



# Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC eJournal

Our Thirtieth Issue — July, 2010 — Now In Our Third Year

## What Lies Ahead After McDonald Supreme Court Win?

On Monday, just as the final copy for this month's journal was being fit in to these pages, the much-awaited Supreme Court decision in [\*McDonald v. Chicago\*](#) came through 5 to 4 in our favor. Much will be written, exploring Justice Samuel Alito's majority opinion as well as the dissents, dissecting in detail each phrase, sentence and paragraph. We will happily leave that analysis to better-qualified legal scholars, especially since we need to wrap up this edition and distribute it to you, our readers!

Despite the celebratory hyperbole that you've probably already heard or read, the Supreme Court opinion does not overturn Chicago's handgun ban; it returns the case to the 7<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals. Now, that court will have to decide which elements of Chicago's gun ban are reasonable, but must now rule in light of Justice Alito's assurances that the right to own a handgun for self defense is a fundamental right.

A ruling like *McDonald*, of course, doesn't invalidate other gun restrictions nor will states and cities stop

passing restrictions the "reasonability" of which yet another court will have to decide. Just as Dick Heller has been back in court after the Supreme Court decision that bears his name, the incorporation of the Second Amendment against the States and local jurisdictions isn't an automatic reversal of all the restrictions gun owners have labored under for decades. It does, however, open wide the door to expect success in lower court challenges to those restrictions.

As with *Heller*, the *McDonald* decision clarifies some issues beyond whether or not owning guns for self defense is a fundamental, Constitutionally-protected right. In *Heller*, the other issue that the Justices addressed was what restrictions are reasonable and acceptable. (For some perspective, see [column](#) written after *McDonald* was argued before the Supreme Court, but before this week's decision.)

In his *McDonald* opinion, Alito identifies certain restrictions as acceptable. "We made it clear in *Heller*, that our holding did not cast doubt on such long-standing regulatory measures as 'prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill' 'laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of

arms.' We repeat those assurances here. Despite municipal respondents' doomsday proclamations, incorporation does not imperil every law regulating firearms."

Fights over what restrictions are reasonable are win-a-few lose-a-few kinds of affairs – as in the D.C. ban on high capacity magazines that Judge Urbina upheld in March, along with D.C.'s registration requirement.

Cases in lower courts challenging laws restricting magazine capacities, guns in city parks, public buildings, open carry, concealed carry licensing, these and more all lie ahead, because it isn't reasonable to expect the broad opinion of a Supreme Court decision to identify and mandate every little detail. Still, now we have even more reason for optimism.

Alan Gottlieb of the Second Amendment Foundation ([www.saf.org](http://www.saf.org)) makes it clear how this critical win in *McDonald* helps define legal strategies in the fight against restrictions on guns for personal defense. In a press release sent out as soon as the decision was handed down, Gottlieb wrote "This morning's high court ruling clearly shows that the right of the individual citizen to have a gun is constitutionally protected in every corner of the United States. We are already preparing to challenge other highly-restrictive anti-gun laws across the country.

"Our objective is to win back our firearms freedoms one lawsuit at a time."

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# Pincus Pursues Natural Shooting Methods

*Interview by Gila Hayes*

The name Rob Pincus has considerable prominence in television, radio, books and magazines about defensive shooting. There is little doubt that his views about using guns for defense influence how a lot of people prepare themselves. So, what is Rob Pincus' message? In June, I sat down with Pincus for an extensive interview. While the way he challenges accepted doctrine won't earn him friends everywhere, his penchant for examining everything we do in training does encourage valuable exploration of what we hold to be true. Initiating that kind of critical thinking is priceless when the topic is actions we may undertake in self defense.

As we switch to a question-and-answer format, let's start by asking how this instructor, author and TV host started his study into how humans fight for survival.

**eJournal:** We know a bit about your background as a shooter, beginning with your interesting childhood in which you taught yourself to shoot, as we discussed in the [March 2009 edition](#) of this journal. Don't you also have extensive experience in martial



*Pincus makes a point about combat accuracy during a recent Combat Focus™ Shooting class.*

arts – or should I say combatives?

**Pincus:** The combatives story isn't nearly as rich as the firearms, but it is a really important piece of the story. I was always curious about any of the defensive or combative arts. When I was eight or nine, I did a summer martial arts program, and was really frustrated with it. It was a lot about counting in a foreign language and putting your uniform on correctly and tying the knot and there really wasn't any fighting.

