



CARRY OPTIONS

Sammy Reese

FROM CLASSICS TO CUTTING EDGE IN CARRY METHODS

GRIZZLE LEATHER Hard Working Country Boy



Grizzle's Countryboy

I'll never forget the first time I heard the expression "When the Corps gives you a big bag of lemons you can either make lemonade or let 'em rot. The choice is yours." The grungy old Mustang Captain continued, "Sometimes you get planted in fertile soil, other times you get planted in 29 Palms. I say grow in the rocks like a weed and piss 'em off."

Captain "F" was on a roll and a few beers deep, as well. I was a boot 2nd Lieutenant, so I just kept my mouth shut and my ears open and made sure the boss didn't run out of beer. These words of wisdom have been rattling around in my head for almost 18 years. I've even passed them on to a few buddies when they found themselves in a position they really didn't want to be in.

I told the above story so I could tell this one. A friend of mine who carries a big gun concealed every day suggested I take a look at Ryan Grizzle's holsters. He had purchased a belt, holster and mag pouch, and was very impressed with the quality and at what he thought was an outstanding price. After seeing his rig, I too was impressed with the look and craftsmanship, so I sent Ryan an email.

Grow Where Planted



During our email exchange I asked Ryan how he got into making holsters. What Ryan told me, made me sit back and take a breath. This guy is the poster child for growing in the worst possible soil imaginable. Ryan's story is not unique, but what is, is what he did in the face of adversity. Ryan and 365 others lost their jobs when the mill closed. He found out rather quickly, being a long haul trucker looks better when watching *BJ and the Bear* or *Smokey and the Bandit* reruns, compared to when you do it for real. A devoted family man, Ryan hated being away from home. His small town was out of jobs and he had mouths to feed.



Grizzle's Workin Man

Ryan told me he has carried a concealed handgun for the past 10 years. He liked the holsters he bought, but thought he could do it better. The \$300 investment in tools and supplies was all money well spent. With no formal training, Ryan made his first holster and posted pictures of it on a gun forum. As the saying goes, the rest is history — or history in the making.

As you can see from the photos of Ryan's holsters, a picture is worth a thousand words; but in this case, the pictures can only tell a little bit about Ryan's gear. You have to pick them up, feel them, put them on and wear them for a while to really appreciate them.

I have the privilege of owning holsters made by some to the greatest holster makers — Lou Alessi and Milt Sparks to name just a couple. Ryan may be new, but he's got that "it factor" all the greats have. He has the ability to create simply designed, highly functional gear. The proof is in the wearing, as I like to say.

After some talking, it was agreed Ryan would send me his "Countryboy" holster, and a single mag pouch for my XD. Later that same day, Ryan sent me an email informing me he was also going to send me his favorite 1911 holster — the "Workin Man," and one of his belts.

Grizzle Gear

The Countryboy design, as well as the Workin Man holsters, make for all-day comfort while carrying a pistol in a duty rig. I've said it before, but this warrants repeating: The belt is the foundation of your carry system. I don't care if the holster is a \$1,000,000 custom rig with diamonds and other precious gems — if your belt is of poor quality, you'll be miserable and blaming the holster. This would be like blaming the horse for a bumpy ride ... when you're the one riding bare back! Ryan got it right with his belt — his well made holsters work better because of it.

I'm a big fan of what some call sweat guards on concealed holsters. I prefer to call them "ouch" protectors, especially with 1911s. My home turf is usually pretty warm, so I end up often having to hide my guns under loose T-shirts. If you haven't been "bitten" on the side by the safety on your 1911, you're lucky, and your time is coming. Either way, the guard takes this problem completely out of the equation — a huge bonus in my eyes.

The names Ryan gave his holsters (Countryboy and Workin Man), intended or not, seem to say it all. Ryan is a hard working country boy, who may have been given a truckload of lemons. Rather than complaining about it and letting them rot, he made lots of lemonade.



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