



Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC

eJournal

Our Twentieth Issue — September, 2009 — Now In Our Second Year

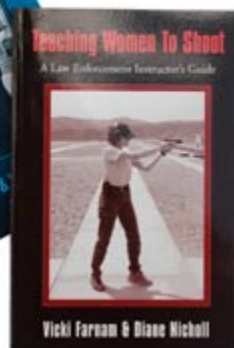
Like a Spark in Tinder: Motivating Female Shooting Students

An Interview with Vicki Farnam
by Gila Hayes

In our previous two journals, we've addressed aspects of the knotty problem of self-defense tactics and planning for armed citizens with family members for whom skill with a firearm is not a priority. During an interview that started as research for the August journal, [Defense Training International](#) vice president and instructor Vicki Farnam emphasized that a lot of women are willing to learn how to defend themselves and their family, they need only the opportunity and the right kind of encouragement.

Drawing on 20 years of teaching experience, Vicki Farnam partnered with researcher Diane Nicholl to write two books entitled *Teaching Women to Shoot* and *Women Learning to Shoot* (see this month's book review). In these books, Farnam and Nicholl define impediments they've identified to women learning to shoot. Once recognized, removing those stumbling blocks may be all it takes for a formerly reticent woman to begin enjoying firearms and self-defense training.

And now, to preserve Vicki Farnam's succinct and knowledgeable presentation, we'll switch to the Q&A format with which our readers have become familiar.



eJournal: When you teach women, what are the common reasons they give for coming to training?

Farnam: The biggest is, "My husband wanted me to come." In the majority of cases, when I hear that, I wish it were different.

Within that particular circumstance, some of the women say later, "Oh, I didn't know it would be like this and I'm so glad I came," and others find they don't like it just as they predetermined. Still others, in spite of themselves, find that there's a certain satisfaction in hitting the target.

eJournal: What do you tell men who ask you how they can get their wives interested in self defense?

Farnam: I remind them that it has to be a personal decision. When a man comes to me and says, "How do I get my wife motivated?" I say, "She has to make the decision on her own. You can help her by talking about what the reality is, that there could be a danger lurking out there in her future that could threaten her and that she is the only one that may be able to save

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Going step by step, instructor Kathy Jackson demonstrates revolver reloads during an all-women's shooting class.

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herself. But she has to be able to think about that and process it until it becomes her own decision. And then, she is motivated.

If you drag her here [to class], she may never reach that point. It's like deciding to lose weight or stop smoking, it doesn't matter how many times somebody else tells you to. It doesn't work until you make up your mind to do it yourself."

eJournal: *Not everyone can get their spouse to a class. How do you feel about spouses teaching spouses?*

Farnam: Sometimes that's the only way that's available. Husbands can certainly teach their wives, as we know. Probably 95 percent of what I learned when I first started was from John [Farnam, the other half of DTI], but husbands have to understand that just because their wife picks up a gun does not mean she picks up the philosophical overview—that she will become a warrior.

eJournal: *What starts the mental processes? What encourages a self-defense mindset?*

Farnam: I always divide my classes so I begin with the gun handling and accuracy skills and only when they have succeeded with the skills will I start to talk about how you utilize the skills. I don't want them thinking about HOW to use this if they are attacked in a dark alley until they actually know how to do it. From the very beginning when I started working with John, it was always very clear to me that I needed to know how to do this before I started thinking about how I would use it. Most classes plunge into a combination of mindset and skills simultaneously.

eJournal: *What transforms a hesitant or resistant student into one who will vigorously defend herself?*

Farnam: Well, I think you have to back up. For so many women, it's easier to ignore and deny that unknown threat lurking some place in the future. So, many of them go along for a very long time, thinking, "If I don't think about it, it's not true and I won't experience that threat."

Then, they end up at a course and they discover, "If I look at this simply as a skill that I am learning, like driving car or using the computer, I can do this." And once they can do it, then sometimes you see that transition happen, where they think, "Well, it is not so difficult. If I can hit the target, then maybe I can defend myself."

Before, it was, "I could never do this. I don't want to think about the threat, because how would I ever confront it?" It has all been a mystery until they say, "I can do this." So we just give them the skill and now they think, "Maybe I *could* [defend myself] if I absolutely *had* to because now I have some confidence in myself."

eJournal: *Does this come about more easily in women's only classes?*

Farnam: It does for some women, though I would not go so far as to say that is true for all women. I'll give you a couple of examples.

In April, I worked with a group of women in Colorado who all know each other and are part of an exclusive community in which there had been an incident. One of the husbands who had been a student of ours for many years came to me and said, "My wife and her friends are really thinking it is time they learned how to shoot and to take care of themselves. Would you teach them?" And I said, "Of course."

The morning the class started, the comments were, "I'm scared to death. My stomach hurts SO bad! Is anybody else as scared as I am?" But by the middle of the second day, it was like, "Wow, we really can do this." But they wouldn't have done it in a group of men. In a group of women they had the comfort that they could work through it because everybody else felt the same way.

The other example I'm going to give you is a woman who's husband had been urging her to come to class and she had been putting him off and putting him off. Last spring she finally got to a [women's only] class.

