

Responses to Mass Shooting Attacks *An Interview with Ed Monk*

Interview by Gila Hayes

Today, we're joined by Retired U.S. Army Lt. Colonel Ed Monk who has agreed to address questions about surviving a mass shooting event.

Ed is a retired Army officer, former schoolteacher, current law enforcement officer and firearms trainer. For 16 years, he has researched the active shooter problem and provided training to law enforcement agencies, schools, churches, and businesses nationwide, and has been a featured speaker at the police, tactical, and faith-based security conferences for several years. He has been hosted by training facilities coast to coast and offers classes for unarmed and armed responders and for instructors. His formal education includes a BS from West Point, an MS from Kansas State University, and he's a graduate of the Army's Command and General Staff college.



Watch the longer, more casual video version of our interview with Ed Monk at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMm-cjzg82k>

eJournal: Ed, I am grateful to have the chance to learn from you today. Thank you for being here. Your bio shows what a broad demographic you reach when you teach active shooter response and tactics classes. What motivates your students? Have they experienced a critical incident or has there been a shooting at venues to which they go?

Monk: It's not that something happened to them personally or someone close to them—which is often how you get people in classes who want a gun in their home or to carry for personal defense against a mugger. For the presentations that I do, I've found both general interest and frustration on the topic. Why do they keep happening? Why can we not respond any better? Over the last 21 months we've had roughly one shooting a month. It is so frustrating that we refuse to do anything about it!

Requests for presentations surge after a big attack. For example, after the Sutherland Springs, TX church shooting, people from churches were asking me to come work with them. My phone rang nonstop for about a week after the Uvalde school shooting, and I have been going nonstop ever since.

As far as the hands-on firearms training for active shooter response, I teach armed citizens who've volunteered for or

taken charge of their church security team or just want to prepare and add to their current skills. They may already have a gun for defense and already may carry a gun in public, but you and I both know that statistically, if we're attacked by somebody outside our home and are forced to use a firearm, the odds are very high that it's going to be a mugger, not an active shooter. These are completely different attacks; they're different in about 50 ways that I go over in my classes.

Others who call me are armed guards, armed school staff, and cops, including school resource officers. I also have classes for instructors who want to add active shooter response to their curriculum or who teach it and want to see how I do it. I tell them they can come see what I do and copy it. I tell instructors to do the buffet method where they take what they like out of it and leave what they don't.

eJournal: The depth of the research that you include in class is a hallmark of your work, Ed. From those statistics and numbers, you've drawn solutions that are based on evidence, not on what on mistaken ideas that we may have drawn from news reports or our own fears. As students, we may come to you thinking, "If X happens, I'll do this." What myths do you find yourself most commonly debunking?

Monk: Probably the biggest myth is that getting cops there is the solution. That is causing high victim counts. In 1999, cops just circled outside the Columbine school and waited for over 40 minutes for SWAT to show up. Supposedly, law enforcement and the country learned that the active shooter is not a SWAT problem.

We just can't afford the time that it takes to get SWAT there. Lesson number one in 1999 was we can't wait the 45-90 minutes it takes to get SWAT there, but it's going to take probably five to ten minutes to get a single patrol cop there. That's too much time, too.

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We have to learn lesson number two: we can't even wait on the cop. That's too much time. If you look at how active shooters shoot, they have already shot 20 to 30 people by the time the first cop gets there. Time is killing us. We have to stop it earlier or there will be a high victim count. The intended victims, the people he came there to shoot, are going to have to stop this.

He's going to shoot at a rate that will get into double digits, pretty quickly. There are pretty good odds for a single-digit victim count if you can stop him within 30 seconds of the first shot. There is no way you can call somebody who's not already there, to get there and stop it within 30 seconds. You are left with the people who are there; they are the ones that have to stop it.

I go to conferences for cops and schools where they talk about phone apps to alert the cops faster, or panic buttons in the teacher's room. The cop still has to drive there, get in the building, and find him. It is going to take too long. There's just no mathematical way to win that fight.

The second myth—and this is mostly for schools—is that lockdowns are the answer. Lockdowns get a lot of people killed. Lockdowns were not designed or intended as responses to active shooters. We already knew how to do lockdowns, so we just took this big round peg, and we hammered it into a square hole.

Schools like lockdowns because they're easy to type, they are easy to drill, and they don't make anybody upset. Lockdowns don't trigger anybody, all I have to do is pull the shade on the door window, lock the doorknob, turn out the lights, and sit quietly. Lockdown drills work perfectly every day that the active shooter doesn't show up. That is 99.9999% of the days. Lockdown drills are great until the active shooter shows up.

Students and staff are told if you just lock the door and stay in your classroom, you'll be okay until the cops get here and end this thing. Lockdown drills are not the answer. In Parkland, for example, he shot a total of 24 people in 90 seconds. Eighteen of those were inside their classrooms behind locked doors. He just simply shot from the hallway through the doors of the classrooms and got 18 people inside their classrooms behind locked doors where they were told they'd be safe. Same thing in Uvalde, he shot a bunch of people through the walls and doors. Lockdown drills are not the answer. They're not. They are fine on the days he doesn't show up, but not the days he does show up.

I retired from a career in the Army and 10 days later started teaching high school. I went from one drastically different career to another. I went from a career where very commonly, we planned to do deadly, vicious, ruthless violence against other people, and we fully expected the enemy to try to do that to us. That's just normal day-to-day planning. Then I went into public education where that we don't even want to talk about any kind

of violence—grabbing, punching, shoving—talking about any kind of violence was uncomfortable.

At Last Resort, our training facility here in Arkansas, our classroom is served by a septic tank. Well, when that septic tank gets full, I'm uncomfortable dealing with it so I call a professional. I outsource the problem to a guy that has a truck with a pump and a tank in the back. No one's getting hurt in the time it takes him to come out and pump the tank, but if my toilet backs up at home at nine o'clock on Sunday night, even though a plumber is far more qualified to deal with it, time matters. I have to get my hands dirty and deal with it. That's what we're talking about here, but schools don't want to deal with violence.

Schools are uncomfortable with doing deadly, vicious, ruthless violence against another human so they're looking for lockdown drills, security audits and risk assessments or building a higher fence. Hardening the buildings is another myth: better locks, better doors, make it harder to get in the building. That may make sense for certain places, but for middle schools and high schools, there's a 90+ percent chance your shooter is your own student; he's already in the building. Hardening those buildings is probably just going to delay cops and ambulance from getting into your building.

If we just think better locks, better security, we're not thinking it through. We have to understand what the threat is before we start building things to counter that threat. Who's the active shooter? One school told me, "We can't have an active shooter here because we now make our students wear see-through backpacks so there's no way they can bring a gun into the school." When I tell them that the Bethel, AK shooter rode the bus and walked into his school with a full-length pump shotgun down the leg of his jeans, they just blink at me. They think the see-through backpack, phone apps, metal detectors and panic buttons—all things they are comfortable with—cure the problems.

The only thing that's going to give a school a realistic chance of a low victim count is that the people at the school are going to have to do vicious, deadly violence against another human.

