

The Firearms Rights Newsletter for All South Carolinians!

GrassRoots South Carolina

P.O. Box 6383
Columbia, South Carolina 29260
Internet: <http://www.scfirearms.org>



Fall, 2000

Vol.4 No.3

LET'S BE REASONABLE! **LET'S GET RID OF UNREASONABLE GUN LAWS!**

In GrassRoots' last newsletter we pointed out how government officials were considering putting up signs at South Carolina borders telling travelers how dangerous SC rest areas are. GrassRoots pointed out how good self-defense minded people are committing felonies merely by pulling into a rest area with a gun in their vehicle, even if it is in the glove box, and even if they have a Concealed Weapons Permit (CWP). Self-defense minded travelers are not the only ones committing felonies, so are hunters if they bring a rifle into the parking lot of a publicly owned building, and a rest room facility at a rest area is a publicly owned building. *This law is unreasonable.* It needs to be changed.

GrassRoots heard from many of you complaining about other *unreasonable gun laws* in SC. We listened to you and now *GrassRoots is proposing reforms (see full text of reforms inside) to these unreasonable gun laws.*

IT IS UNREASONABLE TO:

- * make a felon out of a good person armed for self-defense just for using a rest area.
- * make a felon out of a good parent who picks up a child from school just because the parent has a gun in the glove box for self-defense.
- * deny the effective right to self-defense to good people who visit state owned parks and recreation areas.
- * impose a lifetime firearms disability upon a person for parking in their own rented parking space at work merely because they work for the government and the parking lot is on government property.
- * make a felon out of a good person armed for self-defense for possessing a gun in an area *not posted* against possessing guns or not known to the person to be an illegal area.
- * deny good people who visit SC the effective means to self-defense.
- * require a CWP holder to carry and produce a CWP even when not carrying a concealed weapon.
- * violate the First Amendment to our U.S. Constitution and allow the State of SC to tell churches what people can do in their own church.
- * violate the U.S. Constitution and require a new citizen to wait one year to get a CWP.
- * allow the State of SC to deny certain privately owned businesses the right to grant permission to CWP holders to enter their premises.

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www.scfirearms.org

GrassRoots South Carolina is a South Carolina 501(c)4 non-profit corporation. Our mission is to educate and promote acceptance of responsible firearms ownership within the State of South Carolina and to protect the rights of law-abiding gun owners. Our objectives are to improve all aspects of lawful ownership and carrying of firearms in South Carolina.

GrassRoots South Carolina, Inc. is registered as a Lobbyist's Principal in South Carolina and employs lobbyists to promote or oppose legislation concerning all gun owners and issues surrounding the Right to Keep and Bear Arms South Carolina.

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www.scfirearms.org

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GrassRoots PAC - Making Dreams Come True!

By Ervin Wagner

How often are your dreams answered? Well, we can make one of our dreams come true this November. Present SC law effectively prohibits a person from ever possessing any firearms if that person is convicted for having a firearm in their vehicle while using a rest area, or parking in the lot of a publicly owned building, or having a firearm in their vehicle when parking in the lot of a nice restaurant. Last year's GrassRoots gun law reform bill (H. 4797) would have gotten rid of these unreasonable laws. Some legislators fought to kill the GrassRoots reform bill.

A GrassRoots PAC has been formed to "reward" those who kill our reasonable gun law reforms. One Representative in particular is especially vulnerable having won his last election by 86 votes out of over 9,000 cast. If GrassRoots PAC can educate just a few dozen gun owners to what this representative did, we can teach him a lesson he will never forget as he stands in the unemployment line unable to harm the honest law abiding citizens of SC any more. But, it takes money to get the message out. And we plan to educate many, many more gun owners than the few dozen needed to spoil his election bid.

Our dreams can be answered. We can get even with those who betray us. We can set an example for other politicians who feel they can betray gun owners and get away with it. Lets start fighting back and send the message "we're mad as heck and we aren't going to take it anymore!"

Please give all that you can afford. Do it now, today. Send your contribution, whatever amount you can afford, to:
Ervin Wagner, Sr. Chairman/Treasurer
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803-694-2755
ervin@interpath.com

Statement:

"GrassRoots of South Carolina, Inc. has formed a Political Action Committee (PAC). All laws and rules governing our operation are well understood and will be fully complied with. Those who can and will may send me their donations now. Any amount you donate must be by check. Make the check out to "GrassRoots PAC". This will be deposited quickly in a checking account. A detailed report will be made each month at the GrassRoots PAC as well as GrassRoots SC Leadership meetings. Please provide your name and address and place of employment for the record. Only those items specified by the rules will be disclosed for public consumption."

GrassRoots PAC
Ervin Wagner, Sr. Chairman/Treasurer

South Carolina Rest Areas

The Attorney General's Office says we only need permission, not new laws, in order for CWP holders to carry in rest areas. Then we must ask for permission.

GrassRoots has sent letters to SC Department of Transportation and the Department Parks, Recreation and Tourism. If you'd like to view our letter it is available on our web site or you may

request a copy by sending GrassRoots a S.A.S.E.

Did We Miss Sending You Your Invitation?

By Larry Coble

Something recently became apparent as we worked to distribute 10,000 summer newsletters. Many, many of our followers out there aren't GrassRoots members. This is understandable since we started four years ago operating on a shoestring budget and existed solely on contributions. In June 1999, however, we saw that we would never be able to accomplish many of the objectives our contributors wanted us to accomplish unless we became a membership organization. Therefore, we incorporated at that time and inducted all previous contributors as annual members. Unfortunately we seemingly failed to contact all of our followers and offer them an opportunity to join us.

Here's your invitation!

Why Join GrassRoots?

Why should anyone join an organization that freely places all of its services online for free? That is the dilemma facing any grassroots service organization and that is the dilemma facing GrassRoots as we try to become a political force in South Carolina.

The leaders and contributors to GrassRoots desperately want to share their work and knowledge with all South Carolinians so everyone benefits from their work. We know that the more knowledgeable all gun owners are, the better off we all will be in the long run. On the other hand, as election season

GrassRoots Leadership Report

begins we have met and talked with legislators and candidates and they typically have one pressing question, "How many members do you have?" They don't ask how many people GrassRoots influences, how many newsletters we've distributed this year, how many people are on our fax or e-mail lists, or how many hits we've had on our webpage. Simple put, they want to know how many people view gun rights as an important enough issue to put their money where their mouths are.

As the Director of Communications I receive the bulk of the e-mail from our web presence. Many questions are asked by and answered for out of state people relocating to South Carolina. Additionally, many in-state questions are asked and answered - many by CWP holders who later found an 8 hour course is just the beginning to staying up-to-date with CWP issues. These people are encouraged to join our e-mail list, our discussion group, and our organization. While not members, they are encouraged to stay on our e-mail alert list and contact their representatives when the need arises. Remember though, it is GrassRoots Membership that will make our organization powerful enough to get information out to ALL CWP holders in South Carolina and accomplish the goals shared by our members. Moral support of GrassRoots is not enough. Political power comes from membership numbers, not mere sympathizers and spectators.

Occasionally I get an e-mail from a lapsed member asking for information, report a posted merchant, request a New Hampshire permit application, or simply to complain about our current CWP law. Of course questions are always answered as we are able, NH permits are sent, and "don't shoot the messenger" is offered for complaints. Sometimes I notice the individual has lapsed in membership and encourage them to re-join. The response is too typically, "That's okay, I don't need the newsletter - I get everything online now." Somehow we have failed to convey the big picture to many people. Only with membership numbers can we stay active, contact merchants offering alternative signs, print the NH permits, and change the current law. "Specta-

FREEDOM:

tors" won't enable us to make positive change in South Carolina.

I'll cut this short because I don't want to seem ungrateful to the many individuals who are really making this happen in South Carolina. GrassRoots has, in less than 4 years, grown to be the largest firearms rights organization in South Carolina. No doubt, as the current leadership has demonstrated strong support of continued membership drive activities (gun shows, radio ads, magazine list mailings), we will continue to grow and continue to be South Carolina's largest firearms rights organization. GrassRoots will, in all likelihood, continue to make information ac-

cessible to the public whether on the Internet, via e-mail, or complimentary newsletters found at gun shops. However, remember that it is the GrassRoots Member who deserves the pat on the back for making all this possible.

Please give us your vote of approval and help strengthen South Carolina's firearms rights by joining GrassRoots. Tear off the back page of your newsletter and send it in. Or use our printable online membership application at: <http://www.scfirearms.org/app.html>

Please join GrassRoots if you appreciate the hard work being done by our volunteer officers, staff, and commu-

nity volunteers. We absolutely need your support if you'd like to see us continue our efforts.

Larry Coble is the Communications Officer for GrassRoots. He can be contacted at: lcoble@netside.com or at our **new** postal address:
GrassRoots South Carolina
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GrassRoots Gets the Word out at Gun Shows throughout South Carolina!

Ed Kelleher and John Ponti went to Charleston to assist GrassRoots members and volunteers there at a recent Gun Show. They joined new members and helped spread the word, "Guns Save Lives." All in all, working a table at a gun show is lots of fun. Contact Ed Kelleher if you'd like to run a table at a gun show, county fair, or elsewhere. You'll meet lots of like-minded folks and have some fun in the process.

GrassRoots Letters from the Editor's Desk

Gun Saves Life of Coastal Carolina Mensa President

By Becky Barbour

Last month our Cheep Eats event took us to the Pizza Inn on Rivers Avenue in North Charleston. Allowing myself some extra time to run a few errands prior to supper, I arrived a bit early. As I sat in my car waiting for a familiar face to arrive, I busied myself by reading a book I had just purchased at Barnes & Noble.

I failed to hear the approach at my window of a homeless man who asked me for money. Without hesitation, I reached for the glove compartment where I keep my .38 Colt revolver. He must have realized that it wasn't spare change that I was reaching for and fled before I even got to open the glove compartment.

About a week later, two people were stabbed by a homeless man asking for money in that same parking lot. Perhaps the title of this piece is a bit of an exaggeration, but it got you to read this illustration of one of the reasons I so vehemently fight for Second Amendment rights. First snakes and wild hogs, now the homeless--what's next?

CWP Permit Renewal Comments

In talking with some people that have permits coming up for renewal as well as mine in 02-2001, I have found out the following information. Is this true?

1. Fill out at new form for SLED.
2. Check renewals.
3. More finger prints.
4. Three more pictures.

Must go through all the steps but the TEST and SHOOT. By the year 2025 SLED will have my fingerprints 27 times do you think they (prints) will change Lets get a life here. Please check this out and return me and answer by e-mail or call.

**A.L., Williston
Editor's Reply:**

SLED has now stated that 30 days is all that is needed now to complete the neces-

sary items and issue a renewal permit. Second, when renewing please call SLED, ask for Regulatory Services and request a "CWP Renewal Package." The permit applications you can find at your local sheriff's department are NOT FOR RENEWALS. If you use a "new applicant" packet to attempt a renewal it will be returned to you without processing. The Renewal Package will tell you what you need to do. You may call S.L.E.D. at 803-737-9000 (ask for Regulatory) to



request a CWP renewal packet. Yes you'll need pictures and fingerprints.

Regarding some of the requirements for renewal, remember that SLED isn't making this stuff up. It's the law. Unfortunately many requirements such as fingerprints and photos (which they don't use on your permit) are currently law. GrassRoots is working to change this. Hassling the folks at SLED won't remove these requirements. Joining GrassRoots will. So, join us in our efforts to make our CWP law a better law for you. Yup, it's a crock, but it's the law. Work with GrassRoots to make it better.

I hope you'll renew your GrassRoots membership and will volunteer to help us in your area.

Please call your state senator and representative. Tell them you belong to GrassRoots and you want them to support our proposed changes.

Together, we can save your fingerprints from getting worn off. :-)

Hello!

This week I picked up a copy of your excellent newsletter a Columbia gun store. I am very impressed with your publication and its message.

I am a veteran and gun owner. I am also a person who holds impassioned views on gun issues. My family and property are important to me, which is why I choose to own firearms. I am a sportsman and hunter, my hunting helps to feed my family. My wife and daughters eat well because I choose to hunt. Meat that you purchase in a grocery store has not been raised in a natural environment. Most of the beef and pork purchased in stores has been fed steroids and God knows what else to promote "higher yields". This is not healthy!

More importantly, I am a law-abiding citizen. I am cautious in how I drive, live and work. I try to help my neighbors and the community any way I can. However, I will not give up my rights for what some people tout as being "in the interest of public safety". The British and Australians are learning a hard lesson, "outlaw guns, and soon only the outlaws will have them". How tragic, these people are being victimized and have no right to defend themselves. I say that their own governments victimized them first, they took away the right of self-defense. So far as I can see, the British and Australian governments should be criminally liable in any case that a "law abiding" citizen is hurt or killed in the commission of a violent act with a firearm. Armed robberies increased 44% in one year in Australia, but these weapons are illegal? Only the "good citizens" surrendered their guns, the criminals obviously didn't.

If we as a society in the United States don't take action, we WILL suffer the same fate. Do not stand by and allow the law abiding public to be disarmed, this would be the largest mistake in our history.

As for Smith and Wesson, how can they as a manufacturer allow the government to dictate to them without legislation? How could they not make a stand? They folded without a fight in court. The most inexcusable part of this is; they left the rest of us vulnerable to further attack from a dishonest and horribly misinformed government. The President has restricted so many guns in the interest of public safety. This administration has made some weapons unobtainable based on the supposition that they are danger-

GrassRoots Letters from the Editor's Desk

ous. A gun is not dangerous until, a dangerous person puts their hands on it. S&W gave up on the people who helped fund them and built their company. Shame on them!

In closing I would like to find out how to join GrassRoots, how and where to obtain a CWP and how I can help GrassRoots.

Yours truly,
C.B.S. Columbia

Editor's Reply:

Thank you for your kind words. It appears that you share "GrassRoots" beliefs. We have published in previous newsletters the very statistics you quote in your e-mail. We are very much trying to wake up the public here in South Carolina regarding their second amendment rights. We've had a successful year and, in fact, a successful 4 years of continued growth.

That newsletter you picked up is one of 10,000 we printed and distributed throughout South Carolina in an effort to find people just like you. People that see the direction we are headed in with our gun rights. I am especially pleased that you, primarily a hunter, share our beliefs. Too often hunters do not believe they too are on the list of being disarmed (just a little farther down the list).

GrassRoots is a group of law-abiding citizens that want to see things turned around for all gun owners. To us, that means starting right here in South Carolina. Last we helped pass excellent range protection for all gun owners in South Carolina. You'll find the results of our other legislative efforts in the newsletter you picked up. We're doing things and we need help from every gun owner in SC.

While we have been around for about 4 years, we have only recently begun a full court press to contact and wake up every South Carolinian. Why? Because we have to if we are going to win. We're going for broke and we'd love for you to join us and participate.

You can join GrassRoots by sending in the back cover of the newsletter you picked up.

To get your CWP, I have a few suggestions. Here in the Midlands I know of two

FREE CWP classes being conducted on a regular basis. The Columbia Police Department is offering a firearms safety class which is free and meets the requirements for CWP. Also, Jake Knotts, representative for Lexington County teaches a class about every other month. The Lexington Chronicle sponsors the class held at the Lexington Court House and I am sure you can contact them (Chronicle) for the next date. If neither of these meets your needs please visit the GrassRoots South Carolina Instructors' Home Page at: http://www.scfirearms.org/cwp_inst.htm for a listing of CWP Instructors in your area.

You can help GrassRoots many ways. The first thing we need to do is get you up the speed with what we're doing now. When you send in your membership application please jot a note on it telling me to send past newsletters. This will help you find out where we're at currently. Next please feel free to attend our next meeting on the 3rd Monday of each month at Shoney's on Bush River Rd. at 7:30pm. You'll meet some nice folks that share your beliefs and have some excellent fellowship (dinner too if you come early).

Thanks for your mail. It was uplifting to know we are reaching the right people in our communities.

Moving to South Carolina

I'm a Nevada resident planning on moving to Greenville, SC.

I have a valid NV Concealed Weapons Permit and have had it for more than 5 years.

I see that to get a SC CWP I have to be a SC resident for one year! So who is promising to protect me for the first year? My ex-wife who has threatened my life for the last two years will be pleased to know that I'll be defenseless for 12 months.

Editor's Reply:

First congratulations on the move. Welcome to SC.

As for who's going to protect you for your first year of residency, contact those anti-gun legislators that put that and other restrictive clauses into our current CWP law here. GrassRoots is working to get

our CWP law changed here. This is one of the items we have in our CWP legislation. Read our legislative goals for 2000 elsewhere in this newsletter.

Can GrassRoots count on you to testify before at the public hearings we will be having next year as we go forward with CWP reform legislation? GrassRoots personally considers this particular clause unconstitutional. The Supreme Court has determined that welfare recipients can not be denied benefits just because they move to a different state. We think the same applies to self-defense. Join us! We are the only group in this state taking this matter seriously and working to get things changed. We've already been successful in other areas. We hope to get CWP reform passed this next legislative session but people like you might make all the difference.

Myrtle Beach Success

I want to tell you that I finally had some success! I got the signs posted on the doors at Beach Ford removed, in fact, I removed them for them and replaced them with our alternative signs; please place them on our list of merchants who have removed signs. I am also close to doing the same thing at another car dealership and we have 2 of our signs at the Myrtle Beach Chamber of Commerce being reviewed as replacements for the ones they used to hand out. Let me explain all of this....

I spoke with the manager at Beach Ford and reached an agreement to replace his old sign with ours...I was able to do this because I had the signs with me and could show them rather than just describe them...I also had a scraper and offered to do the job for them. The next dealership was also very receptive to switching their signs but needed to get owners approval. I am optimistic on this one too. The chamber of commerce representative was very positive in her attitude and I will keep after them in hopes that they will see things our way.

I wanted to share these thoughts with you because I learned from this trip and it may help all of us...the key to changing minds is to have a sign to show them. When they see how professional they look the reaction is totally different then when I just tried to describe them. Hav-

GrassRoots Letters from the Editor's Desk

ing a scraper to remove the old one for them just removes one more obstacle to finishing the job. I also had a copy of our newsletter to show the list of those who post and lose patronage and the list of those who have removed their signs and deserve our patronage - these things get attention!

As a result of my good day I am now out of signs and newsletters. Could you send me more? A dozen or more signs would be great...and some newsletters to show as well. Another thing that I would find useful is a copy of a letter from the Attorney General stating that merchants do not bear any responsibility for failure to post...I think we have such a letter and I would like to have it to show merchants. I would also like to suggest creating a new wallet card just the opposite of the ones we have to give when merchants post a new one should say "Thanks...I came in because I saw your sign. Members should identify themselves as Grass Roots members when they patronize a friendly merchant so that the merchant realizes the impact of that alternative sign.