**eJournal:** Oh, you got the traditional approach.

**Pincus:** Yeah, but I didn't care about the tradition, so I got really turned off about martial arts training, which is unfortunate because I would be so much more capable today if I had gotten into training. So I would go to a seminar, maybe a karaté seminar, then I would go to a Taekwondo seminar, and I'd always run into the same thing: I never found a place that would teach me how to fight. So I ended up reading *Black Belt Magazine* and *Paladin Press* stuff, and watched a lot of movies. In high school, I became a wrestler, and that was probably my first practice learning how to control another person's body and not let them control mine.

I had all this theoretical, self-taught kind of stuff, plus wrestling, and I got a little combative training in the military. Law enforcement academy reminded me of the old martial arts approach. While I was being taught how to throw a punch, I never felt like I was being taught how to fight.

**eJournal:** In fairness, DT [police defensive tactics] would have been more about control techniques.

**Pincus:** Exactly. Then, in 2000 or 2001, I was teaching a SWAT school down in Florida. I was trying to combine the realities of a SWAT team going into a house, dealing with people, controlling everybody in the house

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## Combat Focus Shooting: The Science of Intuitive Shooting Skill Development Evolution 2010 by Rob Pincus

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and getting the person they are looking for. Very rarely in law enforcement do they shoot anybody, and yet, 99.99% of the runs that a SWAT team does through a scenario house are shooting. There was this huge, big missing chunk.

The school at which I was teaching had just bought two [Tony Blauer](#) Impact Reduction High Gear suits, so I put one on. It wasn't like some of the other suits that you wear, that are like wearing mattresses with duct tape and you can't move or feel anything that is done to you! I left there tired, and bruised and beat up, but so did some of the SWAT guys, because I was able to fight and move. That led to a two-hour phone conversation with Tony Blauer. We talked about combatives and what I had been frustrated by. Tony's experiences paralleled my own. I'd started by intuitively shooting very naturally, then I got into what the big schools taught and I thought, OK this is the right way to do it because it was what the police academy and the military taught me, but I always felt very frustrated with it. One day I accepted that just because it has been done this way for a hundred years, that doesn't make it right. And Tony went through the same thing.

So Tony and I hit it off. I became a student, got the instructor certificate in his civilian and law enforcement programs. Then I went to [Royce Gracie's](#) law enforcement program. I was certified to teach his law enforcement program. To this day, when I teach extreme close quarters counter ambush for military, I combine my contact shooting block with Tony's S.P.E.A.R. stuff, with some of Royce's grappling. So I do teach combatives, and while it's not in the forefront of what I do, it is there and I'm passionate about telling people that they need that piece of the puzzle.

**eJournal:** *It shows. As I read the new edition of your book, [Combat Focus Shooting](#), I feel like it is an extension of Tony Blauer's [Personal Defense Readiness](#) overlaid onto armed defenses.*

**Pincus:** There is a lot of overlap in terminology. After a decade of working together, the vernacular of S.P.E.A.R. system and [Combat Focus™ Shooting](#) is very similar. I don't know who said which phrase first, but Tony's S.P.E.A.R. system was much more evolved than [Combat Focus™ Shooting](#) was when we first met and I've learned a lot from him. I've been inspired to do research because of things he's said and certainly have borrowed a lot of the terminology that I use. It has been a great synergy and the two programs compliment each other very, very well.



Rob Pincus

**eJournal:** *Like Blauer, a lot of your work is about breaking old paradigms that you do not believe applicable to real defensive emergencies. What traditional shooting techniques do you debunk?*

**Pincus:** I probably get the worst rap about unsighted shooting being point shooting because I had to so emphatically explain to people that it [traditional sight use] is not 100% necessary. I can stick my hand out with a screwdriver and point it at you because of hand-eye coordination and because of the way the human animal integrates with tools. So, with a little practice, I think I can do that with a gun, too, especially at the distances we are talking about.

In class, I start by not using sights. By two or three hours into the class, we've talked about sight picture, and we're having students do shots that most of them probably need their sights for. And certainly by the end of a two-day class, they've been challenged to the point to where they learn real quick that they need to use their sights for certain types of shots, when the target dictates it and you recognize the need for it. We don't say to use your sights whenever you can, we say use your sights when you need to. The only way to know if you need to, is if you go out and train and practice and you figure it out.

If you have time, use your sights. In training on a well-lit square range with high contrast sights, or in the low light room with night sights, or on pieces of paper that are not going to move, you can almost always use your sights. So you end up becoming complacent and dependent on your sights and you become expectant that they will always be there.

Tom Givens and I had a great conversation about sight use and his students who have been in shootings. He said, "I don't know if people use their sights or not, I don't know if I believe them when they said they did; I don't know if I believe them when they say they didn't. We train people to look at their sights because it verifies that their gun is aligned and at least they know how to use their sights so they have it if they need it."

