



eJournal

of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC

Our Sixteenth Issue — May, 2009 — Now In Our Second Year

Lessons from Over The Edge

An interview with Michael Bane

by Gila Hayes

From inside the gun industry sound a chorus of voices speaking out for gun rights. Speaking to the same concerns, the increasingly influential voice of professional journalist Michael Bane offers a different and valuable perspective. His opinions do not always parallel those of insiders, but the unique insights and counterpoint musings on [Bane's blog](#), his interviews on [Downrange Radio](#), and programming on [Shooting Gallery](#) and [The Best Defense](#) are making a difference for armed citizens. Though our readers will know Bane from his discourses on guns, shooting and self defense, some of Bane's magazine and book credits involve extreme sports, as reflected in the title of what is perhaps his most famous book, [Over the Edge: A Regular Guy's Odyssey In Extreme Sports](#).

While Bane was becoming famous with cave divers, mountaineers, and wind surfers, he was also active in the shooting community, lending his influence to IPSC and IDPA when both organizations were embryonic, as well as participation in shooting sports ranging from bulls eye to



Television Personality Michael Bane

cowboy action to sporting clays. Over the years, a number of the major firearms manufacturers have drawn on Bane's media and marketing savvy.

I met Bane when he was managing the [National Shooting Sports Foundation](#) (NSSF) Media Education Program, and not long thereafter, I joined him on his first filming for the TV program, *Shooting Gallery*. That original footage perished in a conflict with the original program underwriter, but Bane's gun-TV concept thrived. Today, *Shooting Gallery* is arguably the mainstay of the Outdoor Channel's programming. This season, Bane introduced a new show, *The Best Defense*, and just in case he might run out of things to do, Bane produces another Outdoor

Channel program, [Cowboys](#).

When I caught up with Michael Bane recently, we sat down to talk about guns, self defense and his multitudinous projects. To maintain Bane's unique style, let's switch now

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to interview style, and see what is on the mind of this most eclectic member of the firearms community.

eJournal: Michael, I've been following your work for years and years, and I like to think I was there for *Shooting Gallery's* launch. But to go back farther, I also remember reading articles by Michael Bane in gun magazines, and that makes me curious about your transition from print into television. You were literally a straight-up reporter at one time, weren't you?

Bane: I was officially a life-time, professional journalist. Most of my life, I've made my living as a free-lance writer. Occasionally [work] contracts were longer here or there, but basically, I wrote articles and books, and my assumption was that I would spend the rest of my life writing articles and books. I was asked to speak at a journalism conference and they asked me how you go from print to electronic. I said, "You walk down the street and wait for a television show to hit you in the head." Actually, it's largely by accident.

eJournal: How did your "accident" happen?

Bane: A friend of mine was hired as the Media Director for the Outdoor Channel. Executives at the Outdoor Channel, two sets of executives ago, said we need a consultant to come in here and tell us what shooting sports we need to cover. My friend said, "Just get Michael. Michael knows about that stuff."

eJournal: True—you've been a competitive shooter for a long time, haven't you?

Bane: In fact, I was lucky enough – and it was luck – to be involved in the start of the [USPSA](#), of [IPSC](#), in the United States in the early '80s, but it was largely by accident. Again. We were shooting the Florida Invitational, which was one of the first really big National combat matches.

I got squadded with Walt Rauch, Tommy Campbell, who was then at Smith & Wesson, Dave Arnold who became the first USPSA president, and a couple of other people. We had a break the first day and one guy goes, "We're going to go to a strip joint and invent a new shooting sport. Do you want to come?" I said, "I don't know," and Walt Rauch said, "Get in the car."

None of us had any money, I mean, between five of us at the table, we couldn't get a pitcher of beer. But we had a yellow legal pad and we outlined what would become the United States Practical Shooting Association. How we would break it up ... and I didn't know anything about all this—nothing!

eJournal: Scarcely! You were a shooter and a gun owner already...

Bane: Yeah, I was a shooter. I've been shooting since I was six. I started bird hunting when I was eight. But bullseye was my first formal competition; I shot it in Long Island in the mid-'70s. In 1977-78, I got a 1911 and started what was then the new Modern Technique from St. Cooper the Divine. It was fun, and I think the thing that was most exciting to me was that it was all new.

eJournal: Kind Providence!...So you took your yellow legal pad to a strip club and you, uh, did what?

Bane: Created USPSA. Outlined what the sport would be. In fact, the sport is still very much what we outlined sitting there. I started working with those guys and then I fell in with a lot of local people in this area (Orlando, FL) In fact, the Orange County Police Range is sort of where I "made my bones."

I'd been doing a lot of competition shooting in the early '80s, and I started working with Frank Repast who was the firearms instructor for the Orange County Sheriff and head of Orange County SWAT. He was in the process of changing police training from the classic PPC stand-and-shoot, to

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Bane pushes the limits at the recent Rangemaster Tactical Conference at the USSA range in Tulsa, OK.

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scenario-based training. His idea was that he would rather use a range master he trusted. And I kept saying, "I don't understand, I'm not a cop," and he goes, "Trust me on this."

I was running detectives through scenarios. The first detective came up. The buzzer went off and he pulled out his Smith & Wesson J-frame and went click-click-click-click-click, and he raised his hand. I said, "Sir, reload your gun and continue with the stage of fire," and he goes, "My gun's empty." [Louder] "SIR! Reload your gun and continue with the stage of fire," and he goes "You idiot, what are you not hearing?" I said, [Louder] "SIR! Reload your GUN," and he goes, "I'm done with this crap," and turned around and walked off. The deal was if you failed qualifications you were off the street. Afterwards, Frank said, "I did not want my officers mad at my firearms instructors so that's why we had you here. You can never speed in Orange County, because you'll probably do hard time."

eJournal: And so you had to run away and become a TV personality?

Bane: Yeah. But that was fun, because I was involved in the beginning of practical shooting, and that first, great change in police tactics.

eJournal: And so you absorbed all of this change and reflected it in your articles. What else led you to where you are today?

Bane: I was one of the last people to interview Ayn Rand, the great Libertarian philosopher. I'd been a rock critic in New York City for Rolling Stone, and we were all getting out of New York City because it was scary, and a friend of mine went to Texas and got a job at a magazine. He called me up and said, "I need you to interview some old broad."

And I went, "You mean like some old rock 'n' roll person?"

And he goes, "No, some old broad named Rand."

"Ayn Rand?"

And he goes, "Yeah."

"I'm pretty much out of my league. I'm a rock'n' roll journalist."

And he goes, "It's all rock 'n' roll, dude."

I went to New Orleans, and she was everything one would expect Ayn Rand to be. At this point she was old,

and kind of a crone. She was perched on a high stool, and I was on a low stool. I turned on my tape recorder and I asked my first question, and she looked at me for a long time and she goes, "That's not good enough, young man, try again."

[Laughing] Oh, gosh. I felt like a fool. She's one of the great 20th century philosophers! But when I finished that interview, at the very end of the interview, she walks out of the room, she turns around and comes back, and she like shakes her finger at me and she goes, "Young man, you have one thing to do in your life: one thing do to."

"Yes, ma'am?"

She goes, "See clearly. That's all you have to do is see clearly." And she turned around and left. And I've always classed that as the best advice I've ever gotten.

eJournal: And you've applied it to your life—

Bane: To everything! If there's a baseline piece of advice that I've built my professional career on, it was Ayn Rand telling me to see clearly. I've tried to do that.

eJournal: And I think that you *have* done so, because you are the rare person in this industry that will speak out when the direction we're collectively taking does or does not make sense. And as often as not, you say it doesn't make sense, particularly when you're talking about how we're spending shooter-retention money.

