at the very least someone with no criminal record should be able to get an LTC for "Sporting" or "Hunting and Target Shooting" purposes. John does not carry for the most part, and was originally planning on settling for a lesser LTC permit as that would have at least enabled him to purchase and practice with his handguns. However the Class A LTC makes more options available. His collection consists of a Swiss K-31, Smith & Wesson Model 686 (.357 Mag.),

Marlin M1894 (.357 Mag.), Marlin Model 60, Ruger Mark II, Mossberg 500 (12 ga.), and Marlin 336 (.30-30). He admitted the Swiss K-31 was the odd one of the lot when considering his focus, but he liked its reasonable (at the time) price, excellent accuracy, inexpensive (at the time) bulk surplus ammo, and smooth operation with the straight-pull bolt. All of his guns were purchased used from various small gun stores throughout the state. John has also been expanding into reloading and black powder firearms as time and finances permit, noting the lack of laws even in Massachusetts regarding antiques and muzzleloaders. His first acquisition towards that end was a reproduction of a Remington Model 1858 Revolver he purchased at a gun show.

Wireless phone service in the vicinity of the cabin was spotty at best. John said that under normal circumstances he would have ordered the cheapest level of POTS line from the local phone company, but the cabin was located too far away from the pole for a cheap installation. An off-the-shelf cellphone extender would increase coverage reliability, but is also out of the budget. John has been

experimenting with homebrew DIY cellphone extenders as time permits. As an aside, I have heard from many survivalist-types who specifically look for places that **don't** have wireless phone service when choosing their Galt's Gulch location.



For off-grid communications, the cabin is equipped with a SSB CB rig and 2-meter FM ham transceiver, both operating on batteries and acquired from local hamfests. Plans are in the works to add an HF ham transceiver. John currently possesses a Technician Class Amateur Radio License, and expects to upgrade to the General Class at the next hamfest he attends. For news acquisition, John purchased a police scanner, shortwave radio, and weather-alert radio on clearance from Radio Shack.

As mentioned previously, John purchased a small Honda generator for running power tools and other AC electrical devices

at the cabin. He went with the Honda EU2000i because of its reliability, long run time, and compatibility with electronics. He has been supplementing the Honda with the purchase of solar panels from Harbor Freight, and small experimental wind generators.

Plans are in the works to also experiment with small scale water power from the property's stream. John has been focusing on DC as opposed to AC because he's found parts easier to acquire via RV and truck shops.

Lighting in the cabin is provided by a combination of modified dollar store solar-powered LED lights, candles, and oil lamps. John plans to eventually equip the cabin with 12 Volt appliances, powered by a battery bank charged with a combination of wind, solar, and hydroelectric power. The electronics in the cabin are powered by batteries. John uses rechargeables in these, and buys solar-powered battery chargers when he finds them on sale (Harbor Freight). Most of the electronics can also use external DC power, so they'll be able to connected to his DC power system when it's finished.

One item of noteworthy interest was John's library

of DIY and self-reliance books. John built shelves into the wall of the cabin, and now has about 18 feet of shelf space. Most of his books were bought at used book sales held by various libraries. He also checks the offerings at used book stores whenever possible. I already mentioned Eric Sloane. Another one of his favorites is the Foxfire book series. John prefers paper to electronic books as "they don't need electricity".



Internet service at the cabin is non-existent, and there are no plans to establish it. John said he's on it enough when in hell, and has plenty to do at the cabin without it. However, John does have a Raspberry Pi hooked up to a small flatscreen monitor that he uses as an e-book reader and experimenter's tool. One of the future uses of the Pi is as a data terminal for digital amateur radio modes on HF and VHF.

At the present, John is still in the process of converting the place from a seasonal to an all-season

residence. He is also exploring options for income generation in the Berkshires, with self-employment being a significant possibility. Once he's living in the cabin full time, he can then proceed with items that require regular attention such as livestock and a garden.

