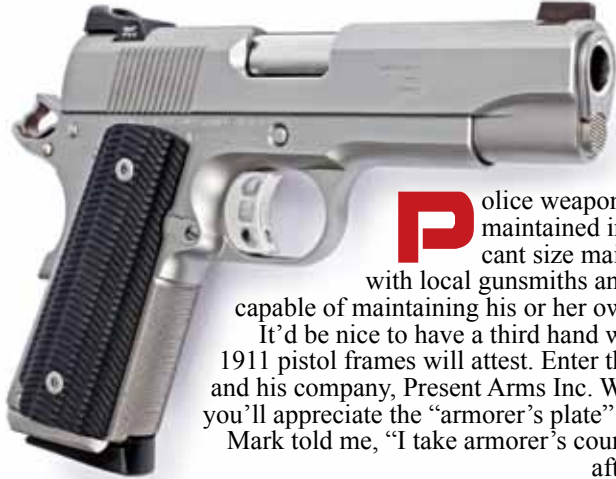




Even today, this elegant but tough design wrought over 100 years ago still serves yeoman duty in the holsters of cops nationwide. Nighthawk Custom T3 shown.



MAINTAINING THE IS11 PISTOL

Police weapons are life-saving emergency rescue tools. It's imperative they be maintained in perfect working order. This is why police departments of significant size maintain in-house armorers, and why smaller departments contract with local gunsmiths and armorers to do the same. It's also why any smart cop wants to be capable of maintaining his or her own firearms.

It'd be nice to have a third hand while working on guns, as many an "idiot scratch" on the left side of 1911 pistol frames will attest. Enter the "armorer's plate," and the impressive products of Mark Jenkinson and his company, Present Arms Inc. Whether you're fitting a sear or simply doing a routine field strip, you'll appreciate the "armorer's plate" and "armorer's block."

Mark told me, "I take armorer's courses everywhere. I made my first plate about 30 years ago, but after watching students chasing parts all over the place and fumbling with them, I decided to make a better one. I was just an old engineer wanting to fill a void."

I started out using Mark's 1911 Armorer's Plate, only \$130. It allows the frame to swivel 360 degrees, and has cut-outs custom made for different jobs like barrel link pin removal/replacement, mainspring and housing removal, and much more. The videos on the Present Arms website show it perfectly. Suffice to say the 1911 Armorer's Plate kit provides more than a "third hand."

In some operations, it was as if there was an assistant with *two* more hands present to hold things in place and help with disassembly/reassembly.



The Present Arms kits (this one or 1911 work) make maintenance easy — as if you have that magic third hand!



Various cut-outs (and video instructions) help you to disassemble/re-assemble your 1911 correctly, helping to cut down on scratches and kludge marks, peened pins and hammer marks!

GUNNER'S MOUNT KIT

I liked the first kit so much I've ordered the larger, more comprehensive Gunner's Mount kit, which is particularly useful for working on platforms such as the AR15 (\$650 retail, on special at this writing for \$100 less). My 1911 is now in the hands of my regular armorer and gunsmith Bill Pfeil, who absolutely loves the thing.

But why the 1911? Why in this day and age of light, high efficiency, high capacity modern service pistols would a cop carry a gun dating back to the year 1911? You can ask the aforementioned Bill Pfeil. In his long career with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement he started out with the double action S&W revolver, was carrying a Department-issue Beretta Centurion 96G when we first met, and wore an issue GLOCK 22 at the time of his retirement. He developed great respect, then and now, for all his issued duty weapons. However, now enjoying his retirement, his daily

carry is a Scandium-frame 4.25" S&W Performance Center 1911 in .45 ACP.

The 1911's slim profile makes it deliciously comfortable to holster inside the waistband when off duty or in a plainclothes assignment. The on-safe carry mandated by the 1911 design has saved many a cop's life when a bad guy got such a gun away from him, as has been documented repeatedly over the decades in the *Ayoob Files* section here in *American Handgunner*. The low bore axis and natural grip angle give excellent controllability with powerful cartridges, and the 1911's famously good trigger pull is conducive to accurate shot placement under the highest stress.

Not for nothing is the 1911 issued by so many SWAT teams from FBI to LAPD, and truth to tell, the 1911 is probably more popular today in police circles than ever in its long and distinguished history. I see quite a few of them in Arizona and Texas in particular, but they are surprisingly well represented in other regions including the

Pacific Northwest and many of the smaller agencies in Illinois.

That said, it's pretty much established among top police armorers from the legendary Hilton Yam on down the 1911 is a more maintenance-intensive pistol than many designs. With this in mind, for the officer who chooses to carry a 1911, a deep knowledge of the pistol and its maintenance protocols would be a very good investment. It follows the exact same is true of the excellent products from Present Arms.



For more info: www.americanhandgunner.com/index, Ph: (413) 575-4656