Bane: I think a lot of the problem is when people simply don't do the right thing. They know what the right thing is and they choose to not do it, or worse, not to speak about it. It certainly is a cliché to say that the only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to say nothing, but the problem is that we all go along and get along in everything and that never does us much good. But I'll say this: speaking the truth doesn't do you much good, either!

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eJournal: And what about outside the gun industry? Can you tell us about your famous book, *Over the Edge*?

Bane: When I lived in Florida, I was a business writer covering the birth of personal computers, but I was also a wind surfing instructor. One day, I'm writing in my office and I think, "Oh, what the hell, let's go to the beach." But it was a 60-mile an hour day on a small body of water; [in those conditions] you're not really sailing as much as you're just not drowning. And I survived! I was so pumped up on this experience that I took all my friends to a bar-pizza place and we bought pizza and beer. About midnight, somebody goes, "You know, you ought to make a list of shit that can kill you."

We got a cocktail napkin and a pen from the waitress and we wrote thirteen things that can kill you. In the taxi, after they poured us out of the pizza joint, somebody said, "What are you going to do with the list?" And I said, "I don't know, I think I'll write a book about it." The punch line, of course, is that seven years, all the money I had in the world and one marriage later, I finished the book.

eJournal: And that became *Over the Edge*. I notice on your blog that you have re-published *Over the Edge*. Tell us about it, please.

Bane: *Over the Edge* changes, on a macro scale, the way you look at life. And it certainly changed the way I look at training, because [in the book] I'm going out and essentially I'm doing events in which the consequences of failure are death. Cave diving is the most classic example. As my friends who continue in cave diving say, "It's the safest sport in the world because there are no injuries per 100,000. There are no injuries at all. *You just die.*" And there's only maybe 2,000 certified cave divers at any point and "X" number die every year and they die because they make mistakes.

And mountaineering on high mountains: I was on McKinley in '95, and Pico de Orizaba, which is a 19,000-foot Mexican volcano, a couple of years later. Mountaineers, and cave divers and really, really, radical hang gliders understand training at a level that we, within the firearms industry, in the training community, didn't understand.

eJournal: How?



Bane: Initially, within training, we had a certain obsession with technique. Maybe a lot of that derives from Col. Cooper and Col. Cooper's disciples, of which I probably am one, but there's a whole focus on technique beyond understanding what the technique actually did.

My cave diving instructor John O'Lorski had this great line: "Let me tell you about training. All you got to do is figure out what keeps you alive. And what keeps you alive, is what you've got to do 100% right, 100% of the time. Learn to do that; the rest of the stuff doesn't matter."

eJournal: Applied to self defense, what do we have to do 100% right, 100% of the time, Michael?

Bane: What we have to do right 100% of the time is first understand what the threat is. Before we even get to techniques, we have to understand threats and we have to understand risks. Those are things you would think the shooting and the law enforcement community would understand but we don't have a clue! It is threat assessment, and the strategy springs from threat assessment, and technique springs from strategy.

eJournal: But we often start at the other end...

Bane: Right! We started with, "I'm going to learn 50 neat techniques!"

eJournal: But do we know what the techniques are for?

Bane: Part of the problem in firearms training is that you can learn techniques all day long. As an instructor, you can set up a school where you're focusing strictly on technique, and because your students aren't going to go out tomorrow and do something life threatening, you can get away with that. In cave diving or mountaineering, you can't. What you're taught in cave diving today, when you

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go into the cave the next day, your life is at risk.

Training needs to get you ahead of the curve; technique cannot get you ahead of the curve. If your focus is on technique, there is too much lag time. You'll never get to execute the technique, because you'll be run over by then! You have to be moving farther up in the curve, and one of the things that I learned from mountaineering and cave diving is that everything is about how far ahead of the curve you can get. Because if you screw up you die.

You have to teach people the high end of the cycle—awareness, avoidance, all those steps, you know, “Here’s how to be aware of your environment; here’s how to avoid being in a situation.” I think that for the most part you can head off bad things, and this comes back to cave diving and mountaineering: risk divides up into subjective and objective risk. Subjective risk is risk over which you have some control. Objective risk is when God says, “You’re it.”

If you think about risk that way, what you say is, “I want to control what I can control.” Let’s say I can minimize my risk on the street by 50%, 60%, 70% by being aware and avoiding. That’s important because it allows you to focus your techniques on the little area of risk that you can’t get around.

An example being: A couple of years back, I’d just been filming at the National Tactical Invitational, and we’d run probably a dozen 7-11 simulations there at the National Tactical Invitational, right? I go home and Denise, my girlfriend says, “We need milk.” I stop at the supermarket in Nowhere, Colorado, which is where I live. I walk in the supermarket; there are three street people, two women, one man, sitting on the floor. The largest one, in biker drag, stood up and as he stood up his right hand went to his left side in his leather jacket. I saw the hand come up and I said, “Well, I’ll be damned. He’s going to draw.” And I simply outdrew him. My hand went in my leather jacket and I won.

The guy was taller than me, maybe six-four or -five, and I had a mouse gun, a Colt Mustang .380. The most amazing thing was that he didn’t laugh. He put his hands behind his head and said, “What do I have to do to stay alive?” I put him on the ground and I left the scene because I’m not a police officer. I went immediately to the police, which was across the parking lot.

To me, that’s a case of pure objective risk! It wasn’t

that I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, it’s just that shit happens.

eJournal: But you had your eyes open and could see the risk, so you got ahead of the curve, which is where a lot of people would have failed. Now you’ve launched a self-defense show on the Outdoor Channel about getting ahead of the curve. Why don’t you tell us about it?

Bane: I wanted to put a show together that was not a gun-tip show. Most shows are gun-tip shows. *Shooting Gallery* is a gun-tip show. It’s a good gun tip show, but it’s still a gun tip show. But every other show that I saw that said it was about personal defense was a gun tip show.

On *The Best Defense*, Rob Pincus, Mike Janich and I want to teach you what we know and how we go through the world. I’ve seen violence happen really quickly. That’s part of being a reporter. I was a police reporter; I’ve been in war zones; I’ve traveled a lot in the Third World; I was on the Granada invasion.


I get to talk to a lot of Special Forces guys and they’re really interested in these lessons because they understand the need to be ahead of the curve. They understand that if they can be just two degrees higher on the curve, they win and they go home that night.

eJournal: What a great affirmation of the kinds of things you’ve been doing with your life. I see your administrative assistant waiting for you, so I suppose I ought to let you go. Thank you so much; it’s been a wonderful visit. I know our readers will enjoy hearing from you this way, and we’ll all go watch *The Best Defense*...

Bane: Watch *Shooting Gallery*, too! Lots of weird things there!

eJournal: We’ll watch for that! Thank you, Michael! ●

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Marty Hayes

President's Message

As I write this, Vincent and I are preparing to attend the [NRA Convention](#) in Phoenix, May 15-17. With the help of one of our WA State Reps, Bill Van Tuyl, we will man a booth, talk to several thousand members of the National Rifle Association, and hopefully sign up several hundred new Network members! How cool would it be

to grow by 10 or 20 percent in one weekend? If you are going to the NRA convention, please stop by Booth 1831. Members, if we are very busy when you stop by to say "hi," please consider stepping in for a few minutes and help us hand out brochures!

Recently, I was thinking about what I actually do as President of the Network, and I decided my job was much like that of a community organizer. I am helping organize a community of armed citizens, to band together and say, "Enough!" to prosecutorial misconduct in charging law-abiding citizens with crimes. At times, though, I feel like a spider trying to spin a web, with all eight legs going at once to get all the strings of silk organized into what we call the Network. I am not complaining! In fact, the only complaint I have is that I cannot clone myself for a year or two to help with this formative task!