I just had an email from him and he said, "My wife has raised the question about an intermediate pistol course

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Author and instructor Vicki Farnam

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for women.” She wants to continue with all women, because they all started out at somewhat the same level, they watched each other, encouraged each other, saw each other stumble, and succeed, and she liked that format for learning.

The prominent issue in the all-women’s class is the pace. There is more time to talk and they get to express their feelings and their emotions as they go along.

eJournal: Do you mean that emotional expression is vital to the woman’s learning process?

Farnam: Absolutely, because women like to confer with each other. They like to hear what other women think. They like to confirm the conclusions that they come to.

eJournal: There’s such a broad spectrum between extremely feminine and not-so-feminine women—where do the different extremes fit into women’s only classes?

Farnam: I’ve heard women say, “I don’t want to be with a bunch of giggly women.” But the women’s only classes *aren’t* filled with giggly women; the students are just striving to understand, and they realize that it is going to take them longer to learn everything than it will a typical group of men.

There is one place where we’ve taught for many, many years. One year, I was asked to teach a women’s class, but that only lasted for one year. The next year there was a guy who wanted to come over [to Vicki’s class] and then it evolved into doing two, simultaneous classes with John doing X, Y and Z at John’s pace, while I’m on another range doing X, Y and Z, but at a slower pace. You decided which class you wanted to go to.

At many ranges, we run two classes and I do an all-women’s class, in which we move at a slower pace. We

cover all the same information, but there’s lots of time for discussion.

eJournal: So you’re going at a slower pace, yet covering the same material?

Farnam: John may run more drills than I will run

because he has that faster-paced group. In my class, I hear, “Wait a minute! Can we go back over that? Can we take this a little slower to make sure we get it right before we go on to something else? Because if I don’t get this correct the first time, I will be lost with every subsequent thing that you teach me.”

That is the crux of the women’s worries: they want smaller pie-



Farnam demos with a blue gun while teaching at a firearms instructor conference.

ces of information and a greater amount of time to absorb it. They want to make sure that they’re getting it right, where as guys will figure it out as they go along. Men will absorb it faster. There is an intuitiveness to learning to shoot that the majority of men have, so they can move faster because they don’t have to think through the process as much. That is the crux of the two books.

Men understand spatial relationships intuitively. Spatial relationships are part of the men’s world. That’s why men are architects, fighter pilots, and baseball players: occupations that are based on spatial relationships. Only a small percentage of women reach towards those things.

The concept of aligning the sights while simultaneously pressing the trigger in order to get an accurate hit is something that women have to mull over in their minds and confirm, “OK, front sight and rear sight and target in line with my eye, hold all that steady while I press the trigger at the same time.” Women have to see what happens when they fail, thinking, “OK, I did it wrong this time, because I moved the front sight. Now, if I don’t move the front sight...” but it takes a while to get that ingrained.

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So many of our classes are mixed classes where we have women in the class and while they can get to the same spot as the men, in most cases they are still not as fast because they haven't done enough repetitions to allow them to speed up.

You know, speed always comes naturally when you start to flow through all of your moves. The speed comes by itself. But women don't reach that point of having the skills flow as quickly as men because they are working so hard to make sure every single step is correct, and the men just start doing it and the speed and flow eventually comes.

eJournal: When do women begin to let go of thinking through each step slowly, and start flowing through the sequence of motions?

Farnam: It is different with every single woman. It only comes when they recognize their competence. When they recognize, "OK, I can go from A to B to C and I don't have to stop and think." They say, "Oh, I didn't have to think about each of those steps individually. I just let it flow."

eJournal: You and Diane Nicholl literally wrote the book on teaching women to shoot. How much of this is in Teaching Women to Shoot and Women Learning to Shoot?

Farnam: Not all of it, but a good portion of it is. I'm always looking for things that will help women go through this faster.

eJournal: Is a third book underway?

Farnam: Not a third one, but a second edition of the first one. You know, there is so much that we've learned since we wrote the book and so many more experiences that we've had. Every time we teach, we just keep going back and analyzing what we did, what we saw, and how it turned out.

eJournal: Well, we will surely look forward to seeing the updated version, too, though there is plenty to study in the first two books! Please be sure to let us know when the second edition is done. Meanwhile, thank you so much for sharing what you know with our Network members! ●

Learn more about the Farnams work at www.defense-training.com/

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Women Learning to Shoot: A Guide for Law Enforcement Officers

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Marty Hayes

President's Message

Things have been fairly quiet with the Network the last few months, having gotten past the frenzy of producing the fourth DVD and getting it out to all the people who have renewed their memberships. We have received some very nice feedback about it, and I personally think it is our best effort to date. Thanks to Marc MacY-

oung for his professionalism in helping produce it, as he made up for my lack of the same!

And, speaking of DVDs, I am starting the fifth DVD project next month, with an interview with Dennis Tueller explaining his reason for developing what has become known as the Tueller Drill, and then describing how one should do this drill themselves, in order to document this knowledge. The fifth DVD will be a compendium of several smaller topics, and the Tueller Drill is just one of them. But, since Dennis will be in the Pacific Northwest next month for a training session, I have arranged to spend an afternoon with him to get this filmed and in the can, then I will tackle the other topics.

