

Journal

of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC

The Tenth Issue in our Inaugural Year — November, 2008

Controlling Fear

by Tom Givens

When a responsible person first begins going armed, he is usually haunted by two recurring questions, or self-doubts:

- 1. If I'm really attacked, and my life is at stake, will I be able to handle it?
 - 2. What if I screw up and kill an innocent person?

This is a normal reaction, and to a degree it is healthy. We do, however, need to address these issues and

resolve them, before a conflict, so that they will not raise their ugly heads when we should be concentrating on winning the fight. Remember, if an unavoidable fight is thrust upon us, we MUST WIN! The alternative can be death, or crippling injury.

The first issue to face is that of FEAR. Fear is a normal reaction to physical violence for

most people. In addition, since most of us no longer have military experience and live in "civilized" surroundings, we may not have ever actually engaged in a true fight before our moment of truth in a criminal attack. This fear of the unknown is, for many, worse than the fear of being hurt or killed.

First, let me say this. Unless you are an exceptional person, a nutcase, or a liar, and you have actually been involved in armed conflict, you have tasted fear. I'm not ashamed to say I have been scared several times, and I fully expect to be scared again before my life is over.

What you must learn to do is control your fear, and do what you must to win.

Fear can be controlled and overcome, even in life threatening circumstances. This is obviously true, and it is proven every day by hundreds of ordinary people all over the country.

Here are some steps you can take to make this process easier:

1. Admit to yourself you are afraid, then move on. Con-

centrate your mental energies on the task at hand, not on your fear of death, injury, or loss of ego.

- 2. Avoid dwelling on the chance of failure. Concentrate on finding a way to win.
- 3. Take control of yourself. Autogenic breathing is the very best and most efficient way to do this. (Details later.)
- 4. Focus on getting the job done.
- 5. Have a Plan B. Always, always, always, expect Plan A to fail. Expect your gun to malfunction. Expect the suspect to stay up after being hit solidly. Expect to be injured. If any of these things occur, have a pre-planned option to continue (Plan B).
- 6. Turn anger into a motivator. Who does this clown think he is?!? What makes him think he has the right to (rob/rape/kill/ pick one) me?!?
 - 7. Accept an element of fate in every situation. You

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can get hurt by accident after doing everything right. Control everything you CAN control (selection of equipment,

getting adequate training and practice, being alert, thinking tactically) so there are fewer things you CAN NOT control.

Courage under fire is not a matter of being without fear. It is a matter of being able to control fear and accomplish your mission, which is to stay alive. Only fools are fearless.

The other nagging self-doubt concerns over-reacting and shooting someone under unjustifiable circumstances. If you are reading this, that will not happen. Citizens who are responsible enough to obtain carry permits, seek expensive training, make time for practice sessions, etc. are simply too honest, caring, and self disciplined to shoot people without just cause. In my own state, there have been eight fatal shootings by permit holders in the past three years. Every single one was judged to be justifiable and lawful by trained instructor teaching firearms skills. the Attorney General's office.

Author Tom Givens has made hundreds of arrests, some taking in armed felons, as well as using a handgun to defend himself and others. He is both a life-time student of defensive pistolcraft, and a highly

Not one of these permit holders was charged with any crime nor were they sued for anything.

Why? Because every single case was clear-cut, obvious, and morally, legally, and ethically justified. Private citizens have a great reluctance to shoot, even when it is necessary. In fact, for many the problem they will face is the exact opposite of being "trigger happy." Believe it or not, every day, people who are armed and know how to use their weapons, and who have an opportunity to use their weapons to save their lives, fail to do so and die as a result.

This happens to both private citizens and police officers alike.

You ask, "Why on earth would someone who is armed stand there and literally watch a thug kill him?" There are a number of reasons, and they stem from the socialization process that the normal person goes through from birth (but that the criminal does not). These reasons most often include:

1. Moral repugnance to taking a life: You have been

taught all of your life that human life is sacred, that to kill is wrong, and that only bad people hurt others.

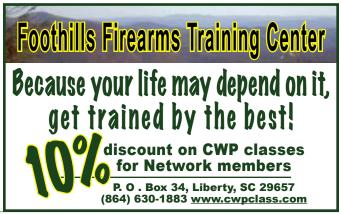
- 2. Failure to be mentally prepared: An astonishing number of people who go armed have never given any thought whatsoever to the fact that they may have to shoot someone. To many, the gun is a talisman, and wearing it is thought to ward off evil spirits. In fact, it is a tool, one used for launching bullets, and nothing more.
- 3. Failure to understand the dynamics of armed confrontations: Many people armed with firearms are killed by thugs armed with edged weapons because they fail to take the "lesser" weapon seriously; they don't understand that deadly force is deadly force, whether applied by gun or knife; and they don't realize how quickly someone at ten feet can be at their throat.
- 4. Inhibition by community pressure and fear of lawsuits: These are trivial matters compared to being killed, raped, or permanently crippled. Get your priorities straight! Unless you are alive, these don't

matter, anyway.

5. Uncertainty about when deadly force is justified: This is a training issue. Be certain that you understand the laws of your state as they apply to self defense and the use of deadly force. Once you have internalized this information, it is simple and easy to see when the circumstances fit the law. There is nothing subtle about someone actually trying to kill you! It will be obvious to you, to any witnesses, and to the police.

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The best way to be fully mentally prepared to actually press that trigger if you have to, is to develop a well thought out and plainly stated set of rules of engagement, long before you are faced with a crisis. This is referred to as a "pre-made decision," thought out, verbalized, and firmly planted in your mind in advance.

I suggest the rules of engagement set out by fellow trainer Gabriel Suarez, a decorated veteran of several police gunfights and a world-class firearms instructor. Gabe uses the acronym IDOL, which stands for "Immediate Defense of Life." Make a commitment that you will only fire as a desperate measure to terminate a threat to your own life, or the life of an innocent third party. If you pose an imminent and otherwise unavoidable threat to my life, or that of an associate (wife, partner, etc.). I will act swiftly and decisively to put you down and out. I will reach for my gun for no other reason, period.

