

When The Bubble Bursts.....What Will I Need?

August 31, 2006
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Imagine that the world has suddenly turned upside down. With what little gasoline you have left in your car, you're driving around looking for someplace to buy food. Everything is closed. Even the convenience stores that are normally open round the clock are closed. Some of them have broken windows and people are dashing out with whatever food they can carry. The grocery stores have armed guards and the doors are locked. Gas stations are closed and abandoned. Just yesterday everything was normal. You got \$200.00 out of the ATM at the mall. Today, the ATMs that have not been destroyed and emptied of all cash are not working.

Deciding to give up any hope of finding food, you turn down a side street to turn around and go home. As you come around a bend, there is a small group of men with guns....all pointed at you. Before you know what's happening, you are dragged from your car and relieved of your watch, wallet and all jewelry. Your car is searched and your flashlight is taken, as is all the loose change in the ash tray. You are kicked a few times and sent on your way, unhurt but terrified. You drive straight home, only to find your front door kicked in and a few of your neighbors in your house. Once again you are held at gunpoint while every morsel of edible food in your house is loaded into trash bags and carried off. Your one means of protection, a 38 caliber pistol that you've had for years, is tucked into the waist band of the guy that used to lend you his lawnmower. He is very apologetic, telling you that it's now the survival of the fittest. People that you do not know are walking freely through your house as you sit on the floor with a man pointing a rifle at your head. You are helpless to stop them. Eventually, they finish searching and carry off anything and everything they feel will be of value in the future. As soon as they leave, you run to the phone to call 911, only to find out the phone is dead. You suddenly realize that you are on your own, with no help, with no means to protect yourself or your family.....and you have nothing to eat and no way to get something to eat.

This scenario, or one like it, will be played out for millions of Americans in the not-so-distant future. The world is poised for a financial collapse that will occur overnight and without warning for the vast majority of the population. Oh sure, there were people talking about it. Business failures were at an all-time high, but they say the economy is good. Even General Motors was in trouble, but they say the economy is good. "But this is America. The government will figure out something. They always have".....they say. Not this time. This collapse will be global, impacting all countries in about a 30 hour window of time. It has been planned for years and is quite easy to achieve if you're in control of the stock markets. It will most likely start in Japan, sweep through the European stock market within hours and probably prevent the U.S. stock markets from opening the following day. All banks will be closed. You will be left with what you have on hand, both in cash and goods. Your credit cards and debit cards will be worthless, as will any dollar bills you may have. Nothing will be open. Looting and pillaging will be the only means to obtain goods. Gun shots will be frequent. Men will prey on their neighbors. Rape and murder will become the national pass-time. Sounds impossible? It's much closer than you think.

How do you prevent this from happening to yourself and your family? It takes planning. It takes knowledge. It takes preparation. Leave out any of these three items and you will find yourself a victim of something like has been described in the opening paragraphs. We won't get into the how's and why's of all this. From this point on we will discuss preparation.

The most important commodity will be food. You have it, you live.....it's that simple. People will kill for it. Think about it for a second. If your family is starving and you have a gun.....and you know that the guy next door has food and does not have a gun, how long will you allow your family to starve before you walk next door and get some food? Sure, you'll try the friendly approach at first and ask for some food. What if he says no.....and you have a gun in your pocket.....and crying children a few feet away? Could you do it? Would you do it? Eventually you would, hopefully without violence, but you would. And it wouldn't take that long to get there. Scary thought, huh? If you're honest with yourself, you know you would take his food.....at gun point, if necessary. Acquisition of food will be the number one cause of death. People will kill you over a can of tuna. Plan on providing one meal a day for each member of your group for a minimum of a year. You can also farm, fish and hunt to provide additional food. Don't forget that bartering will become very popular and that some people have been preparing for years and will be able

to trade goods that you need for goods that they need.

Remember, the most basic of life's simple pleasures will not be available. Unless you prepare, electricity will be non-existent, hot water will be found only on camp fires. Batteries for flashlights, radios, etc. will not be found at all. Consider solar power. Consider rechargeable batteries (from solar power). Forget about running a generator. Where would you get the fuel? What about the noise?

Next on the list of items to have is guns and ammunition. They are pretty much worthless unless you have both. Most gun owners have a pistol, a shotgun and maybe a hunting rifle. They will have less than 100 rounds of ammunition between all three weapons. This will get them through the first week.....if they have food, that is. By the way, ammunition will become money. You will be able to barter for items you need with just a few bullets or shotgun shells. Those that prepare and have ammo to trade will be alright. Just make sure that you trade with people looking to protect their property rather than those that plan to prey on others. If you do not have guns, soon you will have nothing. If you have the means to protect yourself, chances are good that you'll be far better off once the collapse occurs.