**eJournal:** *OK, so that is sight use. What else?*

**Pincus:** I don't think the gun should be pushed out from the body in any extended ready [position] until you are coming out to a target to shoot it.

**eJournal:** *What is the appropriate ready position?*

**Pincus:** We call it the high compressed ready: elbows

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at the side, gun close to the chest, above the level that it will be at when it comes out of the holster. In other words, when you're drawing the gun, it comes up to around the pectoral muscle. Letting the gun drop down from that level is inefficient.

I didn't invent the high compressed ready and I'm not the only guy teaching it. In the '70s, Applegate was writing about not swinging the gun laterally. If you think about it, if you have an extended ready [position] and you drop the gun down into a low guard and you notice a threat off to your left, now you're swinging in two planes, you're swinging the gun back up to your line of sight and to the left to find that guy.

I say bring the gun to your chest, now you can turn and orient your body, which is going to happen naturally anyway if you get distracted, and then punch that gun out again and you will have consistency.

When you're done shooting, if there is no longer a threat, pull the gun back into a compressed high ready position. We do the reloads there, we do malfunction drills there, we assess there, and we do everything in the high compressed ready because consistency leads to efficiency. Now you've got one place to present the gun from all the time, every time and it happens to be a place that is congruent with presentation from the holster so you really only have one way to get the gun out to get your first shot on target.

**eJournal:** *We have to weigh traditional methods against what you suggest really happens in a fight. Just to keep the length manageable, can you prioritize the three worst disconnects between what a skilled shooter does in a real life defensive shooting and how range training is commonly conducted?*

**Pincus:** The biggest one is choreography, presumptive knowledge, and foreknowledge of the shot you are going to have to take. To me, that is the most important disconnect from traditional training to what happens in the real world. That is one of the gaps we are trying to bridge with our balance of speed and precision drills.

**eJournal:** *To be sure I understand, so the range master calls the drill and says...*

**Pincus:** *[picking up the thought]...says, "You have three seconds to fire four shots into the chest. Go!" On a*

neuroscientific level, your brain has already activated the neurons to perform that skill and the blood flow has already increased to the muscles. You're already visualizing it, like an athlete going into the "zone."

People talk about "on demand" as when the buzzer goes off. If you are standing there waiting for the buzzer to go off, it is not the same kind of "on demand" that I am talking about. I am talking about when you standing there thinking about buying ice cream and suddenly you have to shoot somebody in the chest. You didn't have a chance to think about it. Behaviorally and biomechanically, that is very different because the motor cortex hasn't primed those muscles.

In Combat Focus™ Shooting, I rely a lot on the scientific research. I rely a lot on the way the body works, the physiology, the anatomy, the neuroscience, and the way we learn to control our muscles. The problem with sports/science type analogies that people want to make between shooting training and fighting is you don't get that warning time.

False confidence comes from performing a skill that you are prepping yourself for, standing by for, as opposed to performing a skill truly on demand after processing information that tells you that you need to perform that skill.

**eJournal:** *How can we prepare to respond more quickly when we've got a carton of ice cream in our hands and we really need to be holding a 1911?*

**Pincus:** Everything from high level force on force with trained role players in scenario settings down to visualizing a threat when you're shooting at a piece of paper and visualizing that threat going down until you don't need to shoot any more. Something as simple as that.

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**Using empty hands, Combat Focus™ Instructor Grant Cunningham demonstrates coming from high compressed ready into a shooting position.**

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**eJournal:** Let's get back to the top three discrepancies between range training and a real defensive shooting.

**Pincus:** Another top paradigm shift would be [recognizing that] multiple shots until the threat stops is NOT the non-standard response. That is the response that people SHOULD be having, and if in 2010 you're still calling it the non-standard response out of tradition and respect for ages gone by, well, words mean things. Tradition shouldn't be a priority when we are trying to teach people life and death stuff.

You don't know how many shots it is going to take, so in Combat Focus™ Shooting when we give our standard command, "Engage to the high center chest," we criticize students who always shoot pairs, three times or four times, and we remind them to stop shooting patterns. Let's say they're shooting triplets, and they need nine shots to solve their problem. If they're going bang-bang-bang, pause; bang-bang-bang, pause; bang-bang-bang, those pauses add up. If those two pauses were each a quarter of a second, that's half a second for the bad guy to get closer to them and fire another shot or two. A lot of people talk about the time to the first shot – you know, start hurting the bad guy. I'm worried about time to the last shot. I'm worried about the time until you're not in danger any more.