While I'm on a role, one more suggestion...a demographic pole of our members and CWP holders statewide to show our age, income level, number of times weapon was used to defend ourselves, things that make a merchant concede that we are the folks he wants coming through his doors...sorry if I got a bit carried away, but I really believe this is **important to get those signs removed....**
Thanks,
Bob M., Little River/Myrtle Beach

Recycled Newsletters

Quite often, as I read through my NRA publications as well as other gun magazines I see very well written pro-gun articles. I also think, "I wish Bill had read this" or some other friend who is anti-gun or borderline. Too often these articles are preaching to the choir. The article was unable to change my mind about anything, I was pro-gun before I read it and still pro-gun after. We now have several million members; all receiving NRA magazines and I usually collect mine. Here's my idea: What would happen if all the members took these magazines with them every time we went to a doctors office, dentist, lawyers, office or any-

place that has a waiting room, and then forgot to take it with us when we left? Just leave it with the other magazines. This will cost our members nothing and requires very little effort on a member's part. Think of the millions of people we would be exposing to the shooter's side of things. We can't seem to get media coverage.

I've been doing this for a couple months now and got a lot of magazines out with very little effort on my part.

Thank You,

Ernst V.

Register and Vote or Register Your Guns - The Choice is Yours

My suggestion is Grass Roots should make up posters to be placed in gun shop windows.

REGISTER AND VOTE OR REGISTER YOUR GUN THE CHOICE IS YOURS
Mail registration forms can be secured at local Election Board offices and placed in gun shops.

Local Gun Shop Offers Discount to GrassRoots Members

A local gun shop in Greenwood, Taylor Guns and Police Supply, is offering a discount. This is one of the shops that allowed me to place newsletters and then asked for more. The owner said that the discount wasn't much but he wanted to do something to show his support.

Kevin

GrassRoots Member Defends Home

I was working on the computer this morning on the opposite end of the house where my front door is. We have a porch with a gate on it that has a clasp lock and a separate spring lock which is rather difficult to open from the outside of the porch. My front screen door and front door was open because my cats enjoy sitting on the porch (which is enclosed for them so they don't wander) and they can walk in and out as they choose. The entire front porch and gate is encased in turkey wire to prevent easy access also. The front door, like I said is on the oppo-

site end of the house near where our bedroom. My back-up, best friend and fighting partner (my wife) was sleeping so she was dead to the world.

Being "ever vigilant," I heard the clasp move and my cat came running meowing in to tell me something was wrong. Before he crossed the threshold of my computer room I already was out of the chair with so much firepower in my hands Aarafat would be jealous. Getting to the front door, using a wall for cover, a big woman had already unlatched both latches and had her foot in the porch area. When she looked up and saw what she was facing she explained that she **THOUGHT THE HOUSE WAS ABANDONED AND SHE WAS JUST LOOKING AROUND.** Two others sitting in a car outside decided it was just best to sit there. I said to her, "You had to unlock two latches both latches are by a doorbell which you should have rung. If your brain was too small to comprehend that how about calling out to see if anyone was in the house."

This ploy has been used in this area. The bad guys get into a house and when confronted they say they thought the house was abandoned, was for sale, etc. I explained to her that in this house the words no trespassing hold severe weight. If she had entered the home she would have been taken out in a body bag.

We live down the block from a welfare project and I know where these people came from. The word will get back that the first house on the block is not the best place to go to do bad things. I guess the point I was trying to make here is that if your guns are on one side of the house and you are on the other you're out of luck. Another point is even if your gun is on the table next to where you are it will take you time to pick up that gun while you are going to engage a bad guy. If your guns are where they should be - on your person - you are going to be a lot safer rather than if the bad guy is between you and your firearm.

I am not preaching with this story. I just thought it might help somebody sometime. Please do not start in with the legal issues, etc. about this. I believe one must do what one must do to protect one's loved ones and yourself. That's it. Have a good day.

Neal S., Conway

IMPORTANT SHOOTING RANGE PROTECTION ADVICE

Shooting Range Protection is now the law in South Carolina. All existing shooting ranges are now protected against nuisance noise lawsuits. Or are they? Is your favorite shooting range in danger? Read below and find out.

We need to be prepared for legal attacks upon our shooting ranges. First, this article discusses potential problems and shows how attorneys will legally attack our shooting ranges. Then, it offers guidance on solutions for how to protect our shooting ranges from those attacks. Our concerns need to be with how our shooting ranges will be attacked five to ten years from now, and what to do now to win then. Our concerns should not be with how our present neighbors are easy to get along with because they are not the people you will be fighting in the future. Remember, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

THE PROBLEMS: Not every shooting range is ***legally defined*** as a shooting range. The law defines what constitutes a shooting range. If your shooting range does not satisfy every requirement legally set forth in the law, then it is not a protected shooting range. The most important issues to be concerned with are listed below.

First, the law requires the shooting range to be "designated, utilized, and operated by a person for the firing of firearms." If where you shoot is simply "out back," "in my field," or "behind the house," then your "shooting range" may not legally be a shooting range. The shooting range must be "designated, utilized, and operated by a person for the firing of firearms." "Out back," "in my field," or "behind the house" are much too general descriptions. Boundaries of the shooting range need to be established so the shooting range area is clearly defined as a shooting range.

Second, the law requires "the firing of firearms is the usual, regular, and primary activity occurring in the area" within the boundaries of the shooting range. This requirement is the one most likely to be litigated. For example, what constitutes the "regular" "firing of firearms"? Is it eight hours of every day? Once a day? Once a week? Once every two weeks? The courts will decide this issue because the law did not define the terms. The more shooting that occurs at the range, the easier it will be to prove the firing of firearms is the regular activity occurring at the range. But, the more firing that occurs, the more likely it is to make your neighbors unhappy such that they feel it necessary to take legal action.

The most likely issue to be litigated for private ranges will be whether "the firing of firearms is the usual ... and primary activity occurring in the area." How is the "area" going to be defined for private shooting ranges? Lets look at the possibilities.

The Mid Carolina Rifle Club (MCRC) is located on about thirty acres. The only activities which occur on those thirty acres are all shooting related. People shoot there virtually every day. MCRC will have no problems proving "the firing of firearms is the usual, regular, and primary activity occurring in the area" designated as their shooting range.

Mr. Citizen, just like MCRC, owns thirty acres and has a shooting range on two acres of this property. Also on that thirty acres, Mr. Citizen has his home, a large garden, a swimming pool, a barn, and he keeps a couple of horses in a pasture. The issue that will be litigated here is whether the whole thirty acres, or only the two acres actually used for the shooting range, will be considered when determining whether "the firing of firearms is the usual ... and primary activity occurring in the area." If the whole thirty acres are used to determine if "the firing of firearms is the usual ... and primary activity occurring in the area", then Mr. Citizen's shooting range will get no protection because it is obvious Mr. Citizen's other activities are "the usual ... and primary activity occurring in the area." If only the two acres actually used for the shooting range are used to determine if "the firing of firearms is the usual ... and primary activity occurring in the area", then Mr. Citizen's shooting range will get protection. Mr. Farmer has the same problems as Mr. Citizen, except he just owns more land.

Third, the law requires reasonable precautions be taken to prevent the escape of discharged projectiles from the shooting range. If you are shooting shotguns into the air, then you must own enough land so your shot does not leave your shooting range. If you are shooting rifles and pistols, then you will need berms large enough that they are expected to stop all discharged projectiles. Gravity is more help for shotgun ranges because it brings the shot back to earth relatively soon. But, because rifles and pistols have such tremendous range, berms are necessary to prevent ricochets from leaving the shooting range area.

Fourth, the law requires signs be posted by the county at a one mile radius from the shooting range

warning people they are entering a noise area. The range must pay to fabricate such signs, but the county must erect them. The signs must be erected by January 1, 2001.

THE SOLUTIONS: The following solutions are not to be considered as legal advice. Please consult with an attorney if you want legal advice, and be sure to show him this article. Now that the proper legal disclaimer has been made, here are possible solutions to the problems identified above.

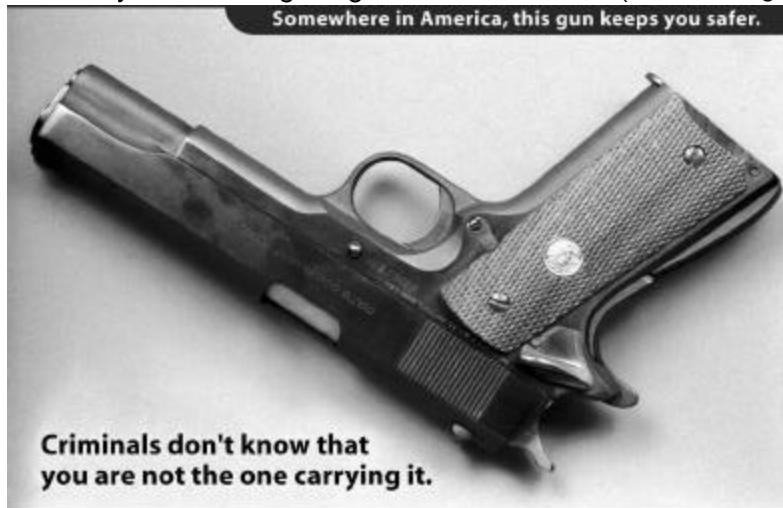
First, have the area of your shooting range legally separated from your other non-shooting range property. *This is the single most important step you should take that has not most likely already been taken.* This can be done by having a survey made of the property and filing it with the county. See an attorney on how to do this. If you do this, then the issue of how much of Mr. Citizen's or Mr. Farmer's property is to be considered when determining whether "the firing of firearms is the usual, regular, and primary activity occurring in the area" can be avoided and you should prevail.

If you have requested tax relief and are paying property taxes on the shooting range property at a reduced legal residence or agricultural property tax rate, then it is more likely a court would NOT find "the firing of firearms is the usual, regular, and primary activity occurring in the area" because you stated the property is either your legal residence or is used for agricultural purposes. But, if you are paying the full property tax on the shooting range with no reductions for legal residence or agricultural use, then it would be very difficult to claim it is not a shooting range because the firing of firearms is not the usual, regular, and primary activity occurring in the area. Thus, legally separate the shooting range from your legal residence or agricultural property and pay the full property tax rate on it so as to protect your shooting range from future attacks.

Second, shoot there on a regular basis. Shoot there at least once a week, and more if possible. You might even invite some friends to come shoot there also. Remember, if people don't shoot there regularly, you don't have a shooting range as defined by the law.

Third, make sure you have berms large enough such that a court would think they would be expected to stop all rounds shot at a target in front of the berm. Remember, if the berms are not large enough, you don't have a shooting range as defined by the law.

Fourth, contact your county officials (in Lexington County it is the Director of Public Works) and tell them of your shooting range and how the law (SC Code § 31-18-60) requires them to erect warning signs by January 1, 2001. Be sure to give them as much advance notice as possible. The law requires the shooting range to pay the cost of fabricating the warning signs, but the law requires the county to erect the signs. Fabrication and installation are two different activities. The cost of installing the warning signs should not be included as part of the cost of fabricating the signs. It is the responsibility of the county to procure the permits needed to erect the warning signs.

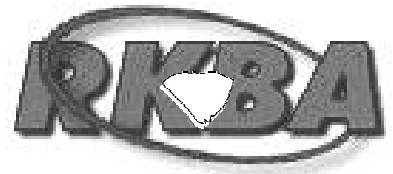


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One of the problems you may encounter is that the term "primary highway" was not defined by the law. SC DOT uses a definition of "primary highway" that is not very useful because it would require some shooting ranges

to put up no warning signs at all. Thus, be reasonable and work with your county official to put up warning signs on all major roads such that it would be impossible for a person to get to a piece of property within the one mile radius without first passing one of the warning signs. The cost of fabricating warning signs made by Lexington County for Lexington County shooting ranges will be less than \$60.00 each.

Well, GrassRoots hopes this helps you keep your shooting range. If you have a shooting range now, protect it for your children and grandchildren. It will only get more valuable as time goes on and urban sprawl starts to surround shooting ranges that are now in the country. If you have any questions, contact Rob Butler at rbutler1@sc.rr.com or 803.957.3959.



The GrassRoots REASONABLE GUN LAW REFORMS

Everybody claims they are in favor of reasonable gun laws. But what is reasonable? GrassRoots believes reasonable laws are those that punish doers of evil. ***Gun laws that only harass good honest citizens are not reasonable! Gun laws that deny good people the only effective means of self-defense are not reasonable!***

Doers of evil do not obey God's laws that say thou shalt not murder, rape, or steal. What reasonable person could possibly believe a doer of evil would obey a man made law that prohibits them from possessing a gun when the doer of evil will not obey God's laws? Thus, it is unreasonable to expect doers of evil to obey gun laws. The only people who obey gun laws are the good people, the potential victims of the doers of evil. ***It is unreasonable to disarm the good people!***

Dr. John Lott's book, MORE GUNS, LESS CRIME, proves ***more CWP holders mean fewer murders, fewer rapes, and fewer aggravated assaults***. Dr. Lott's research shows that for every CWP issued there is a ***decline*** in violent crime, and a cost savings to the public of thousands of dollars. ***Thus, reasonable gun laws would encourage good people to carry everywhere!***

GrassRoots is proposing **REASONABLE GUN LAW REFORMS!** The GrassRoots reasonable gun law reforms would do the following:

- * allow CWP holders to carry everywhere except police stations, jails, prisons, courthouses, and places posted against the carrying of concealable weapons,
- * allow good citizens to keep self-defense firearms in the glove box of their vehicles even in parking lots of publicly owned buildings (rest areas) and nice restaurants,
- * allow SC CWP holders to carry in more states by allowing CWP holders from other states to carry in SC (as done in Michigan),
- * require all signs prohibiting concealable weapons to be uniform in size and content, easily visible, and posted in a uniform location,
- * allow CWP holders to carry in otherwise prohibited areas if given permission to do so,
- * eliminate the one year residency requirement to get a CWP,
- * only require one photograph be submitted with CWP applications and renewals,
- * set reasonable standards to govern denial of a CWP,
- * eliminate the requirement to carry one's CWP when one is not carrying a concealed weapon, and
- * no longer require pre-payment on a rental accommodation to be able to carry a self-defense weapon into the rented accommodation.

Here is the full text of the GrassRoots reasonable gun law reforms:

SECTION 16-23-420. Carrying or displaying firearms in public buildings or areas adjacent thereto.

(A) It is unlawful for a person to carry onto any premises or property known by such person to be owned, operated, or controlled by a private or public school, college, university, technical college, or other post-secondary institution, or into any publicly-owned building a firearm of any kind, without the express permission of the authorities in charge of the premises or property.

(B) It is unlawful for a person to enter the premises or property described in subsection (A) and to display, brandish, or threaten others with a firearm. Nothing in this section shall be construed to deny or punish a person for exercising the right to self defense.

(C) A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

(D) This section does not apply to a guard, law enforcement officer, person carrying a concealable weapon pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 31 of Title 23, or member of the armed forces, or student of military science. A married student residing in apartments provided by the private or public school whose presence with a weapon in or around a particular building is authorized by persons legally responsible for the security of the buildings is also exempted from the provisions of this section.

(E) For purposes of this section, the terms 'premises' and 'property' do not include state or locally owned or maintained roads, streets, or rights-of-way thereof, running through or adjacent to premises or property owned, operated, or controlled by a private or public school, college, university, technical college, or other post-secondary institution, which are open full time to public vehicular traffic, or to parking areas, vehicular ingresses or egresses, or driveways when a firearm is carried pursuant to Section 16-23-20.

(F) For purposes of this section, the term 'publicly-owned building' does not include a building at a rest area along an interstate highway, and such rest areas shall not be posted against the carrying of concealable weapons by a person in possession of a Concealed Weapon Permit.

(G) For purposes of this section, the term 'publicly-owned building' does not include a building at a public park, and public parks shall not be posted against the carrying of concealable weapons.

SECTION 16-23-430. Carrying weapons on school property.

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person, except State, county or municipal law-enforcement officers, persons carrying a concealable weapon pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 31 of Title 23, or personnel authorized by school officials, to carry on his person, while on any elementary or secondary school property, a knife, with a blade over two inches long, a blackjack, a metal pipe or pole, firearms or any other type of weapon, device or object which may be used to inflict bodily injury or death.

(2) A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years, or both. Any weapon or object used in violation of this section may be confiscated by the law enforcement division making the arrest.

(3) For purposes of this section, the term 'property' shall not include state or locally owned or maintained roads, streets, or rights-of-way thereof, running through or adjacent to elementary or secondary school property, which are open full time to public vehicular traffic, or to parking areas, vehicular ingresses or egresses, or driveways when an item contained in subsection (1) is carried pursuant to Section 16-23-20.

SECTION 16-23-465. Additional penalty for unlawfully carrying pistol or firearm onto premises of business selling alcoholic liquors, beers or wines for on-premises consumption.

In addition to the penalties provided for by Sections 16-11-330 and 16-23-460 and by Article 1 of Chapter 23 of Title 16, a person convicted of carrying a pistol or firearm ~~onto the premises of~~ into a business which sells alcoholic liquor, beer, or wine for consumption on the premises is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than two thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

In addition to the penalties described above, a person who violates this section while carrying a concealable weapon pursuant to Article 4, Chapter 31, Title 23 must have his concealed weapon permit revoked.

Section 23-31-210(1) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"(1) 'Resident' means an individual who is present in South Carolina with the intention of making a home in this State a resident of South Carolina for at least twelve months preceding the date on which an application to carry a weapon is submitted under this section or military personnel on permanent change of station orders."

Section 23-31-215 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Section 23-31-215.(A) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, except subject to subsection (B) of this section, SLED must issue a permit, which is no larger than three and one-half inches by three inches in size, to carry a concealable weapon to a resident who is at least twenty-one years of age and who is not prohibited by state law from possessing the weapon upon submission of:

(1) a completed application signed by the person;

(2) ~~three one~~ three current ~~one inch by one inch~~ full face color ~~photographs~~ photograph of the person ~~no~~

smaller than one inch by one inch and no larger than three inches by five inches;

- (3) proof of residence;
- (4) proof of actual or corrected vision rated at 20/40 within six months of the date of application or, in the case of a person licensed to operate a motor vehicle in this State, presentation of a valid driver's license;
- (5) proof of training;
- (6) payment of a fifty-dollar application fee. This fee must be waived for disabled veterans and retired law enforcement officers; and
- (7) a complete set of fingerprints. A law enforcement agency may charge a fee not to exceed five dollars for fingerprinting an applicant.