Another myth is that armed citizens are too dangerous. That's a political, emotional knee-jerk reaction that makes me ask, "Why? Tell me your evidence." Armed citizens have never shot the wrong person when they've shot an active shooter and have been very successful at stopping it early with low victim counts. They've never accidentally shot the wrong person while doing it, but I can show you a list of multiple times that cops have. Three times, cops accidentally shot cops by mistake responding to an active shooter; two died. Armed citizens have a better safety track record and by and large a higher hit rate, compared to cops in active shooter attacks.

Gun control is another myth. Whenever we have an active shooter attack, the people that already support gun control

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use the emotion that comes with an active shooter attack to get laws that they can't get passed when people are logical. I am not going political when I say that the type of gun the active shooter uses is not significant. It's not what we should focus on. We should focus on why we let him shoot people unopposed for five or more minutes. Now, you know guns. How many could you shoot if you snapped and turned evil and went into a big, crowded building with a double barreled, break open shotgun and a big bag of buckshot and were unopposed for five and a half minutes? Isn't it 30 or 40 or 50 people in five and a half minutes, even with an archaic gun like a break open shotgun?

In Parkland, he used an AR-15 and shot 34 people in five and a half minutes. You could have shot 30-50 people with a couple of handguns, a pump shotgun, or a lever action 30-30. The problem is not the type of gun. We've got to stop letting them shoot us unopposed with ANY kind of gun.

Mental health is kind of a new myth. People who already want to spend more money on mental health, use an active shooter attack to say, "That's the problem; we need mental health." I'm not against it, but I ask, "Do you think we had more mental health funding and more access to mental health in 1960 or in 2020?" Everybody I've talked to in the mental health industry say, "By far, there's more funding and more access now."

So, I ask, "How many active shooters did we have in the 1960s versus now?" It doesn't pass the smell test to me that lack of access to mental health is the reason we're having more active shooters now. If you look at the shooters at Isla Vista, CA, Parkland, or the recent one in Maine, for example, had massive mental health care. It just didn't help.

I see people wanting mental health funding, gun control, school security and faster police response instead of the one thing that will really help. There's only one thing that will really help us get a low number. We have to be prepared to immediately counter-attack and stop the shooter.

eJournal: You spoke about limiting time to reduce loss of life to single digits. If security is in the foyer of the church or a school resource officer is down the hall, is there time to run to the place where the shooting's happening?

Monk: I only know we have to end it as quickly as we can. He's going to shoot somebody every three to five seconds in the first minute but then his shoot rate is going to slow down the longer we let him shoot, so I offer people a rough mathematical planning factor that he's going to shoot somebody every 3 to 5 seconds in the first minute, one every 6 to 8 seconds in the second minute, then one every 10 to 12 seconds in the third minute, and continue to slow down.

If you can stop him in 30 seconds you have a chance of zero to ten being shot. Now, that's not a guarantee. The shooter in the Oregon district in Dayton, OH, started in such a crowded place

and shot so fast that he hit somebody every 1.2 seconds. Even though very heroic, aggressive cops got to him and shot him down in 30 seconds he still killed nine and wounded 17, but that that's kind of an outlier. You still have a fairly good chance if you can get to him within 30 seconds and stop him. Now, that's armed or unarmed. I show examples of armed people, both cops and citizens, and unarmed people successfully stopping active shooters.

Armed is statistically much more successful than unarmed, but if the victims are not armed by choice or unarmed by law, then they only have two options. Both are really bad choices between horrible things. If you do not have a gun present amongst the victims, then you either have to attack him unarmed, which is not a great option, or watch him shoot a bunch of your people, which is a more horrible option. You have to take the least bad option and attack him unarmed. In classes, I show a list of when it worked: one school shooting was stopped by construction workers who were there; two were stopped by students and two by staff.

When I talk to schools about being prepared to attack when a shooter starts, they say, "You're not suggesting we tell our kids to do this!" Yes, if you want a low victim count. At Thurston High School in OR, the shooter shot less than 5% of the ammo he brought because a student who had been shot rushed and tackled him. He had 95 percent of his ammo left, unfired. How many people would he have shot if somebody had not stopped him? What if cops showed up eight minutes later? It would have been horrible, more horrible than it was.

eJournal: Jake Ryker's courage at the Thurston High school is inspirational. Switching topics from unarmed to armed, sometimes people expect faster stops from pistols than is realistic. Still, your research shows a rapid stop if an armed teacher or church goer stops a mass shooting attack. Is the stop psychological, not physiological? Are the murderers just giving up because facing armed opposition is psychologically defeating? Why is that stopping it so quickly?

Monk: The handgun is more than adequate to stop an active shooter. The armed citizen is stopping it so quickly because they're there. I don't care if the active shooter has a bazooka, a flamethrower, a nuclear hand grenade so long as he hasn't pulled the pin yet, if you put three or four or five of your shots here [indicates chest] or one or two of yours here [eyes], that'll solve the problem. I don't care what the active shooter has. If you have a handgun and you're willing and know how to use it, that'll stop any active shooter that you're likely to come across.

Now, what stops them? I tell cops and armed responders, just aggressively go to him with a gun intending to find him and shoot him. A long list of good things can happen if we do that. Many times, when he knows somebody that will threaten him with a gun is getting close, he will shoot himself and end it on

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his terms, not yours. If he faces a cop or an armed citizen and gets into a gunfight, he could be blinded, crippled, paralyzed, or hooked up to tubes in a prison hospital for the rest of his life with lots of pain involved.

Sometimes active shooters take a bullet or two before they shoot themselves. Sometimes you have to fight to the bitter end and physically stop their body. Eli Dicken in the mall in Indiana had to put eight bullets into his shooter. Several have taken multiple rounds, but then most of us carry handguns that have multiple rounds.

In the live fire classes, we tell students that after you find him, your first goal is to put him on the ground. If you put him on the ground, congratulations, you have won round number one of this fight. Will there be a round two? I don't know. We show examples of active shooters that shot back from the ground. They're still a threat, although once they're on the ground, you are at a bigger advantage. If they get back up, shoot them some more.

eJournal: That raises the question of how motivation might affect attackers' tactics, determination, or numbers. So far, we've talked about shooting spree attacks, not ideological terrorists. Here in the US, are we gearing up to fight terrorism or training to stop a home-grown shooter who wants to be famous for killing a lot of people?

Monk: As far as a public mass shooting, I would say both. There are some differences, but for the armed responder, whether armed citizen or cop, you very likely won't know whether it's their religious jihad, they got fired yesterday, their girlfriend broke up with them or something's mentally wrong. In training, we are preparing for someone going into a public place, trying to shoot a lot of people to get up a high victim count, no matter his motivation.

If they are motivated by radical Islam, the chances of multiple shooters go up just slightly. We've only had five multiple shooter attacks in our country. Three of those five were students in middle and high schools but the other two were radical Islam. They will be more aggressive; they will shoot more rapidly than the average active shooter and they will re-shoot their victims more than a non-terrorist active shooter. So far, none have shot themselves. Terrorists will either fight to the absolute bitter end or they will fight very hard to escape. You may only know there's a guy shooting people at the mall, your church, the elementary school or Walmart. You may not know their motivation.

eJournal: How important is gender, race or age? I was a surprised to learn the Tennessee school shooter was female since I don't pay much attention to race or gender. Do we need to pay more attention to demographics, Ed?