Over the last two days, I received calls from two attorneys, one in San Francisco CA, and the other in Roanoke, VA. They heard about the Network through word of mouth from our advisory board member John Farnam, and wanted to know how to join and help. I am awaiting their confirmation to add them to the Network Attorney list, and am concurrently working on all the requests you have sent in, too. We have leads on dozens of attorneys at the moment, and I am trying to work with them as time permits. Remember the spider?

It's such a marvelous world we live in, where someone can take an idea, get some of his friends and colleagues together, push the "Go" button, and a year later have a vital organization of 1,000 members, who all believe passionately about the right to keep and bear arms in self-defense, and won't sit back and be victimized by the system. A year ago, I was sitting here at my desk wondering if we would succeed, or if the idea was just another of those seemingly good ideas that go nowhere. I am happy to report that we

are headed in the right direction.

Unsolicited comments that I get almost on a daily basis from people who believe that what we are doing is right and proper really get my juices flowing. For example, posted today on the member's-only forum for the [United States Concealed Carry Association](#) were the following comments:

"Marty, I certainly appreciate the difficulty of the work you are doing. It makes me even more grateful that you are taking on the "mountain." Keep up the good [work], sir. Rest assured, you are making a huge difference for all of us. Thank you."

"Marty, I just joined the ACLDN myself. Just like Griz, I want to thank you for your willingness to take on the up hill struggle, as well. I certainly believe everyone that can afford it, needs to join... You are trying to set up an organization that will help many in the future if and when you are successful. Thanks again for your effort."

"Hats off to the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network. A needed and very worthwhile endeavor and mission."

After reading comments like this, you can see why I am so enthused about what is happening with the Network.

You will read elsewhere in this issue of the [eJournal](#) about Vincent and me attending the recent [Rangemaster Tactical Conference](#). We had a blast, and I was really excited when, while giving an update on the success of the Network, I received a spontaneous round of applause when the audience learned we had over 900 members. Wow! Many of the folks there were already Network members, having signed up through the recommendation of the different Network Affiliated Instructors, especially Tom Givens of [Rangemaster](#).

Tom has been doing great work for us in Memphis over the last year, and I was pleased to support his tactical conference once again. We expect to go back next year, and I know I'll once again come back with my batteries recharged as I have this year.

Many of you are members of the [United States Concealed Carry Association](#), and receive their publication, *Concealed Carry Magazine*. I wrote an article about the Rangemaster event for the magazine, so I shouldn't repeat my thoughts here. Look for that article in a couple of issues from now.

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While on the topic of writing for *Concealed Carry Magazine* (CCM), I have been penning a series of articles titled *Incident to Acquittal*, addressing the issues one will face if they have to use a gun for self defense, and are prosecuted for that act. I hear from Kathy Jackson, Managing Editor of CCM, that I am scaring her readers! Well, I certainly understand why frankly discussing the topic might cause some people a little angst, because they have never really thought through the legal consequences.

I must admit I paint a gloom-and-doom picture of a good shooting gone bad, and the costs, which will be associated with a criminal defense. Not all cases of self defense end up in court; in fact, I believe in the vast majority justice is not derailed. But, enough go bad that the possibilities merit discussion, and I am doing that with the blessing of CCM.

Well, one of those eight spider legs is being tugged at in another direction, so I am heading off to put out another fire. Next month, check in with me for a report on the NRA convention. ●

Our Readers Write In

To the Editor:

I just read some of your *Letters to the Editor* and have a few comments that I think are pertinent. First of all, an argument is not intended to persuade. If you enter into an argument with one of the anti-gun crowd, their minds are already made up. The Brady Campaign is very careful about crafting the talking points that most of them fall back on. I've had several of these "one-sided" discussions, and even though the facts I present are indisputable, there is no relent. While I've had discussions with open minded people that are willing to listen and investigate the facts I present, most of the anti-gun crowd is that way because they choose to be.

Secondly, there has been mention that we need to be all the more responsible citizens. This could not be more true. The Iron Triangle (ABC, CBS and NBC) will never publicize the truth, because it is contrary to their agenda. They will always seize the most sensational aspect of any shooting, and use it for the agenda of disarming the rest of us. That is why we bear the responsibility of making sure that the truth finds the light of day. The only way we can do this is to actively and openly engage the anti-gun crowd with compassionate truth and facts.

Thirdly, any person in possession of a CHL (NOT CCW, as weapons are made to kill people) should be strongly considering joining the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network. The risks are far too great for a law abiding citizen to be railroaded after a legitimate shooting without being properly armed with legal advice and experts to fall back on. It would be like going into a

major battle without a plan to win!

And finally, remember... train... train... train... train. No amount of training is too much, and no amount of practice is too much. Remember... Freedom isn't cheap, but it is dear.

Eric Polson

To the Editor:

"We're the minority. I suspect we'll be the minority for some time," Rob Campbell said in the last news letter [See April *Our Readers Write In*]. Are we? I know the media says so but this is not the first time they have lied to the public. They also say gun ownership is at a all time high. What about the people that carry other weapons (knives, batons, and such) for self defense? So many people keep this quiet because it is "wrong" by the media's say so, and no one wants to be the "odd one." As the media starts to set their sights on self defense (like the latest 20/20 reality show). It will get worse if we don't stand up and make it known! YOU ARE NOT ALONE! YOU ARE NOT THE MINORITY IN WANTING TO DEFEND YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES! Or even owning a gun, heaven forbid.

This is why I do what I do in talking about it (firearms) and my faith in God every chance I get. Everyone knows what I stand for! I think each of us should ask this question. Do those around me know what I stand for?

I pledge my most valued asset to the Network. My time!

Robert Wylie

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.

Vice-President's Message

A Weekend of Training, Education and Discussion

Marty and I traveled to Tulsa last month to attend the [Annual Rangemaster Tactical Conference/Polite Society Match](#). We had several reasons to attend the conference, not the least of which was to represent the Network and Foundation. Adding to this important purpose, Marty had a teaching assignment and I had the chance to learn from some great instructors.

The Tactical Conference, now in its 11th year, was held at the US Shooting Academy (www.usshootingacademy.com.) This is a one-of-a-kind shooting facility replete with

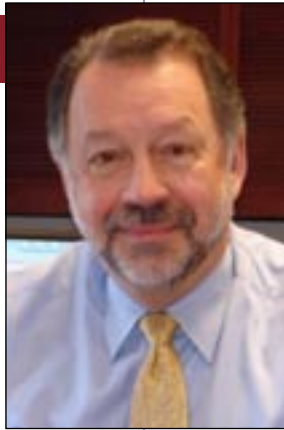


Left: Match competitor takes one handed shots as required by the stage of fire.

lodge, pro shop, class rooms, shoot house, and enough pistol and rifle ranges to satisfy even the most critical shooter. This place makes any trip to Tulsa worthwhile.

The conference itself is the brainchild of Tom Givens, the owner and chief instructor at the Rangemaster facility in Memphis. Tom is a friend of the Network and a member of the [Foundation's Advisory Board](#). He knows how to put on a great conference and develop a challenging match. Besides, he has a wonderful staff that goes out of its way to make sure the conference and match run flawlessly.