(B) Upon submission of the items required by subsection (A) of this section, SLED must conduct or facilitate a local, state, and federal fingerprint review of the applicant. SLED must also conduct a background check of the applicant through notification to and input from the sheriff of the county where the applicant resides. The sheriff must, within ten working days after notification by SLED, submit a recommendation on an application.

A sheriff's adverse recommendation shall only be based upon information which is part of a public record and which would prohibit the person from possessing a firearm in South Carolina. Before making a determination whether or not to issue a permit under this article, SLED must consider the recommendation provided pursuant to this subsection. The failure of the sheriff to submit a recommendation within the ten-day period constitutes a favorable recommendation for the issuance of the permit to the applicant. If the fingerprint review and background check ~~are favorable~~ reveal no grounds exist to prohibit the applicant from possessing a firearm in South Carolina, SLED must issue the permit.

(C) SLED shall issue a written statement to an unqualified applicant specifying its reasons for denying the application within ninety days from the date the application was received; otherwise, SLED shall issue a concealable weapon permit. If an applicant is unable to comply with the provisions of Section 23-31-210(4), SLED shall offer the applicant a handgun training course that satisfies the requirements of Section 23-31-210(4)(a). The course shall cost fifty dollars. SLED shall use the proceeds to defray the training course's operating costs. If a permit is granted by operation of law because an applicant was not notified of a denial within the ninety-day notification period, the permit may be revoked upon written notification from SLED that sufficient grounds exist for revocation or initial denial.

(D) Denial of an application may be appealed. The appeal must be in writing and state the basis for the appeal. The appeal must be submitted to the Chief of SLED within thirty days from the date the denial notice is received. The chief shall issue a written decision within ten days from the date the appeal is received. An adverse decision shall specify the reasons for upholding the denial and may be reviewed by the administrative law judge division pursuant to Article 5, Chapter 23 of Title 1 upon a petition filed by an applicant within thirty days from the date of delivery of the division's decision.

(E) SLED must make permit application forms available to the public. A permit application form shall require an applicant to supply:

- (1) name, including maiden name if applicable;
- (2) date and place of birth;
- (3) sex;
- (4) race;
- (5) height;
- (6) weight;
- (7) eye and hair color;
- (8) current residence address; and
- (9) all residence addresses for the three years preceding the application date.

(F) The permit application form shall require the applicant to certify that:

- (1) he is not a person prohibited under state law from possessing a weapon;
- (2) he understands the permit is revoked and must be surrendered immediately to SLED if the permit holder becomes a person prohibited under state law from possessing a weapon;
- (3) ~~he has either been is~~ a resident of this State ~~for at least twelve months preceding the date of his application~~ or he is military personnel on permanent change of station orders; and
- (4) all information contained in his application is true and correct to the best of his knowledge.

(G) Medical personnel, law enforcement agencies, organizations offering handgun education courses pursuant to Section 23-31-210(4)(a), and their personnel, who in good faith provide information regarding a

person's application, must be exempt from liability that may arise from issuance of a permit; provided, however, a weapons instructor must meet the requirements established in Section 23-31-210(4)(b), (c), (d), (e), or (f) in order to be exempt from liability under this subsection.

(H) A permit application must be submitted in person or by mail to SLED headquarters which shall verify the legibility and accuracy of the required documents.

(I) SLED must maintain a list of all permit holders and the current status of each permit. Upon request, SLED must release the list of permit holders or verify an individual's permit status. SLED may charge a fee not to exceed its costs in releasing the information under this subsection.

(J) A permit is valid statewide unless revoked because the person has:

- (1) become a person prohibited under state law from possessing a weapon;
- (2) moved his permanent residence to another state;
- (3) voluntarily surrendered the permit; or
- (4) been charged with an offense that, upon conviction, would prohibit the person from possessing a firearm.

However, if the person subsequently is found not guilty of the offense, then his permit must be reinstated at no charge with the valid term extended for a period equal to the period of revocation and at no additional cost to the permit holder.

Once a permit is revoked, it must be surrendered to a sheriff, police department, a SLED agent, or by certified mail to the Chief of SLED. A person who fails to surrender his permit in accordance with this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined twenty-five dollars.

(K) A permit holder must have his permit identification card in his possession whenever he carries a concealable weapon. A permit holder, when carrying a concealable weapon pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 31 of Title 23, must inform a law enforcement officer of the fact that he is a permit holder and present the permit identification card when an officer (1) identifies himself as a law enforcement officer and (2) requests identification or a driver's license from a permit holder. A permit holder immediately must report the loss or theft of a permit identification card to SLED headquarters. A person who violates the provisions of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined twenty-five dollars.

(L) SLED shall issue a replacement for lost, stolen, damaged, or destroyed permit identification cards after the permit holder has updated all information required in the original application and the payment of a five-dollar replacement fee. Any change of permanent address must be communicated in writing to SLED within ten days of the change accompanied by the payment of a fee of five dollars to defray the cost of issuance of a new permit. SLED shall then issue a new permit with the new address. A permit holder's failure to notify SLED in accordance with this subsection constitutes a misdemeanor punishable by a twenty-five dollar fine. The original permit shall remain in force until receipt of the corrected permit identification card by the permit holder, at which time the original permit must be returned to SLED.

(M) A permit issued pursuant to this section does not authorize a permit holder to carry a concealable weapon into a:

- (1) police, sheriff, or highway patrol station or any other law enforcement office or facility;
- (2) detention facility, prison, or jail or any other correctional facility or office;
- (3) courthouse or courtroom;
- (4) ~~polling place on election days;~~
- (5) ~~office of or the business meeting of the governing body of a county, public school district, municipality, or special purpose district;~~
- (6) ~~school or college athletic event not related to firearms;~~
- (7) ~~day care facility or pre-school facility;~~
- (8) ~~place where the carrying of firearms is prohibited by federal law;~~
- (9) ~~church or other established religious sanctuary;~~
- (10) ~~hospital, medical clinic, doctor's office, or any other facility where medical services or procedures are performed unless expressly authorized by the employer.~~

A person who wilfully violates a provision of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, must be fined not less than one thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than one year, or both, at the discretion of the court and have his permit revoked for five years.

A concealed weapon permit holder may carry into the areas of subsection (M) if prior permission is received by a person with the apparent authority to give such permission.

Nothing contained herein may be construed to alter or affect the provisions of Sections ~~40-11-320, 16-23-420, 16-23-430, 16-23-465, 44-23-1080, and 44-52-165, 50-9-830, and 51-3-145.~~

(N) Valid out-of-state permits to carry concealable weapons held by a resident of ~~a reciprocal~~ another state must be honored by this State. ~~SLED shall make a determination as to those states which have permit issuance standards equal to or greater than the standards contained in this article and shall maintain and publish a list of those states as the states with which South Carolina has reciprocity.~~ A person carrying a concealable weapon in this State pursuant to a permit issued by another state shall be required to comply with the same restrictions which apply to the carrying of a concealable weapon in this State by a South Carolina Concealed Weapon Permit holder. SLED shall publish in one document a list of all restrictions which apply to the carrying of concealed weapons by Concealed Weapon Permit holders in this State. This document shall be available free of charge from SLED, all municipal police departments, and all county sheriffs' departments.

(O) A permit issued pursuant to this article is not required for a person:

(1) specified in Section 16-23-20, items (1) through (5) and items (7) through (11);

(2) carrying a self-defense device generally considered to be nonlethal including the substance commonly referred to as 'pepper gas';

(3) carrying a concealable weapon in a manner not prohibited by law.

(P) A permit issued pursuant to this article is valid for four years. Subject to subsection (Q) of this section, SLED shall renew a permit upon:

(1) payment of a fifty-dollar renewal fee by the applicant. This fee must be waived for disabled veterans and retired law enforcement officers;

(2) submission of ~~three one~~ one current ~~one inch by one inch~~ full face color ~~photographs~~ photograph of the applicant no smaller than one inch by one inch and no larger than three inches by five inches; and

(3) a complete set of fingerprints. A law enforcement agency may charge a fee not to exceed five dollars for fingerprinting an applicant.

(Q) Upon submission of the items required by subsection (P) of this section, SLED must conduct or facilitate a local, state, and federal fingerprint review of the applicant. If the background check is favorable reveals no grounds exist to prohibit the applicant from possessing a firearm in South Carolina, SLED must renew the permit.

(R) No provision contained within this article shall expand, diminish, or affect the duty of care owed by and liability accruing to, as may exist at law immediately prior to the effective date of this article, the owner of or individual in legal possession of real property for the injury or death of an invitee, licensee, or trespasser caused by the use or misuse by a third party of a concealable weapon. Absence of a sign prohibiting concealable weapons shall not constitute negligence or establish a lack of duty of care.'

Section 23-31-230 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"Notwithstanding any provision of law, any person may carry a concealable weapon from an automobile or other motorized conveyance to a room or other accommodation he has rented or secured by credit card or debit card and upon which an accommodations tax has been paid."

Section 51-3-145(G) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"(G) Possessing any firearm, airgun, explosive, or firework except by duly authorized park personnel, law enforcement officers, or persons using areas specifically designated by the department for use of firearms, air guns, fireworks, or explosives. Licensed hunters may have firearms in their possession during hunting seasons provided that such firearms are unloaded and carried in a case or the trunk of a vehicle except that in designated Game Management areas where hunting is permitted, licensed hunters may use firearms for hunting in the manner authorized by law. This section shall not apply to a Concealed Weapon Permit holder carrying a concealable weapon in accordance with Article 4 of Chapter 31 of Title 23 and the concealable weapon and its ammunition."

Section 23-31-235 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"A. Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, any requirement of or allowance for the posting of signs prohibiting the carrying of a concealable weapon upon any premises may shall be satisfied only by a sign expressing the prohibition in both written language interdict or and universal sign language.

B. Signs shall be posted at every entrance into a building where a Concealed Weapon Permit holder is prohibited from carrying a concealable weapon and shall:

(1) be clearly visible from the outside entranceway at all times,

(2) be eight and one half inches (8.5") wide by eleven inches (11") tall,

- (3) have a white background color,
 - (4) contain the words 'NO CONCEALABLE WEAPONS ALLOWED' in black uppercase letters five-eighths of an inch (5/8") tall at the bottom of the sign, one word per line of text, and centered between the lateral edges of the sign,
 - (5) contain a black silhouette of a handgun inside a red circle six inches (6") in diameter with a red diagonal line that runs from the lower left to the upper right at a forty-five (45) degree angle from the horizontal and which is a diameter of the circle with the red line and circle being one-half inch (1/2") wide,
 - (6) be placed no less than forty inches (40") and no more than sixty inches (60") above the bottom of the entrance door, and
 - (7) be placed either on the door or within 24 inches (24") on either side of the door.
- C. If the premises where a Concealed Weapon Permit holder is prohibited from carrying a concealable weapon does not have doors, then the signs contained in subsection (A.) shall:
- (1) be thirty-six inches (36") wide by forty-eight inches (48") tall,
 - (2) have a white background color,
 - (3) contain the words 'NO CONCEALABLE WEAPONS ALLOWED' in black uppercase letters two inches (2") tall at the bottom of the sign, one word per line of text, and centered between the lateral edges of the sign,
 - (4) contain a black silhouette of a handgun inside of a red circle thirty-four inches (34") in diameter with a red diagonal line that runs from the lower left to the upper right at a forty-five (45) degree angle from the horizontal and which is a diameter of the circle with the red line and circle being two inches (2") wide,
 - (5) be placed no less than forty inches (40") and no more than ninety-sixty inches (96") above the ground, and
 - (6) be sufficiently numerous to be clearly visible from any point of entry onto the premises."

Section 10-11-320 of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

"A. It shall be unlawful for any person or group of persons: (a) to carry or have readily accessible to the person upon the capitol grounds or within the capitol building any firearm, dangerous weapon, explosive or incendiary device; (b) to discharge any firearm or explosive or to use any dangerous weapon or to ignite any incendiary device upon the capitol grounds or within the capitol building; or (c) to transport by any means upon the capitol grounds or within the capitol building any explosive or incendiary device.

B. This section shall not apply to a person carrying a concealable weapon pursuant to Section 16-23-20."

<END>

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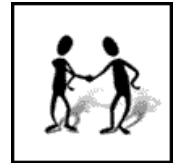


GrassRoots REFORM LEGISLATION **ACTION STEPS YOU CAN TAKE NOW!**

Rep. Jake Knotts (R., Lexington County) and Rep. Mickey Whatley (D., Charleston County) have agreed to sponsor the GrassRoots gun law reforms that were included in H. 4797 last legislative session. This is good news because it shows the GrassRoots reforms have bi-partisan support, and our safety should not be a partisan issue. H. 4797 passed the House in May 2000, too late to be considered by the Senate. GrassRoots members need to contact their elected representatives and ask them to co-sponsor the Knotts/Whatley bill. A pre-written letter is included for your convenience. Just write in your representative's name and mail it in. But, before you mail it in, make copies for your friends and neighbors to send in too.

H. 4797 was a good bill, as far as it went. But, SC needs more reforms than were included in H. 4797. GrassRoots members must push for the whole GrassRoots reform package. The following items were missing from the old H. 4797 and need to be included in the new bill:

- * SC Concealed weapons permit (CWP) holders need to be able to carry in more states. This can be accomplished by allowing CWP holders from other states to carry in SC.
- * SC CWP holders should be excepted from the laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed weapons everywhere except jails, prisons, police stations, and courthouses.
- * Current gun laws need to be amended so they legally state what everyone thought they already stated, but do not. <end>



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SC House of Representatives
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Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Rep. _____:

I support the GrassRoots SC proposed gun law reforms. It is time our laws recognize there is a huge difference between good people carrying guns and criminals carrying guns. John Lott, in his book More Guns, Less Crime, proved that good people carrying concealed weapons actually **decrease** the violent crime rate. In fact, for every additional concealed weapons permit issued, violent crime went down even further. Further, the violent crime rate went down for ALL people, not just those with concealed weapons permits. ***Good people carrying guns reduce violent crime.***

One interesting finding in More Guns, Less Crime was that violent criminals would cross state lines to commit their violent crimes in adjoining states. If the adjoining state did not have a "shall issue" concealed weapons permit law and the criminal's own state did, then the criminal would cross state lines to commit his violent crimes where it was safer to practice his evil ways. Violent criminals are not stupid, just evil. Criminals are aware of where good people are self-defenseless, and they go where the pickings are easy, i.e., the potential victims are disarmed.

The State of SC should be charged as an accessory to every violent crime committed against good people at a legally designated "gun free" zone. Every so called "gun free" zone is NOT gun free. The State of SC disarms only the good people in these areas, while the criminals still have guns because criminals do not obey the law. This helps explain the violent crime at rest areas in SC (please see The State newspaper report of June 8, 2000, page A1, wherein Parks, Recreation and Tourism officials were considering putting up signs at the SC border warning travelers of the dangers at SC rest areas). It is a felony for good people to have a gun at a rest area, so they don't. But, criminals find the rest areas to be good places to work their evil ways because their victims are being disarmed by the State of SC. SC should be ashamed to disarm good people to make the work of criminals easier.

It is in the best interests of all SC citizens to remove the impediments to good people carrying concealed weapons. SC needs to encourage good people to carry concealed weapons, not restrict good people from doing so. The GrassRoots proposed gun law reforms are needed to help protect the health and welfare of all SC people.

Rep. Jake Knotts and Rep. Mickey Whatley have agreed to sponsor the GrassRoots reforms passed by the House last session. These reforms are a good beginning, but the entire GrassRoots reform package needs to be enacted. Please support the bill being put forth by Representatives Knotts and Whatley, and amend it to include the entire GrassRoots reform package.

Sincerely,

South Carolina Concealed Weapons Permit Instructors Information

Guns Don't Cause Crime, Criminals Do

By Patrick D. Nolan, Ph.D.

The argument that the simple availability of handguns increases the rate of gun violence and violent crime has



received yet another blow from a study by two researchers at Florida International University: Lisa Stolzenberg and Stewart D'Alessio. Their article in the highly esteemed sociology journal *Social Forces* (June 2000), reports that although illegal gun availability is associated with an increase in the rates of violent crime, gun crime, and youth crime, legal gun availability is not. They note that this important distinction between legal and illegal gun availability has been ignored by previous researchers.

They use concealed weapons permits (CWP) per 100,000 population as their index of legal availability, and the number of guns reported stolen per 100,000 population as their index of illegal availability. They derive crime data from the *National Incident-Based Reporting System* for South Carolina, a much more reliable and detailed record of crime than that provided by the more readily available and widely used *Uniform Crime Reporting Program*.

Their time-series analysis focuses on 46 South Carolina counties for the four-year period 1991 to 1994. It should be noted that this is before passage of the Law-Abiding Citizens Self Defense Act of 1996 which changed South Carolina from a "may issue" to a "shall issue" state.

Net of controls for a variety of factors known to affect rates of crime (e.g., poverty, unemployment, dropout rates) they find that illegal gun availability significantly and substantially affects rates of

violent crime and gun crimes. A one point increase in stolen guns is associated with a one point increase in violent crime. A two point increase in stolen guns is associated with a one point increase in the rate of gun crimes, and a ten point increase in stolen guns is associated with a one point rise in gun crimes by people under the age of 21. The statistical probability that these associations with crime rates are due to "chance" is less than one-in-a-thousand.

There are two important implications of this study for South Carolina CWP holders and CWP laws. First, given the strong effects of stolen guns on violence and crime, it is imperative that all gun owners take every care to prevent theft. Second, it is critical to reform South Carolina CWP laws so that permit holders are not forced to leave legally-carried weapons in car trunks and glove compartments, where they can be stolen, because current law prohibits carry in a myriad of places including restaurants, and churches.

Patrick D. Nolan is a Professor of Sociology at the University of South Carolina and a SLED-Certified Concealable Weapons Instructor

Moving Firearms State to State

By Ed Kelleher, FFL Dealer

Q. What laws or restrictions are there in mailing or sending guns. For example my permanent address is in SC but I am currently in Idaho with my job. There is a gun show coming up here and if I were to purchase a gun how can I get it back to SC?

Larry forwarded this request to me. I thought my reply might be of interest. Also, if anyone sees any mistakes in my thinking I'd appreciate a heads-up.

I believe the Gun Control Act of 1968 applies here.

Section 922(a)(3) states "It shall be unlawful for any person, other than a licensed dealer ... to transport into or receive in the State where he resides a fire-

arm purchased or otherwise obtained by such person outside that State."

There is an exception (A) for bequest or succession (e.g., inheritance).