John has found that lack of an Internet connection at the cabin has enabled him to direct his free time towards other pursuits related to the nuts and bolts of establishing a homestead, and the acquisition of a useful skill set.

In the end, he advises, take a good look at your particular situation and figure out what would work best for you based on what other real people with situations similar to yours have discovered. If it doesn't work, then try something else. He said that since we are really in a slow decline, there is a good amount of time to get up to speed until the reset. So in the meantime, he's going to work on his place in hills, expand his skill-set in multiple directions, and in the end just be another anonymous dumb hillbilly in the sticks until the end happens.

## More Guns!

We all like guns, so it goes without saying that I include some gun porn in ~~most~~ every issue. This way, readers can become inspired to get their Type 3 FFL (only \$30!), and come out of the closet as the flaming gun fags that they want to be!

Seriously though, if you're a Doomsday Prepper who is worried about the impending TEOTWAWKI WROL Zombie Apocalypse, you surf all the online forums, read a couple gun rags, and settle on a M4orgery with the required 10 pounds of accessories slapped on the Picatinny rails and a Glock. Maybe also a Remington 870 with that breacher muzzle thingy. Because that's what all the other preppers have, and if you don't have it then you'll be SOL when TSHTF. The rest of us pick up a few good solid working guns, learn a little gunsmithing, and call it good. Some of us just say "Fuck it", get our C&R, and enjoy collecting guns.

Not that I have anything against anyone who wants to buy an AR-15, a Glock, and get on YouTube dressed like the high-speed,

low-drag tactical operator they aren't. It's your money (and reputation) after all. It's just that I have to point out that 150 grains at 2700 fps is just as good as 62 grains at 3100 fps as a working gun round. Sometimes it's even better. Especially when you're living paycheck to paycheck and had to really save up in order to afford even a \$200 rifle. Enough pontificating. What I really wanted to do in this article was pick up where I left off in Issue #5, and talk about a few more neat guns.



This is the Karabiner K-31 in 7.5x55mm Swiss. It was standard issue in the Swiss military until 1958, and used by their militia until the 1970s. The cartridge is comparable to 7.62mm NATO in capability.

There are a few nice things about this rifle. They are known to be very accurate. Their straight-pull bolt action is very smooth and fast. They have a detachable box magazine. Their ammunition is still available as inexpensive, match-grade, non-corrosive surplus.

If you grabbed one of these when they first hit the surplus market, you would have paid less than \$200 for the rifle. They're closer to \$400 now, but it's still a good deal for a nice piece of history and an excellent working gun.

When I first started collecting guns, I came across this Mauser in a now long-defunct gun store called Old Foundry Guns in Cold Spring, NY. It turned out the Mauser was from Sweden, and the price was right, so it came home with me. Thus began my fondness for Mauser rifles in general, especially Swedish Mausers.

Swedish Mausers use a 6.5x55mm cartridge, and much like the Swiss, their surplus ammo is match-grade, and non-corrosive. Also like the Swiss, their firearms are very accurate with standard ammo. As Mauser cartridges go, the 6.5x55mm has a mild recoil. I'd say it's much like .243 Winchester. The 6.5x55mm also has a reputation of being very flat-shooting.



This is my favorite Swedish Mauser, the M94 Carbine.



No gun collection would be complete without having the humble and practical single-shot break-open shotgun. This is a 12ga Winchester Model 37. While collectors have driven up the prices for these to the point where they cease to become affordable working guns, you can still find one in decent condition for under \$200 if you look around. The funny thing about it all is that the time they were intended to be the cheap poor man's working gun.



Finally, we have the current contender for the poor man's working handgun. This is the Russian Nagant M1895 in 7.62x38mmR. They are \$100 shipped directly to you if you have a C&R, and ammunition is cheap.

Swedish Mauser picture from author's collection. All other pictures in this article courtesy of Wikipedia via Creative Commons.