A pattern can slow us down; a pattern can make us reckless. I don't see that a pattern has a benefit, except that it is a better rehearsed mechanical skill set. If the emphasis is on looking good on the square range, you want a better rehearsed mechanical skill set. If you're an IDPA shooter, you want to shoot really good double taps. The problem is, as that second shot is breaking, you're looking somewhere else for that next target, because that is how you win competitions.

We could also talk about multiple target engagement. The problem with traditional methods is that if you're a human being, you focus on a threat and you're not going to be looking for the other guy.

**eJournal:** I was very interested in what you wrote about multiple target in your book. Talk challenging traditional methods!



**Pincus checks his students' performance during a class.**

**Pincus:** A version of that chapter has been out on the Internet [http://www.imakenews.com/valhalla/e\\_article001679377.cfm](http://www.imakenews.com/valhalla/e_article001679377.cfm) and last year we did some video on that topic on Best Defense [TV program]. When I called the EI Presidenté drill "irrelevant" repeatedly, I expected that to come back at me. Either people are tired of telling me how I'm sacrilegious and arrogant or it just makes so much sense that nobody's complaining. (See also <http://www.downrange.tv/forum/index.php?topic=9762.0> for a good discussion)

You get a false confidence in this choreography that, "I'm going to shoot the target to the left and then I'm going to shoot the target to the right, and then I'm going to reload, and then I'm going to ..." Choreography and presumption that comes from competition and flawed-premise training creates a lack of emphasis on assessing your environment after dealing with a threat.

It absolutely and certainly is creating false confidence. I mean, a plate rack is not multiple target training; it is a circus trick. Unless you're going to be attacked by two guys in a three-legged race you're not going to have two guys right together to shoot. People move; people split up. Watch surveillance tapes of the guys that rob stores. They don't stand right next to each other and pull out two knives and put two knives in your face. One guy's over there [gestures to the right] and one is over there [gestures to the left].

**eJournal:** And how do you prepare to fight off those robbers?

**Pincus:** Earlier you asked, how do we speed up our processing of information in the real world? The way we do that is through visualization, realistic training and thinking about the context of use. A dynamic critical incident is

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surprising—you didn't know it was going to happen. It's chaotic—you don't know what is going to happen next. And it is threatening—there is an identifiable threat. Shooting is the right solution and you're looking at a person you need to shoot.

There's a lot more to surviving a dynamic critical incident than shooting a tight group. Survival is not an isolated skill, but shooting has been taught as an isolated skill. If you want to be a target shooter, go learn shooting as an isolated skill. The person who only wants to become a better shooter needs to go somewhere other than Combat Focus™ Shooting.

**eJournal:** *Wait! You've not defined "better shooter." Better for what? A little while ago, you used the term "combat accurate," and we've not defined that, either.*

**Pincus:** Any shot that significantly affects the target's ability to present a lethal threat is combat accurate. I think that the overwhelming majority of one-shot stops are psychological. I don't think they are physical. Every time you shoot a pepper popper and it goes down with one shot, you need to rethink your training paradigm, because how many times should we really count on one pistol bullet stopping our threat? Not unless you hit the spine at the base of the brain, unless you shut down the central nervous system which isn't very likely with a standard pistol bullet in plausible situations.

**eJournal:** *Does competitive shooting interfere with the habituated response we seek from realistic training?*

**Pincus:** Absolutely.

**eJournal:** *Are you opposed to serious defensive shooters participating in competition shoots?*

**Pincus:** No, competition shooting is fun. It gets a lot of people shooting who wouldn't be shooting otherwise. It paints a happy face on the gun world when the fact is that guns really don't exist for happy reasons. Competition shooting is awesome and great, but we need to do it knowing that it interrupts what we need to be doing to defend ourselves and our families with guns.

There are overlaps. Obviously, it would be foolish to say that you don't become a better weapons handler or a better shooter and that being a better weapons handler and being a better shooter doesn't contribute to being able to better defend yourself with a gun. But, if you give me two hours and 100 rounds, and say that I can go shoot

an IDPA match or I can go practice in the context of use, I think practicing in the real context of use is a better use of that 100 rounds and two hours.

Should we stop competing? No. Competing has its place. If you enjoy competition shooting, go do it, but don't come to me and tell me that that's your training. Too often I hear, "I do USPSA for training," or "I do three-gun matches for training," or "I do IDPA for training." OK, IDPA is the closest. I know some clubs for example now that require a lateral step upon presentation. I know there are some clubs that require a flinch, your hands have to move in front of your body and above your belt line before you can go for your gun.

Obviously, that is not part of the official IDPA rules, but if someone said, "Hey, I've got my ID card, I want to show up and pay my fee, but if you guys don't mind, I'm going to sidestep on presentation, and I'm going to simulate a flinch before I draw. I know I'm not going to win, but that makes more sense to me," I hope that the IDPA club wouldn't tell them they weren't allowed to. I hope that if someone wanted to take 30 seconds to pie a corner properly, instead of a second and a half to shoot three targets, that they would let them and wouldn't mock them and tell them they are wasting everybody's time.