There is an exception (B) if you obtain a LONG gun (rifle or shotgun) from a licensed dealer; i.e. you fill out a form 4473.

Regardless, there is the proviso that the transaction must fully comply with the legal conditions of sale in both states.

NO HANDGUNS, except for exception (A) above - inheritance.

People can buy long guns from licensed dealers outside their home state. But not handguns from licensed dealers.

I believe the exception allowing you to transport ONLY applies if you purchase from a licensed dealer. If you don't fill out the ATF 4473 (yellow form) then I do NOT think the exception applies and hence you are prohibited from transporting.

As far as shipping, only licensed dealers may send handguns by USPS (snail mail).

Also, what the shipper will accept is entirely up to them. They may not want to accept firearms because the law applies some penalties to them for screwing up too.

You can transport firearms on a common carrier (plane, bus) if you are a passenger.

Also, the GCA of 1968 Section 922(e) says briefly if you ship a firearm to a non Federal Firearms Licensee (like a spouse or relative) you have to notify in writing the carrier that you are doing so. This section does not apply if you ship a firearm to a licensed (FFL) dealer.

TO SUMMARIZE:

I'm not a lawyer and can not give legal advice. This is just my understanding reading the GCA as put out by the ATF. To be sure you might try calling the local ATF. If you get anything resembling a

South Carolina Concealed Weapons Permit Instructors Information

response from them I'd be interested in hearing it.

Assuming you can legally possess firearms there and here:

1) If you don't buy from a licensed dealer, you can't bring or ship firearms back here.

2) You can buy long guns from licensed dealer there and bring them back with you - by car, or plane etc. The FOPA of 1987 says in transporting firearm with you, if it's legal where you come from and legal where you're going, you're legal anywhere in between.

3) If you buy long guns from licensed dealer there, you can ship them here, but you have to let the carrier know in writing you are doing so and they have to agree. Carrier will have to get written receipt from person who receives package.

4) You can't buy handguns and bring them back, or ship them to anyone but a licensed dealer (see #5).

5) You can buy handgun or long gun from anybody and ship them to a licensed dealer here in SC who could then transfer them to you. But you'd have to fill out the 4473. If you have SC CWP you're exempt from background check, but still have to fill out the 4473, and a SLED form for handguns. For handguns, the SC dealer would also have to be a SC Retail Pistol Dealer. Dealers charge for this, maybe \$30.

Also, be careful about what you buy. Can't be NFA type firearm (short barrels, etc). Must have serial number intact. And for South Carolina, if it's a handgun it can not have a metal frame with melting point less than 800 degrees F. This is the zinc die cast metal guns typically under \$100 by Lorcin and others. These are contraband. If you buy and ship to dealer, he'll have to turn it in and you are SOL.

6) Oh, also about handguns, an out of state licensed dealer can not sell you a handgun. But, you could pay for it (plus shipping) and he could send handgun to licensed dealer in SC. But, that dealer would have to have copy of other dealers

FFL before he could ship it. So, you got to trust the guy and it will take a little while.

I'll tell you. Having to read that Gun Control Act of 1968 makes me sick to my stomach. It really is a copy of the Nazi Gun Control Laws as documented by JPFO. I hope you all are as pissed off as I am about these unconstitutional scribblings.

But, I hope this helps. Baaahhh!

CWP Renewal Update

By Larry Coble

From our mailbox we have been receiving many complaints about the CWP renewal procedure. First, it seems SLED has changed their initial request for submission of a renewal 90 days prior to your permit expiration. They have assured me that 30 days is all that is needed now to complete the necessary items and issue a renewal permit. Second, when renewing please call SLED, ask for Regulatory Services and request a "CWP Renewal Package." The permit applications you can find at your local sheriff's department are NOT FOR RENEWALS. If you use a "new applicant" packet to attempt a renewal it will be returned to you without processing. The renewal process can be found in your summer newsletter. Do it right, and save yourself some grief. You may call S.L.E.D. at 803-737-9000 (ask for Regulatory) to request a CWP renewal packet.

Regarding some of the requirements for renewal, remember that SLED isn't making this stuff up. It's the law. Unfortunately the law requires fingerprints and photos (which they don't use on your permit). GrassRoots is working to change this. Hassling the folks at SLED won't remove these requirements. Joining GrassRoots will. So, join us in our efforts to make our CWP law a better law for you. <end>

Question: Can a posted business grant an exception to a CWP holder? If

so, are there any guidelines for doing so (i.e., does it have to be in writing, who must approve it, etc.)? On a related note, if I were caught carrying in a posted location, but the business owner/president/CEO said "Never mind, we're posted, but we don't mind he was carrying," or "We don't want to press charges." Is that okay, or is the crime against the state instead of against the business, like shoplifting?

Answer: I'm not a lawyer and I don't give legal advice, but in my opinion the point of SECTION 23-31-220 of the S.C. Code of Laws is to make it clear that someone who owns or controls a piece of property can ALLOW or PROHIBIT a CWP holder's carrying on that property and that placing a sign that says "No Concealable Weapons Allowed" constitutes adequate notice. The law also says that anyone who defies the notice MAY be charged with a violation of 16-11-620, which is a trespassing violation, not an unlawful carry violation. Since you MAY be charged, that means that you MAY NOT be charged. Logically, that would have to depend on the decision of the property owner/controller. In most cases of trespass, the police tell the property owner/controller to sign the warrant. In those cases, if that owner/controller fails to do so, no charge is made. Although the law doesn't address your questions specifically, my conclusion is that a property owner/controller can do as he wishes, i.e., he can allow concealed carry or he can post against it and make or not make exceptions. However, you run the risk of a property owner/controller's changing his story if an incident happens that draws attention to your being armed at a place that is posted. It would be wise to have the exception in writing from the person with the highest authority. A second offense will revoke your permit.

--Paul Peters, CWP Instructor

For more information please see SECTION 23-31-220 of the S.C. Code of Laws.

Warning! These Merchants and Businesses Prohibit Firearms on their Premises

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Statewide:

Angler's Mini Marts
BB&T
Carolina Bank & Trust
Carolina First!
Carolina Tire
Central Carolina Bank
Coastal Federal Bank
First Citizens Bank
Gaz-Bah Mini Shops
Hot Spot Convenience Stores (Jordan Oil Co)
Money Man Pawn
Santee-Wateree Regional Transportation Authority (all
vehicles posted "NO CWP")
Security Finance
South Carolina Federal Credit Union
Suburban Propane
Thomas and Howard Cash and Carry
Tiger Mart (Rogers Oil Co)
Will-Mart Convenience Stores

Aiken:

Aiken Mall 2441 Whiskey Rd
Captain D's Seafood 1907 Whiskey Rd
McDonald's 1902-A Whiskey Rd
Shoney's Restaurants 1909 Whiskey Rd

Anderson:

Anderson Yamaha/Honda 110 Miracle Mile Plaza
Perpetual Bank 907 Main St

Andrews:

H&S Oil Co

Barnwell:

Rainbow Gas Garden 1109 Dunbarton Blvd

Batesburg/Leesville:

B & L Sports 514 W Railroad Ave
Huddle House 327 E Columbia Ave
State Farm Insurance 605 W Church St
Wiz's Eatery 110 West Church St Suite A

Bishopville:

Holland Enterprises, Feed and Seed
R Travis Windham Insurance 204 N Main St

Blythewood:

Bank of Ridgeway 115 McNulty St
Blythewood Oil Co /Sharpe Exxon #1 Hwy 21
IGA McNulty St
JR's United Convenience 10447 Wilson Rd
McDonald's 250 Blythewood Rd
Plum's Ice Cream Factory Wilson Rd
Vision Quest Video 420-D McNulty Rd

Camden:

Food Chief 433 Sumter Hwy
IGA 1816 Jefferson Davis Hwy

Charleston:

Charleston Steel & Metal 107 Brigade St
Check Care Systems 4790-A Trade St
Citadel Mall 2064 Sam Rittenburg Blvd
CPM Federal Credit Union 5600 Virginia Ave
Evening Post Publishing Co 134 Columbus St
Gallman Personnel Services 3175 W Montague Ave
Goodwill Industries of Lower SC 5640 Rivers Ave
Hay Tires 444 Savannah Hwy
Henry's Sporting Goods 1662 Hwy 17 N
James Island Cleaners 1739 Maybank Hwy
Kaufman Mobile Home Supply 6842 Rivers Ave
Lenz's Dry Cleaners 2665 Ashley Phosphate Rd
Northwoods Mall 2222 Northwoods Blvd
Pagemart of South Carolina
Piggly Wiggly 1005 Harborview Rd
State Farm Insurance 8300 Dorchester Road

Columbia:

Alpine Road Amoco 8404 Two Notch Rd
Arch Paging 1724 Broad River Rd
Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC I-20 & Alpine Rd
Bojangle's 542 St Andrews Rd
Boozier Lumber 1400 Atlas Rd
Builders FirstSource (was Pelican Cos) 919 S Edisto Ave
Carolina Collegiate Federal Credit Union 710 Pulaski St
Carolina Convenience Corp 209 Stoneridge Dr Suite 102
Chipco Computer Distributors 122-F Old Mill Rd
Colonial Life & Accident Ins (Unum) 1200 W Colonial Life
Columbia Mall 7201 Two Notch Rd
Columbia Steel and Metal 1148 Shop Rd
Crown-Stone Printing Co 819 Main St
Custom Pizza Co 6801-3 St. Andrews Rd
Eckerd Drug #2744 9810 Two Notch Rd
Express Personnel Services 4464 Devine, Suite L
Exxon / Blimpie's of St. Andrews 800 St. Andrews Rd
Frankie's Fun Park 140 Parkridge Dr
Goodwill Industries 555 St. Andrews Rd
Hair Cuttery 144E Harbison Blvd
Hair Cuttery 9710 Two Notch Rd
Hair We Are 9810 Two Notch Rd
Hancock Motor Co 3905 W Beltline Blvd
National Tax Service 3707 Main St
One Price Clothing Store 800 Bush River Rd
RBMG 7909 Parklane Rd
Richland Fashion Mall 3400 Forest Dr
South Carolina Merchants Assoc 1735 St Julien Pl
St. Andrews Mult-Cinemas 527 St. Andrews Rd
Star Music 1322 Assembly St

Merchants: If your business is no longer posted against Law Abiding Citizens, please notify GrassRoots for removal from this list.

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Warning! These Merchants and Businesses Prohibit Firearms on their Premises

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(Columbia Cont'd)

Star Music 9810 Two Notch Rd
State Farm Insurance Claims I-20 & Bush River Rd
Tuesday Morning 282 St. Andrews Rd
United Oil Marketers Garners Ferry Rd
United Oil Marketers N Main & I-20
Western Steer Steakhouse St. Andrews Rd

Conway:

Rod's Pawn & Jewelry 2298 Hwy 544

Cottageville:

Main Street Diner 10716 Cottageville Hwy

Midlands Area:

#1 Flea Market Hwy 1
Allstate Insurance Claims 172 McSwain Dr
Cooper Power Tools, 670 Industrial Dr, Lexington
Cooper's Corner Exxon/Hardee's/Laundromat/Car Wash
1910 S Lake Dr, Lexington
CVI-Cablevision Industries 1125 B Ave, W Cola
First Community Bank 5455 Sunset Blvd, Lexington
Hair Cuttery 3028 Charleston Hwy
Kroger's Sav-On Food Stores 7467 Woodrow St, Irmo
Old Cherokee Amoco 1104 N Lake Dr, Lexington
Ramada Inn West I-26 & US Hwy 378, W Columbia
SC Farm Bureau 724 Knox Abbot Dr, Cayce
Sansbury Eye Center 205 Columbia Ave
SMI Steel 310 New State Rd, Cayce
Taco Bell - All Midlands Locations
The Factory Outlets - All Midlands Locations
Wendy's 1410 Lake Murray Blvd, Irmo

Darlington:

Henry's Pantry 438 N Main St

Easley:

Goodwill of Upper SC 5155 Calhoun Memorial Hwy

Florence:

Piggly Wiggly Florence Mall
Rack Room Shoes Florence Commons Center

Fountain Inn:

Burger King 1101 N Main St

Georgetown:

Beverage Depot 254 St Delight Rd
Edward Jones Investments 936 Front St
Georgetown Art Gallery Inc 732 Front St
Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce 1001 Front St
Georgetown Seafood 1902 Highmarket St
Law Firm of Hinds, Cowan, Strange, & Greer 604 Front St
Nightingale's Professional Apparel 924 Front St
Piggly Wiggly 1620 Highmarket St
Prince George Framing & Gallery 805 Front St
Thomas Cafe 703 Front St
Tomlinson's Department Store 806 Front St

Gilbert:

First Community Bank of Gilbert 4325 Augusta Hwy

Greenville:

AAA Supply 203 Haywood Rd
Burger King 1513 Poinsett Hwy
Comfort Inn 545 N Pleasantburg Dr
Rogers Stereo 525 Woodruff Rd
Spinx Oil Convenience Store
UPS Customer Counter 291 Fairforest Way

Greenwood:

Burger King
Cross Creek Mall
Dixie Drive-In 600 Montague Ave
Greenwood Bank & Trust

Hilton Head:

Belks @The Mall at Shelter Cove 24 Shelter Cove Ln

Hollywood:

Piggly Wiggly

Lugoff:

Food Chief 840 Hwy 1 S

Manning:

Clarendon County Chamber of Commerce 19 N Brooks St
Freedom Finance, Inc 14 N Mill St
New Country Corner 521 Bloomville Rd

Marion:

Donut Hole

Mauldin:

Golden Strip Mirror and Glass 343 Miller Rd

Mt. Pleasant:

Pantry Pride 2171G Hwy 17 N

Mullins:

Pee Dee Office Systems Main St

Murrells Inlet:

Inlet Square Mall 10125 Hwy 17 Bypass & Tadlock Rd
Old House Memories Antiques

Myrtle Beach:

Advantage Realty 9622 N Kings Hwy
Dicks Pawn Shop Highway 501, Dick Pond Rd. Surfside
Dixie Discount Beverage S Kings Hwy
Federal Express 1600 Stockholder Ave
Galleria Liquors 9658 N Kings Hwy
Klig's Kites 4824 Hwy 17 S, N Myrtle Beach
Klig's Kites Kings Hwy, Surfside
Schlotzsky's Deli 812 S Kings Hwy
Surfwood Office Supply 809 2nd Avenue N Myrtle Beach
Time Warner Cable 1901 Oak St
VPS Geo. Bishop Parkway

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Pacolet:

Pacolet Express 441 N Hwy 150

Pawley's Island:

Tuesday Morning 364 Hwy 17 N

Pickens:

AAA Marine

Rock Hill:

Three Bells Beauty Salon 803 Willowbrook Ave

Saluda:

Caper House 401 N Main St

Saluda Farm and Garden Supply 508 N Main St

Seneca:

Carquest Auto Parts 507 N First St

Hometown Food Store N Walnut St

Spartanburg:

Progress Lighting 101 Corporate Dr

Westgate Mall 205 W Blackstock Rd

Summerville:

Lenz's Dry Cleaners 1625 N Main St

Maxway Boon Hill Rd

North Main Market 1301 N Main St

The Consignment Gallery N Cedar St

Sumter:

Black River Electric Cooperative 1121 N Pike Rd W

Boykin Air Conditioning Services 845 S Guignard Dr

CP & L 180 Wesmark Blvd

Dixon's Grocery State Hwy 261

Greater Sumter Chamber of Commerce 32 E Calhoun St

H & S Wholesale 200 S Harvin St

Hill Plumbing & Electric 438 N Main St

Hodge Auto/Truck Service 491 E Liberty St

Jessamine Mall 1057 Broad St

Kwik-Fare 1768 Pinewood Rd

Neal's Cafeteria 16 E Liberty St

SAFE Federal Credit Union 180 Wesmark Blvd

Sportsman's Shop and Stop 2810 Hwy 15 S

Sumter Check Casher 1084A Broad St

Time Finance Co. 31 Liberty St

Tri Star Storage II/Cash Advance 2220 Peach Orchard Hwy

UPS Customer Service Counter Electric Ave

Swansea:

Shelton's Rainbow BP 100 W First St

Taylors:

Spinx Oil Convenience Store 3226 Wade Hampton Blvd

Walterboro:

Allied Department Store 205 E Washington St

Carpet Country

Carpets of Walterboro 601 Bells Hwy

Clearvision Optical 501A Bells Hwy

Coastal Electric Cooperative 2269 Jefferies Blvd

Gold Collection 501 Bells Hwy

Hunan Chinese Restaurant 339 N Jefferies Blvd

Jus Sports 253D Bells Hwy

Low Country Marine 903 Green Pond Hwy

Parks Auto Parts 555 Bells Hwy

Seigler Brothers One Hour Photo 501 Bells Hwy

South Carolina Electric & Gas - All Locations

Wholesale Bedding Outlet 111 Eddie Chasteen Dr

Grassroots Hall of Shame



Galleria Liquors, DBA

Donna M Hardee Enterprises

9658 N Kings Hwy, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

This past winter the owner of Galleria Liquors, Larry Hardee indicated he would replace his posting with the Grassroots alternate sign. Six months later, and after having the name of his establishment placed on our "Welcome Back!" list, the original posting remains, and Mr. Hardee communicated to a recognized community volunteer that he is not interested in allowing CWP in his store. Further attempts to educate this merchant have resulted in his complaining to local law enforcement that he is being "harassed". Would you spend your hard earned dollars with this merchant?

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Welcome Back!

The Following Merchants Have **REMOVED** Signs Which Discourage Law Abiding CWP Holders from Entering Their Stores!