I have also been working as an expert witness on two court cases for armed citizens, offering my services on a pro-bono basis, since the requests came from non-member individuals but were routed through the Network. There was no money to pay anyone else to help out these two citizens who had to resort to use of a firearm to protect themselves. The people I know who do this sort of thing often take cases that have merit, even if they don't get paid to do so, kind of like a movie star lending his or her name

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to a charitable project to help raise money. The Justin Timberlake Shriner's Golf Tournament comes to mind, as it is coming up soon.

Though I cannot discuss the details, in each of these cases, the armed citizen was arrested and is or was facing prosecution for what I believe was a legitimate act of self defense. I found out this morning that one of these cases is going to be dismissed, which is great news. The other is still ongoing, and will likely go to trial in about a month. From what I can see in this second case, the prosecution's case is starting to unravel, and we have a pretty good chance of winning a good outcome for the defendant.

Our attorney list is growing, but slower than any of us would wish or could have predicted. Hang in there with me, folks. We will develop a reliable, meaningful list of attorneys who understand the defense of innocent people who defended themselves. Those kinds of attorneys are not so common. If you know of an attorney who would make a good Network Affiliated Attorney, please email me with his or her name and contact information, and I will pursue it. I have been tied up on the other projects I mentioned above and haven't had the chance to follow-up on the bar association links many of you members have sent me, but I see my way clear to renew that effort very soon. Please check the list at <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/ec/attorney.php> now and then, since we may have added an attorney in your area recently.

Well, this looks like it will be a short message this month, as I have a myriad of things to get done, and little time to do it in, so I had better go take care of business. ●

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J. Vincent Shuck

Vice-President's Message

If anybody is keeping score, and Marty, Gila and I certainly are, the Network is doing fine, in fact, maybe better than fine. We continue to grow to new membership pinnacles and continue to meet our self-imposed objectives. Much has been said about our efforts to grow the Network and the membership in recent **eJournals**, but give me a chance to provide a new synopsis.

There are many reasons for this realized growth, not the least of which is the fact that we are meeting the needs of law abiding gun owners and legally armed citizens. Our educational component via the DVDs provides much needed education on the use of deadly force. The original DVD set sent to all new members provides some of the best information available on these subjects. Make sure you re-review these DVDs from time to time and record the date and time of your viewing. We now have DVD #4, which is sent to members upon renewal. That's our free gift to renewing members and one of our ways to provide more education. This DVD, on recognizing and responding to pre-attack indicators by Marty Hayes and Marc MacYoung, could literally save your life, not to mention potential legal hassles.

Speaking of renewals, please remain alert to our email notifying you that your membership renewal is due. Your timely response will reduce the need for follow-ups and will get the DVD #4 into your hands sooner.

We are gaining members via a number of methods and are constantly looking for new ways to spread the word about the Network. As the Network grows, so does our ability to help members. Probably our most successful mechanism for new members is through articles in the shooting press. I'm sure many of you have read these

articles and perhaps even joined because of the article's recommendation. In addition, the Network Foundation's Advisory Board members share our mission with their colleagues and students. The same is true for our dedicated Affiliated Instructors. Don't forget to visit our list of Affiliated Instructors so you can take advantage of the member discount, where offered. The web site itself is attracting new members and we are in the process of making some changes to the look of the site and its functionality.

I've previously mentioned the Network Representative group of members who share Network information with gun stores, gun clubs and other individuals. These dedicated volunteers actively pass out brochures and encourage membership. While they all work hard, I'd like

to cite one, Phil Smith of New York, who travels a lot and thus gets to many states. He seems to have a natural sales pitch and has helped us place Network brochures in locations throughout the Eastern U.S. Thanks, Phil, for being such a dedicated representative. If you are interested in becoming an official representative, please let me know.

All of the noted membership recruitment resources are great, but nothing beats recruitment efforts by individual members. You know best why you joined and why others should as

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What does this beautiful Galco shoulder holster have to do with V.P. Shuck's column? Read page seven to learn how it can be yours!

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well. If you need a few "talking points," try these:

- Use of force education
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- Full case review at no cost
- Affiliated attorney list
- Affiliated instructor list
- Book, DVD and training discounts
- Foundation support of legal defense costs
- Complete access to the monthly **eJournal**
- Members only forum
- New educational DVD each year upon renewal

Refer your interested colleagues to the Network's web site to join.

Finally, the Foundation's first auction item should go on the charity auction section of GunBroker.com this month. The first item will be a Galco 40th Anniversary Shoulder Holster System custom made of Tiger Shark skin, valued at \$795. This auction will generate membership interest in the Network and further our efforts to advance the legal defense fund, an important membership benefit. We will send an email alert to all Network members as this auction goes live. Be prepared to bid on this great item. ●

Vincent Shuck serves as Network Vice President and is President of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Foundation. Contact him at jvshuck@armedcitizensnetwork.org.

Our Members Write In

To the Editor:

Really enjoyed the latest issue of the newsletter as it has lots of food for thought in the section that dealt with tactics involving the armed and unarmed partner and I hope you will continue to present us with these gnarly tactical problems.