Many people think about this incorrectly. They ask themselves, "If he does ----, can I shoot him?" That is a recipe for disaster! Your question should ALWAYS be, "Do I have to shoot him?" Ask yourself, "If I don't shoot this man, right here, right now, will I be killed or crippled?"

If the answer is yes, shoot him! If the answer is no, try something else.

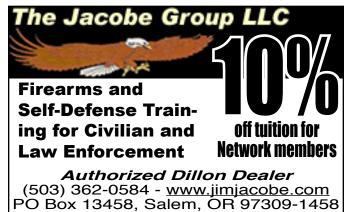
As with most things, this is a matter of training. Proper training ingrains the proper responses.

Repetition is the mother of all skill. With skill comes confidence. With confidence comes the ability to think under pressure and make sound tactical decisions.

To be of value to you, training must meet the test of the Three R's. Training must be: RELEVANT/ REALISTIC/ RECENT.

Relevant training refers to exercises and skill drills pertinent to the task of self-defense.

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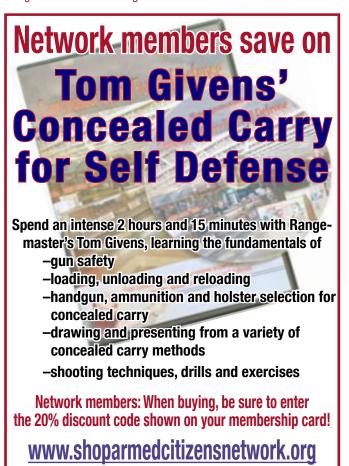
Realistic training is conducted on humanoid targets, from the holster, with a carry type gun and full powered ammunition, in varied lighting conditions, and under time pressure.

Recent training assures retention of motor skills, which degrade quickly. The skills involved in rapidly firing a full-power weapon with precision are perishable, and are lost completely without frequent practice. I suggest two sessions of dry practice at home each week, with at least one range session per month to maintain competency. Practice builds skill, skill builds confidence. Having a well developed skill set, and the confidence that well developed skill engenders, can help you keep your head and stay in control during highly stressful conflicts.

"An amateur practices until he gets it right. A professional practices until he can't get it wrong."

About the author:

Tom Givens is the owner and operator of Memphis' predominant indoor gun range, <u>Rangemaster</u>. For over thirty years Tom's duties have included firearms instruction, training police, military and foreign government agents. At Rangemaster, he directs a successful training business that takes people from the ground-floor basics of gun safety to high-level tactical training.



Autogenic Breathing to Counteract Fear and Stress

by Gila Hayes

Few factors cut into performance like breathing disruption! Getting oxygen into the system is an immediate and on going requirement and few things in life disrupt breathing as regularly as stress, fear or even performance anxiety.

Situations that increase adrenaline levels limit us in many ways. Vision is affected, fine and complex motor skills diminish, and disruptions to creative thinking or reason are all common symptoms.

The cure? Autogenic breathing. From yogis to Lamaze practitioners, to SWAT cops and infantry soldiers, altering and controlling the rhythm of the in breath and exhalation is a proven path to controlling mental and physical reactions that stand between us and our goal (be that survival, improved performance under stress, temper control, you name it), as well as giving mastery over the psychological damage suffered by survivors of life-threatening events. And autogenics is nothing new; psychologists and counselors have used it combined with the power of suggestion, and with progressive muscle relaxation therapy for decades.

In our community, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman has done much to introduce the value of autogenic breathing, and his efforts have spread into the counseling community where it is taught both for performance enhancement as well as used in therapeutic processes to relieve post-traumatic stress troubles. He gives a great explanation of the physical process and why it works at http://www.killology.com/art onkilling anxiety.htm and since he has so generously shared his work on the Internet, I strongly recommend you take time to study what he has written.

Some have renamed the technique tactical breathing, combat breathing or square breathing, because of the four-count employed. One slowly draws in breath on a count of one-two-three-four, holds in that breath for the same counting sequence, releases the breath slowly for the four-count, and then pauses, delaying the next inhalation for the same one-two-three-four count. As the in-hold-out-hold sequence is slowly repeated, heart rate moderates, blood pressure decreases, anxiety diminishes, and in the mind, the capacity to reason and solve problems creatively returns.

Fortunately, few of our Network members face lifethreatening situations on a regular basis! Thus, we encounter the challenge of remembering to use techniques like autogenic breathing to control the physiological and emotional arousal a true adrenaline dump creates. Experts like Alexis Artwohl, Grossman and Charles Hume, Jr. all recommend practices to make implementing autogenic breathing a *conditioned* response during an emergency.

Simply learning how to do autogenic breathing isn't enough, because of adrenaline's disruption of higher brain function in the throes of fight or flight response. Go to http://www.pursuitwatch.org/stories/adrenaline.htm and read Charles Humes, Jr.'s article on the influence of and solution to adrenaline during an emergency. Pay special attention to the latter part of the article, then look for ways to adapt and implement his recommendation to practice the skill by associating it with a triggering event.

What triggers can our members use to make using autogenic breathing a conditioned response? Take classes that include simulated force-on-force training blocks, and quietly add autogenic breathing to your execution of the drills. Use mental imaging – in your mind's eye, put yourself in a self-defense situation, and implement autogenic breathing. Use it while driving when risky road conditions have you white-knuckling the steering wheel. Use it to calm down when faced with a task that induces anxiety. Simply put, make square breathing part of your regular coping mechanism.

Lean about and practice autogenic breathing. Even a superficial web search turns up the following resources for further study:

http://www.killology.com/art onkilling anxiety.htm http://www.burrese.com/2008/03/autogenic-breathing.html http://www.policeone.com/training/articles/1271860 http://www.guidetopsychology.com/autogen.htm http://www.holisticonline.com/stress/stress autogenic-training.htm

Letters to the Editor

We want to hear from you! Please send your letters with questions and comments to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

Be sure to include your full name, town and state of residence. Though it will not be published, we also require an E-mail address that won't end up in your Spam folder, or a daytime telephone number for verification of your letter prior to publication.