Monk: No. If it's a left-handed, 76-year-old female in a mall shooting a bunch of people, then she needs to be shot. If it's a 17-year-old kid shooting people in the cafeteria at his high

school, he needs to be shot. Age or ethnicity doesn't really matter. It's all about math and time. They need to be stopped quickly, regardless of demographic.

Many of them are young, so we need to be ready to shoot a young person. Trainers may tell students to mentally rehearse putting the front sight or red dot on an individual and shoot them. I bet most of us that have mentally rehearsed that process did not think about putting our sight on an 11-13-year-old kid and pulling the trigger, but if it's in a middle school or a high school, it's almost guaranteed they're going to be one of the students. All of us, especially armed school staff and SROs and any cop responding to a school shooting, have to make sure our head is ready to put our front sight on a very young person and pull the trigger because that's statistically likely who's going to be in there.

eJournal: If we don't bear the responsibility of a classroom full of small children, for example, does the venue or the location affect decisions to barricade, run for safety or run towards the sound of gunfire like Eli Dickens did? If seated in a big auditorium, can you really run out of there? How much are best responses based on situations or venues?

Monk: Regardless of the venue, planning and knowing what to expect ahead of time, does make some difference. For instance, between high schools, middle schools, and elementary schools, who the attacker is and where he starts is usually different, but that's just for planning. Once it starts, very simply, there's three possible actions: fight, flee, and barricade, but there really are only two choices: fight or flee.

We put "fight" first because fighting to stop this attack as early as possible means the fewest lives lost and that's best for humanity. If you and I work together in an office building and all of a sudden we hear popping sounds and someone comes into our room and says, "It's Freddy; they fired him at lunch," the safest thing for me personally is to go in the opposite direction and get as far away from Freddy as I can get, but the safest thing for humanity is someone shooting Freddy fairly quickly. That will give us the lowest number of victims.

Fight is always the first option we want. People ask, "I have a five-year-old in pre-K. You telling me that my five-year-old daughter has to fight?" No, good thing about active shooters is they're going to attack a crowded, public place, so everybody doesn't have to fight. We only need one or two. All they needed was Eli Dicken at the mall, or Jeanne Assam or Jack Wilson at their church. More people were there, but only one or two was needed.

If you haven't taken a badge and taken an oath, you have no legal obligation or any obligation at all, but what's best for humanity is for somebody to counterattack and stop this active shooter. We always say fight is the first option to consider.

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Schools, churches, businesses, and offices need organizational plans saying we want people—customers, employees, whoever's here—we want them to fight. That's what we would like to happen. No one's obligated, but that's what we want.

If you cannot or will not fight, then flee. The farther away decisions are from each other, the easier they are to delineate under stress. Going to find evil and killing it is 180 degrees opposite from running away, so it's a fairly easy decision to make under stress. I'm either going to go find the person who's making this noise and I'm going to stop him or I'm going to run until I can't hear the shooting.

Those are the two options: either go kill evil or get away from evil. Barricade is a third option. Barricade is what you do when you don't have a choice—when you're trapped and cannot or will not fight. If you barricade, you still need to have a plan to fight in case he defeats your barricade.

Too many places like schools start out barricaded: lock the doors, stay in your classroom, hunker down. You can go on YouTube and listen to the 9-1-1 call of a Columbine school staff member in the library screaming at her kids to get under the tables, keep their heads under the tables, to stay under the tables. Getting under the tables has no survival benefit; in fact, it probably helps the shooter. That was 1999, over 20 years ago. Less than two years ago in Uvalde, when the shooting started in that elementary school hallway, the teacher in classroom 111 told his kids to get under the tables. We're not learning. We keep doing what actually makes the active shooter's job easier. It's a huge, huge problem.

Fight if it's at all possible. Plan to fight. Don't say, well, if you're trapped, if you have no other way out, then okay, you have the right to defend yourself. No. We need as a group to fight back and stop this guy. In May 2022, in a church in California, a brave doctor in the congregation ran at a shooter to try to stop him. He got shot down; that didn't work, but then the preacher hit him over the back of the head with a chair and other people piled on. They fought back and kept it at a single-digit victim count. They didn't just get under the pews and make it very easy to be shot like they did in Sutherland Springs.

Fight, no matter where you are. If you're in a Walmart, a school, a church, a mall, your place of business, no matter where you are, the first option everyone should consider is fight, if not, then run, and barricade only, only if you don't have another option. There are some exceptions for populations like nursing homes that can't fight or flee, but you plan for that ahead of time, and really go heavy on "barricade" through the building and its gear.

eJournal: For a person consistently carrying a gun who decides they will act for the good of humanity, are there strategies to make their armed interdiction fast but also get them into po-

sition to shoot without dying on the way? Is the tactic different if we're facing someone with a handgun or several rifles?

Monk: In the big picture, what they're armed with really doesn't matter. Go find them, positively ID them and get within your skill distance, if you're not already. Just because you see him doesn't mean you have to start launching rounds in a public place. That's a Rule Four problem [Rules of Gun Safety] that we go into very heavily in my live fire classes. Go find him and positively ID him, which won't be a problem. He's the guy holding a gun, randomly shooting people in a public place. That won't be a calculus equation. That'll stand out to you.

Once you find him, get close enough for your skill level. Now, yours is different than mine and it's different for other people. In my training, I do a fade back drill to determine for every student how far back he or she can guarantee 100 percent solid center body hits; not peripheral hits, not most-of-the-time hits, but how far back can I guarantee solid center body hits? That's how close I need to get in a public place, unless I have a wide-open, clear shot and I know what my backstop is, which is not normal inside public buildings. Go find him, get within your skill level, and put bullets into him until he's on the ground.

I have a list I show in my presentations where 19 times good people, a mix of cops and armed citizens, with only handguns stopped active shooters with long guns. If you put four or five here [chest] or one or two here [eyes], I don't care what gun the active shooter has.

With a few exceptions, active shooters are not very skilled. They have many gun malfunctions. I can't find a true malfunction happening to an armed responder shooting an active shooter, but I have a long list of active shooters with gun malfunctions. They generally don't know how to run their guns, some stolen that morning, like at the STEM school. They don't know anything about guns. At least two attackers couldn't make the first round come out of the gun; some had malfunctions they did not know how to fix. Although inside the Pulse nightclub for over three hours before we went in and killed him, that guy only shot for 17 minutes until his rifle malfunctioned and he couldn't fix it. He still got 102 people. So yeah, they're dangerous, evil people, but they're not Navy SEALs or John Wick.

In class, I play a video of the 1984 San Ysidro McDonald's shooting. The first cop got there 14 minutes into the shooting and saw that the shooter had an Uzi. He said, "I was outgunned," so all he did was take cover behind a truck. He didn't try to aggress and shoot. He had a .38 Special revolver. The Uzi shoots a 9mm: ballistically almost identical. The Uzi holds a lot more ammo, but he wasn't outgunned; he had six. If he had put one or two of his six here [eyes] or four or five of six here [chest], he would have ended it.

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It doesn't matter what they have. What it matters is, do you have a gun, and do you know how to use it? Then go shoot the guy. It will be stressful and terrifying, but it's actually a pretty simple task. Go find the one person that's got a gun shooting people and get close enough to guarantee your hits and shoot him until you put him on the ground and then see if he wants more hits; if he does, put him on the ground again.