If you go to a Steel Challenge match, all bets are off. Put on your neon shirt and get all logo-ed up and put extra stuff on your gun and have a good time. Because that's all fun. IDPA is dangerously blurring the line, I think. People don't know the difference between a game and training.

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If you're showing up with a different holster and a different gun and carrying it in a different way and doing different things than you would do if you were in a training environment so you can get a better score or so people won't tease you, I think that's where it becomes an interruption to your ability to really train.

Competition really can interrupt the training process and give false confidence because people think they are much better prepared to defend themselves than they ever really will be.

**eJournal:** *Can an avid competition shooter really habituate one set of responses for the game, another set for real life?*

**Pincus:** I don't think most people can. I think the whole reward system in the brain is designed to find good, to rationalize away the bad, to find excuses to make yourself feel better and get the dopamine levels up when they're low. If you have someone telling you, "Wow, you're a great shooter. You're really dangerous. I hope I never get on your bad side because you shoot really tight groups, or you shoot steel really fast," of course that plays to your confidence. I think a lot of people watch themselves shoot tight groups and say, "Wow, you're awesome! You are going to be fine tonight."

**eJournal:** *You think that the skills that win shooting matches deviate from the most natural methods to shoot a gun under stress?*

**Pincus:** Absolutely. Combat Focus™ Shooting is not trying to change what you would do naturally with a gun, I am trying to refine that idea of sticking the gun out in your line of sight and pressing the trigger. That's what people do in the absence of training. Bad guys do that to bad guys all the time, and plenty of people have defended themselves with a gun without any formal training what so ever. They stuck the gun out in their line of sight and they pressed the trigger. Combat Focus™ Shooting seeks to refine that. We're not trying to make people be the best shooter they can possibly be, because I think being the best shooter you can possibly be is incredibly incongruent with just sticking the gun out in front of your face and pressing the trigger.

I have students that have been in shootings, and they say, "Your training saved my life," which is a wonderful



*Pincus illustrates a point during a range-time lecture.*

thing to hear, but until I see a video of a student doing exactly what I taught them to do, I can't take any credit. I hope that my training is refining what the human body does naturally with a gun, but I can't take credit for that.

**eJournal:** *If we accept your premise and avoid habituating artificial or unnatural responses, we have to ask just how realistically can we train? An awful lot of people carry in pocket holsters, purse holsters, waist packs, even Thunderwear! Do you allow these in classes? How do you address safety from alternate carry devices in a group training environment?*

**Pincus:** Now we've gotten to my third paradigm shift, which involves the safety rules. Around 2003, I got in a lot of trouble for saying something after an individual shot his buddy in a hotel room apparently quick drawing against one another after a class. A lot of people on the Internet were saying what amounted to, "Those guys were idiots. They didn't follow the 4 [Universal Gun Safety] Rules. This wouldn't have happened if they had."

My response was, "Time out!" Let's consider that a lot of people shoot other people with guns "accidentally" or "negligently." Originally, there were three rules—I know the guy who painted the first sign—and they were the three rules for handling a gun during a gunfight. Then they evolved into four rules, and people said that is how you always interact with a gun. Well, that is impossible. You can't always treat every gun as if it is loaded, because we need to pull the trigger on a Glock to disassemble it. We know that guns need to be unloaded to do some things. For years, a lot of clay and shotgun instructors have been standing right in front of the muzzle looking down the bead and looking down the barrel to see if the eye is aligning and they are on the cheek weld properly. We are not going to do that if it is loaded.

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If that seems pedantic, it is not. Words mean things, and our safety rules should have integrity. I don't subscribe to the idea that you treat every gun as if is loaded all the time. You treat every gun as if it is loaded until you prove that it is unloaded and if there is more than one person in the environment in which it is unloaded, you need two people to clear a gun.

So let's go back to the guys in the hotel room. If they had been given a procedure by which they had to check each others' guns, that guy wouldn't have gotten shot. Having the rule, "treat every gun as if it is always loaded," and "never point a gun at anything you are not willing to destroy," didn't keep that guy alive. As instructors, we owe it to our students to come up with a better way to help them interact with guns.

That was the first time that I was really held out as a wrongdoer. I've had a lot of feed back over the seven years or so since that it made sense, and I've seen a lot of guys change their rules and change how they describe the rules. Now they say, "While we are on the range here, treat every gun as if it is always loaded.

