

## **Brand opens new gun store**

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

Thursday, 03 June 2010 19:01 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 June 2010 19:03

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**Sales and repair services unique to this area.**

Attention all gun enthusiasts in Gothenburg and surrounding area.

Platte Valley Arsenal LLC, at 905 Ave. H, is now open for business.

The opening of the gun, knives and ammunition store is a dream turned into reality for Mark Brand, co-owner of Brand Electric and Grain Equipment Co.

“Five years ago, Nikki encouraged me to pursue my dream,” Brand said. “Dad said if I could manage the electric business at the same time to go ahead.”

So, with a loan from the bank, Brand created a separate store in the electrical business building and opened May 20.

Platte Valley Arsenal carries a full line of ammunition, including shotgun shells for the local trap shooting team, rifles, shotguns, pistols, machine guns and suppressors and knives.

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Suppressors are guns with reduced decibels for hunting and target shooting so shooters don't have to wear ear protection.

The knives, Brand said, are mainly hobby and multi-purpose knives.

"I want to offer a little bit of everything," he said.

Brand emphasized that he's not giving up the electric business.

"I still love it," he said.

Instead, he and his father Roger plan to hire a journeyman electrician.

Roger will help his son operate the gun business.

Another reason for opening the business, Brand said, is because he grew tired of not being able to find certain ammunition or guns locally.

Because the firearm business is so highly regulated, Brand had to become licensed through the Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco which involved application, tests, interviews and a background check.

Brand also had to prove his business would have a storefront since people in the weapon business cannot sell out of their homes.

"There's lots of tax fraud involved with people selling out of their homes," he said.

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The Gothenburg native also is a gunsmith which means he can repair guns.

“I don’t believe there’s anyone in the county who can supply or work on them,” Brand said. “And if I can’t fix something, I know people who can.”

Strict government regulations on the gun-sale business have meant several things.

For example, Brand had to install a complex security system with sensors.

If activated, local authorities and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms officials in Omaha will be notified.

There is also a serial number on every gun so it can be traced.

“There are six pages for every gun I sell,” Brand said about paperwork.

In addition, the Internal Revenue Service can audit Brand’s books anytime.

He also has to undergo periodic training.

Brand and Nikki have four children: Chrysten VanAcker, 22; Jeremy VanAcker, 17; Mackenzie Brand, 16; and Drake Brand, 14.

Store hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 6-9 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m.-noon.

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Appointments can also be made by calling Brand at 529-0109.

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