You know Andy Brown in Washington. Andy killed a guy with an AK rifle with a Beretta 9mm. He put 9mm bullets in him to the point that he couldn't shoot the rifle anymore. That's what we need to do.

eJournal: This echoes the myths you debunked earlier, the things we're told that convince us we can't prevail. Are there social "rules" like not shooting a child which you mentioned, or don't go through the "Staff Only" door, that we need to ignore in a crisis?

Monk: In several episodes of the Seinfeld TV show, they talk about bizarro or opposite world. If there's an active shooter, it's opposite day. On that day, none of the current rules apply. At school, for instance, normally we don't want you to be violent against another human. But on this day, we not only begrudgingly allow it, but we encourage you to be viciously, ruthlessly violent. On other days we don't want you running off campus without permission. On this day, run like the wind. We'll find you later. On other days, you'll get in trouble if you break windows, but on this day, break as many as you need. None of the usual rules apply.

Saving lives is the only rule on opposite day. It's like getting caught speeding. Generally, you'll get in trouble for that, but if the cop sees that your kid was bit by a copperhead or a rattlesnake and you're trying to get help, it's okay, this is opposite day. You can break rules when things like this happen. In restaurants, if you see a door marked "Employees Only," on every other day I'll obey that rule, but if I determine that's my least bad option during an active shooter attack, then I'm going through the door. Will an alarm sound? Guess what? I won't hear for very long because I'll be running.

We have got to get past the "rule" to wait for professionals to deal with an attack. Obeying that rule is the reason we still get victim counts in the 20s, 30s and 40s.

We have got to get past the idea that violence is never the answer. If your child is on the elementary school playground sitting on a bench during recess reading his Bible and some bully comes up behind him and kicks him in the back of the head, jumps on top of him and starts beating his face in, if your kid just fights to try to live, they'll both go to the office, they'll both get suspended because "violence is never the answer." Violence is almost never the right answer, but to quote Tim Larkin, sometimes it is the only answer.

On this day, on opposite day, on the active shooter day, vio-

lence is the only answer that will stop the active shooter before he stops himself. Almost all, if not all of them, decide on their own to stop way too late in the attack to have a low number of victims.

I've been doing this for sixteen years but until Uvalde, I never got phone calls saying, "Ed, come train our staff how to deescalate, how to talk the shooter down." After Uvalde, I got multiple calls to which I had to say, "No, I won't do that. It has this [holds thumb and finger a hairsbreadth apart] chance of success." They want a solution that can be talked out where no one gets hurt. The teacher at Parkland in one of the rooms he ran past first said if he'd come into her room her plan was to stand up and say, "I love you." She thought surely, he couldn't shoot us if we told him we loved him. Yeah, he could. Watch the video of the sentencing hearing for the Ohio active shooter. He looks at the families of the people he shot and says, "You see this hand that pulled the trigger that killed your sons? It now masturbates at that memory. F- all of you." You're not going to talk that guy out of it. So, we have to get past that.

I jumped from being active duty in the Army a year after I got back from Iraq into teaching in public schools where talking about doing violence was unheard of. You didn't do it. That's why we outsource it, like when I call the septic truck to come deal with my septic tank, they want to call the cops to come deal with violence.

eJournal: You've decisively showed waiting for cops fails, not just in schools, but a lot of other places. Unfortunately, we must ask if there's even anyone there carrying a gun.

Monk: We've got to start carrying where we can carry. I know of several cases where police officers who could have been carrying in the location of the active shooter attack were not, because it's inconvenient, they didn't want to. "Who would need to carry there?" Well, you never know. We wear our seat belts for the same reason we carry our guns all the time. You don't know when you're going to get into an accident.

Armed citizens need to carry. If you haven't taken an oath, I'm not saying you must confront an active shooter. You're not required to widow or orphan a member of your family so that someone else is not widowed or orphaned, but there are many people that will for the good of humanity. We have to start carrying in places that we can carry so that we can stop these things. This is a buy one, get one free. If the active shooter thinks, "I can start the attack here, but it won't last long," he's not going to start it there. He's going to go somewhere else. A response plan, trained, resourced, war gamed and ready to stop the attack quickly is also a deterrent.

eJournal: You commented that being armed is not a requirement to go act, but I have to ask, wouldn't it be nice to have that alternative? You might not be able to run away. Wouldn't

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it be nice to have the alternative to fight back? Maybe it is inconvenient putting a gun on every morning; nobody said the responsibilities that go along with being armed are easy. Some are unpleasant, but wouldn't it be nice to have the choice to fight if you need it?

Monk: Statistically, if you have to shoot somebody outside your home, the odds are it's going to be a mugger who is two to four yards away. The active shooter is likely to be much farther away and has a good chance of having a higher-level gun than yours. When you're choosing the gun to carry every day, the gun that's minimally adequate for a mugger may not be minimally adequate against an active shooter. Check on your gear and make sure it's adequate. I'm not saying I couldn't stop an active shooter with my LCP or my single action North American Arms five shot but I wouldn't want to.

eJournal: What would you like Network members to take away from our talk today?

Monk: The last thing I'll leave you with is Rule Four. "Be sure of your target and what's in line with your target." We talk about this, and we beat it into people's heads, then we go out to the range, and the only thing out in front of you is your target and a big wall of dirt behind your target where your bullet will stop. If an active shooter is inside of a building and you see nobody in front or behind him, how do you know that there aren't people on the other side of that wall? Most interior walls won't stop a bullet.

On the range we talk about hits and misses. I haven't seen a police qualification yet that required 100 percent; we have to change training to require 100 percent hits. I hear, "That's unrealistic," but wonder, "Okay, your 14-year-old daughter is in the school cafeteria when an active shooter kicks off. If a resource officer or an armed staff member comes in to stop it, what percentage of hits would you like them to get?"

We can't accept 80 percent to pass a police qualification and then demand 100 percent under severe stress. The problem with Rule 4 is you can't know. If I see an active shooter within my range in front of me and a wall behind him, there may be a classroom full of kids on the other side of that wall. You can never really know.

The solution is 100 percent center body hits with good hollow points in our pistols. If there are people behind him that we didn't see because we were so focused on the shooter or because they're hiding behind clothes racks in Walmart, or they're behind the wall, they're at minimal risk if we put 100 percent of our hollow point pistol rounds in the center line of the body. We have got to stop just talking about Rule 4 in the classroom, but actually start teaching it. If the active shooter is 35 yards away, maybe I can't hit at that distance, so I have to get closer. We need to pay more attention to Rule 4 in all shootings.

eJournal: Yes, thank you for emphasizing that. We touched on such a small fraction of what you pack into a seminar. Members, if you see that Ed is teaching a class in your region, don't wait. Sign up for it. Ed told us how busy he is and how tightly he's scheduled. Plan ahead, because it's very much worth the time and expense. He's also teaching at the [NRA Annual Meeting](#) in Dallas in May, the [Girl and a Gun Conference](#) and the [JALEFI](#) conference. His program is inspiring, it's sobering, and it is evidence based. Ed, thank you for doing what you do. We need to hear the facts, so please know that we very much appreciate what you do.