**eJournal:** You challenge the "universal" aspect of the 4 Universal Rules of Gun Safety.

**Pincus:** As thinking people, we have to avoid absolutes when they are not absolute. My safety rules in my Advanced Pistol Handling class have evolved to, "Keep the weapon pointed in a generally safe direction whenever possible." If the rules are to be followed all the time and we want the student to take the rules seriously, then we should have well-thought out rules that can actually be followed.

Getting back to the holster question, I tell students that want them to bring the gear they are potentially going to be using three weeks from now to defend themselves and their family. I've had pocket holsters in my class; I've had a lot of appendix carry in my class over the past few years; I've had shoulder holsters in my class; I've had fan-

ny packs in my class. If I find what the student is doing to be unsafe, I will tell them and I won't allow it.

I hate to see the student get all this training and then it doesn't actually apply to what they are doing, especially if I am teaching counter-ambush, in which draw stroke and presentation into the first shot is important, so it is up to me as the instructor to teach them the most efficient, safe draw stroke that I can with their chosen, acceptable method of carry.

**eJournal:** Let's talk a little more about what you teach.

You make some interesting points in your book about balancing precision and speed. How do you keep students from slowing down to improve their paper target?

**Pincus:** Let's go back to combat accuracy. The target dictates the need for precision, not you. You are not going to arbitrarily decide that you need to shoot a three-inch group. If we are talking about hitting high center chest, let's just hit the high center chest. Sometimes that is a seven-inch group; other times that is 17 inches.

On the range, obviously, we need to have some objective, so if we are using a cardboard target with

an eight-inch circle in the high center chest area, that is what the target is dictating as the need for precision in that drill. You are going to fire two, three, four, or five rounds at that high center chest circle. Any shot inside that circle is good; any shot outside that circle is a miss. That is how we define it for training purposes because we need

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to objectively measure if you are using the appropriate balance of speed and precision. After three magazines, you've got a four-inch group in the center of that eight-inch circle and the person next to you has a eight inch group filling up the circle, and the person on the other side of you has a twelve-inch group all around the circle.

So, the guy who shot the twelve-inch group and the guy who shot the four-inch group get equal criticism from me. Most would tell one guy that he is a really good shooter, but I think he is under-confident and afraid to expand his opportunities to shoot the bad guy faster. If anything, I probably give him more criticism because he obviously has more innate skill and should be doing more.

**eJournal:** *That's a tough change for shooters who take pride in precision marksmanship! How can they avoid discouragement?*

**Pincus:** It all comes down to critical thinking. Ask yourself if you are trying to shoot the best group you can in the maximum amount of time that is dictated by a course of fire or are you trying to stop a bad guy as fast as you can.

The first thing I say in classes is that I'm not here to make you the best shooter you can be. If you wanted that class, it's not my class. I just want you to be the best, most efficient defensive shooter you can be. I stress this competency issue in my opening conversation with the students. You're trying to win a competition that doesn't exist if you are comparing yourself to someone else, because all you need to do on the day that you need to fight with a gun is to fight as well as you can.

**eJournal:** *And you have got to ask, "What might that fight be like?" Why have you narrowed your focus to counter-ambush techniques over all?*

**Pincus:** 85-90% of my students over the last five years have NOT been military/special operations personnel. Even SWAT teams do things like special operations only 5% of the time. That means that 85-90% of my students are never going to fire a gun unless it is in defense of themselves or others. That is counter-ambush. That is what they are doing. They are fighting from an ambush moment. They are not hunting, they are not looking for trouble. A police officer knows he may have to shoot somebody, but he is not anticipating the need to shoot somebody when he pulls a car over in the middle of the night.

He might be ready, but I think "ready" is a different fallacy.

I teach counter ambush. I'm not training people for the fight when they have the guy at gunpoint and he goes for the knife anyway. My fight is the guy who pulls a knife and comes charging at you across the room and you go, "Huh?" because you saw a blur of motion, and now you have to get the gun out and rounds in to him before he stabs you.

**eJournal:** *How does that apply to a burglary while you're home? If you're in the safe room and had some preparation time, I would be hard pressed to call that an ambush.*

**Pincus:** If your fight is easier than what we train for, that's a bonus. The alarm goes off and the windows break and the dogs are barking and I get to my gun in the closet and I'm in the back of the safe room on the phone with the police. Is it an ambush when the bad guy actually comes around the corner? Probably not, but until the guy comes around the corner, you don't know if he is coming fast or slowly, so you don't know what level of deviation control you need, you don't know what kind of shot you need to take.