## Product Review: Montana Americana

There is a really good clothing and sporting goods store in Millerton, NY called Terni's. You can't miss them, they're right on 42 Main St., just up the block from one of the few remaining independent book stores in the region, Oblong Books. It's one of those old-school places I'm fond of seeking out, instead of giving money to cookie-cutter corporate stores.

I was in Terni's not too long ago, browsing his knife selection. He's a Case dealer, and he has some models you won't see in places like Tractor Supply and Cabelas. However, when looking in his display case, I noticed another knife maker of whom I was familiar with, Montana Americana.

Those of you who read that excellent magazine, The Backwoodsman, will recognize Dean Hazuka and his column "Ramblin's of a Mountain Man." Dean is a modern-day mountain man, living with his wife Heidi in an off-grid cabin in Montana where they make knives and leatherwork under the

business name of Montana Americana.



Being familiar with his knives from reading The Backwoodsman, I decided to purchase one from Terni's, who has a pretty good selection of them. I picked the Medium Drop Point sheath knife (shown above). It has a 3  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch drop point blade made from 1095 carbon spring steel. The full-tang handle is Maple wood with brass pins. The pouch sheath is leather with a belt loop.

Right off the bat just from looking at the knife and sheath you can tell that this is hand-made American craftsmanship at its best. This particular model cost \$60. The price is comparable to what you'd pay for a mass-produced blade in the same category. Actually, \$60 for a knife made by hand in America is a bargain.

The quality of the knife and sheath are excellent. The 1095 carbon steel holds up well to daily usage. This is a genuine honest working knife.

From an ergonomic standpoint, the handle fit my hand like it was born there, and was probably one of the most comfortable knives I've ever handled. I know this is a purely subjective observation, but good ergonomics are still important in a knife.

Montana Americana has an entire line of blades ranging from small 2 1/2" blade neck knives all the way up to 8" blade Hudson Bay and Bowie knives. Their small & medium knives (under 5" blade) are under \$100.

If you are looking for a good solid hand-made in America working knife, I recommend you look at the offerings from Montana Americana. As their website states:

*"It's our belief that developing a relationship with the customer is as important as the sale. Therefore, in an age of impersonal transactions, we request that you call or email us to place an order. Oftentimes in talking with our customers we're able to customize a particular style to meet each person's unique needs."*

Montana Americana's website is:

<http://www.montanaamericana.com/>

You can reach them by phone at 406-261-3546 or email at [deanzuka@yahoo.com](mailto:deanzuka@yahoo.com).



Here we are yet again with another issue of The Dystonaut. I must be bored, have a serious masochistic streak, or really like writing as I've often thought that the best phrase to describe the polemic I put out is "*Vox Clamantis in Deserto*." There seems to be, however, a few of you out there who are interested in this stuff, poor addlepatented souls that you are.

In recent news, a New York City court dismissed a lawsuit filed by stabbing victim Joseph Lozito who sued the city because two transit cops locked themselves in a subway car a few feet away from the incident, instead of coming to his aid while he fought off his assailant. The NYPD claimed that their two officers locked themselves in the car because they thought the perpetrator had a gun. Yep, two cops with Glock pistols, spare magazines, Tasers, pepper spray, and plenty of back-up were afraid of one guy with a gun. The judge sided with

the city in their claim that the NYPD has no "special duty" to intervene, and that the two cops were so totally lacking in situational awareness that they did not notice Lozito was in danger at the time.

Look on the bright side. Had the two cops tried to do something, they would have probably sent 30 rounds downrange, maybe hit their target once, and probably would have injured or killed 29 innocent bystanders. With their semi-automatic pistols loaded with the 15-round magazines that the statist Progressives and Liberals in New York City feel that only the Police should have. I guess those sick and sad fools have it coming.

I've said it before and it's worth repeating: If you live in NYC, you are getting what you deserve. I implore all my friends who live in New York City to get the hell out of there! Actually, I implore all my friends who live in New York State to move out of there. There are much better places to live.

As the American Empire continues its slow decline, occupied zones like New York become less viable places to live. Relocate to a Free State while you still can.