Monk: Thank you for having me on. Anybody that wants to host me for a presentation, I go all over the country doing them. All we need is an audience, funding and open day on my calendar and we can do it.

eJournal: I hadn't thought about hosting. What an excellent idea. Well, Ed, thank you for sharing your time with us today. Members, email Ed at edmonk@aol.com or call 870-273-1113 and explore hosting a class.



President's Message

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

This is a message I had hoped not to have to write. You see, the Network has lost its fight against the WA Office of Insurance Commissioner (OIC) with whom we have been battling since 2020 for the right to enroll new Network members who reside in Washington. At the beginning, after

unsuccessfully appealing to the state insurance commissioner's hearing officer, we appealed to the Lewis County Superior Court, which deferred to the government bureaucracy on the issue and affirmed their order. We next appealed to the Washington Court of Appeals, which ruled against us. Finally, we filed for discretionary review with the State Supreme Court.

Now, the Washington State Supreme Court has refused to take up our request for review of the Court of Appeals' decision, which called what we do insurance. The bottom line is we are out the original \$50,000 fine which we previously paid, and legal fees of over \$140,000 (thank you very much to those who assisted with donations to defray the legal expenses). Worse, we remain unable sell new Network memberships in WA State. Members sometimes exclaim, "Why don't you just move out of Washington?" without understanding that we would still be prohibited from enrolling new members from this state.

Okay, we grudgingly accept this outcome, although we firmly believe the courts are wrong. Here is why. If one uses force in self defense, choosing to engage in an act of use force is an intentional act. One cannot unintentionally act in self defense. Washington State's definition of insurance is: Insurance is a contract whereby one undertakes to indemnify another or pay a specified amount upon determinable contingencies. We argued that because the act of self defense is an intentional act, it cannot be a contingent act. The OIC argued that the determinable contingency is the situation which presented itself which caused the individual to act.

I believed the concept that self defense is an intentional act was pretty simple to grasp. Nonetheless, we found out that when one of the parties is the State, and in our situation, the decidedly anti-gun WA State government, we simply never had a chance to get a fair and unbiased decision. Our appellate court and supreme court judges and justices are all elected. Two of Washington's three appellate courts are located within the Western Washington liberal population base, as is the WA State Supreme Court.

We have fought this three-plus-year battle to the bitter end in pursuit of enrolling new members who live in WA. The restriction is only against recruiting and serving new members; we remain allowed to renew memberships for Washingtonians who joined Network before the end of March 2020, the date the cease-and-desist order was issued.

Okay, moving on to something more positive. What is next for Washington State?

We are moving forward to bring out a solution for Washington State armed citizens, which we are not yet ready to publicly announce. Until we do, there are two current providers here in WA, both of which have problems. US Law Shield is a no-starter for me, because in order to get permission from WA OIC to sell policies, they had to include a "recoupment clause" meaning that the USLS insurance underwriter, Lyndon Southern, can require you pay them back ALL the money they spent on your defense IF you are found guilty of any crime associated with the incident. That means if you plead guilty to ANY crime associated with the event, you can be forced to pay back the insurance company. That's why it is a no-starter for me.

The second choice for WA residents is the law firm Attorneys for Freedom's Attorneys on Retainer program. They have a high-profile presence on YouTube, where you can find out all about them. I have scrutinized their program and see only one problem with them: THE COST! They require a monthly payment of \$35 per month, which shakes out to \$400 per year. The other less bothersome, but thumbs-down factor for me, is they do not offer any documentable training like the Network does. We know the key to winning in court is training, and without the training to rely upon and bring up in court, your chances of acquittal diminish considerably. Maybe the Network should offer our educational package to AoR members. They would then have a very similar program, although at a much higher cost.

The Network on YouTube

We have been enjoying stretching our wings a little and branching out more frequently into streaming media at <https://www.youtube.com/@armedcitizenslegaldefensen4041>. Gila has been conducting interviews of industry influencers, and I have been doing talking head topics. Together, we have also held a couple of live streams where we answered member questions. It's kind of fun. Our next live stream will be Thursday, Feb. 8 at 7 p.m. Eastern when I will come out with a look at the industry of "self-defense insurance." If you have been watching us, be sure to subscribe to our YouTube channel and give us a "Like."

Are you going to the NRA Annual Meeting?

The Network will be in Dallas May 17-19 for the NRA Annual Meeting, of course, where we hope to meet many members, and perhaps even sign up a few new ones. Our booth number is 8247. As you likely know, Wayne La Pierre has resigned, but word from the trenches is that the likely replacement will be one of the current board members. Meanwhile, Andrew Arulanandam, who has been employed by the NRA for 26 years will become the interim CEO so I would be surprised if things in the administration of the NRA changes much. But that doesn't mean we cannot support the organization by attending the convention and supporting the businesses that shell out hard-earned money to connect with their customers. See you there!

February 2024



Attorney Question of the Month

In December, several Network members used their firearms to defend themselves. One incident took place in a large city where our member was robbed, shot at, and aggressively pursued by his attacker. He returned gunfire, killing the attacker. Responding police took our member into custody over night, but no criminal charges were filed and he was released the next day.

While in custody, our member called a Network affiliated attorney who went to the jail and in the words of our member, was reassuring and calming, which he found enormously helpful. Network President Marty Hayes spoke with the attorney, to cover his fees, ask about any further legal needs from the incident, and to say thank you. The attorney told Marty that long before the incident, our member reached out to him to ask what to expect from the criminal justice system if he used deadly force to defend himself, and to find out how to contact the attorney if that need arose. The two men met for breakfast, had a pleasant discussion, and went their separate ways -- until the call for help.

This experience emphasizes why armed citizens should meet with an attorney and work out in advance how to contact them for help after self defense. When Network members contact attorneys, the responses range from “come by my office for a few minutes” to “buy me breakfast and we’ll talk” to “call us after something has happened.” Every law firm operates a little differently, so we alert members that attorneys may need to charge members for consultations, especially for more than a few minutes. Our February Attorney Question of the Month column focuses on how members can meet an attorney before a need arises. We asked our Affiliated Attorneys the following questions:

Do you speak with armed citizens who don’t have an immediate need for representation but want to be prepared?

If an armed citizen wants to meet you briefly, do you prefer a phone call, Zoom or other Internet meeting, or to talk in person?

How should a member contact you for a brief meeting (telephone, in person, email)?

The response was among the largest we’ve enjoyed on an Attorney Question of the Month, and the variety ranged from “yes” and “no” answers to informative explanations. To avoid repeating the question for each response, we approach this topic using a different format than usual. In addition, we received so many responses that we will run the first half this month, and continue the discussion in March.

Question: Do you speak with armed citizens who don’t have an immediate need for representation but want to be prepared?

Samuel Martin

Delli Bovi Martin & Reed LLC
34 W 6th Ave Ste 2E, Helena, MT 59601
406-438-6143

<https://dbmlaw.com/>

Yes, we provide guidance and consultation for a fee whether or not someone has an issue. This fee may be waived for members, depending on the type of consultation they are looking for.