Letters may be edited for brevity or clarity.

Reloading for Your Handgun



by Guy Neill

Shooting is like anything else - if you want to do it well, it takes practice, and lots of it to get really good at it. I would say this is especially true with shooting pistols, compared to long guns, since you have fewer points of contact with the gun, affording much less support than with long guns.

If you've considered the economics involved in shooting a lot, you've probably decided to reload for your handgun. How is it done? What equipment is needed? Let's see what it takes by looking at the mechanics of reloading.

One part is easy. You will need components to reload. This consists of bullets. cases, powder and primers. Since the case is one of the two most expense pieces, we save them and reuse them. This is a primary factor in the cost savings of reloading. If you haven't been saving them, start - now!

Let's be clear though. Not all cases are suitable for reloading. Look inside the casing to see the flash hole. This is the hole through which the primer flame ignites the powder charge. If there is more than one

central flash hole, the case uses a Berdan primer and is not suitable for reloading. We are looking for one flash hole in the middle of the case head.

If the case is steel or aluminum, it is not a candidate for reloading. While it is physically possible to reload these cases, they have different properties than brass cases. These differences complicate things, so best simply to avoid them. Realistically, the Berdan cases mentioned above can be reloaded as well, but the work and bother of doing so, not to mentioned the general unavailability of Berdan primers for reloading, make if too burdensome to worry with.

Now, after inspecting your cases, you should have Boxer (one flash hole) cases displaying no cracks, severe dings, extensive corrosion or other damage. The cases should be cleaned. The easiest means of cleaning is to acquire a vibratory case cleaner and let it do the work. These cleaners use an abrasive media, such as ground walnut shells or corn cobs. I tend to like ground corn cob, but the cleaning action of walnut shells is more aggressive.

Bullet selection will depend greatly on what you want from the ammunition you load. If you want to duplicate your carry load as much as possible, you will need the same bullet as used by the carry load - assuming it is available as a component. Many are sold for reloading, but not all.

If you are loading purely for economy, the field is wider. At one time cast lead bullets were the lowest cost bullets, but metal price increases over the last couple of years have significantly narrowed the cost between some

> jacketed bullets and cast. A disadvantage of lead bullets is that they produce smoke when fired, and leave more dirt and debris in the gun. A great number of competition shooters abandoned lead bullets for this reason. even when the cost advantage made them attractive.

> Let's assume you select a jacketed bul-

let of the same weight as used in your carry load. This allows the same sight settings to apply, for the most part.

Once you have picked a bullet, it's time to think about the powder to use. There are many powders available. If the bullet you selected is from a company that publishes a reloading manual, buy one of their manuals as the best starting point for load data.

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Tumbler to polish the cases .

With the reloading manual in hand, look up the data for the cartridge for which you are loading, and find the bullet you have selected. Last month, when we talked about the economics of reloading, I used the 40 S&W as the basis, so I'll stay with that here. I tend to use 180 grain bullets. For ease, I'll relate to the Speer Reloading Manual, since I'm familiar with it.



With a Speer 180 grain bullet for the 40 S&W cartridge, there are about a dozen powders listed. All

are suitable, and picking which one to use should consider (at least) three criteria. The first may be availability. Is that powder available? Most are, but some imported powders, in particular, go in and out of availability.

You should know the published ballistics of the defensive round you carry. We've already made use of that to select the bullet weight, but what is the rated velocity of the round? For simplicity, we'll take it that the defensive round is said to deliver 1,000 fps muzzle velocity.

Looking at the reloading data, the second question is which powders will give that velocity? Several do, and it's likely most will be available, so we need additional means of selection. My criteria at this point is which powder will give the velocity at the lowest pressure.

Now, truthfully, the pressure range listed in the reloading data is quite small overall. The allowable operating pressure of the 40 S&W is over 30,000 psi, and the starting loads listed are quite likely to be within 5% of the maximum pressure, but if I can obtain the velocity I want at 30,000 psi instead of 33,000 psi, I see that as easier on the gun. Since all the loads do not necessarily list the pressures, I judge by how close to the beginning load the powder will deliver the velocity I want.

Once you've settled on a powder, go with the primer listed in the load data – at least to begin with. Now that we have the components to load (assuming you were saving cases), what equipment is needed?

The basic reloading equipment list goes something like this:

Press

Dies

Scale

Shell holder or shell plate (depending on the press)

Reloading manual

You could manage to reload using just the above list, but there are several other items that will make the process much easier, reliable, and faster. These include:

Powder measure

Dial calipers

Case gauge

Tumbler

Primer flipper

A single stage press is nice in the beginning because it separates the reloading steps, making the process very simple and direct. As handgun shooters, though, we are interested in the quantity of ammunition as well as the quality, so a progressive press makes a lot of sense for our needs. A progressive press accomplishes several reloading steps with each cycle. They are the same steps as with a single stage, but done simultaneously.

The Dillon Square Deal progressive press comes with the dies and shell plate, along with a powder measure, so it is fairly complete for that part of things. The dial calipers are needed to set the dies to produce the correct length ammunition and establish a suitable crimp.

The reloading steps are these:

Size the case

De-prime the case

Seat a new primer

Bell the case mouth

Add the powder charge

Seat a new bullet

Crimp the case

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I'll describe the Dillon Square Deal reloading press for this discussion. There are many other presses available, and, like buying a car, there may be features you may like better on some other model. You will need somewhere to mount the press. A workbench of some sort is usually the best, but people have been creative and mounted them to portable benches, desks, tables and who knows what else. Sturdier is better. Depending on the height of the bench, you may be interested in the Dillon Strong Mount. It mounts to the bench, and the Square Deal

mounts to it, and it raises the Square Deal higher. This may facilitate easier use of the press. I have no direct experience with the Dillon Strong Mount, so I cannot say how much benefit it may be.