The conference is a combination of classroom lectures and range exercises. These educational and training options are presented in two-hour segments and are



J. Vincent Shuck

repeated over the two-day event. Thus, you can pick and choose what you want to learn, in both the classroom and range. This is what makes the conference so unique. Where else, in one weekend, can you hear from or shoot with, Will Andrews, William Aprill, Massad Ayoob, John Farnam, Skip Gochenour, Paul Gomez, Marty Hayes, Hany Mahmoud, Glenn Meyer, Rob Pincus, Karl Rehn, and "Southnarc," to name just a few of the conference instructors. This "taste" of expert instructors gave me a chance to experience several trainers I had not heard from before and who helped remind me how valuable training is to our individual growth. But, even for the Rangemaster Tactical Conference, there are only so many hours in the day. I had to miss a few lectures and shooting experiences due to time constraints, but there's always next year!

I started out with Southnarc's *Managing Unknown Contacts*. Here's a guy who has years of undercover narcotics work – don't you think he can teach a few things about the criminal attack paradigm and pre-assault clues? You bet. The class disarmed and trained using his techniques on how to defuse a potentially dangerous situation. We practiced distance, voice commands and inflection as well as how to recognize dastardly pre-assaultive and furtive movements.

Skip Gochenour was next on my agenda. Skip specializes in homicide investigations and I attended his class in hopes of learning some things that would keep me from being a subject of one of

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Above: Competitor takes cover behind the bed of a pickup then gets his hits on Pepper Poppers. Right: Massad Ayoob carries a child-sized mannequin through the same stage of fire.



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his investigations. He pointed out some simple yet important pieces of information, like predators are motivated by stuff – your stuff. But he gave nod to enough details that made his lecture a worthwhile learning experience about criminal behavior.

Any good shooting conference should have at least one clinical psychologist on the schedule and we had one in William Aprill, who also has law enforcement and competitive shooting experience. He lectured on *Violent Actors and Violent Acts*. In a stimulating lecture, William talked about the types of violence we can experience, the profile of violent criminal actors (VCAs), and the nominal influence we have as law abiding citizens on VCAs. If there was any critical piece of information I took away from the lecture, it was the fact that VCAs are always playing their game, not ours. In this regard, they can interpret the most casual or ordinary movement from us as a threat to them or what they stand for.

I subsequently had a chance to catch Glenn Meyer, a professor of psychology, who presented information about *Modern Psychology and Firearms Usage*. His information related to one of the Network's primary goals – presenting education to members about the aftermath of a self-defense incident. Glenn noted that jurors are impressionable people and studies have demonstrated that they can be influenced by the appearance of an aggressive-looking firearm, especially if your defense attorney is not skilled at explaining the rationale for the use of your chosen self-defense weapon.

Out of the classroom and back on the range, I participated in one of Rob Pincus' *Combat Focus Shooting* classes. While his techniques are not necessarily new, some procedures are different from my handgun style. But, I liked the new experiences and challenges.

Did I mention there was a match interwoven among

the lectures and range classes? The low-light shoot house portion of the match duplicated a Mumbai-style hotel overrun by terrorists that you had to shoot your way out of, neutralizing the reactive 3-D mannequin bad guys without inflicting harm on any of the intermixed innocents. The outdoor range portion of the match involved paper targets

at various distances, five metal Pepper Poppers, and a Jack Bauer type rescue mission near a stationary pickup truck requiring you to save a child while dealing with four attackers. Time, marksmanship and reliable tactics were needed to win the day in all of the match scenarios – sounds like real life, right?

If you have a reasonable level of handgun skills and want to be tested, visit the Rangemaster web site at www.Rangemaster.com to



Above L-R: Massad Ayoob, Marty Hayes and John Farnam enjoy a good joke together during a break in the match.

Below: Network Vice President Vincent Shuck firing one handed strong hand as required by a match course of fire.



find out about the 2010 conference; the schedule and registration information should be posted soon. You will be hard pressed to find a better collection of powerful speakers and exciting range classes all mixed around a challenging match.

Finally, the response from the conference participants and instructors to the Network's first year was positive and both Marty and I had a chance to encourage membership and to discuss the benefits of joining. I'm already looking forward to next year's conference and to reporting on the Network's continued progress and new developments. ●



Debbe von Blumenstein

Attorney's Viewpoint: Keeping A Carry License

by Debbe von Blumenstein

Remember when you got your driver's license? Did you take a driver's education class? Okay, so you took a three hour class and then went and got your driver's license, right? No? Okay, so you practiced driving, you drove for three hours and then you took your test and they gave you a driver's license, right? No again, huh?

But wait a minute, you can take a mere three hour class and afterwards apply for a Concealed Handgun License (CHL). Why can't you get a driver's license after a three hour class or three hours of practicing driving? Common sense tells you that with a driver's license you have quite the liability. If you were to operate a several-ton vehicle without experience, skill and training, you would be putting yourself and others at risk. To have a driver's license is a powerful privilege and with that comes responsibility.

However, isn't being licensed to carry a concealed firearm a mighty power? So what goes with it is a higher responsibility.

Many people pay about \$40 for a three-hour CHL class and pay less than \$100 for fingerprinting, the background check and application fee for a CHL. Yet, these same folks may end up at the door of a law office paying a lot more because they did not embrace this rule: **the higher the power, the higher the responsibility.**

Most folks will go through their life (thankfully!) without being involved in a shooting incident and may even go through their life time without having to employ their firearm. However, plenty of people will get in legal jeopardy through owning and/or possessing a firearm and usually from choices they make at crucial times. If you have chosen firearms to be in your life and to carry concealed (both advocated by this writer), you have a responsibility to keep yourself educated and trained so that your decision-making doesn't end with the decision of which attorney to hire to defend you.

The stories of many people in need of legal defense involving firearms have a common thread: they took a three hour CHL course and no more classes and training. Then after they are cuffed and stuffed, bailed from their cell

and the police reports are being reviewed, there is another common theme. Typically, the police report will reveal a scenario where they are arguing with the police officer at the scene because they "know the law;" after all they took "a three hour class" and they "have the right" to do as they did. Well, the "duh" factor here is that at the point where you are arguing with a police officer about the law, you are in a losing position.

Know the Statutes and Ordinances

You have the responsibility to know the statutes and ordinances in the state, county and cities you live, work and travel in. Granted, as Bismarck said: "If you love the law and sausages, you don't want to see how either is made." Equally true is that when you read statutes and ordinances that then refer you to at least three more statutes and another six exceptions, you may be more confused than when you first started. However, then it is your responsibility to take a class and/or seek out an attorney to answer the questions you have on the law.

Most people have a driver's license and drive without having ever read the statutes and ordinances on the driving laws. Well, logic alone would tell you that you drive at your own folly even then; however, many usually can do so without too much trouble because of the training and practice one has had behind the wheel. Yet even then the burden is still on the driver to know the laws on driving before getting licensed and driving a vehicle. But you know that if you are ignorant on traffic laws that will not be an acceptable excuse if you violate them. Or rather, it is an excuse, but not an acceptable defense. With driving, if you are more lucky than not, a mistake or ignorance will only get you a ticket for a violation punishable by a fine

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and a mark on your driving record. However, not knowing the law, not having the education and training that goes along with the responsibility of having firearms in your life and licensed to carry concealed, will not get you a fine only – you could be facing misdemeanors to felony charges along with jail to prison time, not to mention the consequences if your error harms another human being – a sentence that never ends.

So now you have made yourself familiar with the statutes and ordinances and had your questions answered by a trained legal professional. What next?

Continue Your Training and Education

The higher responsibility that goes with the higher power of firearms ownership, possession and concealed carry is to continue your training, keep your knowledge and skills ongoing, current and comprehensive. However, your education needs to go beyond just knowing how to use a firearm.