B-Mart Manning
Piggly Wiggly of Chesterfield
Gloriosa Florists
Hiller Hardware
Ace Parker Tires of Sumter
Office Max - All Locations
Special Effects Hair Salon
System Plus Computers
Blythewood Feed and Hardware
McDuffie's Home Furnishings
Lowes Hardware - All Locations
Rush's Restaurants
McCall's Supply
Little Pigs Barbecue
Chamber of Commerce Walterboro
Discount Auto Parts
Domino's Pizza on Two Notch
Cost Cutter's Barber Shop
Dixie Furniture in Walterboro
Walterboro Chamber of Commerce
Wayne's Sporting Goods and Trophies
Walterboro McDonalds
Burger King Walterboro
Warshaws Mens Shop
Perkin's Family Restaurant
Food Chief Store #22
Crosby Herndon Music
Thyme Out Exxon
Greenville Carmike Cinemas
If It's Paper
Best Stop Stores (pending)
Denny's Restaurants
Burlington Coat Factory
Collins Jewelry
Wal-Mart #2214 in Columbia
Lee's Grocery
Spann's Store

Becknell Cleaners
Camden Gas and Oil
Granger in Columbia
Food Lion of Ravenel
Ed's Paint Center
Jim Hall's Auto Service
Central True Value Hardware
Gerry's & Things
Ben Satcher Motors
Wicker World, Myrtle Beach
Jones Department Stores
Pro-Glo Body Shop, Sumter
Granny's Cafe, Walterboro
Blythewood Pharmacy
Sav-Way Convenience Stores
Grady Miller's Honda
Circle K/Smile Gas in Sumter
Logan's Appliance Center, Bishopville
Wal-Mart 2245 Ashley Crossing, N. Charleston
B and D Grocery, Rembert
Spee Dee Cash, Sumter
Piggly Wiggly, Lexington
Lube Express, Surfside Beach
Horry Telephone Cooperative
Piggly Wiggly, Ladson
Shell Lamp Outlet, Myrtle Beach
Heavenly Ham #B2 Myrtle Beach
H and R Block Manning
Beach Ford Myrtle Beach
Freedom Finance Sumter
Food Chief Johnsonville
Food Chief Pamplico
Frankie's Fun Park Lexington
Buddy's Pizza and Subs Pelion
Custom Pizza Co. Chapin
Dick's Pawn Shop N. Myrtle Beach

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Email jrponti@yahoo.com

State Farm Cancels Policy of Gun Owner Who Has Private Shooting Range

Shooter? Hunter? Who's your "Good Neighbor"?

Gary Atkinson is a good neighbor, even though his nearest neighbor lives hundreds of feet away. He makes his home in rural Chapin, South Carolina on thirteen hilly, mostly wooded acres, along with his wife Lisa, sons Tom and Yates, two horses, three yard dogs, and "too many cats to count" as Gary puts it. "Somebody's got to take in the homeless animals" he explains. "If not, well...." His voice trails off. No need to describe the fate of stray animals in a sparsely populated area.

Gary's job in heavy equipment sales brought him from Illinois to South Carolina in 1985. He promptly fell in love with the area, and bought acreage 25 miles and a culture away from the state capitol in Columbia. Gary and Lisa bought a second, adjoining parcel in 1988, and began building their dream house in 1990. "We moved into the house in 1992" Gary says with a laugh, "but we never stopped building. A barn. Outbuildings. A pool. A pond. There's always something going on at our place". When the time came for Gary to change jobs, he stayed in South Carolina.

Gary admits his rural homestead isn't as rural as it once was. Fifteen families now live along his dead-end country road, and more are discovering this long-forgotten corner of Richland County every year. But it remains a close-knit community, where everybody knows everybody else. The kids play together, the adults are good friends, and the entire neighborhood gets together several times a year for a massive "block party".

But being a good neighbor involves more than holding block parties and swimming in each other's pools. It involves being there when people have a need. For example, Lisa prepares meals for shut-ins, and Gary uses his tractor and chain saw to help around the neighborhood. Sometimes he cuts grass for people who can't do it themselves. When Mike, their neighbor across the street, broke his back in a fall from a deer stand, Gary built special rails on Mike's front steps so that Mike could get in and out of his house. And when there

was a loud explosion in the woods behind another neighbor's house, she immediately called Gary and asked him to investigate.

Gary found a tree had fallen across a power line in a right-of-way, and started a fire. He fought the fire himself while others summoned help. By the time the trained firefighters arrived, Gary had brought the blaze under control. The firefighters' main job was to put out the still-burning utility pole. That's the kind of "good neighbor" Gary is.

For 34 years Gary bought his insurance from State Farm, a company that claims it's a good neighbor. His father got him started with car insurance when Gary was 16. Gary later bought homeowners insurance from State Farm, and eventually added an umbrella policy to protect the assets he had accumulated. Gary was happy with State Farm. And State Farm should have been happy with Gary, because he has an excellent claims record. True, his car was broken into several years ago. Hurricane Hugo blew down a tree. And a pipe burst, causing damage in his basement. Not bad, for 34 years of State Farm coverage.

Gary's rosy relationship with State Farm came to a screeching halt a few months ago, when he casually mentioned to the local State Farm office that he had been shooting in a ravine back in the woods behind his house. The local agent, who he regarded as a friend, didn't like that, and questioned Gary closely. Shooting? With guns? He answered all of her questions, and even took her through the woods to the ravine so she could see the area for herself. She wasn't happy. Neither was the home office. State Farm promptly cancelled Gary's coverage for what the company called "the operation of the shooting range on your property".



Hunting and recreational shooting are a way of life in rural South Carolina, and in much of the rest of America. Gary has enjoyed these activities since he was seven years old, when his father started him with a .22 bolt action rifle. (It's a tradition Gary hopes to pass on to his own sons.) Still, Gary tried to appease State Farm by offering to limit his shooting. Would they *ever* let him shoot on his own property, or did the company insist on a total ban? "Maybe once in a Blue Moon" the agent told him. "What about hunters going through my woods?" Gary asked. "It's just too dangerous" she replied.

Gary next offered to protect State Farm from any liability for his shooting. The ravine was on a parcel of land separate from the house, so what if they just insured the parcel with the house? No deal. Gary went out and bought a million-dollar liability policy from a NRA-endorsed underwriter to cover his shooting activities. Would State Farm be willing to exclude all shooting activities from his homeowner's policy? Still no deal.

So, what did State Farm want from him? Gary asked State Farm's agent to point out the fine print in his policy, or to show him something in writing, so that he could keep the company happy. She conceded there was no fine print, nothing in the policy, and nothing in writing anywhere. But the company regards shooting activities as a "factor of increased risk" she told him, and as reason for terminating his coverage. The company would never be happy. (cont pg 26)

Close Encounters of the Posted Kind

GrassRoots South Carolina Guide to Merchant Contact

By John Ponti, Merchant Contact Program Coordinator

Grassroots South Carolina was originally founded to deal with the problem of merchants posting their businesses against the lawful carry of concealed handguns by persons possessing concealed weapons permits (CWP's). Merchant contact remains a cornerstone of Grassroots South Carolina's gun rights activities. Presented for your enlightenment is an overview of the merchant contact program and how permit holders can gather information on posted businesses as well as communicate with business owners on the social good that our state's CWP law represents.

The Merchant Contact Program

Grassroots South Carolina's Merchant Contact Program serves two important functions:

1. It is an evolving database of posted merchants that serves notice to permit holders where not to break the law by carrying concealed handguns...it's a list of merchants who don't want law abiding citizens to carry concealed weapons on their premises.
2. It serves notice to posted merchants that permit holders, as principled individuals, will not do business where their right to lawful armed self-defense from violent criminal attack is denied.

When Grassroots receives information that a merchant or business dependent on public goodwill is posted, our organization sends a formal letter of protest to that businesses' owner of record or corporate CEO or president. The letter politely informs the merchant or business that:

1. Permit holders have undergone scrutiny by both state and federal law enforcement agencies.
2. Merchants who post against concealed carry invite criminal mayhem

from individuals looking for easy targets of opportunity.

3. Merchants who post against concealed carry have implied assumed responsibility for the safety of their patrons and may face financial redress in the event of a criminal act, which results in injury/death of a patron.
4. Permit holders are consumers who represent a valuable commodity.
5. Alternate signs are available which court permit holders yet serve notice on others.

Depending on the situation, a posted merchant or business may receive alternate signs with the letter along with a copy of the Grassroots newsletter. The name and address of the posted merchant or business is then added to a computer database which you see in your newsletter. This information is also forwarded to another Grassroots volunteer who enters the information on the organization's web site. If the merchant or business removes their posting signs or replaces them with the alternate signs, the name of that merchant or business is removed from the list of banning businesses and placed on our "Welcome Back!" list. Placement on this list may be subject to verification by Grassroots staffers or recognized community volunteers. Merchants who do not remove their signs receive a follow-up letter and may also receive 'extra attention' in the form of postcard mailings or, if necessary, negative publicity events (picketing). Merchants who are caught cheating also receive extra attention from Grassroots.

The Merchant Contact Program and you.

Grassroots South Carolina, as an all-volunteer organization, must depend on information gathered from permit holders from around the state. Therefore the information provided Grassroots is only as accurate as what is provided us from you, the CWP holder. The more information about a posted merchant provided the better.

Turning observation into action

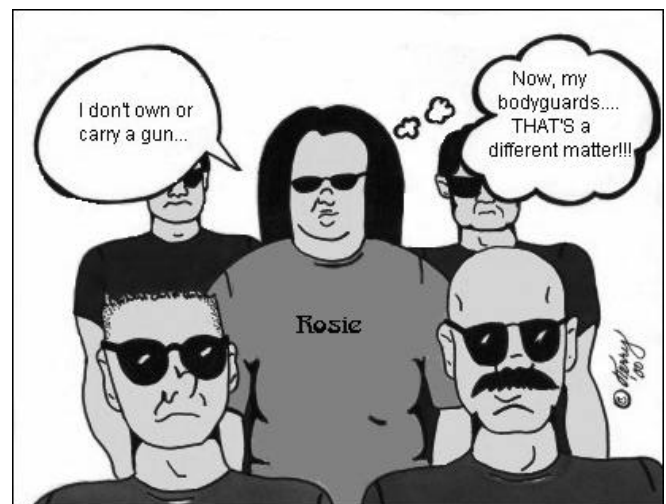
What do you do when you encounter a merchant or business that is posted against concealed carry? Grumble and walk away? Disarm yourself and spend your hard-earned dollars with a merchant who denies you your right to armed self-defense from societal predators? Or do you turn a problem into an opportunity?

The growing list of merchants featured on the "Welcome Back!" list did not happen simply because they received a protest letter from Grassroots. Conversely, a letter from Grassroots is rarely sufficient to convince a merchant to stop posting. Merchants stop posting because they receive a steady influx of complaints from the public...their former customers who make good on a promise to do business elsewhere until the posting policy is rescinded.

The "Rule of Thirds"

Four years of merchant contact experience has taught us what we can refer to as "The Rule of Thirds":

1. One third of posted business will immediately rescind a posting policy upon receiving an overview of the benefit of concealed carry as a strong deterrent to violent crime. This overview can come from either a communication by Grassroots or a personal visit by a permit holder(s).
2. One third of posted business will rescind a posting policy in response to a protracted education effort by Grassroots and permit holders.



Close Encounters of the Posted Kind

3. One third of posted business will refuse to rescind a posting policy no matter what information is presented them.

We've learned to write off the last third; it's the first two-thirds we'd like to concern ourselves with.

"Just Do It"

Many merchants continue to post because they haven't been approached by anyone willing to take the time to educate them on why permit holders aren't a problem. If your response to encountering a posted merchant is to turn around and walk away never to return then you shouldn't expect the merchant to stop posting.

Be an information-gatherer and a diplomat for the CWP cause

Your first responsibility when making merchant contacts should be to gather information that it may be sent to Grassroots for entry into our databases. The second task is to present information to the merchant so that a favorable outcome may be reached. Commit this to memory...it will be explained in further detail.

When engaging in merchant contact activities never forget that you are a diplomat for the CWP cause and that first impressions are lasting ones. Rude behavior, being confrontational and other unacceptable behaviors, no matter how rudely one is treated by a merchant, is counterproductive to our mission. We're the good guys, remember?

What's in a name?

In a word, everything!

As was mentioned earlier, your primary responsibility when making merchant contacts is to gather information.

BURN THE FOLLOWING INTO YOUR MEMORY: THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF INFORMATION GRASSROOTS NEEDS IS THE NAME OF OWNER OF RECORD OR CORPORATE CEO OR PRESIDENT BECAUSE THEY ARE THE ONES WHO HAVE

DECISION-MAKING ABILITIES. IT SHOULD BE YOUR PRIMARY GOAL TO GET THIS NAME ABOVE ALL ELSE.

We've learned a little about merchant contact over the years...it's best to deal with the person at the top. It eliminates the temptation by a lower-level employee to "pass the buck", and a communication to a merchant with the owner's name on the letter of contact sends a much stronger message than a letter addressed to "Dear Business Owner". Admit it, did you ever really pay that much attention to a letter you've received addressed to "Occupant"? The business' name is obvious, and getting the address is as simple as opening a telephone book. It's the owner's name we need, and it's recommended that you get it FIRST before even mentioning the "NO CWP" issue. That way, if things go south, as they sometimes do, Grassroots has all the information necessary to forward an official communication. Case in point: a permit holder approached a retailer and immediately launched into the posting issue. The retailer took offense (it happens, they'll get over it) and told the permit holder to leave the store. When the permit holder asked the retailer for his name, the retailer refused to provide it. Had the permit holder gotten the owner's name first it would have made things easier in regard to sending a letter to the individual in question.

Despite the fact that we're the good guys, many people regard the CWP issue as extremely controversial. Don't be surprised if a retailer immediately "tightens up" if the subject is brought forward. It's a natural response and it's not worth getting confrontational over it. It's also for this reason that one need not even bring up the subject to a store's rank and file employees when obtaining information; many of these folks have little concept of firearms, self defense, or CWP. Resist the urge to deliver a lecture to the pimply kid at your local Shop-and-Rob...he has no decision-making authority.

For whatever reason, if you cannot get the name of the owner of record or company CEO there are alternative methods of obtaining it:

Owners business cards (usually in plain sight...get one or two)

- Local chambers of commerce

- City Hall/county records (many cities and counties require business permits; the records are available to the public)
- Social and professional contacts
- Inquiries from a posted merchant's adjoining business neighbors
- The post office
- Telephone books/yellow pages
- Inquiries to a posted merchant's supplying vendors
- The South Carolina Department of Revenue (803) 898-5751 maintains databases of all businesses and merchants in the state. A request usually takes about a week to complete.

A merchant who refuses to provide you with his or her name in the belief that withholding such information will prevent their business from being listed on Grassroots database is doing so blindly. Merchants cannot operate in the public eye under total immunity from public record or scrutiny.

Up close and personal: the physical visit

There are as many ways to conduct a merchant visit, as there are permit holders to conduct them, so a hard-and-fast formula cannot be provided you. You will simply have to do what works best for you. Some people simply hand the merchant a copy of the newsletter and an alternate sign and make a follow up visit at a later date. Others make more formal presentations. Here is a list of do's and don'ts for your consideration:

DO:

1. Familiarize yourself with the Law Abiding Citizens Self-Defense Act of 1996, our state's concealed weapons law. You don't need to commit the entire law to memory, but you should familiarize yourself with the law as it pertains to liability issues, absolution of negligence for not posting, and the employer's right to supersede an employee's right to carry while on company property or vehicles.
2. Conduct yourself as a professional. Dress appropriately-you don't need to wear a suit and tie but hunting attire/BDU's/cammies, dirty clothing, clothing in disrepair, or T-shirts with slogans which could be con-

Close Encounters of the Posted Kind

strued as controversial should be avoided. Present yourself as an ordinary guy or gal. Brush your teeth. Don't wear sunglasses (they make you appear cold and secretive) and leave the cologne or perfume at home. You are trying to get the business unposted, not a date.

3. Determine if the merchant or business is an individually owned proprietorship, a locally owned franchise, or part of a larger chain of stores.
4. Recognize if and when you get "the run-around". This is where "Do" rule number 1 comes into play. "We are required to post by law", "Our insurance company made us do this", and "It's corporate policy" are common brush-off phrases we've heard. Learn to anticipate and deal with such claims appropriately. Oftentimes a chain store has been posted per store manager's discretion.
5. Do have with you samples of Grassroots alternative signs. They are a major selling point.
6. Remind the merchant that their present postings bear no legal or practical notice on criminals. Remind the merchant that they are discriminating against customers with proven clean records.
7. Ask the specific reason why the merchant is posting.
8. Recognize that educating merchants about CWP and reluctance to patronize posted businesses is not "harassment".

DON'T

1. Break the law by going armed into a posted store. This is common sense. If you are caught carrying a firearm into a posted merchant, you could face arrest, fines up to \$200, spend a month in jail, and possible loss of your permit. If going unarmed unnerves you that much, ask a legally armed friend, relative or spouse to accompany you and have them escort you to and from your vehicle.
2. Make threats or get confrontational with a merchant. We are in the business of presenting ourselves as GOOD CITIZENS, not creating grudge matches. If a merchant visit "goes south", thank the retailer for his or her time and leave without further comment.
3. Remove any postings without express permission. You can, however, offer to replace the present signs with alternative decals.
4. Forget to thank the merchant for taking time out of his or her schedule to meet with you.

Getting past and over the word 'no'

It is the firm belief of Grassroots South Carolina that posting issues should be handled by local permit holders working in their own communities to solve posting issues.

If a merchant is unreceptive to a contact you may wish to engage in further contacts by having other permit holders in your area contact the merchant, the idea being if a merchant hears a steady stream of complaints from former customers

they'll unpost ("When they feel the heat, they'll see the light). Contact other permit holders in your area. Conduct a 'phone blitz' or 'postcard blitz' informing the merchant that you will return your business when your safety concerns are met to your satisfaction (Grassroots can supply you with postcards...you supply the signatures and stamps).

And finally, learn to recognize when a merchant or business simply wants no part of CWP issues. They will continue to be listed on our database as long as they are posted. If a posted merchant in your area is the scene of a violent crime notify Grassroots immediately.

Verifying merchants and businesses as being no longer posted.

If you volunteer to verify that a merchant or business is no longer posted recognize the fact that the signs may have simply be moved elsewhere on the premises. You need to do a physical walk-through. Check every entrance inside and out...THOROUGHLY. Ask the owner or management if necessary and don't forget to thank them. If unposted, return your patronage and let them know why.

<end>



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Playing God

PLAYING GOD

**By: Rev. Eugene C. Rollins,
D.Min, LPC S.C. Concealed
Weapons Permit Holder**

It began as a normal Tuesday with me leaving for my office at about eight A.M. The Tuesday that I have a break for lunch I usually prearrange a lunch meeting with my wife as I did this Tuesday. We choose one of our special places. It is a converted gas station in a neighborhood that began experiencing the "white flight" two decades ago. The little place has character, ambience and wonderful food at reasonable prices.

We were a fourth of the way through our meal when I heard a loud voice.

"Do like I say or die!"

I looked to see a tall thin man in his early twenties banishing an old thirty-two special in the face of the man at the cash register.

"Gimme the damn money now...or die!" he said in a loud demanding voice as he looked nervously around the place.

We were seated twenty-five feet behind him and to the left with white painted lattice separating us. I asked my wife to slide her chair back just a foot placing a solid wall between them.