What guns will you need? That's mainly a question of economics. If you are financially able to have a hand gun for all members of your family capable of using one, plus a spare or two, that would be excellent. They should be of the same caliber or maybe two different calibers at most. The best would be 9mm since it packs a good wallop, but can be managed by women without a problem. You may want to have a .40 Smith & Wesson (.40S&W) on hand for the men. While .22 caliber ammo will be very valuable for trading, it is of very little use to hold off the bad guys. As of the writing of this (January 1, 2006), a box of 500 .22 bullets can be purchased anywhere for under \$15.00.....so buy several thousand rounds. You'll be very glad you did later. The 9mm ammo will be about \$100.00 per 500, but that is still a bargain. You'll need several thousand rounds of this as well.....for shooting and trading. Remember, there will be lots of good people out there that will need a little help. Maybe they'll have plenty of canned vegetables but be short on ammo. You can help each other by trading.

There is no better weapon for home defense than a 12-gauge shotgun. Get a good one. Get more than one if you can afford it. I'd recommend the Mossberg 590, which holds 8 shells, has excellent sights, holds up well and has a quite frightening appearance. The Mossberg 500 would also be a good

choice (holds 5 shells). Outfit it with a good 3-point sling, a shell holder for extra shells, night sights.....and make sure it has a rifled slug barrel. With practice, you can hit a target with a 12-gauge slug (and a good scope) at 120 yards. For close in, use 00 buck shot. Bad guys are very afraid of shotguns. Shotgun shells are also cheap, so buy plenty. These will also be highly sought after for bartering.....especially slugs and 00 buck shot, although game shot and general loads will be needed as well for hunting.

Rifles will come in very handy to discourage bad guys from a distance and for hunting. In general, they should have scopes and bipods to greatly improve your marksmanship. Make sure they are magazine fed and semi-automatic (sometimes called "auto re-loaders").

The most common rifle will be the .223 caliber (NATO 5.56mm....same thing). This is a very capable round, but has limited knock-down power past 300 yards or so. It is easily managed by women, lighter to carry and cheaper to feed. Lots of people will have them, so bullets will be available and those that plan ahead will have an outstanding bartering commodity. The best .223 rifle for the money is the Ruger Mini-14. With a good scope, they can be had new for roughly \$800 and used in the \$500 range. Have plenty of high capacity magazines on hand (20-rounds works best, but 30-round models of good quality are great as well). Have about 2,000 rounds of ammo on hand. This is an excellent choice for the females in your clan. For upscale .223 rifles, look at the AR-15. This is made by many manufacturers and prices vary greatly. Get the A4 (flat top) version for the best scope mounting (the A2 puts the scope very high and is not as easy to properly aim). Look at products by Armalite, Colt, Rock River and others. This is an assault style rifle. You can find these used with incredible accessories in your local trading post newspaper. Expect a properly outfitted AR-15 to cost \$2,000 new and roughly half that amount used.....with nice accessories like bipod already mounted, good scopes, flash suppressors, special stocks, etc. Buy it used if possible.

Next in the rifle hierarchy is the 7.62mm.....excellent accuracy and performance. More expensive....and worth it. The same outfitting and manufacturers can be found for the 7.62. You can't tell them apart from the .223 from a distance, but when you shoot it you'll know. After that comes the .308.....much more expensive to feed.....much greater accuracy at distance.....much heavier to carry.....not for the average woman. Get a good scope and hits out to 600 yards and beyond are not out of the question. Some people prefer the 30-06 over the .308. Both are excellent. It's a matter of personal preference. The .308 is generally considered as more of an

assault caliber and they have better accessories for the .308 rifle.

There are numerous other calibers....243, 270, 7mm, 300.....all hunting calibers. All very accurate, but will not be as common. Many rifles that use these calibers are bolt-action.....not adequate to meet the need if a semi-auto rifle can be had, but certainly better than nothing.

Ideally, you'll need a place of refuge, way out in the country. Make no mistake, you cannot stay in an urban or suburban area (think back to what happened in New Orleans in 2005). Some rural areas will be OK, but what you want is wilderness. The further out in the wilderness, the better. Paved roads are not the answer. Tree-less areas should be avoided. Mountains are preferred. Water in the area would be very helpful. If you have a place of refuge, it completely changes your preparation requirements. You should have secure storage where you can store your food and weapons at the refuge. You won't be able to haul everything there on short notice.....and short notice will be all you get. It should be relatively close by. If you'll need more than one tank of gas to get there, make sure you have gasoline on hand. You won't be able to get it on the way once the bubble bursts (always keep your gas tank nearly full).