Take continuing classes on not just how to shoot and when to shoot but also how to survive the potential legal aftermath after any incident with a firearm – no matter if you are a victim, complainant, witness or defendant. At any time, you may be placed in any one of these roles and where you fall will have a lot to do with your knowledge, skills and decision making.

Be Above the Law

No, this does not mean being Steven Segal. It means with a higher responsibility, have a higher standard for yourself, your actions, your behaviors and your choices. Now that you are familiar with the law and it has been explained to you and you are pursuing ongoing training, consider the higher responsibility of holding yourself to a standard above merely meeting the barest of legal requirements. Be more strict and diligent than the law requires you to be.

If you are just following the law, you can still get into trouble. People who are not guilty, people involved in righteous self defense events, still get arrested – if that did not happen, we would not have attorneys and court rooms. Remember, it is not enough to be right – you want to be right and not arrested.

Once you have knowledge of the law with ongoing training and education, the next best measure you can take is to not just comply with the law but to hold yourself to

a higher standard. This means if you are in a self defense situation yet you have an avenue to avoid it – do so. After all, what's the down side?

Many folks ask, "Well, if factors A, B and C (or A, O and J: Ability, Opportunity and Jeopardy) happens, can I shoot?" Well, ask way ahead of the AOJ situation, "What are the actions I can take so I am never in the AOJ situation?" Sometimes being prepared to take the A, V, O, I, and D option is best.

The Company You Keep

This may mean deciding who it is that you are not going to hang out with because they are someone who may get you into an AOJ situation. Is there someone you know who when they drive, they tail gate, flip folks off or slam on the brakes to those they perceive as tailgating? Make it known that you will not ride with them if they continue aggressive driving behavior, because their actions may get you into a situation making crucial life or death choices that you would choose not to be in. Going out for drinks? Leave the firearm at home!

Remember, if you take the best Olympic gold medalist sprinter and put both of their feet in mud, they will no longer be the fastest sprinter. Environment counts. Where you are and who you hang out with can get you in trouble even when you are being the good guy or gal. Always choose carefully on both: it is taking a higher responsibility. "I was hanging out with the wrong people" is no defense especially if an honest look may have you honestly assessing whether *you* are the "wrong people."

Keep yourself to a high standard of conduct in your life and those you associate with and where you frequent. Do the laws on firearms say to do this? No, but remember, higher the power, higher the responsibility.

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Keep an Awareness Mindset

Develop and keep an Awareness Mindset. Train yourself to be a credible historian and a credible witness. Be aware of your own skills and limitations on being able to recall an event. Do you use a lot of emotion and adjectives or can you relate an incident using facts and accurate descriptions of your observations? How good are you as a witness? This skill may make the difference between being labeled a defendant or a victim in a police report or one of the bad guys brought to the appropriate legal consequences for his/her acts or going on to commit more crimes.

Recently, we held an advanced class on *Legal Self Defense* in Salem, Oregon. The students in this class have many hours and even years of firearms training. Some were former law enforcement. Yet when we had an eye witness scenario, most were shocked by how far off their ability to observe and recall accurately what they saw within inches and feet of themselves was - even when the scenario was not in real time (i.e., fast and during stress) but rather a slow, calm scenario with no threat or adrenaline dumping.

Okay by now, I usually hear: "It's just like an attorney to depress us or scare us." Well, good. Remember, it better to find out where your skill set is lacking while still in the classroom setting rather than in the maelstrom of real life.

Train for Life While You Are Living it

When you are not in a formal training class, you can create training scenarios of your own. When you read the newspaper or watch the news, think through what happened and how would you have responded, how would you report what happened. Even better, you can create ongoing spontaneous training situations. Let's say you have a friend and you both agree that if you go somewhere either one of you can claim: "Training Session Now." This means you or your friend has to now describe a situation you just saw or the description of the clerk who waited on you two stores back. Then check out your accuracy. See where you need improvement and practice those skills!

A Word on Memory

The topic of how the human brain works with memory and recall could take up several books and has in most libraries. However, each person's memory works a little bit differently. You will want to be aware of how your memory works. We all have unique recall patterns. For example,

when you recall an event do you typically recall it in black and white or color? How are your sense observation skills tuned? Are you visual? Auditory? Sensation? Do you recall an event as if you are going through it or does your recall work like a video camera as if you see yourself going through it from an outsider's perspective? If you do not know this ahead of time, your credibility may be attacked when you are describing your observations to a police officer or in a courtroom.

Memory has been described as putting a coin in water, that is, you can still see the coin and make out what it is under water but it is distorted as to its actual proportions. Memory recall after a stressful event is similar. You may recall what happened but the details may be distorted in time or space or in order of events. If you are not aware of this, you will not be prepared to describe accurately what you experienced after an event.

Also, realize, that when it comes to recalling events many times we have to think about the event as far as what happened and what happened next and we may forget some details but get more details as we focus on the recall. However, when you are recalling a person or what is called recognition memory, your memory ought to be immediate. With events, your memory may use comparison points, such as "I was standing here, holding this, wearing that." However, with recognition memory, you are not comparing your memory with another person's recollections, rather, the comparison is to your own memory, such as: do you recognize the person as whom you saw?

For example, if you are walking down the street and you see someone you know, you don't have to think, "Do I know that person?" Rather, your memory instantaneously tells you: "Hey I know that person." You may need to think about in what context you know that person and then that

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is event recall. However, if you are relying on recognition memory and you have to think about what you saw (description of the person, eye witness to who did what) your memory will most likely not be so accurate. Recognition memory ought to be instantaneous or it is more likely in error or influenced by others' bias, feedback and input.

Case of Identifying the Would-be Rapist

A 19 year old woman was out jogging. A man came behind her and put a hood over her head and began dragging her off to an isolated spot to rape her. She was able to get the hood off her head and get a look at the rapist. She then fought him off by first dead weighting to the ground and then when he dropped on top of her to pull off her shorts, she shoved her fingers into his eyes. He leapt up in pain and then struck her across the head telling her that he was going to kill her. She took advantage of her position on the ground and him standing above her by bracing herself with her elbows and bringing her foot up to kick him in the groin. She ran off to safety.

Later she told her tale repeatedly to each officer interviewing her. She told the story consistently but the last officer asked: "Why did he run off rather than chase her?"

It was then for the first time, the woman remembered that at that point she had begun screaming and windows at nearby apartments opened in response. Her recall memory had been compromised by the traumatic event and during questioning she described it as if it was happening to someone else. During the event, she had disassociated, which helped her fight off her attacker as she later described that she had already accepted that she was going to die but just not be raped. When asked about the incident using event recall, she had to think about it a moment before she could respond to the question.

However, a week later, she saw the would-be rapist as he was walking to work and her recognition memory was instantaneous. Although she saw the perpetrator in profile and in darkness only during the trauma, when she saw him, she knew immediately it was him and was able to call the detective assigned to her case and thus the perpetrator faced the consequences of his actions.

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.

The Lessons

To be prepared, you must prepare. If you have chosen to exercise rights with higher powers in your life, you must also exercise higher responsibility in your life style. If you do not, you live life at your peril and maybe the peril of someone else.

If you have taken the steps to protect yourself and your loved ones from harm, you owe it to yourself and your loved ones to protect yourself from legal jeopardy. The three most precious things are: Life, Liberty and Livelihood. If you are facing legal consequences all three will be in jeopardy. You may have done what you had to do to defend your life or defend against serious bodily harm or defend the life of your loved ones - but are you prepared to defend your LIBERTY?

One of the biggest mistakes a person can make is believing they will never be in a position to be facing these issues and the second biggest mistake is thinking that being innocent will protect someone and the third biggest mistake is not being prepared.

Realize that there is a reason they send lawyers to law school, not justice school.