The Square Deal comes set up for the cartridge you specify. You'll have to attach the powder measure and some other parts, but the dies are already installed and adjusted to allow getting going pretty quick out of the box. The bullet seating depth and amount of powder will be the principal adjustments. The included directions should get you through without problems, but Dillon has telephone support if you do run into problems.

Once mounted, with the locator buttons installed (positioning pieces that align the shell case and prevent the case from coming out of the shell plate, but which are removable to a permit removing a casing if necessary), cycle the press three or four times, watching the action of the press. You shouldn't have any powder in the measure yet, but even if you do, the measure is designed not to dispense powder unless a casing is present.

We see that the Square Deal has four stations. The shell plate rotates clockwise, as looking down at it. A casing is inserted at station one, located at about 4 o'clock and the handle is pulled down. This raises the ram and pushes the case into the sizing die, and the old primer is pushed out of the case at the same time. As the handle is raised, lowering the ram, the shell plate automatically rotates, carrying the case to station two.

Resizing the case squeezes it back to dimensions close to the factory specifications. I say close because there is a tolerance in the factory dimensions, and different cases will have varying degrees of hardness. The



hardness, in turn, means variability in springback. In any event, the casing will be returned to a dimension that will allow easy chambering in the gun.

Resizing is necessary because the pressure from firing the cartridge both pushes the bullet out the barrel, and expands the case to the limits of the chamber. The resizing action brings the case back to acceptable dimensions.

While resizing the case, station one of the Square Deal is also decapping, or de-priming the case: removing the spent primer. The spent primer will fall into the cup at the bottom of the press. It will need to be emptied occasionally. You can discard the spent primers, or save them until there is a quantity to sell to a metals recycler. The primers are made of brass.

When the shell plate has reached station two, press the handle further back, toward the bench to seat the new primer. Before stroking the handle again, place a new case in station one, then stroke the handle. Pulling it down this time accomplishes the same sizing and de-priming on the case in station one, while the case in station two is brought up to the powder measure where a quantity of powder (that you've pre-set in the press set-up) is dispensed. The case mouth is also belled at station two.

Bring the handle back up, the shell plate rotates and press the handle back to seat a new primer in case two. Insert a third case in station one, set a bullet on the case at station three (being certain there is powder in the case) and crank the handle again. The first case, now entering the seating die at station three, has the bullet you placed on it pushed into the case. You will need to check the overall length of the cartridge once the bullet is seated. The reloading manual should have the length listed. Best

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to set this before you start to load.

With a fourth case inserted in station one, a new bullet placed on the case in station three, the fourth stroke of the handle will accomplish all the steps already described, plus have the crimp applied at station four. As the handle is raised, the rotation of the shell plate will eject the finished round into the Akro bin.

Continue the process until you run out of time, patience or components.

That describes the reloading process, but you do need to adjust the quantity of powder dispensed before starting to load. This is where the scale comes into play. With the shellplate empty, and powder in the measure, insert a case into station two, under the powder measure. Take the case out at station three (following the indexing of the shellplate), and dump the powder into the scale pan.

Note the weight, compared to the selected amount of powder from the reloading manual. Adjust the powder measure to deliver more or less powder, as appropriate. Repeat until the measure is delivering the desired quantity of powder. Before you set out reloading, though, do a final check by dumping ten powder charges to look at the average. Adjust the powder measure to have the average of ten powder charges match (within a tenth or so) of the powder charge you want.

Almost every powder measure will have some degree of variation in the powder charges it delivers. The greatest source of the variation is the operator. As you reload, try to stroke the press handle as much the same every time as you can.

Take the first few cartridges you load and try them in the case gauge, if you have one. The gauge essentially duplicates a chamber. If the cartridge fits the gauge, the round should chamber in the gun without problem – at least with respect to the diameter of the cartridge. The bullet profile may be different and require some experimentation with the overall length to match the gun and ammunition for best function. Some remove the barrel from their pistol and use it as a gauge.

You should develop the habit of checking the amount of powder thrown by the powder measure periodically throughout your loading. This is insurance that vibration doesn't change the setting. Likewise, gauge some of the cartridges throughout loading session to be certain there

are no changes in the crimp or sizing of the case, along with checking the overall length on occasion. You are the quality control department, as well as the manufacturer, so these inspections give you greater confidence in the integrity of the ammunition you are loading.

To use the primer flip tray, separate the two halves. Set the ungrooved half aside for now. Remove the cover sleeve from a tray of primers, being careful not to spill any of the primers. Place the grooved half of the flip tray over the primer tray and, while holding them together, turn them over so that the primers will be in the flip tray once you remove the plastic primer tray.

Now move the primer flipper back and forth gently, but with enough force to have the primers try to slide in the tray. The grooves will catch the edges of the primers and flip them so that they are all anvil side up. Now place the ungrooved half of the primer flipper on the grooved side, and, while holding them together, with the primers inside, turn them over so that the grooved side is now on top. Remove the grooved side and the primers will all be cup side up.

With all the primers oriented with the cup side up, you can use the primer pick-up tube to pick them up. Once all the primers are in the tube, they can be transferred to the primer feeding tube on the press in an anvil side up orientation suitable for being inserted in the primer pocket of the cases.

Primers are the most dangerous part of reloading, since they are sensitive to impact, as well as heat. Treat them with care, and they (and you) will be okay. Get rough with them and there is the potential of setting one or more off. Eye protection should be used whenever reloading. Some even wear ear protection while loading just in case a primer does go off. They are surprisingly loud (and powerful) for their size.

Powder is flammable – but you know that. Keep heat sources away from it and all is well. Don't smoke during reloading.

I don't intend to scare you with these warnings. If you can handle guns safely, you can reload safely. You do need to be aware of the dangers, the same as you need to know the dangers when driving – or shooting – or most any activity. Knowing the dangers allows safer pursuit of the endeavor.

As mentioned earlier, always check that there is powder in the case before you put the bullet on top of it. You'll develop awareness for the amount of powder. Should you

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encounter a case with no powder, or too much powder, this awareness allows you to stop before seating the bullet on a round that could cause problems. Check the powder measure periodically as you load, trying to ensure you don't run it out of powder.