As you noted there are many solutions to this and the situation will dictate what you have to do. This specific situation is a real concern for off-duty police officers and there are some very good examples available (which the armed citizen can gain useful info from) of how they handle the problem when caught out in public with their family during an armed encounter. I just finished giving a class on concealed carry in which we actually role play these scenarios with Sims to keep the arguing to a minimum!

First, if you have your family with you and you are not directly being attacked, seek cover, call 911, become a good witness (this is especially the way to go if it is just you and the kids). The real issue driving the response in this case is incoming fire. As soon as you draw a gun and engage you become a bullet magnet, as does everyone else near you. If you are forced to use your sidearm you need to get your family away from you or you need to get away from the family.

Having your partner grab your belt is a good idea in total darkness or smoke-filled rooms but under other circumstances it brings us back to the incoming problem and if you are having a really bad day it lines you up and slows you down, setting you up for the possibility of one round

getting you both, not to mention increasing the chances of getting your feet tangled.

We have learned through actual experience (in my former life) that your best ally is speed while moving away from the threat (if possible). This may also be the most natural response so it doesn't take a lot of teaching. This requires some slightly different footwork for the armed partner so he can move quickly while keeping his balance and checking both front and rear (when you are trying to protect someone else), but reduces the problems caused by incoming by minimizing the time you and your partner/family are a target while you move rapidly to cover or an exit. If you can't run for whatever reasons and only one partner is armed, I favor separation.

We have an excellent example of this in the Trolley Square incident which took place in a shopping center in Salt Lake City on 12 February 2007 (see Wikipedia for details). Turns out the real hero here was the wife who was a police dispatcher. The tapes of her calling the cops and advising them of the situation are remarkable for her calmness.

Keep up the good work!

Ed Lovette

We are always delighted when our readers respond to something in one of the journals! We encourage our members to follow Ed's example and write us an email now and then so that we know when an article makes you think! Write to editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org. For more about the dispatcher who played such a pivotal role in the Trolley Square shooting, go to this [link](#). –Editor

Affiliated Instructor Question of the Month

One of the Network's great strengths is its affiliation with firearms instructors and attorneys. With the goal of introducing more of these professionals to Network members, in this edition, we are delighted to debut a new feature, the *Question of the Month*. This month, we asked our affiliated instructors the following question:

When a student has trouble with drills in your class, what is his or her greatest impediment to success?

We got a lot of responses, and only wish we had room to print them all. We'll carry this question over to the October journal to share more of these responses. The selection below should help our members get more from their training as they pursue firearms and self-defense skills.

Of Attitude and Mental Barriers

David Nash

Shepherd School, Inc. <http://www.tngun.com/>
Franklin, TN

In my experience, the greatest impediment to success in the classroom setting is a student that is in the class for the certificate and not the knowledge. All too often, ego can get in the way. The student has an ingrained habit, and when you try to correct it they get defensive. They blame the gun, the ammo, the weather, or they just don't feel good today. In these instances it can sometimes be hard for me as instructor to get past the shooter's ego so that I can do my job.

I use the phrase, "I can tell you are a good shooter, but do me a favor and try this and see if you like it better. It may be a little awkward at first, because you have shot so much the other way, but I think it will bring your range scores closer in line with your natural talent." It doesn't always work, but sometimes it can take the ego out of the situation and helps the student to try proper technique.

Lateif Dickerson

New Jersey Firearms Academy www.njfirearms.com
Jersey City, NJ

When a student has trouble with drills, it is going to be one of these issues that hinder their success:

- The student hasn't internalized the value of the drill, or its relevance to the real world application. If the stu-

dent doesn't own the reason for why the drill is important, they will only be going through the motions, and an increase in performance is unlikely. The instructor's attitude toward the skill/drill, and his/her ability to communicate its importance is key.

- The student lacks the fundamental, rudimentary skills to perform the drill. It takes 3,000-4,000 repetitions for an action to start becoming a habit, therefore **skills** need to be built, before they can be applied. We **teach** the skill low speed, low stress, **test** the skill high speed high stress. Doing high speed or high stress drills without fundamental skill only show how poorly you perform under speed/stress, and is not constructive. But once skills are committed to muscle memory they can then be reinforced by repetitive drills.

Slow Down, Speed Demons!

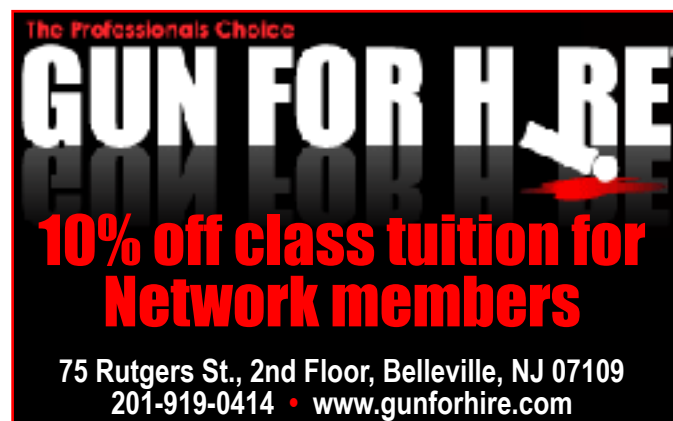
Karl Rehn

KR Training <http://www.krtraining.com/>
Bryan, TX

Some students don't understand what "slow" and "fast" mean. For example, a student will be jerking and yanking on the trigger, and be instructed to "slow down on your trigger press." This usually results in the student slowing down from slapping the trigger in 0.1 second to a leisurely 0.2 second. My usual fix for this is to have the student put his/her finger on the trigger, and then I put my finger on theirs and press at the speed that I want them to go. Most of the time, the student is surprised at how slow I am pressing (at group-shooting speed).