Protect yourself through a high responsibility to the higher powers you have chosen. ●

About the author: Network Affiliated Attorney Debbe von Blumenstein, J.D., is a trial attorney who has practiced in courtrooms throughout Oregon since 1997 covering twelve different counties and a multitude of municipalities. Her practice has an emphasis in self defense cases and weapon charges. She is a graduate of the Lethal Force Institute and other defense training local to her area. She has also been a legal instructor for the Oregon Police Corps, a paramilitary law enforcement academy in Portland, Oregon, and helps present the moot court segment of the Lethal Force Institute's Use of Deadly Force Instructor program. Outside of her law practice, Ms. von Blumenstein has created and presented workshops and seminars throughout the United States, including "Legal Lessons 101: Knowing Your Rights-Learning From the Mistakes of Others." For more about Ms. von Blumenstein, visit <http://www.debbevonblumenstein.com/>

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Membership Renewal Premium DVD at Editors

by Gila Hayes with photos by Vincent Shuck

Production is well underway on the Network's latest educational project, a full-length DVD presentation about identifying pre-assault cues. Entitled *Recognizing and Responding to Pre-Assault Indicators*, the DVD, which will be given to renewing members as an addition to their basic three-DVD set, is currently undergoing editing. I've seen the rushes, and the information contained is not only top notch, but has a depth of information on the topic the likes of which I've not seen before, even in law enforcement.

Network President Marty Hayes scripted this presentation with the intent of educating Network members about the physical indications an assailant gives off just prior to launching an attack. While the program should dramatically increase members' ability to avoid a fight, Hayes' greater intent is educating Network members to the extent that they can tell police, prosecutors, judges and juries that they observed proven pre-assaultive behaviors just prior to drawing their gun.

Law enforcement training has long taught recruits to watch for subjects quartering off for a fight, clenching and unclenching fists, for the target glance or the stare off into middle distance. While those behaviors are certainly valid indicators of pending trouble, sometimes called "cues" that the subject is preparing to do something you'd probably prefer to avoid, they are just the tip of the iceberg.

Determined to produce a program reaching well beyond these classic police training principles, Hayes enlisted the cooperation of Network affiliate Marc MacYoung, who intimately knows assaultive behavior from the role of participant, defender, and personal safety instructor. Author of over 20 books on personal safety and martial arts, MacYoung teaches self-defense programs that run the gamut from lunchtime seminars for corporate audiences to weekend seminars

training hard core dojo denizens to specialized training for police and military units.

Articulate, an expert at the subject matter, occasionally humorously self-deprecating and always patient and detailed in his explanations, MacYoung answers questions and identifies many hints and cues that an assailant is planning an attack. Some of the principles are role-



played, while others receive extensive verbal definition as the exchanges between Hayes and MacYoung cover points ranging from threat displays, the attack you never see coming, dynamics of incidents involving single and multiple assailants and much more.

With the Network's first round of membership renewals due June 30th, we are already receiving some early renewals. Members receive a notification email 60 days prior to membership expiration, followed by a renewal letter mailed out 30 days before their membership is due.

Once the DVDs are back from replication, renewals will receive the new DVD and the Network's new logo-embroidered ball cap. A new membership card with discount codes for the Network's online bookstore is mailed as soon as the member renews; the DVD and cap will go out when the new DVD is done, a firm estimate of which has not yet been established, though we hope it will not be later than the end of June.



Upper right: Videographer Janet Turner captures scenario enactment to illustrate a point from the lecture.

Center: Marc MacYoung rehearses portion of his script.

Lower left: Turner sets up the camera for Network President Marty Hayes' introduction to the DVD.

Book Review

The Tyranny of Good Intentions

By Paul Craig Roberts and Lawrence M. Stratton

Random House, <http://tinyurl.com/qlt4yf>

ISBN 978-0-307-39606-8

264 pages, soft cover; \$14.95

Reviewed by Gila Hayes

**Can America honestly claim the title
"land of liberty?"**

**Is American government accountable to "we the
people"?**

**Do our laws manifest the will of the majority or does the
state operate largely without restraint from the citizenry?**

Should laws protect the guilty as well as the innocent?

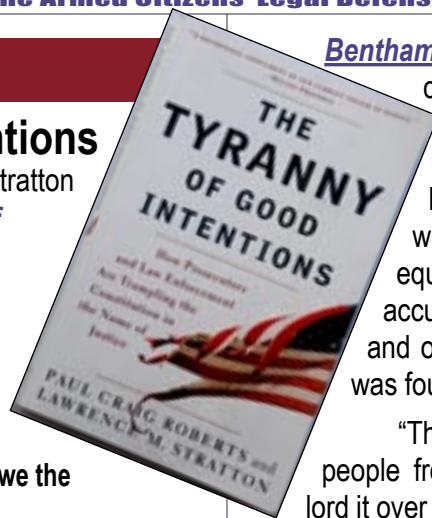
Do Americans care about answers to those questions?

Do you care?

Pondering those questions, I bought *The Tyranny of Good Intentions*, despite concern about excessive conservative bias, that I felt after reading a review on *Amazon.com* describing the book's conclusions as "alarmist prose." *Publishers Weekly* charged that the book "comes off as primarily an incendiary polemic." Seeking what had so put off both *Publishers Weekly* and *Amazon.com*, I found instead examples reproaching both liberals and conservatives for the loss of liberty. "Liberals chasing after white-collar criminals and environmental polluters, and conservatives determined to 'save our children from drugs,' have seriously eroded the protections once offered by law," authors Roberts and Stratton criticize.

In *The Tyranny of Good Intentions*, the authors suggest that most Americans think that unjust convictions occasionally reported are anomalies or good faith errors. To the contrary, they suggest, miscarriages of justice are far too common and sometimes quite intentional. They quote a 2007 survey of 270 non capital cases finding that innocent defendants ran a 25% chance of wrongful conviction if facing a jury, and 37% risk of wrongful conviction by a judge. Overturning a wrongful conviction, even in a death penalty case, is tremendously difficult, they add.

The book explains that our justice system is the products of two opposing influences: [William Blackstone's Rights of Englishmen](#), which the authors call "the foundation of the U.S. Constitution," and its antithesis, the philosophy of economist and social reformer [Jeremy](#)



[Bentham](#). The latter argued that Blackstone's principles had value only when tyrants ruled, and theorized that constraining government limits how much good it can do. Conversely, Blackstone's precepts shield the innocent with due process, attorney-client privilege, equality before the law, the right to confront accusers, protections against self-incrimination, and other values on which most believe America was founded.

"The real question is whether law protects people from government or enables government to lord it over people," the authors write after showing how today American law leans toward Bentham's philosophy. They comment that most Americans think that laws are a list of things government prohibits them from doing, when originally the law was intended as "a handful of principles that prevent the government from using the legal system as an instrument of oppression." How far we've fallen!

In early chapters, *The Tyranny of Good Intentions* provides a fascinating history of early societies establishing democratic methods of self-rule. In early English law, the concept of the plea bargain was reviled as "akin to torture, because the accused may falsely confess to avoid being tried on a more serious charge."

"The function of justice is to serve truth," write the authors. "The moral authority of a justice system depends on its achieving this goal. Consequently, the foremost task of a justice system is to establish the truth or falsity of the charges levied against the accused."

The evils of plea bargaining are a recurrent theme throughout the book as are injustices stemming from government codes and regulations that criminalize even "a mistake when filling out regulatory forms required by government, in which the accused need not intentionally commit the crime with which they are charged."

