

LIFFITON FAMILY HISTORY

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### **Dr. Tim Liffiton and “The American Slider”**

Dr. Timothy King Liffiton has hunted elk and deer in Montana and fished for steelhead trout in Washington State. As an oceanographer he worked on ships in the Pacific Northwest, and as a veterinarian he cared for farm animals in western Ohio.

His experiences led him to think about the utility of a safe and legal knife, which could be operated with one hand. "I'm not one to listen to the radio while driving from one farm to another," he said, "so I thought of a knife that uses neither gravity nor mechanics to launch a blade out of its handle."

He calls it “The American Slider,” and it took him seven years to develop and patent the knife's unique design. An internal locking mechanism keeps the blade inside the handle, which is open at one end. That open slit allows the blade to be launched with a snap of the wrist.



After mulling over his idea, he made two prototypes with wooden handles to turn the design into a working model. He then had to search for a company to make the molds necessary to manufacture the two-part handle. Just that search took him a year to accomplish, and working out the bugs took longer.

The photo to the left is Dr. Tim and singing star, Irlene Mandrell holding up The American Slider at a gun show.

The result of Dr. Tim's work and perseverance is easy to appreciate because it works just as he planned. The handle is made out of Zytel, a sturdy nylon composite, while the blade is made of ATS 34 steel from Japan. By using steel harder than found in most knives, The American Slider holds its edge better.

Tim also had some titanium-coated blades made as well as some birdsong black Teflon blades. He likes the looks of the Teflon, but prefers the easier operation of the steel blade. Friends of Dr. Tim in the U.S. Army Special Forces, the Navy Seals, and among the community of attack dog trainers are using and promoting the American Slider. However, the expense of marketing has been prohibitive, as an advertisement in a knife magazine costs about \$1,000 per month. He does have a

web site, <http://www.americanslider.com/>, but the knife remains only a side interest of his.

Dr. Tim is the second son of Jack Liffiton and the late Mary Jane (King) Liffiton. He grew up in Lakewood, Ohio, with elder brother Jack Downey Liffiton and sister Stacey Liffiton. Following a stint in Europe with the U.S. Army, he earned a degree in zoology from Ohio State University. Hired by National Marine Fisheries as an oceanographer, he traveled to the Arctic Circle. He then returned to Ohio State, where in 1976 he graduated with a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Tim shared his veterinary practice with his wife, Dr. Sharon A. Schumann, caring for farm animals, small animals, and even some exotics like elk. It was also a great environment for raising their two children, Jack Lincoln Liffiton and Amanda Colleen Liffiton.

Recently retired from veterinarian medicine, Dr. Tim turned his attention to various projects, such as building his own house in Lockport, NY, or working with military attack dogs. He has just signed up for a three-week job in California to help battle an outbreak of exotic Newcastle disease in poultry. Dr. Sharon Schumann Liffiton continues to operate the Wapankoneta Animal Hospital and do animal relief work.

Jack's son, Jack Lincoln Liffiton, is now studying computer science at a college in Dayton, Ohio, after serving with an infantry battalion at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. His daughter, Amanda Colleen Liffiton, studies business agriculture at Ohio State University. Currently she is pursuing an interest in ovarian transplants. Obviously the American Slider is just part of Dr. Tim's fascinating story.