A place of refuge gives you a place to go, a place to store and a peace of mind. It's a nice place to spend the weekend until the bubble bursts. You can make your preparations calmly. Keep buying food, weapons and ammo until you can no longer get them. It has to be a place that you can defend.....not a valley where the bad guys can get above you and shoot you at a distance so they can have all you've prepared for. Make it so they have to walk in. Block all approaching roads and fire warning shots. Remember, there will be others looking for a place of refuge. They will need some assistance. Have a few tents on hand and some food you can give out. Approach any situation concerning desperate strangers with caution. There will be well organized groups that will use women and children to deceive people and gain their confidence, only to report to the bad guys where the weaknesses are and how best to attack. The best thing to do is to provide them with a meal or two (that they can take with them) and any other urgent need and tell them to move on. You will not be able to provide continual support for all refugees that pass your way. Do not let them inside your camp. Do not let them see what you have stored. Give out very little information. Let them know that if they come back you will consider them hostile. It won't be easy to turn people away that have nothing, but you have provided them with some assistance and bought them time to figure out a plan for themselves.

If a permanent place of refuge with adequate storage and shelter is financially out of the question, consider burying some of your supplies in a remote area and making your way there as required. You should know the area well.....maybe go camping there once a month or so. Have camping gear on hand.....maybe even a camping trailer. A trailer will provide excellent shelter for the long term. A shelter can also be built from trees and other items found in the woods. Tarps would help. Think ahead. Know what you need on hand. Know what you want on hand. Make your preparations. Plan for the worst. Help those you can. Expect help from nobody. Prepare for the long haul, because things will never be the same. You will not ever get to go back to your house. You will live on food that you have stored, grow, hunt or trade for.

Another important (and expensive) consideration is having night vision equipment. Without it, you can see the bad guys only half the time at best. A night vision scope on a rifle can greatly increase your chances of overcoming a night attack, which is when the smart bad guys will be showing up. Once they figure out that you can see them....they'll move on.....minus a few members of their group, no doubt. Basic night vision costs about \$750.00, and the upper end units can cost thousands. In general, a generation 2+ scope will be sufficient to see 150 yards in nearly complete darkness and will cost about \$1,500.00. This will allow you to place the bad guys on notice that you have night vision capability and to proceed would not be in their best interest. The most successful looters will be a small group (3 at the most) and will move about and attack only at night. They may or may not have night vision of their own. Assume that they will. If they are approaching your camp at night and moving cautiously in a military manner, make every shot count. This type of looter does not rate a warning shot. Keep shooting as long as they are visible. They are likely long time friends and will not take kindly to your "group reduction" activities. Get them all and they can't come back the next night with more friends. They will also have some pretty good weapons and equipment with them that will become yours by default (you're still alive). Another good reason to invest in a night vision scope is for hunting. A deer that happens by at 2 A.M. while you're watching for bad guys would be a nice addition to your food supply. You should consider a night vision scope as indispensable and a night vision monocular as a great asset.

As your finances allow, buy precious metals. This will be the only real money around. While you can partially depend on ammunition for bartering, it would be nice to eventually return to some form of a normal life. The only way this is going to happen is to have purchasing power.....silver and gold.....on hand to

buy that country house with solar power and a well. A house that sells for \$150,000 today could probably be bought for \$10,000 in silver at some point. Precious metals will greatly increase in value when it's the only money around. Silver that can be bought today for less than \$9.00 per ounce will be worth \$200.00 or more. So....silver that can be bought now for \$450.00 will buy you a (present day value) \$150,000 house in the future. Not a bad investment.

You also need to plan for getting over-run.....forced out of your place of refuge.....by military organizations or well-trained groups of looters. Have some supplies buried a good distance away. Hide a shovel under a fallen tree so you'll be able to get your buried supplies out of hiding. Have a rifle with ammo, tent, food, sleeping bags, silver or gold, change of clothes, etc. Triple bag it in trash bags with insect spray between the outer and second bags to keep the bugs out. This will buy you some time to get re-established elsewhere.

Basically, you need to make a plan and carry it out. Don't listen to the nay-Sayers that will tell you that you're crazy if you think this could really happen. It will happen. Let them worry about where their next meal is coming from as they walk around and think about your warnings to prepare. You'll be in warm clothes sitting on a bench watching over your property with plenty of ammo and snacks within your reach. You'll be a victor, rather than a victim. Your family will be safe while theirs is in peril.

Remember.....you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him think!!!