Unfortunately, most of American jurisprudence is accomplished by plea bargain, with the authors reporting Justice Department statistics suggesting that 90-95 percent of "all federal, state and local criminal cases are settled by plea bargains." If the practice has become so commonplace, it is tempting to ask, "what is wrong with it?"

Presuming an innocent defendant, the authors explain, "Trials are costly and uncertain, take too much time and work...Even a defendant who wants a jury trial

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may be pressured to the contrary by a disinclined lawyer. In effect, collusion is going on between the prosecution and defense, and the defendant learns that if he will plead guilty to a lesser charge, the prosecution will not try to convict the defendant on the charge for which the defendant was arrested." Indeed, the authors go on to suggest, some lawyers prefer negotiations over fighting it out in a trial fearing damage to their reputation or working relationship with the prosecutor.

"The practice of having people admit to what did not happen in order to avoid charges for what did happen creates a culture that, as it develops, eventually permits prosecutors to bring charges in the absence of crimes," the authors declare, laying out several pages I wish we could quote in their entirety to show the individual and systemic evil of plea bargaining in our criminal justice system.

Those armed for self defense will also want to pay particular attention to Chapter 13 when the authors summarize the machinations of a justice system foremost bent on achieving convictions not justice. Innocent people need attorneys and experts ready to convince juries of the falsity of manufactured evidence, perjury, purchased testimony, and other prosecutorial tactics used to win convictions!

Some chapters read like horror stories in which our government breaks attorney-client privilege, coerces settlements through freezing assets before trial, of censorship, confiscation, forfeiture, and the death of the presumption of innocence.

The authors' gloomily conclude, "The United States today is an unjust society—not because of unequal income distribution or private discrimination against minorities—but because so many prosecutors no longer see their calling as finding justice by serving truth."

One challenge when reading *The Tyranny of Good Intentions* is buying in to examples illustrating the debase-ment of America's justice system, which feature unpopular defendants like Exxon or Charles H. Keating, Jr., whom they claim was convicted of a crime that did not exist until it was created especially to achieve his conviction.

While this seems to wander far from the concerns of our armed citizen members, consider: prohibition against prosecuting ex post facto crimes "was intended to protect the rights of unpopular individuals—individuals just like Charles Keating—from the arbitrary imposition of power by the government responding to powerful interest groups or

mob hysteria." Few segments of society are as mistrusted as are gun owners and armed citizens. We must understand the current state of our criminal justice system, as it is a force with which we may become entangled.

Reversing the Damage

"Authors who expose such a deplorable state of affairs are expected to provide proposals for reform," write Roberts and Stratton. "The plight of American democracy is beyond the reach of legal reform alone...Without an intellectual rebirth, a revival of constitutionalism, there is no hope for American democracy," they write. "We see one hope for an intellectual rebirth that would let us reclaim our legal tradition of restrained power. This cause for hope is the universal failure of government."

Just as I was becoming truly disheartened, the authors asked, "What, then, can we do? Jurors can stop being so gullible. First of all, jurors need to know that a grand jury indictment is meaningless," they urge. Grand jury proceedings are not subject to strict rules of evidence, and seem to encourage prosecutorial misconduct that is rarely challenged by judges.

"Prosecutors are aided and abetted in their misconduct by the attitude, pervasive among the public, that crime is out of control. Jurors drawn from a population that feels insecure are unlikely to disbelieve prosecutors and police," the authors suggest. I'd take it a step further and theorize that until Americans quit expecting government to provide for their every need, they will continue to be hoodwinked by a legal system bent on convictions not justice. The self-sufficiency of armed citizens, shouldering responsibility to prevent victimization, is part of the solution, in my opinion.

With a government run by regulators not elected representatives, a weak economy ripe for manipulation, and a population frustrated by impediments to improving their lot, the "land of Liberty" may well be drifting toward the internal strife predicted by Roberts and Stratton. Preparation for societal collapse includes life-saving skills with firearms.

I came away from reading *The Tyranny of Good Intentions* even more convinced of the necessity self-sufficiency, without reliance on a corrupt system. The cooperative efforts of the Network are part of the armed individual's support and survival system. Don't read *The Tyranny of Good Intentions* to learn how America is failing – read it to understand why people like Network members discredit the lie that a benevolent government will protect them and their interests. ●

Membership Background Check Policy Revised

Applicants for membership in the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC no longer must submit a copy of their license to carry a concealed handgun (CHL) or other form of background check prior to receiving membership. "This policy change is just one of the inevitable growing pains a new and unique organization like the Network has to work through," comments Network Operations Manager Gila Hayes wryly.

"Originally, we equated submitting the proof of background check with bringing together a group of card-carrying good guys and gals," she continues. "From the beginning, however, we heard protests from a wide variety of gun owners who are just as law-abiding as we, who did not have ready access to a CHL or other documentation. These included residents of states with no provision for concealed carry, applicants for the discounted spousal membership and a number of open carry practitioners," Hayes relates.

The Network tracked the background check complaints from day one, including initiating a discussion of its value or disadvantages on the member's only forum (<http://tinyurl.com/qoszs4>) as well as tracking related discussions on other Internet forums. It became clear that membership applications were being held up, especially those made over the Network's online shopping cart at www.shoparmedcitizensnetwork.org, where everything but copies of background check documentation were easily submitted. With over three-quarters of new membership applications being made online, Hayes says she found delaying those memberships worrisome.

Becoming convinced that the background check was an unnecessary hurdle to Network membership growth, Network President Marty Hayes polled the Advisory Board, all of whom endorsed eliminating the requirement. Acting on that advice, Network leadership concurred that from the beginning, the background check had no bearing on member benefits, the most important of which is the right to apply for a grant of funds from the ACLD Foundation for help with legal fees following a self-defense incident, since before recommending any grant of assistance, the Advisory Board investigates the underlying incident on its own merits, not on the member's Network records.

Instead of submitting a copy of a CPL, new membership applicants are asked to endorse this statement: "With my signature, I hereby attest that under the laws of the United States of America, I am not legally prohibited from

possessing firearms, that I am 18 years of age or older, and that I legally reside in the United States. I understand that any grant of benefits is limited to lawful acts of self defense with no additional criminal charges (unlawful possession of concealed handgun, for example) associated with the incident."

"I wish we'd been able to see the larger picture when we originally set up the Network," Hayes comments. "We hope this decision eliminates impediments standing in the way of law-abiding gun owners who want to join with other Network members to protect and defend one another from legal harassment after self defense.

"I hope anyone we may have put off by the earlier requirement will reconsider joining the Network. We work hard to provide the best benefits possible to members of this new, unique organization. We originally fell short of the mark on this issue and are very pleased to be able to implement this correction," she concludes. ●

Login Required for More of eJournal

As word of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC spreads, the need to use this membership journal as an advertising and outreach tool is diminishing. Effective with our June 10th issue coming next month, the **eJournal** will change from its publicly distributed format to a design that reserves more of the content for Network members only.

We expect to leave open to public access the occasional selected element like leadership messages that give the inquiring public a chance to weigh the attitudes, aspirations and efforts of the Network. However, to read or finish reading all but lead-in or introductory pages to most articles and features, the Network log in codes provided on membership cards will be required.

We make this change for several reasons: from the beginning, the journal was intended as a membership benefit, not a free, online blog given away for nothing. Further, requiring log in allows us to more frankly discuss concerns of Network members with less trepidation about misuse of strategies or tactics by criminals, or being misquoted and misrepresented by anti gun forces.

For both reasons, we are delighted that the Network has grown to the level that making this change is now a reasonable decision. ●



Gila Hayes

Editor's Notebook

Bits and Pieces

My comments this month will reflect the current state of my mind – lots of fragmented pieces of information and concerns all vying for attention. We have a lot of good things going on at the Network these days, and it is exciting to see the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC grow and blossom. With the increasing amount of publicity about the Network, membership enjoyed substantial growth last month.