Kevin L. Jamison

Jamison Associates
2614 NE 56th Ter., Gladstone, MO. 64119-2311
816-455-2669

<https://www.kljamisonlaw.com/>

I charge a small fee for an in-person consultation. If in-person is not possible I will do it by phone or zoom. The consultation is as long as necessary and covers what gun is usually carried, what kind of ammunition, any unique security concerns and Missouri law on weapons and self-defense. Many people ask about knives and expandable batons. These are not covered by Missouri’s pre-emption law and laws vary from place to place.

I stress the first call is to 911, it is the emergency number and you just had an emergency. I stress the limited statement to 911 and the responding officer and how to behave when the officer arrives. Statements are limited by telling the officer “I Want A Lawyer” because I heard of a guy who acted in self defense and he was successfully sued (Bernard Goetz). I give out copies of the Western Missouri Shooters Alliance wallet-sized “Stay Out of Jail Card which summarizes the statements to give.

I give them my card to keep in their wallet, I take calls 24 hours a day. They need the physical card in addition to storing it in their phone because phones are confiscated as potential evidence. A lawyer’s card you can keep.

John I. Harris III

Schulman, LeRoy & Bennett PC
3310 West End Avenue, Suite 460, Nashville, TN 37203
615-244 6670 Ext. 111

<https://johniharris.com/>

As an attorney in Tennessee, I often get calls from individuals who have researched the potential need for an attorney who is experienced with the self-defense laws that exist in Tennessee. Many of these individuals are members of ACLDN. Due to limits on giving legal advice to non-clients that apply in our firm, if the individual desires, I will offer them a client consult by office conference, conference call or video conference. However, I will also refer these individuals to scheduled public speaking

[Continued next page]

events, most of which are free to attend, where I will be addressing Tennessee's self-defense laws. I will also refer the individuals to the information that is available on the Tennessee Firearms Association's website and free email updates from the Tennessee Firearms Association on Tennessee's 2nd Amendment related laws and pending legislation.

In those instances where the individual desires a client consult, these consults, which typically range from thirty minutes to more than an hour, address their questions which include not only the process for ACLDN to be involved with incident related legal services but the options to obtain legal advice independent of an incident based need. For example, we may discuss Tennessee's statutory scheme which makes any possession of a firearm "with the intent to go armed" a criminal offense that puts the burden on the individual to establish an affirmative defense to that crime. We may discuss the statutory scheme in Tennessee where the concept of "self-defense" is not characterized as a right but it is instead classified as an affirmative defense to a criminal charge and, as a result, we discuss ideas that a person should consider doing to improve their training and awareness in the event that they are required to present that affirmative defense to a jury, district attorney or investigating officer. We talk about how it is never a good idea in Tennessee to try and explain, except through an attorney, to an officer or district attorney why a particular incident is self-defense.

In some instances, the consult may also address topics that should be considered long before a self-defense incident arises. These topics include planning for asset protection, strategies to improve the person's "armed citizen" profile in the event of any incident, estate planning, and even weapon and ammo selection considerations.

David Seiter

RileyCate, LLC
11 Municipal Dr Ste 320, Fishers, IN 46038
317-588-2866
<https://www.rileycate.com/>

Of course. Part of being prepared is knowing who to contact before an emergency arises. I have met with many clients so they know who to contact in a crisis.

Timothy A. Forshey

Timothy A. Forshey, P.C.
1650 North First Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85003
602-495-6511
<http://tforshey.com/>

I meet with a great many folks who have questions about their legal rights and responsibilities as they pertain to home defense strategies/planning, self-defense scenarios and firearms selection, to mention just a few areas. I call these meetings "Prophylactic Defense Meetings" (my staff actually calls them "PDM" meetings) and they have proven to be very popular. I

always remind people that is FAR better to STAY out of trouble than it is to GET out of trouble. Meetings like this help.

Letitia D. Quinones-Hollins

Quinones & Associates, PLLC
1602 Washington Ave., Houston, TX 77007
713-481-7420
<https://www.quinonesandassociates.com/>

Yes, I will gladly meet with an armed citizens prior to the need being realized.

Marc Halata

The Law Offices of Marc Halata, LLC
818 Bobtail Drive, Greenfield, IN 46140
708-307-7973
<https://halatalaw.com/>

I'm always available.

Jerold E. Levine

5 Sunrise Plaza Ste. 102, Valley Stream, NY 11580-6130
212-482-8830
<http://www.thegunlawyer.net/>

Occasionally I receive calls from ACLDN members who want to know what to do if they are arrested after using a gun in self-defense. I advise them to keep my phone number in their cell phone and wallet.

Also, a close family member or friend also should have my number, in case the member cannot get to his/her phone or wallet (police confiscate those things upon arrest, and do not always allow the arrested person to access their belongings until release after arraignment).

C.D. Michel

180 E. Ocean Blvd. Suite 200, Long Beach, CA 90802
562-216-4441
<https://michellawyers.com/>

Yes.

Eric J. Bell

Attorney at Law
203 N. LaSalle Street Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60601
312-925-1133
<https://notguiltychicago.com/eric-j-bell/>

I receive quite a few of these questions. I prefer to talk with the citizens over the phone. Usually the advice is fairly general, but many times following simple advice can make a huge difference. (For example, not talking to the police until their lawyer is present, even though many citizens feel they have nothing to hide and they want to cooperate.). I am always happy to talk with citizens about issues they have regarding their rights and obligations as gun owners.

[Continued next page]

Michael G. Romano

12725 SW Millikan Way Suite 300, Beaverton, OR 97005
503-773-6612
<https://romanolawpc.com>

Yes, at my hourly rate of \$360/hr.

Craig Rosenstein, Esq.

Rosenstein Law Group, PLLC
8010 E. McDowell Rd. Suite 111, Scottsdale, AZ 85257
480-456-6400
<https://www.scottsdale-duilawyer.com>

Of course. Educating is the best way to prevent tragedy.

Alan J. Schwartz

Law Offices of Alan J. Schwartz, P.C.
840 Franklin Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530
516-248-6311
<https://www.ajslaw.com/>

Yes. On a regular basis. Years ago, my first call from an armed citizen came from a physician in New York City who was licensed to carry a firearm because he regularly carried narcotics in his medical bag, and he saw my name in one of our publications. The doctor was concerned about how crazy the world has become, and wanted to chat with me to get to know me, in case he ever need my services. He felt that was a 15-20 minute phone call worth its weight in gold, as we say.

Recently, a firearms instructor called to discuss some recent changes in the law here in New York and how they would affect her, and we had a 15-20 minute phone call, at the conclusion of which we agreed to exchange contact information.

Jennifer S. Lough

Schroeder & Lough, S.C.
300 2nd Street N, Suite 200, La Crosse, WI 54601
608-784-8055
<https://www.lacrossecriminaldefense.com/>

I do chat with any armed citizen who calls, even if there is not an immediate situation or necessary representation.

Christopher H. Baker

The James Law Firm
1001 La Harpe Blvd., Little Rock, AR 72201
501-375-0900
<https://www.jamesfirm.com/>

Absolutely! Learning what to say in an emergency is a trained skill – not one that you venture upon on the fly following a critical stress incident. Taking time to speak with someone who has similar values and understanding of protecting yourself is important for anyone exercising their Second Amendment rights.

Question: If an armed citizen wants to meet you briefly, do you prefer a phone call, Zoom or other Internet meeting, or to talk in person?

Samuel Martin, Helena, MT

We can meet however works best for a prospective client.