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Similarly, when we are teaching students to draw, they are told to “go slow” in order to do the technique correctly and smoothly. In every class there are always some for whom the phrase “go slowly and smoothly” apparently means “yank the gun out and shove it toward the target as fast as you can.” When I do a super slow, smooth draw and point out small details as I go (finger position, when to press the safety on a 1911, what I am seeing as the gun comes to the target), again many students are surprised that a “speed” skill can or should be practiced in a slow mode.

On the flip side, shooters whose training has been limited to live fire practice at ranges with restrictions on shooting speed and movement often have to be pushed to break the “speed barrier.” These students are often reluctant to shoot faster than once per second, are slow to react to start signals, and are slow to “get off the X” when initially introduced to the concept. Sometimes it takes putting that person in a force-on-force exercise against a live opponent to make the situation real enough that they begin to act with appropriate speed.

Anthony P. Colandro
Gun For Hire LLC <http://www.gunforhire.com/>
Belleville, NJ

I always find myself bringing the students back to the basics of shooting slow for hits before we ramp up the speed. The biggest impediment is usually a lack of understanding that speed comes with practice. Most students (especially men) want to get to the finish line without running the entire race.

When encountering problems with drills, I will take the student off of the line under the premise that I want to

review the next shooting scenario. This usually gives the student some time to rewind while I give them a diversionary pep talk. When we return to the line, I start with positive reinforcement and move at a much slower pace and slowly increase the speed as the student achieves the desired results. This has been my standard training philosophy for years and I have always managed to have the student meet their required results.

Kevin Gallagher,
The Jacobe Group www.jimjacobe.com
Salem, OR

Many people attending a self-defense class do not comprehend that you must crawl before you walk and walk before you run. One reason can be attributed to “having a three speed brain and a two speed body.” Their brain runs faster than what their body can do when learning new skills.

One of the best methods to combat “the three speed brain and two speed body” is to make a conscious effort to avoid this behavior by monitoring your speed. In a firearms class a good instructor breaks down each component of a technique and explains the principles and concepts to the students, followed by a demonstration of the technique. You, the student, need to focus rather than simply mimicking the instructor. Once you have mastered the skills required to hit your target as taught, speed can be obtained by slowly speeding up at a controlled rate.

We appreciate the many contributions made by our affiliated instructors of which this shared wisdom is only one part. We hope this column helps you feel you know more about our affiliated instructors. We further hope our members will contact these professionals when they need training, and refer friends and family members to them, as well.

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Debbe von Blumenstein

Attorney's Viewpoint: Keeping A Carry License

There is a file on you!

by Debbe von Blumenstein

When you get a Concealed Handgun License (CHL) in Oregon, the county sheriff opens up a file on you. It's legal. In Oregon this issue has gone up to the State Supreme Court. It is legal for them to do this; however, you also can get a copy of your file. You will want to do that.

Remember, in a previous column, when I recommended setting a yearly date to check your CHL expiration date? That is also the date, you will want to request a copy of your CHL file. You will want to do it each year. You may be awfully surprised to see what is in it. Trust me, being "awfully surprised" in a legal context is not usually good.

At the very least, your file will have all of your application materials in it. If that is your entire file, that is good news for you.

However, anyone can write a letter about you to the Sheriff. Ex-husbands, old girlfriends, landlords (I've seen it all), anyone can submit something to the county and say stuff about you, true or untrue. It will not be checked out. It will not be investigated to see if it is valid or not. It will be put into your file. It will be used against you and it can sit there, fester and be part of a reason to revoke your CHL some time down the line.

I also do not know of a single Oregon county that has an expiration date on information. I have had a civil deputy under cross examination inform the court that even if two

alleged incidents happen within a ten to twelve year period, it is considered a pattern of behavior and they will pursue revocation proceedings based on it.

If you do not know what is in your file, you will not know how to protect yourself.

Also, there may be a log in the file. This log is where the civil deputy in charge of CHL matters will review your file and make notations. These notations are usually aimed at gearing up to take your CHL away.

The notations may list phone calls that come in where someone reports something about you, whether true or false. I have seen folks who know someone has a CHL and want to cause trouble for them. They want the license revoked or they erroneously think that if it is revoked, the person cannot possess weapons. Humans are motivated by all sorts of reasons to make reports to the county regarding your suitability to have and keep a CHL.