We are right back to where this conversation started in terms of what I think is wrong with the traditional training model. One of the things that I try to change is this assumption of predictive knowledge—that you know what kind of shot you are going to take. Well, is the guy sideways to you or is he going to turn the corner and give you his chest? Is the guy coming around the corner with a gun or is he coming around the corner with a flashlight that he is going to shine in your eyes? You don't know exactly what you are going to need to do until you need to do it. So there is still an element of ambush to the safe room scenario.

*Continued on page 10*

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Continued from page 9

**eJournal:** You have a lot of interesting ideas, Rob, but we are running out of room. Let's close with a synopsis of your many TV and radio programs, websites, blogs and other resources through which readers can learn more.

**Pincus:** The [icetraining.us](http://icetraining.us) website has a course calendar, and course descriptions, and bios of me and some of the other instructors. You can register for classes there, and the store has the videos and books. I put out my company newsletter, *I.C.E. Training Updates* about every six to eight weeks. You can sign up at the website. I have a defunct podcast. I did a podcast for a couple of years, but there really isn't enough time now, so I leave the old ones up. There are nine or ten episodes and they are all training related. They are available at iTunes or you can link it from the icetraining.us website. I'm putting out an audio book soon, but until it is out, those podcasts are essentially chapters from the book.

The [I.C.E. Training Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ICETraining) page probably gets updated more than my website because I don't have to call web designers to do it. There are people there asking all kinds of questions, students post stuff there, all kinds of pictures and video from training and other Combat Focus™ instructors are there. I also have a personal Facebook page that is really as much business as anything else.

I participate in a blog at [Downrange.tv](http://Downrange.tv) with Michael Bane and Mike Janich, and I moderate the defense and tactics forums that support [S.W.A.T. Magazine TV](http://S.W.A.T. Magazine TV), [Best Defense](http://Best Defense) and [Best Defense Survival](http://Best Defense Survival), because the Outdoor Channel owns Downrange TV.

The next thing would be [Personal Defense Network.com](http://Personal Defense Network.com) a new project that acts in support of the Personal Firearms Defense video series that I do, primarily distributed through the NRA, the Second Amendment Foundation and Guns and Ammo magazine and some other branding partners. We've taped 30 to 35 videos, released 25 or 26, and release a new one about every 45 days. They are on all kinds of topics, mostly related to firearms. I am the managing editor of Personal Defense Network.com, and there are contributors: Marty Hayes, Tony Blauer, Mike Janich, Mike Seeklander and some other less known guys who really have a lot to offer. That is a new project and it is pretty

dynamic. There is also a forum there, so there is some interactive stuff for members and viewers, with myself and other contributors.

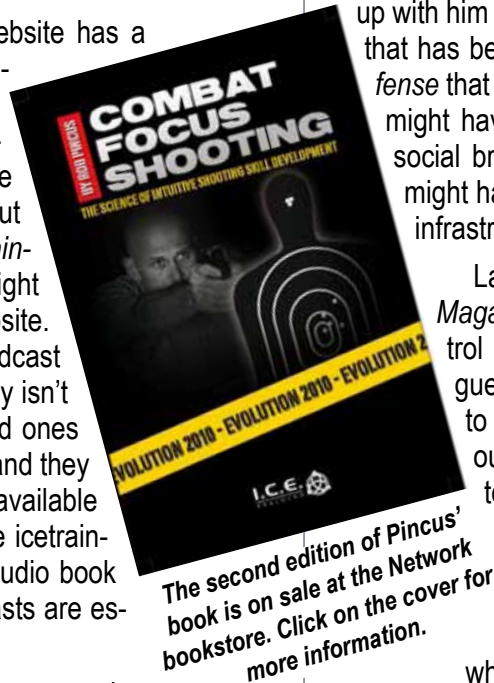
The TV shows on Outdoor Channel are part of the Wednesday night line up. Michael Bane asked me to join up with him and Janich to do the *Best Defense* series and that has been great. *Survival* is the spin off of *Best Defense* that deals with large-scale disasters and what you might have to do to prepare for them, whether that's social break down or natural disasters and how you might have to do things differently to survive after the infrastructure breaks down.

Last year, we started serious work on *S.W.A.T. Magazine TV*, which is my first TV show that I control from writing, producing and hosting. It is a guest-of-the-week kind of show. You get a chance to see what the professionals are doing and find out that quite often it is the same thing you need to do, or if not, why it is specific to what they are doing. Then we look at how we apply the principles they are using in their context of use to home or personal defense. We've got a couple of other projects one or more of which might also start airing in 2011, all on Outdoor Channel.

Finally, I guest co-host [Armed American Radio](http://Armed American Radio) with Mark Walters. It is a three-hour radio show that airs every Sunday night from 8 to 11 Eastern Time and then is available as a podcast for download after the show airs.

