

# LIFESTYLE

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Photos by CHRISTOPHER TOMLINSON: The Daily Sentinel  
Lauren Boebert, 27, owner of Shooters Grill in Rifle, got her concealed carry permit after a man was assaulted in the alley behind her restaurant shortly after it opened in 2013.

# Burger with a side arm



## Gun-packing service draws spotlight, more customers to Rifle restaurant

By RACHEL SAUER  
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**B**efore any of the other staff arrive, before the sun is anything more than a hazy light at the eastern horizon, before the buzz of daytime diners at the back of the street lamps, the kitchen lights are glowing at the back of Shooters Grill in Rifle.

It's 5 a.m. and, alone in the restaurant, Lauren Boebert, 27, is enthusiastically preparing turkey and then has over the most since stacking this stove into a table for Turkey Ham Deli Mobs at her kitchen. Paired with this, she covers it with plastic wrap, writes the date on top, stores it in the commercial refrigerator and moves to check the pots of hollandaise sauce, red chili and green chili and sausage gravy bubbling on the gas stove top.

She arrived at Shooters at 4:10 a.m., her four young sons still asleep, her husband having arrived home the night before from two weeks on at his job in a Louisiana oil patch.

"So, it isn't just to make a point that, as she has around the kitchen, she does it with a Springfield from holstered on her right hip."

"A little while after we opened there was an altercation in the alley behind ours," she explains while tossing a handful of popcorn into the microwave. "A man was assaulted and he ended up dying, and that really scared me. It made me feel that I needed to get my concealed carry permit."

That decision, clearly made, led to Boebert being known as the restaurant where the servers are openly armed. Since late June, when a Greenwood Springs Post Independent reporter came to Boebert's restaurant to write about the millions people's choice around it in the morning, she says, "I've seen the open carry laws, the story has spread."

National and international media have spotlighted the "guns packer" with news and tossed Shooters into the longstanding national debate about gun rights and the Sec-



"And the thing is, this is just who we are. It didn't start out as a gimmick, and we don't worship guns. We worship God." LAUREN BOEBERT, Owner of Shooters Grill

Server Dusty Sheets has worked at Shooters Grill since it opened in May 2013. She carries a Smith & Wesson 9mm on her right hip, which can be seen in the photo below.

ond Amendment. Shooters has been featured on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News and in the Wall Street Journal, among many, many others.

"We were busy before," Boebert says, "but after all this started, it's at least doubled. In the last little while after there were a few days where we ran out of food."

"And the thing is, this is just who we are."

It didn't start out as a gimmick, and we don't worship guns. We worship God. I'm so thankful people are coming out and supporting us, but I hope they're coming for the excellent, fresh food."

### 'SHE'S VERY SAVVY'

In fact, though it may be hard to believe,



the name came first.

In early 2013, Boebert and her husband, Jayson, were considering their options. Jayson was laid off for four months from an oil field job, and with four young sons — now 2, 5, 7 and 9 — they needed a plan to support the family.

Driving along East Third Street in downtown Rifle, they noticed a "For Lease" sign in the window of No. 128 restaurant, they thought.

They'd never owned or even considered opening a restaurant. Lauren enjoys cooking and is right doing it when she was in — her first meal was tacos — and she also had several hours of management experience at McDonald's. But actually owning and running a restaurant was different.

She: "My husband and I kind of fly by the seat of our pants," she says. "We saw the sign and three days later we were signing a lease."

She approached Matt Archambault, who she knew of from various Rifle restaurants, and asked him if he'd like to work with her in building a restaurant.

"It was an opportunity to show what I really can do," Archambault says. "And (Lauren) got a very good business sense, she's very savvy."

So, Archambault brought his recipes and Boebert brought bars, and together they created an American and Mexican menu "with

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When a customer mentioned that restaurant owner Lauren Boebert could open carry her gun because her restaurant was a private business, she decided to do so. Some of her female servers also open carry, other employees do not.