Network Membership Growth

We owe debts of gratitude to *SWAT Magazine*, *The Dillon Blue Press*, Michael Bane's *Downrange Radio*, John Farnam's *DTI Quips*, and other media sources for spreading the word about the Network. The response from gun owners has been extremely enthusiastic, and cheers me through the hours of work required to keep the operation running smoothly. Though I rarely get to meet our members face to face, I can tell the kinds of men and women they are through notes like these:

"It is about time something like this exists. I wish I had known about this earlier. I know there will be others that are very interested in joining here. Please send me a dozen (or 2) brochures that I can pass out to others here," offers a new member.

"I have been concerned for some time about my vulnerability and total lack of legal information should a life defending shooting occur. If (I certainly hope not) a shooting should occur, I now feel I have a team that I can contact that can provide me timely accurate advice and legal information and insight into the problems I would face," emails another new member.

And those are just a couple of notes that came in last week. Every day, we receive email and telephone calls from new members and potential members who express delight and surprise that an organization like the Network is available.

Just before we surpassed our 1,000

member mark, I tabulated responses to a question we ask all new members: Where did you hear about the Network? While not everyone answers the question, it identified some heart warming trends. First, many said they learned about the organization from another Network member, while other applicants received brochures and encouragement to learn about the Network from our Affiliated Instructors. Larger shooting schools accounted for a good number of our members; others simply listed a variety of Internet sources as their introduction to the Network. Printed publications were credited, with the USCCA's [*Concealed Carry Magazine*](#) (CCM) responsible for referring the most members compared to other magazines, understandable since we have advertise regularly in CCM in addition to Network President Marty Hayes' regular column in the magazine.

Spouse Membership Discount Extended to All Household Residents

With almost 18 months of operational experience "under our belts," we've decided to offer the discounted membership rates heretofore extended only to spouses of our individual members to other people sharing the same residential address. In response to requests to add sons, daughters, and others sharing the same residence, we have changed terminology for the "Couple's Membership" to "Household Membership."

This allows an Individual Member, joining and paying the \$85 yearly dues, to add others residing at the same address to their membership for \$50 each per year. Only one set of educational DVDs will be sent. Of course, if the discounted member moves to a separate address, upon renewal, they will need to upgrade to Individual Member status at the usual \$85 dues level.

Ho-Hum – Just Another Gun Owner

In recent journal issues, this column, as well as the *Our Readers Write In*, we've been concerned with gun owners' willingness to present a public face to the world. "Why hide that we are gun owners?" I asked.

Now, I'll be the first to assert that there is a time and place for everything, and there are certainly circumstances

"You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do."

– ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

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under which a discussion of guns and self defense rights is unwelcome and deleterious. Knowing when to speak is the fun part. Thursday night, I took some time off work and went to the local glass blowing studio for an exhilarating four hour lesson. Over the course of the evening, I blew glass with two youths probably aged 17 to 18, the studio owner who appears to be around 30, and with that gentleman's wife, who dropped by with their infant daughter.

As the session ended, we made arrangements to pick up the annealed glass after it cooled. Indicating that my schedule was tight for the next week, I explained my inability to drop by with the throw-away comment, "That's just how it is when you're running two businesses."

"What businesses?" queried the studio owner, conversationally.

With a quick glance at the surrounding walls and cabinets displaying the delicately colored works of art his hands had created, I made a fast decision: I looked the studio owner in the eyes and said "a firearms training academy and the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network."

"I really want to learn how to shoot a gun," interjected the teenaged girl, who'd related earlier that her father is a professor at the local community college.

"Yeah, just don't start with a .357 Magnum and nothing over your ears the way I did," grimaced the studio owner.

Now, I probably wouldn't have offered that information to everyone in the room had I just stopped in to buy a glass bowl or ornament and without taking the time to get to know them. Having sweated side by side with those young people at the furnace, all the while wearing my Springfield EMP beneath a loose cotton shirt, however, I thought that being perceived as a dangerous lunatic was pretty unlikely.

I further thought it a valuable opportunity to illustrate that gun owners enjoy ordinary hobbies, just like all the other people who pass through that little glass studio. Gun owners enjoy artistic pursuits, run businesses and pay taxes, support the local economy and contribute to the well-being of their communities in varied ways.

Maybe the next time someone advocates outlawing gun ownership, one of those four will remember that lady from the Firearms Academy, instead of conjuring up the stereotypical image of a strange-eyed guy in a tattered plaid shirt. Until we take the gamble and identify ourselves as gun owners to those who can see beyond society's

prejudices, the public will continue to think that gun owners pose a danger to them and to society at large.

Whether they know it or not, the public will be in contact with gun owners in ever-increasing numbers! The [National Shooting Sports Foundation](#) announced Wednesday that industry sales figures for the fourth quarter of 2008 showed a 31% increase in sales of guns and ammunition. Not all of those sales are ending up in the hands of hoarders! Certainly some augment existing collections, but many are sold to first time gun owners who are not comfortable with the direction our nation is taking.

And defensive use of firearms continues to save lives! I noticed on Clayton Cramer's blog a few weeks ago the news that his [Civilian Gun Self-Defense Blog](#) had just posted its 4,000th entry. For nearly six years, Cramer and an associate have been posting every news story they could find in which a private citizen used a gun in self defense. Their work has given gun owners an invaluable resource to illustrate that legitimate defensive uses of guns by private citizens are regular occurrences despite the silence in the mainstream media on the lives saved. If you've not yet visited the Civilian Gun Self-Defense Blog add <http://tinyurl.com/brnjd> to your Internet favorites and visit it from time to time to renew your commitment to the self defense life style. ●



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.

Armed Citizens' LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK, LLC



How to join

Print this application form and FAX it to 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 (add \$50 each for additional memberships for others in your household—must reside at same address). Your first year's membership will expire at the end of the month following the one in which we accepted your membership application. If you have any questions, please call 360-978-5200.

When your application is accepted, you will receive three DVDs concerning 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 (please read <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/benefits.html>). You will also receive a membership card with your username and password for the member's Internet forum and other areas of the Network website restricted to members only, as well as your coupon code for the 20% 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 accompanies a lawful act of self-defense.

APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Full Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ - _____ - _____

E-mail _____

How did you hear about the Network? _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT:

With my signature, I hereby attest that under the laws of the United States of America, I am not legally prohibited from possessing firearms, that I am 18 years of age or older, and that I legally reside in the United States. I understand that any grant of benefits is limited to lawful acts of self defense with no additional criminal charges (unlawful possession of concealed handgun, for example) associated with the incident.

Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

(1) Additional Household Member Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

(2) Additional Household Member Applicant's Signature

Please Print Name

----- MEMBERSHIP FEE -----

☐ \$85.00 Individual Membership

☐ \$50 Each Additional Household Resident

Name(s) _____

☐ Charge my card ☐ Check enclosed

CREDIT CARD CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

I, _____ hereby
(Clearly print name as it appears on credit card)

authorize Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC to
charge \$ _____
on my VISA or MasterCard (circle one)

_____/_____/_____
Account Number

Expiration Date ____/____

CVV Code ____ 3 digits on back of card

Full billing address for credit card account:

(Street Address or Box Number)

(City)

(State and Zip Code)

**I agree to pay the amount indicated above.
If the charge is declined, telephone me at**

_____-_____-_____

(Signature authorizing charge)

**Please mail to the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC,
P O Box 400, Onalaska, WA 98570 or fax to 360-978-6102.**

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