I have seen notations such as: "Not enough yet to revoke, let's keep looking," I have seen emails such as: "Can we revoke yet?" or, "Let's contact the District Attorney's office and see if they can charge him with something so we can revoke his CHL."

Does the term "witch hunt," come to mind?

Remember another previous column, in which we discussed keeping the reputation of a diligent law abiding citizen? For example (if your state requires) if after moving, you return your CHL to your previous county with a letter demonstrating that you are doing so to be in full compliance with the law – well, that goes in the file, too. See how you can have positive things in there too?

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Even if you get a copy of your file and you see something that is not true or potentially problematic, there is nothing stopping you from adding information and documentation that shows facts and the truth. But you cannot counter anything, unless you know it is there.

The Lesson: get a copy of your file. Do it once a year. If there is something false or negative, submit something to your file to counter it.

Of note, a question I am sometimes asked is if a person should initiate submitting items such as their ongoing training records to be included in their file. Although you can, I do not suggest this because you also want to not bring attention to yourself if it is not necessary. The information could also be misconstrued by a civil deputy.

However, you will want to know what is in your file, rather than be surprised by a letter of revocation, having to hire an attorney* and fighting your battle in court. Remember fighting a CHL revocation proceeding is not simply a matter of telling your side to a judge and hoping reasonable minds prevail; rather, it is a full blown trial. With that in mind, logic dictates that preventive measures are always best for your self protection and for the protection of your precious rights.

Bonus Lesson: Having a CHL ought to be a private matter. Nobody needs to know but you and anyone required by law to know. If others do not know you have a license to carry, you may avoid problematic situations where someone is out to cause trouble for you. If others do not know that you have a CHL, they are less likely be able to impact you so adversely.

* There's nothing wrong with hiring an attorney – especially for the attorney. As an attorney, I believe hiring an

attorney is like voting - you should do it early and often. However, if seeking a less complicated life, avoiding an attorney is usually preferable. ●

About the author: Network Affiliated Attorney Debbe von Blumenstein, J.D., is a trial attorney who has practiced in courtrooms throughout Oregon since 1997. Her practice has an emphasis in self defense cases and weapon charges. Outside of her law practice, Ms. von Blumenstein has created and presented workshops and seminars, including "Legal Lessons 101: Knowing Your Rights-Learning From the Mistakes of Others." For more about Ms. von Blumenstein, visit <http://www.debbvonblumenstein.com/>



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Book Review

Teaching Women To Shoot: A Law Enforcement Instructor's Guide

ISBN 0-9659422-3-6

136 pages, paperback, \$19.95

Women Learning to Shoot: A Guide for Law Enforcement Officers

ISBN 0-9659422-6-0

134 pages, heavily illustrated, paperback, \$19.95

by Vicki Farnam and Diane Nicholl

Published by DTI Publications,

PO Box 18746, Boulder, CO 80308

303-443-9817 <http://www.dtipubs.com/>

Reviewed by Gila Hayes

Don't be put off by the subtitles! *Teaching Women to Shoot* and *Women Learning to Shoot* contain lots of pertinent information for female shooters or for those involved in training students of either gender whether or not they work in law enforcement. The danger of concluding, based on stereotype, that the information in these books applies to *all* women, is also a stumbling block to getting the most out of the information they contain. As Farnam notes in her interview in earlier pages of this journal, there are examples on either end of the femininity spectrum, just as there are when describing masculine traits.

Because women have long felt that they not only had to perform better than their peers, but do so without offending anyone, acknowledging gender-based differences in learning styles also risks a hostile response from those who may most benefit – women! I remember a friend's distressed response after we both listened to one of Vicki Farnam's earliest class segments on teaching women to shoot. As one of just two women in a group of 20 men, my friend felt singled out as the subject of a presentation focused on learning difficulties. Likewise, Farnam relates receiving very hostile responses from male firearms instructors who did not want to hear that they could not go on doing what they had always done if they wanted their female students to succeed in their classes.

In such politically correct times, it takes courage to spotlight gender differences. Farnam and Nicholl have not done so without suffering a few retaliatory responses. They go to great pains to point out that humans simply are not all the same and that there are women for whom their instructional theory is not applicable. Still, a few sensitive

souls will miss that message, and I can only say, "This is not about **you**! There *are* women struggling with these issues, so let's learn how to help them!"

Farnam and Nicholl are qualified by experience alone, but both bring additional credentials to the book – Farnam drawing on a degree in education and history and Nicholls as a researcher. While both women have moved beyond these earlier careers to concentrate on firearms education, their backgrounds are evident in the organization and clarity of their presentation.

The preface of *Teaching Women to Shoot* explains the subtitle, as the earliest requests for help with women's firearms training came from police chiefs, police firearms instructors and female police officers, none of whom could understand the difficulty the women had with firearms qualifications. Nicholls explains, "I found most of the female officers I work with have never learned the fundamentals of shooting. They do not understand why they cannot accurately hit the target." How did they miss these lessons? The book explains how male and female learning varies and how firearms instruction failed female recruits.