Besides saving money, reloading gives you a great deal of flexibility with your ammunition. Many are able to obtain better accuracy with their handloads than with factory ammunition. There are more bullet styles available for reloading, and the number of powders available can allow the experimenter that likes to compare performance a long career testing different loads.

As long as you're producing ammunition that safely meets your needs, it's all good. Even if you don't end up saving any money, you will be able to do a lot more shooting than if you buy factory.

Perhaps the only real downside is that you do have to spend the time at the load bench. Progressive equip-

Ruger LCP Recall Noted

The following affects the gun reviewed in the August edition of this journal. On October 29, 2008 Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc. reported that it had recently received a small number of reports that LCP pistols can discharge when dropped onto a hard surface with a round in the chamber. Although no injuries have been reported, company announced plans to retrofit all older LCP pistols with an upgraded hammer mechanism at no charge to the customer.

The recall affects all LCP pistols bearing the prefix "370" (that is, serial number 370-xxxxx). LCP owners can sign up for the safety upgrade or obtain additional information by going to the LCP recall website at www.ruger.com/lcprecall or E-mailing: LCPrecall@ruger.com. Offline, customers may call the LCP Recall hotline at 1-800-784-3701 or send a fax to 928-541-8873.

The new parts are being built and Ruger will retrofit LCP pistols on a first-come, first-served basis as soon as they are available. The company will send a shipping label and package with instructions for the free return of the LCP pistol to the Prescott, AZ factory. There, Ruger will install the new hammer mechanism, plus some other functional upgrades that have been added since the LCP's introduction, at no charge. A complimentary LCP magazine with the new finger grip extension will be included as a "thank you" for LCP owners' patience and cooperation.

ment such as the Dillon Square Deal described will help minimize time at the loading bench, and there are other presses that will produce ammo are greater speeds. You need to determine the value of your time to assess the cost benefit. Most find they enjoy reloading, or at least find it a nice, peaceful time since you should avoid distractions while loading. Quality time with yourself – leading to quality time on the range.

About the Author:

Guy Neill is a mechanical engineer, with extensive experience in the firearms and ammunition industries. His résumé shows stints at the Blount/CCI ammunition factory in Lewiston, ID, a time with Wilson Combat, plus life-time involvement with the shooting sports, including IPSC, the Bianchi Cup and IDPA. In a departure from the norm for this industry insider, he currently works for a steel company.

Network is Column Topic

The Network leadership was delighted and honored to be the topic of columnist Ed Lovette, who discussed our educational efforts and other goals in his February 2009 Combat Handguns column "Survival Savvy."

After introducing the Network, its mission and benefits, Ed gives a good overview of the three educational DVDs each Network member receives. It is gratifying to read that Ed's concurrent studies on what happens to citizens after a justifiable shooting support the information given in the second of the three DVD set.

At the end of his article, Ed cites the common rhetorical question, "What is your life worth?" He concludes, "I will suggest that we need to ask ourselves the same question regarding the value to us of the information contained in these three DVDs. We need to ask ourselves this question regarding the importance to us of becoming a member of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network. Your decision is as critical to your prevailing in the before-during-and-after of an armed confrontation as any piece of gear you think you might need that will give you an edge."

We deeply appreciate Ed's thoughtful discussion of the Network in his column and are pleased to be speaking by phone every day with people who are calling because they read his words.

Whether or not Ed had chosen the Network as the topic of his February column, we've long regarded Combat Handguns as one of the top magazines for serious students of armed self defense. You can contact the magazine by mail at 1115 Broadway, New York, New York 10010 or by phone: (212) 807-7100 Fax: (212) 807-1479 and by Email: CombatSubs@harris-pub.com. They have a secure website for subscriptions at https://secure.harris-pub.com/combathandguns.com/subscribe/form.php

President's Message

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

Here we are, nine months into the formation of the Network, and six months after we started taking memberships. When we started the Network, I set a goal of 1,000 members by the end of the first year. That means, by the end of June, we need about 550 more members if we are to achieve the goal.



Marty Hayes

Can we do it? Can we make this idea called the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC into a strong, viable force to contend with when a member is getting hassled in the courts? Can we become the "go-to" educational arm of the armed citizens' movement, when a person wants to know more about the legalities of using guns for self-defense? Can our members go to bed at night comfortable that if they have to shoot a burglar in three hours, they have a plan in place to deal with the criminal justice system? My answer to these questions is an enthusiastic YES! WE CAN!

Each day, new people sign up and give us the thumbs up, encouraging us to keep going, which keeps Vincent, Gila and me positive that we are on the right track. Of course, that track has a steep hill once in a while, and we can even expect the track may go out once in a while, but we will get there, even if we need to back up the train and find a different route.

With my little cheerleading message firmly in the frontal cortex of our collective brainpower, let me take this opportunity to introduce an idea that I believe can propel us beyond our goal of 1,000 members, and get us on a firm path to 2000 members and beyond.

So, what is this gem of an idea?

It is our intent to immediately start a "State Rep" program, where we appoint one or more representatives of the Network to help spread the word to your local gun people. The idea has been fomenting for some time. It would work like this: a member can ask to become a

Join the Network On-line

Membership is now available
through the Network's on-line store
at www.shoparmedcitizensnetwork.org, with a link at the bottom of
the navigation links on the left side
of the on-line store's front page.

State Rep. (There can be more than one state rep, by the way). That rep accepts the responsibility for promoting the Network in your state, not only locally, but perhaps even on the Internet on your local gun rights forums. There would be no other responsibilities, and each State Rep. would be linked to our web site, as a contact point for local individuals to get in touch with for additional information.

Who should be a State Rep?

First off, all volunteers are welcome. There is no reason to limit this to just one rep per state! If you are willing to be pro-active to help the Network grow, then we need you. We will supply a virtually endless number of brochures for you to pass out to your friends, gun club buddies, gun shops and gun shows. Your mission over the next year will be to get these brochures out into circulation. Please don't think this requires you to sell anything! Personally, I am not a salesman. If an idea, concept, goods, service or product cannot stand on its own, and requires a hard sell, then it is not good enough.