I eased my right hand off the tablecloth and removed my .357 caliber Sig Sauer from my strong side under my suit coat. The Crimson Trace laser sight switch was already on with me having only to touch the button with the tip of my index finger. Sliding my left hand off the table my weapon is now in both hands resting on my right thigh. I touch the laser button and the red dot appears on the man's lower back and I move it up an inch behind and below his left ear. All that remains is to catch my breath and begin the squeeze of the three and a half-pound trigger pull. The red dot is unmoving, my hand is steady, as I have rehearsed this shot thousands of times. I shoot a three-inch group, off-hand at twenty-five yards. This is an easy shot. The man behind the counter is out of the line of fire and his life is in danger as well as the customers who are frozen in their seats. Although the robber is scared and

jerky the laser dot remains steady. The shot will be to the brain stem causing death instantaneously.

The laser dot is unmoving but my mind is moving at a thousand miles an hour. At this moment, in this instant I am God. In my hands, resting on my thigh is the power of life and death. His life, and yes, his death is in my hands. Along with being a "concealed weapons permit" holder, I hold the office of "Senior Minister" of a Presbyterian Church. I am fully aware that the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) voted last year for all Presbyterians to give up all their guns as an act of peace. For me, this simply became another emotional outburst on our part. Historically, Presbyterians are readers – learned people – but when it comes to complex emotional issues like abortion, homosexuality, and gun control we leave our brains at home and vote with our emotions. Unfortunately, knowledge of social history doesn't appear to be very important in formulating Presbyterian consciousness. It would serve the denominational leaders well to at least read John Lott's book: More Guns, Less Crime. But, beyond that, I have never been an obedient Presbyterian.

I am reminded of God's Word wherein it says that God is the author and finisher of life. The Bible says, *"Thou shalt not kill"* but in the Hebrew language I know what that text really says. It says, *"Thou shalt not murder."* There is a great difference between those two. I am not about to murder. This will be a "clean shoot." The laws of my state are clear. One life is clearly threatened and maybe ten to twelve others. I can legally and justifiably take his life. This will not be another San Ysidro, McDonald's shooting of 31 people, mostly children. Nor will this be another Luby's Cafeteria in Texas with 23 people being killed.

Scripture continues to race down the hallway of my mind. It says that God created humankind in God's own image. This man standing before me with the red dot dancing on his brain stem is created in the image of God. He is not a low-life piece of crap. He is a child of God. What has happened in his brief twenty or so years to bring him to this point? How has he been wounded? Why does he not know that the life standing before him is also sacred?

The trigger squeeze has begun. Am I playing God? Can I take this man's life? Yes! Part of this action is mechanical. I have shot thousands of rounds in self-defense training. The Sig in my hands is like an extension of myself. I can do what I need to do. But will I? Is it necessary? To snuff out his life is to snuff out part of God's image on this earth. Is it necessary? I can establish a "command presence" telling him to drop his gun or I will shoot. This could increase the risk of him shooting up the place, or force me to shoot him, therefore, I choose not to take the risk.

The man behind the counter fumbles with the money in the cash register. The man with the gun grows increasingly nervous. The decision is made. His life is worth much more than what is in the cash drawer. I will not shoot unless he shoots. The man behind the counter has a good chance of living even if he is shot. Even in wartime, only 10% of those who get shot die. The man behind the red dot has no chance.

With bills in hand the robber orders the cashier to turn around and I once again start the trigger squeeze. The robber looks around the place and races out the door. Everyone breathes for the first time in minutes. I replace the Sig, hug my wife and head for the bathroom just down the hall behind me. I make it just in time as I throw up my half-finished lunch.

As a concealed weapons carrier you may be called upon to play God. Do not play! You take seriously your right to bear arms. Take just as seriously the sanctity of human life. Taking a life is something that will be with you all of your life. Let us not play God!

P.S. The above vignette happened only in the fantasy of my mind. <end>

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Shouldn't We Really be "REPEALING" Gun Laws?

Shouldn't we repeal the gun laws ... if it'll save a single child?

By Vin Suprynowicz

Jessica Lynne Carpenter is 14 years old. She knows how to shoot; her father taught her. And there were adequate firearms to deal with the crisis that arose in the Carpenter home in Merced, Calif. -- a San Joaquin Valley farming community 130 miles southeast of San Francisco -- when 27-year-old Jonathon David Bruce came calling on Wednesday morning, Aug. 23.

There was just one problem. Under the new "safe storage" laws being enacted in California and elsewhere, parents can be held criminally liable unless they lock up their guns when their children are home alone ... so that's just what law-abiding parents John and Tephane Carpenter had done.

Some of Jessica's siblings -- Anna, 13; Vanessa, 11; Ashley, 9; and John William, 7 -- were still in their bedrooms when Bruce broke into the farmhouse shortly after 9 a.m.

Bruce, who was armed with a pitchfork -- but to whom police remain unable to attribute any motive -- had apparently cut the phone lines. So when he forced his way into the house and began stabbing the younger children in their beds, Jessica's attempts to dial 9-1-1 didn't do much good. Next, the sensible girl ran for where the family guns were stored. But they were locked up tight.

"When the 14-year-old girl ran to a nearby house to escape the pitchfork-wielding man attacking her siblings," writes Kimi Yoshino of the Fresno Bee, "she didn't ask her neighbor to call 9-1-1. She begged him to grab his rifle and 'take care of this guy.'"

He didn't. Jessica ended up on the phone.

By the time Merced County sheriff's deputies arrived at the home, 7-year-old John William and 9-year-old Ashley Danielle were dead. Ashley had apparently hung onto her assailant's leg long enough for her older sisters to escape. Thirteen-year-old Anna was wounded but survived.

Once the deputies arrived, Bruce rushed them with his bloody pitchfork. So they

shot him dead. They shot him more than a dozen times. With their guns.

Get it?

The following Friday, the children's great-uncle, the Rev. John Hilton, told reporters: "If only (Jessica) had a gun available to her, she could have stopped the whole thing. If she had been properly armed, she could have stopped him in his tracks." Maybe John William and Ashley would still be alive, Jessica's uncle said.

"Unfortunately, 17 states now have these so-called safe storage laws," replies Yale Law School Senior Research Scholar Dr. John Lott -- author of the book "More Guns, Less Crime." "The problem is, you see no decrease in either juvenile accidental gun deaths or suicides when such laws are enacted, but you do see an increase in crime rates."

Such laws are based on the notion that young children often "find daddy's gun" and accidentally shoot each other. But in fact only five American children under the age of 10 died of accidents involving handguns in 1997, Lott reports. "People get the impression that kids under 10 are killing each other. In fact this is very rare: three to four per year."

The typical shooter in an accidental child gun death is a male in his late teens or 20s, who, statistically, is probably a drug addict or an alcoholic and has already been charged with multiple crimes, Lott reports. "These are the data that correlate. Are these the kind of people who are going to obey one more law?"

So why doesn't the national press report what happens when a victim disarmament ("gun control") law costs the lives of innocent children in a place like Merced?

"In the school shooting in Pearl, Miss.," Dr. Lott replies, "the assistant principal had formerly carried a gun to school. When the 1995 ('Gun-Free School

Zones") law passed, he took to locking his gun in his car and parking it at least a quarter-mile away from the school, in order to obey the law. When that shooting incident started he ran to his car, unlocked it, got his gun, ran back, disarmed the shooter and held him on the ground for five minutes until the police arrived.

"There were more than 700 newspaper stories catalogued on that incident. Only 19 mentioned the assistant principal in any way, and only nine mentioned that he had a gun."

MY BIRTHRIGHT IS NOT FOR SALE!



The press covers only the bad side of gun use, and only the potential benefits of victim disarmament laws -- never their costs. "Basically all the current federal proposals fall into this category -- trigger locks, waiting periods," Lott said. "There's not one academic study that shows any reduction in crime from measures like these. But there are good studies that show the opposite. Even with short waiting periods, crime goes up. You

have women being stalked, and they can't go quickly and get a gun due to the waiting periods, so they get assaulted or they get killed."

The United States has among the world's lowest "hot" burglary rates -- burglaries committed while people are in the building -- at 13 percent, compared to "gun-free" Britain's rate, which is now up to 59 percent, Lott reports. "If you survey burglars, American burglars spend at least twice as long casing a joint before they break in. ... The number one reason they give for taking so much time is: They're afraid of getting shot."

The way Jonathon David Bruce, of Merced, Calif., might once have been afraid of getting shot ... before 17 states enacted laws requiring American parents to leave their kids disarmed while they're away from home.

Vin Suprynowicz is the assistant editorial page editor of the Las Vegas Review-Journal. He can be contacted at: vin@lvvj.com

The Story of Gun Control in England

Result of Losing Our Second Amendment Rights

You're sound asleep when you hear a thump outside your bedroom door. Half-awake, and nearly paralyzed with fear, you hear muffled whispers. At least two people have broken into your house and are moving your way. With your heart pumping, you reach down beside your bed and pick up your shotgun. You rack a shell into the chamber, then inch toward the door and open it. In the darkness, you make out two shadows. One holds something that looks like a crowbar. When the intruder brandishes it as if to strike, you raise the shotgun and fire. The blast knocks both thugs to the floor. One writhes and screams while the second man crawls to the front door and lurches outside. As you pick up the telephone to call police, you know you're in trouble. In your country, most guns were outlawed years before, and the few that are privately owned are so stringently regulated as to make them useless. Yours was never registered.

Police arrive and inform you that the second burglar has died. They arrest you for First-Degree Murder and Illegal Possession of a Firearm. When you talk to your attorney, he tells you not to worry: authorities will probably plea the case down to manslaughter. "What kind of sentence will I get?" you ask. "Only ten-to-twelve years," he replies, as if that's nothing. "Behave yourself, and you'll be out in seven."

The next day, the shooting is the lead story in the local newspaper. Somehow, you're portrayed as an eccentric vigilante while the two men you shot are represented as choirboys. Their friends and relatives can't find an unkind word to say about them. Buried deep down in the article, authorities acknowledge that both "victims" have been arrested numerous times. But the next day's headline says it all: "Lovable Rogue Son Didn't Deserve to Die." The thieves have been transformed from career criminals into Robin Hood-type pranksters. As the days wear on, the story takes wings. The national media picks it up, then the international media. The surviving burglar has become a folk hero.

Your attorney says the thief is preparing to sue you, and he'll probably win. The media publishes reports that your home

has been burglarized several times in the past and that you've been critical of local police for their lack of effort in apprehending the suspects. After the last break-in, you told your neighbor that you would be prepared next time. The District Attorney uses this to allege that you were lying in wait for the burglars.

A few months later, you go to trial. The charges haven't been reduced, as your lawyer had so confidently predicted. When you take the stand, your anger at the injustice of it all works against you. Prosecutors paint a picture of you as a mean, vengeful man. It doesn't take long for the jury to convict you of all charges. The judge sentences you to life in prison.

This case really happened. On August 22, 1999, Tony Martin of Emneth, Norfolk, England, killed one burglar and wounded a second. In April, 2000, he was convicted and is now serving a life term. How did it become a crime to defend one's own life in the once great British Empire?

It started with the Pistols Act of 1903. This seemingly reasonable law forbade selling pistols to minors or felons and established that handgun sales were to be made only to those who had a license. The Firearms Act of 1920 expanded licensing to include not only handguns but all firearms except shotguns. Later laws passed in 1953 and 1967 outlawed the carrying of any weapon by private citizens and mandated the registration of all shotguns.

Momentum for total handgun confiscation began in earnest after the Hungerford mass shooting in 1987. Michael Ryan, a mentally disturbed man with a Kalashnikov rifle, walked down the streets shooting everyone he saw. When the smoke cleared, 17 people were dead.

The British public, already de-sensitized by eighty years of "gun control", demanded even tougher restrictions. (The seizure of all privately owned handguns was the objective even though Ryan used a rifle.) Nine years later, at Dunblane, Scotland, Thomas Hamilton used a semi-automatic weapon to murder 16 children and a teacher at a public school. For many years, the media had portrayed all gun owners as mentally unstable, or worse, criminals. Now the press had a real kook with which to beat up law-

abiding gun owners. Day after day, week after week, the media gave up all pretense of objectivity and demanded a total ban on all handguns. The Dunblane Inquiry, a few months later, sealed the fate of the few side arms still owned by private citizens.

During the years in which the British government incrementally took away most gun rights, the notion that a citizen had the right to armed self-defense came to be seen as vigilantism. Authorities refused to grant gun licenses to people who were threatened, claiming that self-defense was no longer considered a reason to own a gun. Citizens who shot burglars or robbers or rapists were charged while the real criminals were released. Indeed, after the Martin shooting, a police spokesman was quoted as saying, "We cannot have people take the law into their own hands."

All of Martin's neighbors had been robbed numerous times, and several elderly people were severely injured in beatings by young thugs who had no fear of the consequences. Martin himself, a collector of antiques, had seen most of his collection trashed or stolen by burglars.

When the Dunblane Inquiry ended, citizens who owned handguns were given three months to turn them over to local authorities. Being good British subjects, most people obeyed the law. The few who didn't were visited by police and threatened with ten-year prison sentences if they didn't comply. Police later bragged that they'd taken nearly 200,000 handguns from private citizens. How did the authorities know who had handguns? The guns had been registered and licensed. Kinda like cars. Sound familiar?

**WAKE UP AMERICA,
THIS IS WHY OUR
FOUNDING FATHERS
PUT THE SECOND
AMENDMENT IN OUR
CONSTITUTION.**

Gun Licensing Leads to Increased Crime, Lost Lives

Gun Licensing Leads to Increased Crime, Lost Lives

By JOHN R. LOTT JR.

Who could possibly oppose licensing handgun owners? Requiring training for potential gun owners both in a classroom and at a firing range before they are allowed to buy a gun seems obvious. Licensing, especially when eventually coupled with registration, will supposedly also help identify criminals and prevent them from getting guns.

Yet, as usual with guns, the debate over licensing mentions just the possible benefits while ignoring the real costs to people's safety. If the California Senate passes licensing this week, it will not only cost Californians hundreds of millions of dollars annually, but, more important, it will increase violent crime.

In theory, if a gun is left at the scene of the crime, licensing and registration will allow a gun to be traced back to its owner. But, amazingly, despite police spending tens of thousands of man hours administering these laws in Hawaii (the one state with both rules), as well as in big urban areas with similar laws, such as Chicago and Washington, D.C., there is not even a single case where the laws have been instrumental in identifying someone who has committed a crime.

The reason is simple. First, criminals very rarely leave their guns at the scene of the crime. Would-be criminals also virtually never get licenses or register their weapons.

So what of the oft-stated claim that licensing will somehow allow even more comprehensive background checks and thus keep criminals from getting guns in the first place?

Unfortunately for gun control advocates, there is not a single academic study concluding that background checks reduce violent crime.

The Journal of the American Medical Assn. this month published an article showing that the Brady law produced no reduction in homicides or suicides. Other, more comprehensive research actually found that the waiting period in the Brady law slightly increased rape rates.

The Clinton administration keeps issuing press releases boasting that violent crime rates have fallen since 1994, when the Brady law was adopted. Yet violent crime started falling in 1991. The Brady law did not apply to 18 states, but after 1994 their violent crime fell as quickly as other states.

While still asserting that the law "must have some effect," U.S. Atty. Gen. Janet Reno was reduced this month to saying, "It might just take longer to measure [it]."

The reason why the Brady law does not affect criminals is simple. It is the law-abiding citizens, not the criminals, who obey the laws. For example, the waiting-period provision in the law prevented law-abiding women who were stalked or threatened from quickly obtaining a gun for self-defense.

There are still other problems with the law that the state Legislature is considering. When added to the current state waiting period, the processing time for a license will delay access to a gun by a month. While even short waiting periods increase rape rates, waiting periods longer than 10 days make it difficult for law-abiding citizens to obtain guns to protect themselves and increase all categories of violent crime.

The hundreds of dollars it will take to pay for the license and the up-to-eight-hour training course, as well as the many arcane reasons for losing a license, will reduce gun ownership by law-abiding people.

Since no other state has such restrictive rules for simply owning a gun, it is difficult to know how much gun ownership will decline, but similar rules for obtaining concealed handgun permits reduce the number of permits issued by 60%. The reduction in permits increased violent crime.

It is already illegal for criminals to go around carrying guns. Making it difficult for law-abiding citizens to even own guns in their own homes is not going to make them safer from the criminals.

Part of the proposed "training" appears better classified as indoctrination, making gun owners memorize grossly exaggerated

fears of the risks of owning a gun.

It will also be the poor who bear the brunt of these costs and who will be priced out of gun ownership. They are also most vulnerable to crime and benefit the most from being able to protect themselves.

With all the new gun laws already scheduled to go into effect after the November elections, why don't legislators simply require that California homeowners to put out a sign stating: "This home is a gun-free zone"? Legislators could lead by example and start with their own homes.

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John R. Lott Jr. is a Senior Research Scholar at the Yale University Law School. There is now a Second Edition of His Book "More Guns, Less Crime"

GrassRoots Leadership Elections

Opening of Nominations to the GrassRoots Board of Directors was announced in our Summer 2000 newsletter published in July. Nominations were closed at our GrassRoots monthly meeting September 18, 2000.

To serve on the GrassRoots Board of Directors 2001, the current BOD was nominated, as were four new people: Tim Finley, Terry Hicks, Paul Peters, and John Ponti.

Current GrassRoots directors are: Tom Burkizer, Rob Butler, Larry Coble, Bob Holliday, Ed Kelleher, and Charlie Robinette.

As this would give us 10 directors, and our bylaws allow us to have up to 15, the current BOD has proposed that all nominees be accepted as GrassRoots Directors for the year 2001. Biographical information on all directors will be published in our Winter Newsletter to be published January 2001.

**Ed Kelleher, President
GrassRoots SC**

Suppose You Were Fond of Books - Satire

Suppose You Were Fond of Books

By L. Neil Smith

Suppose you were fond of books.

You liked their leather bindings, their fancy endpapers, the way they speak to you of other times and places, the way they feel in your hand.

You even liked the way they smell.

Naturally you were aware that books are dangerous. They give people ideas. Over the long, sad course of history, they've resulted in the slaughter of millions -- books like Uncle Tom's Cabin, Das Kapital, Mein Kampf, even the Bible -- but you had too much intelligence, too much regard for the right of other people to read, write, think whatever they please, to blame the books themselves.

Now suppose somebody came along who agreed with you: books are dangerous -- and something oughta be done about it! Nothing you couldn't live with: numbers could be stamped inside them, a different number, not just in each kind of book, each title or edition -- but in each and every individual book.

"We can keep track of 'em better that way -- it'll help get 'em back if they're stolen."