Brain function has been shown to follow different patterns between the genders, and this research, cited in the second chapter of *Teaching Women to Shoot*, helps explain the greater sensitivity to stimuli like sound and tone of voice, as well as the female tendency toward multi tasking as facilitated by a greater number of connections between the left and right side of the female brain. Brain anatomy and function also explains emotional expression and intensity in women, an affinity for verbal expression and often less aptitude for spatial concepts.

The authors show that women take verbal communication quite literally. Thus, when receiving training, the female students "learn more quickly when information is present-

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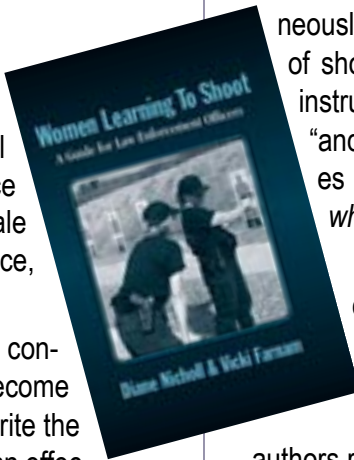
ed in detail and in an orderly sequence,” the authors write. They stress that women use “an abundance of details” presented in small segments, coupled with copious practice repetitions to master a skill. In contrast, male learners want to see the big picture all at once, they suggest.

The instructor of a co-ed class faces a considerable challenge: “Male students can become bored with too much detail and repetition,” write the authors. “Yet we know from experience that an effective teaching technique for women includes additional time for absorbing information and practicing skills.” Proving that assertion, the authors experimented by offering a preparatory firearms training day for female recruits, showing how the women later had no trouble keeping up with the men during the regular academy firearms instruction.

Teaching Women to Shoot cites examples of female officers and their instructors who could produce good results in practice, but had only failure during qualifications. With the instructor telling the student what to do at each step, they succeeded. What the woman needed instead was systematic instruction in the fundamentals of shooting so when the coach was gone and she began missing the target, she knew what she was doing incorrectly. “We cannot overemphasize the importance of a shooter understanding as precisely as possible what she needs to do physically and mentally to make an accurate shot,” the authors stress. Chapters 8, 10, 12 and 13 as well as all of *Women Learning to Shoot* outline those fundamentals. Technique illustrated is hard-core DTI, so be ready for their high thumbs grip and traditional Weaver stance!

Gun fit, holster position, upper body strength, grip, stance and remediation techniques also receive attention in later chapters, along with techniques to address the flinch, eye dominance, weak hands, controlling recoil and muzzle flip, locking open the semi-auto pistol, developing speed, and working with different handgun types. Chapter 21 discusses rifle and shotgun technique.

In Chapter 13 of *Teaching Women to Shoot* we find an example that every instructor should ponder. In it, Farnam relates meeting a young competitive shooter who asked for her advice. In conversation, it appeared that though the young lady knew and practiced sight alignment and trigger control, she had not been performing both steps simulta-



neously. The authors report that after finding a number of shooters who had not made that connection, their instructions became more exact. Replacing the word “and” with “while” in the following directive increases instructional precision: “Keep the sights aligned *while* smoothly pressing the trigger.”

Reminding the reader how brain function influences learning, the authors close *Teaching Women to Shoot* with a section on the psychology of shooting. Recognizing sensory input patterns and multi-tasking affinity in the female brain, the authors recommend paying particular attention to keeping female students focused solely on the fundamentals of shooting, blocking out the many other distractions. Mental attitude, stress release, and interacting with instructors, all play a role in how well the female student will learn. The book concludes with a challenge to firearms instructors to understand learning styles and use that knowledge to turn out shooters who are better prepared.

Four years after releasing *Teaching Women to Shoot*, Nicholl and Farnam published a user's guide, *Women Learning to Shoot*. This volume provides reading and reference material for the student of shooting who wants to understand why the skill eludes her. In the introduction, Farnam explains, “The following chapters are filled with the minutiae that you can read and reread if you need more time and detail to understand the fundamentals of learning to shoot accurately.”

Obtained together, *Teaching Women to Shoot* and *Women Learning to Shoot* can give instructors guidance in their own professional development, as well as reference material to share with students, or provide some real revelations to the skilled shooter who wants to share their knowledge with a significant other. ●

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Gila Hayes

Editor's Notebook

Potpourri: Tom Gresham Has New Show on TV

I corresponded with our friend and associate Tom Gresham by email recently, and he reminded me that his latest project (the man has more irons in the fire than a Wyoming cattleman on branding day), *Guns & Gear TV* is now playing on the [Versus](http://www.gunsandgeartv.com/site2.php) cable network, which many viewers get or can get as part of their cable or satellite package. In addition, some episodes are up on the *Guns & Gear* web site at <http://www.gunsandgeartv.com/site2.php>.

The first program, *Hunting with an AR-15*, is a typical Gresham programming approach: find and thoroughly explore a topic that has given rise to controversy. (Remember the unfortunate February 2007 comment by [Jim Zumbo](#) that he saw no place for assault rifles in hunting, associating anyone carrying one with terrorism and calling on game departments to ban their use from hunting? Zumbo later recanted those opinions.) Often Gresham approaches his radio and TV programming as shooting's own myth buster, as he does in this inaugural show. It looks to me as if Tom Gresham has another winner on his hands!