John I. Harris III, Nashville, TN

Individuals who seek a consult or have a need for legal services should contact my office.

David Seiter, Fishers, IN

I have talked with armed citizens using each of these forms of communication. It is most convenient if they schedule an appointment to make sure I am not in court.

Letitia D. Quinones-Hollins, Houston, TX

I would prefer an in-person or Zoom meeting.

Jerold E. Levine, Valley Stream, NY

I prefer phone calls, but if necessary, I can meet the member for a brief discussion.

C.D. Michel, Long Beach, CA

Zoom.

Michael G. Romano, Beaverton, OR

Whatever is best for the client. I'm certainly flexible. Slight preference for Zoom or FaceTime so we can see each other and I can be shown important body language, facial expressions, and non-verbal cues, but if a client is being interrogated by the police, a phone call may be the only option.

Craig Rosenstein, Esq., Scottsdale, AZ

I utilize an escalating policy. I'll answer questions by phone. If for some reason, a Zoom or an in office appointment is still needed, we would absolutely schedule one. Not sure about the breakfast, but in person, in the office, during business hours is absolutely on the table.

Alan J. Schwartz, Garden City, NY

I always prefer Zoom to telephone calls, since it's the next best thing to meeting in person.

Jennifer S. Lough, La Crosse, WI

If they wanted to meet, I would accommodate their request, including an in person meeting. However, most initial conversations are accomplished over the phone.

Christopher H. Baker, Little Rock, AR

I am available for any method of contact, be it in person, phone, or zoom. I prefer methods where we can see one another, so either in person or video (Zoom, Facetime, Facebook messenger etc.).

[Continued next page]

Question: How should a member contact you for a brief meeting (telephone, in person, email)?

Samuel Martin, Helena, MT

Telephone and email are probably the best, but our door is usually open!

Kevin L. Jamison, Gladstone, MO

I set appointments by phone.

John I. Harris III, Nashville, TN

Email is acceptable.

David Seiter, Fishers, IN

A member may contact me using any of these methods.

Timothy A. Forshey, Phoenix, AZ

Members can reach me by phone at 602-495-6511 or by email at tforshey@tforsheylaw.com.

Letitia D. Quinones-Hollins, Houston, TX

The best way for the armed citizen to contact me would be to call my office 713-481-7420 and request a meeting.

Jerold E. Levine, Valley Stream, NY

Telephone or email are best.

C.D. Michel, Long Beach, CA

Email.

Michael G. Romano, Beaverton, OR

They need to have an established relationship with me, or either have a retainer with my office or pay a consultation fee. After that, they can call my professional and personal cell 24/7. But I won't accept calls from tire kickers and free loaders in the middle of the night, sorry.

Craig Rosenstein, Esq., Scottsdale, AZ

Email or phone first, if necessary, an in person meeting can be set. Walking in without an appointment is probably not the best option.

Alan J. Schwartz, Garden City, NY

How ever they prefer.

Jennifer S. Lough, La Crosse, WI

Reaching out by phone is the easiest, and creates a dynamic conversation where all questions can be answered, but I have been contacted by email as well.

Christopher H. Baker, Little Rock, AR

Individuals in Arkansas can reach out to me at 501-375-0900 (office) or by e-mail at CBaker@jamesfirm.com. I'm always down for wings if you want to have some lunch!

Thank you, affiliated attorneys, for sharing your experience and knowledge. Members, please return next month when we share the second half of our affiliated attorneys' responses these questions.

Video and Book Review

Video: *The Fall of Minneapolis*

Free, cloud-funded documentary at <https://alphanews.org/video/the-fall-of-minneapolis/>

Reviewed by Gila Hayes

Have you watched the documentary from Alpha News about the death of George Floyd and subsequent destruction? I viewed it several months ago, on Thanksgiving as a matter of fact, while I was dicing the celery, carrots and onions and doing other food prep. Did the onions bring the tears to my eyes? Probably not, but some of the documentary does make the watcher want to weep.

Thanksgiving Day was busy and I'd forgotten about the video until Judicial Watch's [Chris Farrell's On Watch](#) podcast featured an interview with Liz Collin, who produced and conducted the interviews in [The Fall of Minneapolis](#). Much public criticism has followed the release of the documentary. I try hard to read and listen to news from neutral sources, so I'm not a regular content consumer at Alpha News.

Unfortunately, the documentary suffers criticism for being an Alpha News production. That's regrettable because there is a wealth of insight in Collin's interviews with investigators, police officers who fled Minneapolis' Third Precinct after the command to surrender it, as well as other victims of the chaos. The full profile of George Floyd's history and the fentanyl, methamphetamine and cannabinoids in his system, coupled with the body cam footage of officers who responded to the Cup Food clerk's call about a customer who refused to return merchandise for which he paid with a counterfeit bill.

That's just a little taste of *The Fall of Minneapolis*, available free at <https://www.thefallofminneapolis.com/>, on YouTube, or on Rumble. Is it 100 percent accurate? Who knows? Was the national news reportage of Floyd's death, the riots, and the trials of the police officers accurate? Oh, heck no, it was not. In *The Fall of Minneapolis*, video footage of police contact with Floyd, interviews with people who were present at the incident and in the chaos of the days and weeks to follow, helps fill in the details for a truer picture of events, the way elected officials fanned the flames, and the losses the city's residents suffered.

Book: *Surviving a Mass Killer Rampage:*

*When Seconds Count,
Police Are Still Minutes Away*

By Chris Bird, Foreword by Massad Ayoob
432 pages, paperback
ISBN-13: 978-0983590194
Privateer Publications (August 1, 2016)
Sold used on Amazon and other used book sellers



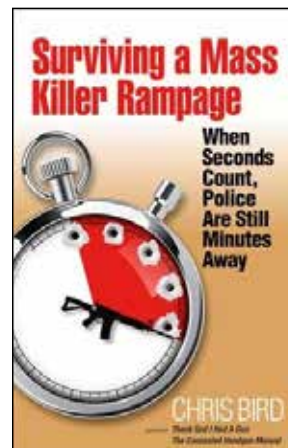
Ordinarily, I would not review an out of print book, but my interview with Ed Monk took me back to a book on spree shootings and mass shooting events that I'd read several years ago. Some of our fellow armed citizens are as reactive to the term "active shooter" as I am to the term "gun violence" (as if inanimate objects can act without a living thing's intervention) and in searching for the terminology my friend, the noted author Chris Bird, prefers, I found myself drawn into his book *Surviving a Mass Killer Rampage*.

Bird also asserted that the term gun free zone is a lie, since "they are only free of law-abiding citizens with guns." Massad Ayoob wrote the foreword and added that so-called gun free zones are actually hunting preserves for killers because victims can't fight back.

While mass killing rampages have occurred in shopping malls, restaurants, theaters, clubs, churches and other public venues, school shootings are among the most disturbing. Arming teachers puts armed defenders on the scene for timely intervention, as Monk pointed out, a solution Bird was promoting in 2016 in *Surviving a Mass Killer Rampage*, which combined extensively researched post-incident interviews with citizen defenders and material from [Tactical Defense Institute's](#) active-killer defense classes, plus other school shooting response programs.