All we ask of the State Rep is to honestly discuss the Network with people who want to know more. The way we get people wanting to know more is to expose them to the Network and its mission. That's all.

What do the State Rep's get in return? Well, at the moment, we don't have any additional products or benefits we can offer in return for your help, but we reserve the right to reward appropriately. Given the fact we are just introducing this idea, and have no idea on how it will be received, let's just implement the idea and get started, okay?

To help as a State Rep. contact our Vice President Vincent Shuck by e-mail, jvshuck@armedcitizensnetwo rk.org as he will be the point of contact for the State Reps. Let's see if we can push Network membership over 1,000 by June!

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Book Review

The Concealed Handgun Manual

How to Choose, Carry, and Shoot a Gun in Self Defense, 5th Edition

by Chris Bird ISBN 978-0-9656784-7-6 \$22.95

Reviewed by Gila Hayes

It was about a dozen years ago that I first read Chris Bird's Concealed Handgun Manual, a well-thought-out book of some 1/2-inches thick that I read with pleasure. Apparently I was not the only one who enjoyed Bird's work, because since that time the author has updated and expanded the book until it is nowin its fifth edition has 522 pages!

Bird's eclectic life experience no doubt colors his approach to the topic. A commissioned officer in the British Army, after departing the service Bird left England to live in Canada, Australia and finally, the U.S.. His 25 years as a journalist and crime reporter for the Vancouver (BC) *Province*, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and San Antonio *Express-News* shows in the reports that illustrate the major points of The Concealed Handgun Manual.

The author opens the book with analysis of Seung Hui Cho's mass shooting at Virginia Tech in 2007. Analyzing possible solutions, he quotes a wide variety of educators, gun rights activists, police and politicians. With the words of Sheriff Wayne Rausch of Latah Co., ID, we are reminded that law enforcement is primarily reactive. "It's absolutely ludicrous to think that on a huge campus like that (Virginia Tech) ... police are going to be able to miraculously pinpoint the exact location and have immediate response to shut it down before it gets worse." states the sheriff.

Bird contrasts the Virginia Tech tragedy against the intervention of armed students at the Appalachian School of Law, Jake Ryker's heroic actions stopping Springfield, OR shooter Kip Kinkel, and others. Solutions analyzed include armed teachers, armed school guards, and defeating the student passivity so impossible to ignore in reports from Virginia Tech. Asking Greg Crane of Response Options what students can do when under attack, Bird gathers some very proactive counsel, the first of its type that I've yet encountered. With so-called Gun Free Zones proliferating, I appreciate the good advice, as I am sure will other readers.

Using his home state of Texas as an example, Bird put the spotlight on most politicians' elitist belief that American citizens cannot be trusted with guns. Hearteningly, in a few cases, Texan officials had the courage to admit that their morbid fear of blood in the streets did not materialize when that state passed a law allowing citizens to carry concealed handguns. The author's accounts of those and other fears swirling around that state's carry laws is instructive.

Natural disasters and civil unrest, illustrated by stories from Hurricane Katrina survivors, bring armed self defense into focus. After the hurricane, "some gun owners realized that many of the same conditions that prevailed after the storm will occur in the aftermath of a biological, chemical or nuclear attack," Bird explains. Guns for defense became a critical factor in surviving Hurricane Katrina, something the author covers in detail. The following chapters contain report after report underscoring the value of guns in the hands of private citizens. Through these stories the reader is guided to analyze the decision to own and carry guns for self defense.

Is the first half of the book establishing the role of guns in self defense, preaching to the choir? Not for me. The stories provide ammunition for the inevitable discussions in which we find ourselves defending our right to carry guns. The author's compelling approach also makes The Concealed Handgun Manual a perfect gift for a friend or family member who is wondering how to defend themselves or their families.

In chapter four, Bird writes, "The object of this book is to provide you with the knowledge and encourage you to acquire the skills to prevent you from becoming...a victim of violent criminal attack." In that pursuit, mental conditioning and awareness are discussed, using Cooper's color codes of awareness, each of which is identified and illustrated. Advising avoidance, Bird wisely suggests, "Your self-defense tactics are most successful when you don't know what might have happened if you hadn't taken avoiding action." This chapter echoes a theme oft repeated through The Concealed Handgun Manual: the catastrophic failure of passivity when confronted with violence.

Chapters on handgun and holster selection define common handgun action types and common concealed carry methods. On the latter, Bird outlines the pros and cons of the IWB, hip holsters, cross draw, appendix, small of the back, belly bands, shoulder holsters, ankle holsters, thigh or garter holsters, waist packs and belt pouches, gun purses and other alternative carry devices. In a later

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chapter, Bird provides a good section on interacting with law enforcement if stopped for a traffic infraction while carrying a gun.

A consummate storyteller, the author introduces gun safety with an account of a father who left a loaded gun in his car with his toddler. Though gone only minutes, in that time, his child shot himself, probably with his thumb on the trigger. With this report setting a serious tone, the author outlines ten basic gun safety principles, closing with a number of pages about safety for children and guns. This includes illustrative and cautionary tales that are far more effective than a long list of rules.

According to Bird, "The best way to keep your selfdefense handgun out of the hands of children and others is to wear it. If you are not wearing it and it isn't under your direct control, it must be made secure. Putting the gun on a high shelf will keep it out of reach of a toddler, but not a teen. Hiding it is also not a good approach. Remember when you were a kid? Was there anywhere in your house that you hadn't explored? I remember as a kid finding a .32 semi-automatic and ammunition in a drawer in my father's dressing room." He concludes by describing the value of gun safes, as well as identifying many of the different sizes and variations commercially available.

The Concealed Handgun Manual offers an introduction to shooting technique including use of sights, gripping the gun, stance, determining the master eye, and an outstanding treatise on the why and how of using the pistol sights. Information on sights follows, including a discussion of night sights, the express sight concept adapted to pistols and lasers for sighting. Next Bird covers the allimportant concept of trigger control, and closes his Basic Handgun Shooting chapter with discussion of drawing from a holster.