But wait.... Isn't the right to freedom of expression, the right to create, exchange, and collect books -- without a trace of government harassment -- to read, write, and think whatever you please, supposed to be guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution? No matter who thinks it's wrong? No matter how "sensible" their arguments may sound for taking that right away?

You tried to defend your rights, but nobody listened. You appealed to the media; they were even more dependent on the Bill of Rights than you were, and American journalism always gloried in its self-appointed role as watchdog over the rights of the individual. But the sad truth was, that during its long, self-congratulatory history, it was more like a cur caught bloody-muzzled time after time, savaging the flocks it had been trusted to protect.

You were alone. You insisted that books don't kill people, people kill people. They laughed and told you that people who read books kill people.

Time passed.... Still they weren't satis-



fied. They wanted the serial numbers written down in record books. Then they wanted your name written down beside the numbers, along with your address, your driver's license number, your age, your race, your sex: "Cause we gotta right to know who's reading all these books!"

Soon they were demanding that bookstores be licensed. They forbade you to buy books by mail or in another state and required that your dealer report you if you bought more than one book in a five-day period. They forbade you to buy more than one book a month. They demanded that you wait five days, a week, three weeks before you could pick up a book you'd already paid for -- at a store subject to unannounced warrantless inspections and punitive closure by heavily-armed government agents. In Massachusetts and New Jersey, the mere possession of a book meant an automatic year in jail. At one point they offered to spend tax money to buy your books: "You've got too many. This is a purely voluntary measure -- for the time being."

Now they want to confiscate any of your books they think are too long: "No honest citizen needs a book with that many pages!"

Your taxes will be spent to burn them, and somehow you have a feeling that it's just the beginning, that some dark midnight, no matter how peaceable or agreeable or law-abiding you are, you're going to hear that knock on your door ...

Yes, books are dangerous. They start holy wars, revolutions, and make people dissatisfied with their lives.

But this is ridiculous!

Is it a nightmare? Another Gulag horror story? A blood-soaked page from the history of fascism? No, it's just the commonplace oppression people suffer every day when they feel about guns the way you feel about books.

Okay, maybe that feeling's hard to understand. But just try justifying your own love of books to a Reverend Donald Wildmon or an Ayatollah Khomeini. The very requirement that you must, in violation of your basic human rights, will make you inarticulate with rage.

Gun owners laugh at the notion of human rights, because they have none.

Guns are dangerous. Like books. Like books, the right to create, exchange, and collect them without a trace of government harassment, is supposed to be guaranteed. No matter who thinks it's wrong. No matter how "sensible" their arguments may sound for taking your rights away.

So what makes you think your books are any safer than your neighbor's guns? Whether you like books or guns, the issue's the same: **WHEN ANYBODY'S RIGHTS ARE THREATENED, EVERYBODY'S RIGHTS ARE THREATENED.**

L. Neil Smith is publisher of *The Libertarian Enterprise* and author of 24 books including *The Probability Broach*, *The Lando Calrissian Adventures*, *Forge of the Elders* (forthcoming in April, 2000) and *The Mitzvah*, with JPFO founder and executive director Aaron Zelman, available at <http://www.jpfo.org>

Letter to My Anti-Gun Friends

Letter to My Anti-Gun Friends

By Angel Shamaya

Dear Anti-Gun Friends,

I've finally figured out that my struggle to "convert you" is wrong. Instead of seeking to understand your position, I've tried to force my beliefs on you. I'm now realizing that each of our goals is truly about peace, so I am raising the white flag and reaching to understand your point of view.

To better comprehend your position, I am opening a dialogue with you. I'll answer any questions you may have regarding my strong belief in the right to keep and bear arms, and I hope you will truthfully answer the questions I pose to you below:

1) Do you believe the government is always honest with the people?

2) A woman who is unarmed is easy prey for an armed rapist. But there are many places in America where a woman cannot legally carry a gun to protect herself from attack. Do you think it is better for a woman to be raped than to fend off a rapist in self-defense with a gun? If so, why? If not, then do you advise women to resist armed rapists with their bare hands?

3) Britain has effectively disarmed its citizens. Their own Olympic shooters had to ship guns out of the country or turn them in to be destroyed. But if more gun control decreases crime, why is Britain experiencing an epidemic of gun-related violence?

4) Washington, D.C. has a per capita murder rate of 69 per 100,000 with the strictest gun control laws in the country. Indianapolis, with much more gun freedom, only has 9 murders per 100,000 residents. If disarming people makes cities safer, how can this be?

5) There are tens of thousands of cases of people getting no response from the 911 system--including scores of cases where people were still wounded or killed after having dialed 911. If a criminal is already inside your house, garage, or car, is dialing 911 really the most effective way of immediately dealing with

the situation?

6) Police also have no legal requirement to protect you when you call for help. People attacked by criminals and injured after calling police for help cannot sue in court and win. This places the responsibility of personal protection in the hands of each individual. Does it make sense that the individual be denied the same access to tools for self-protection that police enjoy?

7) Every national gun licensing and registration in history has led to confiscation. Gun registration in America has already led to confiscation in New York and California. If you support gun registration in America, would you please explain how having their guns registered helped the citizens in China, Nazi Germany, Cambodia, the Soviet Union, or Uganda? Do you think gun registration was beneficial to the Jews in Germany, the Cambodians under Pol Pot, or the Chinese under Mao Tse Tung?

8) Why are the media and the government working in unison to disarm America when the most in-depth scientific studies on the subject of private gun ownership shows that more guns in the hands of citizens REDUCES violent crime? What agenda for the US do they have planned that requires disarming the citizens of our country?

9) Criminals get guns, knives, and bludgeons any time they wish, and they disobey whatever laws they wish--including laws against robbery, rape, and murder. Why would you want to make law-abiding citizens easier prey by taking away their guns?

10) We rarely see both sides of the gun debate issue on national television. Why is that? It has already been proven by the most in-depth scientific study on the subject of guns and crime that more guns in the hands of law-abiding citizens means less crime.

11) The ACLU and most Americans think a door-to-door search for drugs is a gross violation of civil rights. Many gun banners would like to see door-to-door confiscation of guns. Are you willing to have Your Home searched for guns (or anything else) any time the government wishes to do so?

12) Every year Americans citizens legally kill 3-5 times as many criminals as are killed by all the law enforcement officials combined. Up to 2 1/2 million times a year, citizens use guns to legally thwart crime--usually when they are the intended victims. If citizens are disarmed, these intended victims will be defenseless against armed criminals. Are you saying that millions of Americans each year should have no right to stop criminals who are victimizing them? Would you prefer to give many more criminals the ability to succeed each year?

13) Today, many men and women have reason to believe that the Federal government is intent on disarming the American people as a means to significantly greater control the way citizens in disarmed China, Germany, the Soviet Union and Cuba were controlled. If these people are right, does this concern you?

14) There are 3,600 citizens in America for every law enforcement officer. (75,000 to 270,000,000) Do you believe each law enforcement officer can protect 3,600 people from violent criminals?

15) When they express anger, law-abiding gun owners are presented as "extremists" in today's media. American public servants surrounded by armed bodyguards and/or living in neighborhoods with private security are telling law-abiding citizens we cannot carry or even own (some cities/states) a gun--not even to protect our families and ourselves. Do you see the hypocrisy? Can you understand why tolerance pushed beyond a limit of fairness leads to justifiable anger? Can you understand why being told we cannot enjoy the same safety our leaders enjoy invokes outrage? Is a politician's life more important than your life? If so, why?

16) Mainstream media, which uses the publicly-owned electromagnetic spectrum to broadcast, has clearly proven to be biased against guns; it is not presenting both sides of the issue. On the other hand, <http://www.citizensofamerica.org> has a media program that presents the pro-gun side of the story. If you believe in "equality" regarding public property, should COA be given free media time to present their case? And just why IS the media so biased in the first place? (And why might the government be anti-gun?)

Letter to My Anti-Gun Friends

17) In many areas of the nation, a woman who is being stalked by her ex-husband must wait 10 days to purchase a gun--even if her life has been threatened. Why should law-abiding people in fear of their lives wait 10 days to get a gun when criminals have no waiting periods?

18) Criminals often kill people who've already turned over their money and put up no resistance. If a woman does not resist and the criminal intends to rape her, she will be raped. Do you think the government has a right to require women to submit to rape? If so, why?

19) Are we supposed to simply Submit when confronted with an armed rapist or murderer and leave our ourselves at their mercy? If so, why? Can you see how our society would revert law utter lawlessness if everyone agreed to simply submit to armed criminals?

20) Many anti-gun people use child gun-related accidents and/or deaths as a reason for banning guns. Since more children drown every year than are killed by guns, do you support banning swimming pools?

21) Current federal law now limits the capacity of a gun's magazine to 10 rounds. Police often empty their guns without ever stopping a criminal. If you were out alone at a roadside rest area and were approached by 3 hardened criminals with obvious intent to do you harm, would you want to be limited to only 10 rounds?

22) Cars are commonly used to commit crimes. Far more people die in cars every year than by guns--and no Constitutional Amendment guarantees our rights to own cars. Because more people die every year in cars than by guns, do you support a ban on cars?

23) Mayors of several cities in America are suing gun manufacturers under the guise of recovering costs of gun-related injuries which took place in their cities. Because more people are hurt or killed in cars than by guns, do you support these mayors in suing car manufacturers?

24) Numerous cities in America criminalize carrying guns for self-defense.

These same cities make exceptions for people carrying money and jewels. Do you agree that money and jewels are more important to protect than people's lives?

25) The National Guard is paid by the Federal government, occupies Federal property, uses weapons owned by the Federal government, and punishes trespassers under Federal law. Do you truly believe the National Guard is a State agency?

26) The National Guard is also what is commonly called the modern-day militia in anti-gun propaganda as a way of trying to deal with the Second Amendment. If the Constitution was referring to the National Guard with the term "militia," how can we account for the fact that the Second Amendment was ratified in 1787--while the National Guard was created by an act of Congress in 1917?

27) The FBI and ATF (agencies of the Federal government) gunned down innocent women and children and burned most of the evidence down to the ground in Waco. They murdered Randy Weaver's wife. The police and other state agencies shot to death Donald Scott in a bogus drug raid in California. Why would you trust these government agencies with fully automatic weapons but not trust a law-abiding individual with a simple self-defense handgun?

of Nazi Germany, China, the Soviet Union, Cambodia, and Cuba propagandized against the segments of their societies that opposed complete state control?

29) Many documented statements by anti-gun groups claim that the Second Amendment refers to the power of the States to keep and bear arms. In other sections of the Constitution, we find the following: "the right of the PEOPLE to peaceably assemble," the "right of the PEOPLE to be secure in their homes," "enumeration here of certain rights shall not be construed to disparage others retained by the PEOPLE," and "the powers not delegated herein are reserved to the states respectively, and to the PEOPLE." Do you honestly believe "the right of the PEOPLE to keep and bear arms" refers to the States but excludes Individuals?

30) Handguns are the cheapest, lightest, most portable, easiest-to-use, and most effective means of self-defense. This is why they are used by police officers. Denying people the right to use this tool leaves them defenseless against criminals on the street. Why do you advocate that law-abiding people not be allowed to protect themselves with the best means of self-defense available?

31) The Federal government and the United Nations have been working in unison for years to systematically disarm American citizens. Is it even remotely possible that the government has something planned that so many Americans would be against that it is critical that they disarm us? If so, do you see that supporting their disarmament plans could be working against the American citizens committed to preserving freedom?

I do appreciate your thoughts on these matters and look forward to your reply. I am committed to answering every question you send me by giving each one careful attention and a thorough, intelligent reply as soon as possible. If you pose a question I cannot intelligently address, I will seek out an answer until I can.

Respectfully,

Angel Shamaya

<http://www.keepandbeararms.org>
webmaster@keepandbeararms.org



28) The law-abiding gun owners of today are presented as "gun nuts, extremists, militia fanatics, and killers" in the communications media. Is it possible they are depicted this way to sway public opinion toward disliking guns? If so, why would they do that? How is this different from the way the news organs

Civilians Have no Right to Bear Arms, Says U.S. Justice Department

Civilians Have no Right to Bear Arms, Says U.S. Justice Department

By Dr. Michael S. Brown

The case is known as *United States of America v. Timothy Joe Emerson*. Few people will be aware of this important legal battle until it reaches the Supreme Court, perhaps next year. Briefly, the case began with an ugly divorce fight that took place in Texas in 1998. As is commonly done in divorce cases, a judge issued a routine restraining order at the request of Mrs. Emerson. Unfortunately for Mr. Emerson, nobody told him about a federal law called the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. This law makes it a federal felony to possess a gun if subject to a restraining order.

Like all good Texans, Emerson kept a gun around the house and he was convicted of violating this rather obscure statute. The appeal landed on the desk of one of the few federal judges who believes the Second Amendment means what it says. He did not think it was fair to deprive a citizen of an important Constitutional right without a proper hearing, so he reversed the lower court decision. To show that he knew what he was doing, he included an impressive 12-page review of the history of the right to keep and bear arms, starting with the English common law on which our modern laws are based. His decision was appealed again by the government. Attorneys for both sides offered their oral arguments before the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals last week. I recently spoke with some attorneys who have observed 2nd Amendment issues in the courts. It seems that good defense attorneys hate to bring up the 2nd Amendment in court for very good reasons. Since the 2nd Amendment is almost completely neglected in law school, most lawyers know very little about it. If they are told anything at all, they hear only that it guarantees the right of the National Guard to be armed. Since judges attended those same law schools, this is the interpretation that they normally use. Defense attorneys who argue otherwise, along with their clients, are dealt with harshly. Therefore, only the most desperate or incompetent counselors ever use the 2nd Amendment as a defense. This situation is self-perpetuating.

Judges see the 2nd Amendment cited by underpaid public defenders representing the most undeserving clients. Each time they rule against these hapless counselors and loathsome criminals, another anti-Second Amendment decision is recorded in legal history. These poorly argued cases can then be used by government lawyers to show that legal precedent is on their side.

Since judges and government prosecutors occupy a high place in society's food chain, it is easy for them to deny the standard model of the 2nd Amendment. It's not that they hate guns. On the contrary, many legal folks are avid shooters and have substantial gun collections. Like many politicians and celebrities, they simply believe that their elite status entitles them to keep and bear arms while they deny that right to the unwashed lower classes. Of course you won't hear that spoken publicly by anyone in authority. Even Bill Clinton has made it a point to say that he does not intend to take away anyone's hunting rifles or shotguns. Note however, that this famous parser of words never mentioned the 2nd Amendment or a citizen's right to self-defense. To understand the position of the Clinton administration, one should read the chilling words of the Justice Department attorney who represented the government's position in the Emerson case last week.

One of the three judges asked: "You are saying that the Second Amendment is consistent with a position that you can take guns away from the public? You can restrict ownership of rifles, pistols and shotguns from all people? Is that the position of the United States?" Government attorney William B. Mateja replied simply: "Yes." The judge then asked: "Is it the position of the United States that persons who are not in the National Guard are afforded no protections under the Second Amendment?" The response was: "Exactly." So there you have it. The Justice Department, under the authority of Bill Clinton, believes that the amendment listed second in the Bill of Rights conveys only the redundant and useless concept that military units have the right to be armed. They ask us to believe that "the right of the people" really refers to the right of the state. Some say this interpretation is Orwellian, or Marxist, but one thing is certain; the founders would be shocked at how their words have been

distorted. After two centuries of neglect, there are suddenly scores of recent law articles that address the original intent of the Second Amendment. The overwhelming majority support the standard model. The founders, after much well-documented debate about militias and personal freedom, knew exactly what they were doing when they agreed on the rigid language, "shall not be infringed". An administration known for twisting the facts has twisted them one more time.

Dr. Michael S. Brown is a gun rights activist and columnist in Vancouver, Washington. He may be reached at www.geocities.com/rkba2000.

DOES HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF?

Edmund Burke said in 1770 that, "When bad men combine, the good must associate; else they will fall one by one, an unpitied sacrifice in a contemptible struggle." We are in such times now. GrassRoots is the largest pro gun rights organization in SC. No other organization in South Carolina is fighting to improve the gun laws in SC as aggressively as GrassRoots. Without GrassRoots, SC gun owners have no voice in the SC legislature. And with no voice, our rights get taken away bit by bit.

Mao Tse-tung said, "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." But we at GrassRoots believe we can still find strength and power in numbers. The greater the numbers of GrassRoots members, the greater the strength and power GrassRoots will have to influence politicians and legislation. Remember, if we do not band together today, tomorrow we will be like Australia and Great Britain - i.e., no more gun rights. Once we are disarmed, then we will realize Mao Tse-tung was right.

When we talk to legislators, the first question they want answered is how many members GrassRoots has. They do not care how many newsletters we send out each issue (10,000), or how many people are on our email action alert list (2,000), or how many people we influence. They only care about how many people put their money where their mouth is. ***That is why it is so important that you - YES, YOU - join GrassRoots. Do it today. The gun rights you save will be your own!***

Doctors and Gun Control

The Social Hygiene of Gun Control

By Timothy Wheeler, M.D.

We share with physicians the private details of our lives so they can make us well. We depend on them to educate us in the promotion of health. How tempting it is, then, for a doctor to misuse that trust and offer a heartfelt political belief as medical advice. Especially if it's for the good of children.

Pediatricians, regrettably, yielded to that temptation long ago with gun control. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) issued an update on Monday of its recommendations for preventive child health care. The guidelines refer doctors to a detailed action plan and set forth a multi-tiered advocacy effort. Specifically, the AAP advises doctors to "incorporate questions about guns into their patient history taking" and to "urge parents who possess guns to remove them, especially handguns, from the home."

Doctors are supposed to work this political agenda on patients and their families, in their communities, and in government. The AAP guidelines urge lawmakers to ban handguns and "assault weapons" as "the most effective way to reduce firearm-related injuries." Civil rights and the Constitution are not a hindrance to the AAP, the Second Amendment apparently regarded as an embarrassing nuisance.

Pediatrics has a long and proud tradition of promoting the well being of children. Widespread immunization against polio and diphtheria, for example, is the result of years of pediatricians' vigilance and dedication. As a result, these old scourges are just a bad memory. Because of pediatricians, children in abusive homes are routinely rescued from injury or death.

But with these guidelines, pediatricians are redirecting the principle of prevention into our lives in a way never intended by their professional mandate.

The pediatrician who is the chief architect of the AAP's anti-gun guidelines also founded the Handgun Epidemic Lowering Plan (HELP) Network. This is an exclusive organization dedicated to banning guns. Physicians who oppose the HELP Network's radical agenda are not even allowed to attend the group's conferences, a policy unthinkable in any scientific organization.

Public health often balances the general good against personal freedoms. One need only look at the resistance of some parents to child immunizations to understand the issues of personal autonomy at stake.