The kind of gun education Gresham puts out into the mainstream media is an antidote to foolishness like the frenzied response we saw recently created by the neatly dressed man in the crowd outside an Obama health care rally, openly carrying not only his handgun but his slung AR-15 rifle, as well. Whether or not that was a good idea

is inconsequential at this point: the deed is done, the frenzy stirred. The value of mainstream TV programming like Gresham produces is in reducing the horrified amazement many Americans – especially TV personalities – express at seeing someone openly armed, because Gresham shows how prevalent responsible gun use is in America.

The Next Big Showdown

On the political front, most by now know that the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals has sided with Cicero, IL's firearms registration (an aspect of gun control not addressed in the celebrated *Heller* decision), finding that gun registration does not violate the Second Amendment. It is also expected that at the end of this month the Supreme Court will decide whether or not to hear *National Rifle Association v. Chicago* ([08-1497](#)). Other cases that deal with weapons are pending, too, including *McDonald v. Chicago* ([08-1521](#)). Though not specifically about guns, *Maloney v. Rice* ([08-1592](#)) also

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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:

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We welcome your questions and comments about the Network.

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New Addresses?

We hope you won't forget to update your membership information with the Network! If you move or change E-mail, you can call, drop us a note in the mail or [send an email](#) with your new contact information. Network members will want to be sure our record of your E-mail is current and accurate, so we can send you periodic E-mail announcements, including one when each new eJournal is released.

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asks if the Second Amendment trumps state laws, something these three cases ask the Supreme Court to decide.

What is sometimes called “incorporation” could require states like Illinois to bring their laws into agreement with the rights spelled out under the various amendments comprising the Bill of Rights. It is rather amazing to think we still have to pursue such a decision, but the devil is in the details, and while the right to own a gun may be acknowledged, government immediately begins whittling away at the practical application of that right. The Heller case, while vital, only affirmed that gun ownership is an individual right; whether or not various states need to bring their laws into line with that ruling remains undetermined, plus we will, of course, continue to see questions about what kinds of restrictions really are reasonable. It is a very interesting time to be a politically active gun owner, and may also be a very good time to make a contribution to the [National Rifle Association](#) and the [Second Amendment Foundation](#), if you're able and haven't done so recently. While we, the Network, are working hard to build a defense fund for members' individual rights, these organizations are taking the fight to the government on a much larger, sweeping scale. Both need our support.

Constitutional questions such as these make for a strange blend of politics! I also follow with interest the state's-rights challenge embodied in Montana and Kentucky's Firearms Freedom Act. In the two battle fronts, I find a conflict which I personally have not resolved. On one hand, I obviously wish for a Supreme Court ruling requiring that state-level laws reflect the values embodied in the Second Amendment. On the other hand, I absolutely support any actions that limit the federal government's reach into local affairs. That's because to my way of thinking, it is easier to control bad laws on the local level. Influencing legislation in Washington, D.C. is nearly beyond the reach of the ordinary individual; it requires lobbyists, funding, and influence. At the local and state level, it is considerably easier to corral the local representative to the legislature and explain the issue at hand in a factual, plainspoken and convincing manner. The electorate is, to the state legislator, far more distinctly comprised of individuals from his or her district—individuals who may influence others in the district to vote out the representative if their politics are incompatible.

Can I Take My Gun?

If you've been traveling this summer, you've no doubt wondered if there was anything you needed to know about the gun laws of the jurisdiction to which you were going. While we always recommend you make a check with the state's attorney general's office to be sure you know the latest information, the NRA just released a guide that may be of help, too. Get it at <http://www.nraila.org/GunLaws/Federal/Read.aspx?id=59>

New Book Coming

On a personal note, Monday's mail delivered my pre-press copy of *Personal Defense for Women*, a revised version of material I'd previously self-published under the title *Effective Defense*. When we started the Network in 2008, I asked my gun magazine editors for a sabbatical, decided we'd sell out of the second edition of *Effective Defense*, and that I would quit scribbling and concentrate on the larger picture – getting the Network off to a strong start.

Ironically, no sooner had I made that decision, than Gun Digest contacted me about writing a women's gun book. In the end, we agreed to update, rewrite and submit for the polish of a professional editor, much of the content of *Effective Defense*, with new material added to reflect new products, as well as adding areas of discussion Gun Digest's editorial board felt important to a book they intended to sell not only in gun stores, but to the public through Amazon.com, Barnes & Noble and their other booksellers. *Personal Defense for Women* is due out at the end of September. We will sell it in the Network's bookstore, too.

Time to Get Back In Practice

It looks like the ammunition shortage has relaxed a little and prices have dropped some from the levels seen at the height of the panic. That's a relief, especially for shooters who watched their practice and training dry up as ammunition became scarce and prices skyrocketed. With things evening out, isn't it time you got back to the range and brushed up on your skills?

There is little question that the woman or man who is confident in his or her self defense skills projects a self-assurance is less attractive to the predator who is just cruising looking for prey. It's not an attitude you can fake—either you know you're ready or you worry and wonder if you are! Let's get back to the range and do what it takes to be fully assured we are ready for what life throws our way. ●

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