Bird further addressed Muslim jihad and mass killings outside of gun free zones but stressed his disinterest in the killer's motivation. A lifetime professional journalist, he applied Who, What, When, Where and How, to emphasize what to watch for and how to react if caught in a mass shooting attack.

Bird's chapters, stories and vignettes show the decisive stop an armed citizen can affect when a killer attacks a crowd, but he wrote that willingness to act is more important. He told the story of Springfield, OR student Jake Ryker who stopped a school shooter who had killed two and wounded 25, which we mentioned briefly in this month's interview with Ed Monk. When the killer's rifle clicked on an empty chamber, Ryker and his brother immobilized him before the killer could reload or grab a pistol or knife.



Bird quoted the late Bill Barchers' study of active killers in which that researcher asserted that of 49 such incidents, nine were resolved by police while the intended victims

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confronted the shooter and stopped the killing 14 times, with “minimum loss of life.” What a contrast to the common sentiment that citizens should just call 9-1-1 and wait for help.

Rallying police is always too slow, Bird showed, citing reports about school killings at the Columbine, CO high school and on other campuses. He wrote it is likely that the shooter will attack during daylight hours, probably inside a building, will know the area and target specific people initially before the rampage turns indiscriminate. The murderers generally commit suicide, either killing themselves or forcing responders to kill them.

As Ed Monk told us in his interview, Bird wrote that only onsite personnel are likely to stop the killing, which he supported by studying police response at VA Tech in April 2007 where nearly two dozen were killed and many more injured although police responded about eight minutes after the first 9-1-1 call for help.

Through the lens the VA Tech killings, Bird also discussed the question of fleeing or fighting a mass killer attack. He evaluated barricading or locking doors, playing dead and hiding under desks. Only two years earlier, he revealed, a VA Tech student was disciplined for having a gun on the VA Tech campus, despite having a concealed carry license. Contrast this, Bird urged, with the armed, life-saving actions of the Pearl, MS high school assistant principal who stopped a student/killer in 1997, as well as the 2002 armed response of Tracy Bridges who with another armed student subdued a man who shot a student, a professor and the school dean at the Appalachian School of Law.

Armed teachers, students, parishioners, and other armed citizens can and do stop killers seeking infamy through mass murder. Consider the New Life Church in CO where Jeanne Assam engaged an active killer, and in another parish in which the pastor had to shoot a janitor bent on revenge after losing his job.

Bird’s analyses were genuine studies, not pro-gun propaganda and when armed defenders run into difficulties, be that through tactical mistakes, inadequate skill or the inevitable confusion at a mass shooting scene, Bird plainly reported what happened.

Bird showed how seriously disorienting post-incident confusion can be. Joe Zamudio, running to try to stop the shooter who attacked Gabrielle Giffords, encountered a tremendously confusing scene, with another citizen holding the disarmed attacker’s gun and nearly being shot as a result. Bird wrote honestly about the good, the bad and the ugly elements people have gone through interdicting mass killer rampages. Still, he asserted that anti-gun hype that armed citizens will harm more innocents is unfounded. This supposition, he wrote, “has been used to disarm ordinary citizens in stores, movie theaters, malls, schools, colleges, and on the street. It hasn’t happened, but what has happened is that active killers choose so-called gun free zones, including churches to commit their atrocities.”

Additional chapters in *Surviving a Mass Killer Rampage* discussed threats from radical Islam illustrated by the attacks in Mumbai, London, Madrid, the U.S., and France. Today, even more than when Bird wrote it, we recognize that organized terrorism is formidable, not only in weaponry—ranging from handguns to rifles to explosives—but undertaken by teams of assailants sent out to commit dramatic, atrocities. He also analyzed the San Bernardino, Ft. Hood, and Chattanooga attacks, noting that in all three, the terrorists carried huge quantities of ammunition and multiple firearms.

Bird studied various terror incidents, several in which unarmed citizens stopped the danger as did the four young American men on the Paris-bound train out of Amsterdam that came under attack by a heavily-armed terrorist, whom they physically subdued. Jihadists don’t always use guns, Bird illustrated when he wrote about the 2014 beheading a fired food processing plant employee committed in the name of Allah near Oklahoma City. He was stopped by a manager with a gun.

Bird dubbed armed citizens “irregular first responders,” in the war against terror and mass killers. He closed his chapter on terrorism on American soil with a call to be trained in firearms use and where lawful, carry your gun concealed without fail. The armed citizen is the first line of defense, he stressed. *Surviving a Mass Killer Rampage* is a great resource for further study into the topic about which we interviewed Ed Monk this month. In addition to being very informative, like all of Bird’s books, it is a compendium of pertinent stories and it made enjoyable and educational reading.



Editor's Notebook

by Gila Hayes

A second degree murder conviction has been returned against the upstate New Yorker who last April, hearing several cars and a motorcycle coming up his driveway, stepped out with a shotgun and fired twice, killing a passenger in one of the cars. His defense, according

to news from the trial, claimed that the first shot was loosed intentionally to discourage advancing farther, but he blamed the second on his shotgun, which he testified "went off" when he tripped and dropped it.

Sentencing is expected in about a month and could put the homeowner in prison for 25 years to life if the prosecution gets its stated wish for the maximum sentence.

Earlier in April of 2023, an 84-year old Kansas man shot a teenager when he mistook a teen's actions, reaching to open his storm door, as aggressive intrusion into his home. His case won't go to trial until this fall.

Both say they acted out of fear. One was "scared to death;" the other thought his house was under siege. We were not there, so it is not our place to suggest their fear was not real.

We can, however, reconsider the reaction to finding a stranger knocking on the front door or coming up the driveway. Circumstances under which a gun is the right response remains a topic of concern to Network members, as indicated by half a dozen questions sent in for our [January YouTube LiveStream](#)

Q & As about using guns to eject trespassers and squatters or to stop car prowls, to scatter protesters blocking public streets and other offenses related to property, not to one's own bodily well-being.

I'm a strong advocate for keeping a gun on one's person even when we're at home behind locked doors, but that does not translate into meeting every unknown situation with a gun in hand. Go back to an earlier edition of this journal (<https://armedcitizensnetwork.org/disparity-of-force>) and read Massad Ayoob's outline of the elements that must be present before using deadly force against another person—ability, opportunity and jeopardy. In that interview, he discussed the term "manifest intent," a crucial part of the problem we are discussing here.

The New York and Kansas shootings, vividly illustrate the problems with bringing out a gun before it is clear that we or those in our care are in danger of death or serious injury.

Are you frightened by the *possible* danger or are you facing a manifest danger of death or serious injury at that very moment?

Do you really have to open the door? Intercoms, doorbell cameras and other options exist for this very reason.

Have you encountered trespassers while outside your home on acreage or in an expansive back yard? Turn first to alternatives like taking cover and giving verbal warnings to leave.

"Going to guns" before a genuine threat materializes creates many problems, and will probably put the New York homeowner in prison and at a minimum has likely stripped the elderly Kansas man of his gun rights while he awaits trial. Neither man increased their safety by meeting trespassers with a gun in his hand.

About the Network's Online Journal

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In addition, material presented in our opinion columns is entirely the opinion of the bylined author and is intended to provoke thought and discussion among readers.

To submit letters and comments about content in the eJournal, please contact editor Gila Hayes by e-mail sent to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

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