But when public health intervention undermines a constitutional right, citizens are justified in resisting it. Today there is no clearer example of a public health assault on civil liberties than the pediatricians' campaign to persuade families that guns are bad. There is another problem with the public health anti-gun crusade. It urges doctors to probe their young patients and their parents about guns in the home. Such meddling violates the boundary between a patient and doctor. Patients trust doctors to do what is right for them. When the doctor is driven by an ulterior motive such as trying to turn kids and their parents against gun ownership, she is committing an unethical act deserving of disciplinary action.

The AAP anticipates some patients may not go along quietly. The organization's instructional packet for speakers includes a section on how to deal with "challenging individuals" who might object to the AAP's gun demonization program on scientific or constitutional grounds. American gun owners feel the heat being slowly turned up. Now they are coming to realize that Clinton-Gore and the American Academy of Pediatrics are making no exception for law-abiding gun owners. In the war of words, they are being lumped in with the very few criminal gun owners who make daily headlines. A suburban father who takes his kids to the shooting range is the moral equivalent of a crack-addicted father who abandons his child to the care of another criminal. No wonder the National Rifle Association is signing up new members so fast.

We have become accustomed to exaggerated rhetoric from politicians. But our doctors? Never. Never should we have to put up with feigned motives and false counsel from the professionals in whose hands we place our children's wellness.

We can, however, believe the meaning of one pronouncement from the HELP Network's founder: "Guns are a virus that must be eradicated." American gun owners, you have been warned.

State Farm Cont.

State Farm's agent also tried to stop Gary from shooting by claiming all of the other national insurance companies had similar "no shooting" rules, so Gary shouldn't bother to shop around. But Gary did shop around, and he quickly learned that many companies were more than happy to insure safe shooters.

Gary now has all the insurance coverage he wants from companies that are happy to have his business. At prices lower than he was paying State Farm.

Gary still shoots in the ravine behind his house. And he's still a good neighbor. But he's really, really disappointed with State Farm. "This never was about risk," Gary concludes. "It's about guns. State Farm just doesn't want me shooting. Ever."<end>

GrassRoots may be contacted for further information including the termination letter from State Farm (with reason cited) as well as a detailed events write-up describing how State Farm handled this case start to finish. There's no hidden agenda here. Gary's letter of cancellation is available for concerned policyholders who believe they may also be at risk for non-coverage by State Farm. Gary's range was a private range, not commercial, and not open to the public. Gary was in compliance with all local, county, and state laws regarding shooting ranges and the use of his property. Contact Gary at: gatkinson@mdccolumbia.com

ACTION - GrassRoots South Carolina, urges all policyholders with State Farm to contact State Farm and voice complaints regarding their decision to cancel policies based on discrimination of lawful use of firearms. Voice your protests and concerns directly to them or else find yourself facing even stricter policy guidelines in the future - like possible non-coverage if firearms are in the home. To contact State Farm call (309) 766-2311. Members of the media may call (309) 766-7550.

State Farm Insurance Co.
One State Farm Plaza
Bloomington IL 61710-0001
309-766-7554

Online, you may contact State Farm at:
[https://sfinsguides.statefarm.com/insur/F
orms/Comments.asp](https://sfinsguides.statefarm.com/insur/Forms/Comments.asp)

Murder by Gun Control

Murder by Gun Control

By L. Neil Smith

Why is everybody being so damned polite?

No sane individual living in the last days of the 20th century would knowingly welcome Nazis, the KGB, the Khmer Rouge, the ATF, or the FBI into their homes. We've learned too much from what happened to Jews in Germany, Kulaks in Russia, "landlords" in China, everybody in Cambodia, and victims of state terrorism at Ruby Ridge and Waco.

But let the Jackbooted Thugs' Ladies' Auxiliary slap on makeup and broomstick skirts, let them prattle in squeaky little girl voices and breathe their vegetarian breath all over us, and for some reason we think we have to ask them in and offer them chamomile tea.

Well, to hell with that. I used to give a lecture at the local university that began like this: "Until this morning you could plead ignorance for positions you take or fail to take on the moral and political issues of the day. When you leave this classroom an hour from now, having heard the facts I'm about to present, it'll either be as a brand new libertarian, or as a fully self-aware fascist monster."

Today I say the same to politicians, bureaucrats, cops, Handgun Control, Inc., Colorado Governor Bill Owens, and those so miserably lacking in originality that they had to plagiarize Louis Farrakan (of all people) and launch a "Million Moms March". Also, anybody else who thinks it's morally acceptable to use the hired guns of government to take everybody else's guns away.

Gun control may have felt like a nice, warm, fuzzy idea to its advocates back in the 1960s. However today, owing to a great deal of serious legal and historical scholarship -- and a series of horrifying but highly educational events -- anyone who wishes to violate the fundamental covenant on which this nation is based, by attempting to outlaw personal weapons, has to get past three extremely inconvenient but absolutely incontrovertible facts.

(1) Every year, in this nation of more than a quarter billion individuals, a few thousand (three quarters of them suicides) are killed with firearms, while millions of Americans successfully use

personal weapons to save themselves and others from injury or death. Guns save many, many times more lives than they take.

(2) In every jurisdiction that has made it even microscopically easier for individuals to carry weapons, violent crime rates have plummeted by double-digit percentages. Vermont, where no permission of any kind is required to carry a gun, is named in many respectable surveys as the safest state to live in.

(3) More telling and urgent, every episode of genocidal mass murder in history has been preceded by a period of intense disarming of the civil population, usually with "public safety" or "national security" as an excuse. According to Amnesty International -- hardly a gang of right wing crazies -- in the 20th century alone (in events entirely separate from war), governments have slaughtered more than a hundred million people, usually their own citizens.

The U.S. is far from immune. Look up "Operation Keelhaul".

Clearly, if those millions had been armed, their own governments couldn't have murdered them. And if the governments hadn't known where all the weapons were and who possessed them, the people couldn't have been disarmed. It follows, then, that no amount of gun control -- especially "soft" measures like registering guns or gun owners -- is reasonable or safe. Those who tremble at the idea of personal weapons -- "hoplophobes" is the diagnostic term -- are fond of saying that guns are made for only one purpose. Well, gun control serves only one purpose, too -- the incapacitation and extermination of whole peoples.

That's why we call it by its right name: "victim disarmament".

If you think it can't happen here, ask Donald Scott (look him up, too). Ask Vicky and Sammy Weaver. Ask 82 innocent men, women, and children (two dozen beautiful, harmless, helpless little children) from the Seventh Day Adventist church at Mount Carmel near Waco, Texas. Oops, you can't ask them, can you? Because they're all dead -- murdered in cold blood by government terrorists who have yet to be brought to justice.

Let's ask some questions that everybody on my side's been too polite -- too damned polite -- to ask before.

What kind of mind would sacrifice millions for the sake of a few thousands, especially when it's been demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that victim disarmament can't save even those thousands?

What kind of mind wants a return to mean streets and ever-soaring crime rates?

What kind of mind collaborates with agents of mass murder and genocide?

Make no mistake: you victim disarmament types are sick, sick people, in the words of T.D. Melrose, who'd rather see a woman raped in an alley and strangled with her own pantyhose than see her with a gun in her hand.

You're people, down deep in your blackened, shriveled souls, who wait like vultures, secretly delighted whenever atrocities like the Columbine shootings occur -- atrocities whose only significance to you is their usefulness in advancing your political agenda. Dancing in the blood of innocents, just like the lying, thieving, murdering rapist you've sent to the White House twice in a row.

You're people who, like German voters in the 1930s, have empowered and unleashed on your decent and unsuspecting neighbors the most evil and violent terrorist bureaucracy in American history.

You're people, in short, who must be stupid, insane, or evil to continue arguing -- in the face of indisputable facts and irrefutable logic -- that others must be forced into a state of helplessness and victimized by individual criminals or the state.

Stupid, insane, or evil.

You are morally responsible for what happened at Waco. It was undertaken (bad choice of words, probably) by your favorite agency, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, at your behest, in your name, in pursuance of the policies you've always advocated. The blood of those babies, of their mommies and daddies, is on your head. You did it. You killed them as surely as if it were your hands at the controls of those tanks.

Murder by Gun Control

Stupid, insane, or evil.

Harsh words, but what's the point in being polite to advocates of mass murder and genocide? Those are the alternatives: stupid, insane, or evil. Smart people, sane people, good people know, in the words of Robert A. Heinlein, that "An armed society is a polite society."

If you were interested in saving lives -- even one life -- you'd join me in demanding that the Bill of Rights be stringently enforced, that the 25,000 gun laws on the books (each and every one illegal, each and every one responsible for the injury or death of countless individuals) be repealed, nullified, or otherwise disposed of.

Immediately.

For the children.

You'd agree that, as long as we permit the public school system to continue to exist, it has an obligation to instruct children, starting in kindergarten, in the safe and effective use of firearms.

Allow me to repeat that: "safe and effective use".

Emphasis on "effective".

Now don't go all soft and skooshy on me. I can see the razor wire and bayonets behind your New Age gobbledygook. I can hear the tramp, tramp, tramp as you goose-step to the Horst Wessel Song. I can smell the first faint traces of gas seeping from your chambers of death.

Let's make it clear for the dimmest bulbs among you: the kids at Columbine High didn't die from too many guns, they died from too few. I'm not suggesting that the teachers should have carried guns -- not as franchised agents of the state. They should have carried guns as ordinary individuals, exercising a sacred right, and in performance of a solemn duty to protect the young lives that were placed -- very foolishly, as it turned out -- in their hands.

What's more, those young lives needed weapons, too. Instead, they were forbidden the means of self-defense -- even, in effect, the _knowledge_ of self-defense -- and like millions of victims before them, their numbers were added to the ongoing Gun Control Holocaust.

And you killed them.

Stupid, insane, or evil.

You killed them all.

How many more helpless individuals will have to die for you -- be sacrificed on the altar of your nice, warm, fuzzy idea -- before you see what you've done? Don Kates, Gary Kleck, Sanford Levinson, John Lott, all were card-carrying liberal college professors who somehow forced themselves to look at the facts instead of the lint in their bellybuttons. All (and others) have reached the conclusion that the Second Amendment says exactly what we "gun nuts" always claimed it did, and that society is better off if its members have personal weapons handy. "More Guns, Less Crime" is how Lott puts it.

"Million Moms March", indeed. When you came to my town of 100,000, all you could attract was four deluded idiots. There were _16 times_ that number out in the parking lot, picketing your meeting!

Measly, Miniscule March.

Stupid, insane, or evil. Those are the choices. Be honest. Call yourselves "Mush Minded Morons" if you decide that stupid is the least intolerable of the options available. If you choose insane, how about "Mentally Mangled Messes"? If you want to go straight to evil, "Mass Murdering Monsters". They're alliterative as hell, and truthful.

Stupid, insane, or evil. Like it or not, after today, those three words are going to start hanging around your necks like the fabled rotting albatross until, no matter where you go, no matter what you try to say, the first association your presence calls up in people's minds will be "mass murdering genocides".

Stupid, insane, or evil.

Or all of the above.

Your choice.

L. Neil Smith is publisher of _The Libertarian Enterprise_ and author of 24 books including _The Probability Broach_, _The Lando Calrissian Adventures_, _Forge of the Elders_ (forthcoming in April, 2000) and _The Mitzvah_, with JPFO founder and executive director Aaron Zelman, available at <http://www.jpfo.org>

(cont. from front page)

- * prohibit CWP holders from carrying anywhere other than in jails and prisons.
- * require prepayment on accommodations to legally possess the means to effective self-defense in one's own rented room.
- * prosecute a CWP holder because a posted business did not have a sign that was easily seen.
- * allow a CWP application to be denied without setting a legal standard that must be followed by the State.
- * require three photographs with a CWP application when SLED does not use them because SLED uses the driver's license photograph.

GrassRoots will lead the fight to reform these unreasonable gun laws, but we need your support! You must let your politicians know how important the ***GrassRoots reasonable gun law reforms*** are to you. You must let them know you will vote to support only those politicians who vote to support the ***GrassRoots reasonable gun law reforms***.

Politicians are not stupid. A politician's primary concern is to stay in office. They play a numbers game. If the majority of people want unreasonable gun laws to remain the law, then the politician will vote to keep the unreasonable laws in place. We must show the politicians we - the GrassRoots members and supporters - are the voting majority!

The first thing politicians want to know about GrassRoots is how many members we have. Politicians do not pay attention to small groups because small groups are weak and can not organize and hurt the politician at election time. The more people who belong to GrassRoots, the more attention the politician will pay to ***GrassRoots' reasonable gun law reforms***. ***If you support the GrassRoots reforms, then it is vitally important that you join GrassRoots! GrassRoots' power comes from YOU - our members! Remember, there is strength and power in numbers, and the politicians know it!***

News From Down Under

One Year After Australia Gun Grab - Crime Rates Are Up

By Vin Suprynowicz

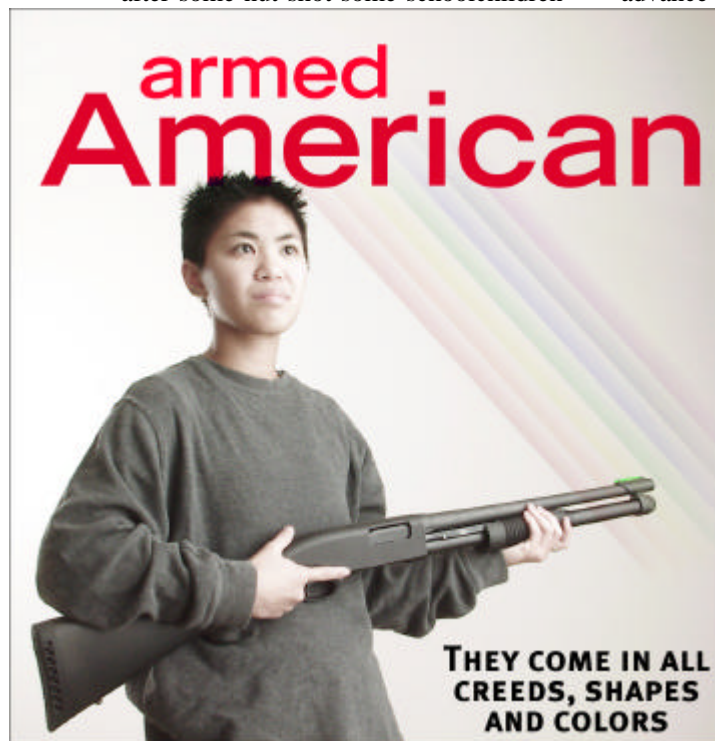
(THE LIBERTARIAN) One year ago, Australian gun owners were forced to surrender for destruction 640,381 personal firearms (including semi-automatic .22 rifles and shotguns.) This program cost the Aussie government more than \$500 million, and produced heart-stopping photos as veritable boneyards full of Browning A-5 shotguns and other beloved collectors' items were surrendered up to be crushed by steamshovels in a kind of steel-and-walnut charnel field. Now, Keith Tidswell of Australia's Sporting Shooters Association reports the results are in. (The entire interview with Mr. Tidswell, conducted by Ginny Simone, is available as "Surprise, Surprise" in the "Archive News" section of the web sight <http://www.nralive.com>)

Drum roll, please.

Mr. Tidswell reports, based on a full 12 months of data:

Australia-wide, homicides up 3.2 percent. Australia-wide, assaults up 8.6 percent. Australia-wide, armed-robberies up 44 percent (yes, 44 percent.) In the state of Victoria, homicides-with-firearms are up 300 percent. (Up until the government gun grab, figures for the previous 25 years had shown a steady decrease in homicides with firearms, as well as armed robberies, Mr. Tidswell notes.) Although at the time of the victim disarmament order, the Aussie Prime Minister decreed "Self-defense is Not a reason for owning a firearm," there has also been a dramatic increase in break-ins and assaults of the elderly, now left with no means to protect themselves. (One wonders whether the Prime Minister's personal bodyguards gave up their military-style weapons.) Mr. Tidswell reports: "Australian politicians are on the spot and at a loss to explain how no improvement in 'safety' has been observed after such monumental effort and expense to successfully 'rid society of guns.'"

Meantime, efforts to systematically remove such weapons from the hands of the unruly, untrustworthy commoners of England have been underway at least as far back as the end of World War II. (By 1946, most of the valuable private rifles donated by American NRA members in response to an emergency call after the 1940 military disaster at Dunkirk had been rounded up from the British "home defense" auxiliaries and either dumped at sea or else poured into new concrete foundations, where -- Londoners confided to me on my last visit, in 1998 -- their steel outlines still occasionally surface out of well-traveled concrete walkways.) Thus, the recent effective outlawing of handguns for civilian Britons after some nut shot some schoolchildren



in Dunblane, Scotland (the government teacher charged with their safety was, needless to say, unarmed and thus useless), was only the last straw. Given that the English peasant populace has thus been unarmed somewhat longer, are there any trends developing there, to which the Australians can themselves now look forward?

In an article by Helen Searls, titled "Trial by Fury" and scheduled for release in the October issue of Reason magazine, we learn: "In recent months the British government has unveiled an array of measures that promise to change the legal system profoundly. This spring, British citizens learned that Tack Straw, the

home secretary (the rough equivalent of the American attorney general, though with more political power), plans to abolish trial by jury for all but the most serious crimes. He is also considering lifting the rule against double jeopardy, which prevents a defendant from being tried more than once for the same crime, and is thinking of criminalizing offensive language even when it is spoken in the privacy of one's home.

"These days, defendants' rights are under attack. The right to silence is now severely qualified, trial by jury is under review, legal aid is being wiped out, defendants now have to disclose their defense strategy to the prosecution well in advance of trial, and in rape cases the

cross-examination rights of defendants have been drastically restricted. ..." But here in America, we're assured that those who would cling to the right to bear arms are nothing but psychiatrically disturbed Neanderthal throwbacks, clutching at the last talisman of 19th century male privilege and power, a kind of combination surrogate penis and security blanket which they hope will magically protect them from the stresses of a changing world. Yeah, that must be it. There's no "practical" reason to cling to such an outmoded, violent, and dangerous technology. It's not as though, were we to give up our guns, armed criminals would take advantage of the situation to commit more violent

"crimes" against us, or the ever-beneficent government that brought us Ruby Ridge and Waco would take the opportunity to start eroding any of our "other" rights. Unless you're some kind of paranoid, black helicopter conspiracy nut, where on earth would you get ideas like those?

Vin Suprynowicz is the assistant editorial page editor of the Las Vegas Review-Journal. He can be contacted at: vin@lvjr.com

<end>

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