In the chapter entitled "Advanced Shooting," Bird tells how one man defended himself twice using a Davis .380. "In a gunfight, who is shooting and how is more important than the cost and quality of the gun," the author concludes. The chapter discusses aiming points, creating distance from an assailant, using cover, alternative shooting positions, reloading the handgun, clearing malfunctions, and unsighted shooting.

In chapter ten, we return to mindset, for which much of the book's first half has set the stage. The author leads with the stories of two armed citizens who prevailed, though things were a little dicey because both had to scrabble for a handgun concealed off of their persons.

Both stories show the value of teaching by relat-

ing real-life experiences. Readers of different skill and experience level will take away different lessons from the reports with which the author leads most chapters. Anyone reading chapter eleven will marvel at and hope to emulate the will to stand and fight described; some will ponder the ammunition selection in the Jim Eichelberg incident; others will see the author's emphasis on how prevalent crime has become. The lesson that follows on mindset is very individual, as Bird explains the natural human reluctance to kill, as well as dealing with an assailant who already has a gun pointed at you, controlling fear and pain, post-shooting reactions, and phenomena like tunnel vision.

In the chapter on deadly force, Bird gives a detailed debrief from one of his readers, a concealed handgun licensee who shot an assailant. His experience, as well as others related later in the chapter, shows the expense of fending off legal actions in criminal and civil court, and detail interacting with police, how the good guy can still spend the night in jail and more. A sadder story follows about a man who folded to pressure to plead to a lesser charge though there is little doubt that he saved himself and possibly his wife from a disturbed intruder.

Post traumatic stress and coping after a shooting close the chapter on deadly force, with explanations by a police psychologist casting light on some of the psychological torment common to people who've undergone life-threatening experiences.

Bird concludes the book with a chapter on practice and training, followed by a final chapter on concealed carry laws.

"Anyone who trusts the legal system to dispense justice is as foolish as the person who believes the police will protect him or her from crime," Bird writes. Still, some legislation has been enacted to protect citizens from prosecution after shooting an assailant Bird writes, citing so-called Stand Your Ground laws. Still, armed citizens need to make a detailed study of the laws of their state, he urges. Concurrently, weigh your own moral and ethical standards against what the law allows, he urges.

Whether you simply want to refresh your supply of anecdotes for use in arguing for gun rights or are looking for a book to give first-time gun owners, The Concealed Handgun Manual serves admirably.

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Editor's Notebook

The Sky Is Falling!

...and similar cries of distress echo through the conservative elements of the nation. I expect next month's gun magazines will be full of political gloom and despair. That gun rights face real peril is, in my mind, uncontested.

During a number of years in which gun rights efforts were more pro-active, we have enjoyed increases in state licensing for carrying concealed handguns and the tremendous



Editor Gila Hayes fits the stereotype painted by President-Elect Obama.

Heller decision, just to mention a few. With our resources less committed to fending off anti-gun legislation, the gun owning community was free work on these accomplishments.

In the next four years, I expect the battlefront to shift into defense against restrictions of all sorts. Areas of attack are still unclear, though I expect legislation proposing gun owner licensing, extreme taxation on guns and ammunition, cartridge serialization, will join the ever-popular restrictions on specific types of firearms.

Personally, I am relieved that the nastiness of the campaign season is behind us. I'm still dealing with the spiteful sentiment of president-elect Obama, made during the primary campaign, when he told a group of wealthy donors in San Francisco that less-metropolitan Americans dealt with their frustrations by getting bitter and "they cling to guns, religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

Ever since hearing that statement, I've felt a little like I was back in elementary school, with Mother advising me to just make a joke out of insults from other children. As the amusing picture shows, I'm not really bitter, I'm just clinging to what is elemental in my life. In the days after the election, I've renewed my personal determination to protect our right to provide for the defense and safety of our families and ourselves, and to practice our faith as each individual sees fit.

Some of the board members of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Foundation offered some insightful comments, and to these, I will now yield the editorial page.

Marty Hayes writes:

First off, I am bitterly disappointed in the direction the country took on Nov. 4th. But having said that, I do understand how it occurred. I have been active in politics since an early age, and remember the uphill battle that President Gerald Ford had trying to get elected to office after the nation endured the scandal of Watergate and the public humiliation and disgrace of President Richard Nixon. Ford sealed his fate when he pardoned Nixon for any crimes he may have committed while in office. All the political pundits of the time believed that single act cost him the 1976 election even if it was the right thing to do. I am not sure I believe those 1976 pundits, as having watched that election closely, I don't think in retrospect anything or anyone could have saved Gerald Ford. The nation wanted to turn their back on Nixon and send a message that this type of behavior was not to be tolerated. They punished Gerald Ford for the sins of Richard Nixon.

Now, fast forward to 2008. I believe the same dynamics occurred here. There was absolutely nothing Senator John McCain could have done to save himself. The nation was intent on turning their back on George Bush and they punished John McCain because of the sins of George Bush.

What were the sins of George Bush? In the hearts and minds of about 52% of Americans, those sins were two

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fold. The first was invading Iraq and getting the U.S. of A. involved in that war. I don't know if the decision was right or wrong, but I do know and am grateful that America has not been attacked again by Al-Queda or any other terrorist organization since. I will let history judge whether or not this was the correct action.

The other sin of George Bush was not keeping a tighter reign on the purse strings. It is no secret, that when you overspend your budget, eventually it catches up to you. How many marriages have ended because one party could not control the family spending? The Republican Party here in America was just divorced by the majority of its citizens.

As the tone and content of this commentary suggests, I am disappointed in the outcome of the election (bitterly disappointed), not because Barack Obama was elected, but because this country would elect **anyone** with such a history of anti-gun, anti-conservative politics. And while I cling bitterly to my disappointment, I am also **very thankful** that five United States Supreme Court justices ruled last summer that we gun owners do indeed have an individual right to keep and bear arms. This ruling helps take the sting out of the election results and gives me some hope that the road the next few years will not be as bumpy as it might have been.

But, as disappointed as I am, I am also so **very proud** of the American people, for having the capacity to look beyond race and elect as president a black man. I frankly didn't think we had it in us, and I am buoyed by the idea that we can, as a nation, simply ignore the color of a man's skin and vote for the ideals and philosophy behind the man, as much as I might disagree with those ideals and philosophy.

If you will excuse me now, I think I will go load some ammo.

Massad Ayoob writes:

We have a President-Elect who is more anti-gun than any in history, backed up by Vice-President-Elect Joe Biden, who proudly authored our last Draconian gun ban, and the equally anti-gun Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi. Looking at Obama's strong connection to his Chicago roots, we can expect a push to deny Federal benefits to states that do not rescind or severely limit concealed carry,

and perhaps an Illinois-style FOID (Firearms Owner's Identification) card to own or purchase guns and ammunition, forced on all Americans. Look for a sweeping "assault weapons ban" with NO sunset clause, and quite possibly (on the British model) no grandfathered possession, either. Gun confiscation has become a reality in Chicago, and there are those who want to make it a reality nationwide.

Our strongest hope now is to remind the party in power of the mid-term elections of 1994, and the devastating backlash to their power then that Bill Clinton himself attributed to the gun owners. We need to renew our commitment to grass roots, state level gun owners' civil rights groups, and to strengthening concealed carry and similar legislation at that level. We also need to be prepared to advise our friends, relatives, and associates who will be motivated to become first-time gun owners by the outcome of this election to make responsible choices...and to do it now.

Vincent Shuck writes:

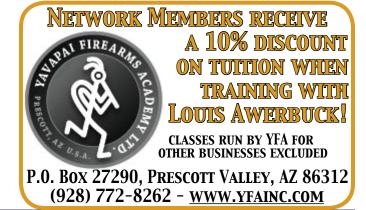
We just experienced an election described by many as 'historic.' I happen to agree with that. What now?

While I may differ with many of his policies, Obama will soon be my President. He will bring change for sure, but there is some potential that he will govern a little bit from the center, following the will of many of those who elected him, i.e. the moderates and centrists. Of course to do this, the new president will have to reject some left wing, partisan points of view and find some common ground upon which to build his legacy.

With some trepidation in saying this, I see no absolute formula that the sky is falling or that all of my guns are in

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jeopardy. Certainly, Obama's track record could portend a far-left approach, but in actuality, it's incumbent on all of us, like always, to monitor our government - from the local to the national level – and stay involved, express our opinions, and hold our elected officials accountable. Yes, we may get dinged by a few legislative actions, but all of our elected officials are subject to re-election, including Obama.

And, as far as the Supreme Court and possible Obama appointments, we'll have to see which, if any, justice resigns. More than likely, a retirement will come from one of the more liberal members of the court. Therefore, short of a surprise retirement. Obama will have the chance only to nominate a liberal justice to replace a retiring liberal justice, leaving the balance of the court essentially unchanged.

I've also decided that one of my goals during the coming year is to take at least one Obama supporter to the range. I want to see if I can have some influence on an individual who may believe that being involved in the shooting sports is bad, that we 'gun people' eat our children, or that we 'cling to our guns' out of despair.

I don't know about you, but in my life I have to play with the cards I'm dealt. For now, I will take the lead from John McCain. His gracious concession speech gave me some hope. I accept the fact that some of the responsibility for turning that hope into a reality is up to me.

Tom Givens writes:

The 2008 elections were not good news for gun owners' rights. Not only were a virulently anti-gun President and Vice President elected, the Democrats improved their

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majorities in both the House and Senate. Expect bad things in the next year or two.

This does not, however, justify sitting around bitching about the erosion of our freedoms. Now, more than ever, we need to be ambassadors for gun rights. Each and every one of us must make a commitment to recruit new shooters and to educate our friends, relatives, and associates about the positive aspects of gun ownership and personal rights. When you learn of a successful selfdefense incident, make sure others know about it. Help a person concerned about crime or personal safety find a way to get training and education in gun use. Mentor some young shooters, or help coach a high school or university rifle team. In short, get involved!

In my state, we have a high percentage of citizens with carry permits—3% of the population, as compared to 1.5% to 2% nationally. Unfortunately, that means that 97% of the state population does NOT have a carry permit. As a minority, we need to have our concerns heard. The average person in this country does not really care one way or the other about gun/self defense rights, mostly out of total ignorance on the subjects. We are the only ones who can remedy that.



The eJournal of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC is published monthly on the Network's web site at

http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org.

We are actively soliciting the participation of writers with expertise in self-defense firearms, the legal profession, and the self-defense training field. If you are interested in contributing to the **eJournal**, please contact editor Gila Hayes by E-mail sent to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC receives its direction from these corporate officers:

Marty Hayes, President J. Vincent Shuck, Vice President Gila Hayes, Operations Manager

We welcome your questions and comments about the Network. Please write to us at info@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

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How to join - mail in form

Print this application form and FAX it in to us at 1-360-978-6102 (if you are using a VISA/MC), or mail it to P.O. Box 400, Onalaska, WA, 98570 with your check for \$85. Your first year's membership will expire at the end of month following the one in which we received your membership application. Please include a copy of your state issued Concealed Carry Permit or other suitable background check with your application form, so we can accept and process your membership application as soon as possible.

When your application is accepted, you will receive three DVDs concerning issues in the lawful use of deadly force for self-defense. Additionally, you will become immediately eligible to have any future case of self-defense reviewed by one of our Network experts at no charge, and may apply for a grant of financial assistance for any litigated self-defense cases initiated after membership application (see http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.com/benefits.html). You will also receive a membership card with your username and password for the member's Internet forum, as well as your coupon code for the discount at the Network's on-line book and DVD store.

We look forward to your participation in the Network as part of a family of armed citizens who passionately care about the right to armed self-defense, and want to protect themselves from the legal nightmare that sometimes accompany a righteous act of self-defense.

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