**eJournal:** You certainly make prolific use of the popular media! I think that makes a great contribution toward demystifying guns and shooting in the public consciousness, and I compliment you on your successes doing that.

Thank you for telling us all about that and your training, and thanks for being an affiliated instructor with the Network, too.



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**Marty Hayes**

## President's Message

Our fifth educational DVD, sent free of charge to members renewing for the third year or signing up for a convenient three-year membership is taped, and soon should be edited and sent to the replicators. For those who are waiting anxiously for it, it should be on its way to you soon. Thank-you for your patience, everyone. I think

it will be worth the wait.

Unlike the fourth DVD that had a little action in it, in this program we go back to the talking head motif because in it I interview four of our advisory board members. The four board members, John Farnam, Tom Givens, Dennis Tueller and Massad Ayoob each talk about a topic to which they bring a particular expertise. Those topics include The Stealth Lifestyle by John Farnam, Commonalities in Armed Citizen Shootings by Tom Givens, The Origins of the Tueller Drill by Dennis Tueller and The Furtive Movement Shooting by Massad Ayoob. To wrap up the video I invited the other two members of the Network leadership team, Gila Hayes and Vincent Shuck, to join me for a few minutes of discussion regarding the Boots on the Ground program.

I find that I enjoy producing these educational DVDs, even though each one takes me out of my comfort zone and requires that I stretch my wings a little. We already have two more video programs in the planning stage and there doesn't seem to be any end to topics for which we can use this medium.

The Network is also introducing a new promotional tool in July, one which we hope to use to expand membership numbers greatly. It is a 16-page booklet I have written, discussing the legalities of use of deadly force in self defense, entitled *What Every Gun Owner Needs to Know About Self-Defense Law*. We are printing up 10,000-15,000 of these booklets which we will offer free of charge to gun shops, gun clubs and shooting schools to give to their patrons, members and students. We hope that once a gun owner reads what is contained in the booklet—basically a written version of our first DVD—they will understand the value of joining the Network and sign up. Vincent

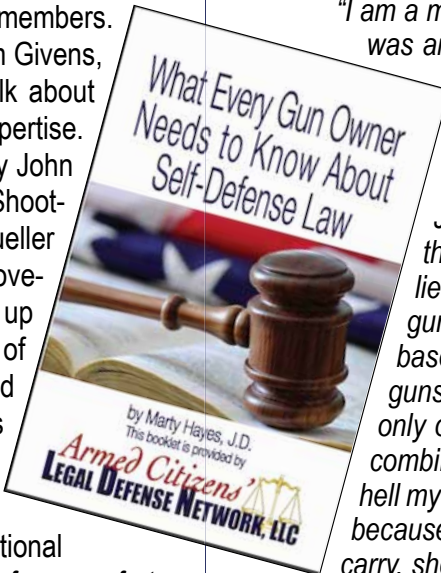
will be heading up this promotional effort, so contact him at [jvshuck@armedcitizensnetwork.org](mailto:jvshuck@armedcitizensnetwork.org) to get a free promo copy of the booklet.

### ***We are not a charity!***

Switching gears, I want to talk a little about some of the requests I have received recently for legal assistance. It seems that people don't understand that the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC exists to serve its members, but it is not a charitable organization. On the average, we receive about one e-mail or call every month or so requesting money to help someone out of a legal jam or asking for free legal advice. For example, just yesterday, I received the following e-mail:

*"I am a member of concealed carry. My step son was arrested last night after getting into a argument with his sister, and threw her to the ground, and was arrested for domestic violence he is 19, and she is 18. When he was in Court this date the Judge asked if there were any guns in the house he told the Judge that he believed his Step Father (myself) has some guns locked up in the a gun safe in the basement. The judge ordered my to turn my guns to be turned over to the police. I am the only one in the house who knows the 6 digit combination to the safe. There is now way in hell my guns would be turned over to the Police because I use them frequently for concealed carry, shooting at a range, and hunting, and this is not charge against me. My guns have since been placed in my brother safe at a different address. I feel this is an infringement on my rights. Can you please advise my on what to do?"*

*Continued on page 14*



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J. Vincent Shuck

## Vice President's Message

### Foundation Auction

We successfully posted and sold the first item in the Foundation's 2010 auction – the Galco concealed carry handbag. Congratulations to the Network member who submitted the winning bid and thanks to everyone who placed

a bid. The next item is scheduled to be posted this month on [GunBroker.com](http://GunBroker.com). Watch for the announcement of the rifle-rated composite armor board from Safe Direction ([www.safedirection.com](http://www.safedirection.com)). This item has a \$325 value and can be used in your cleaning room, dry fire area or any place where you handle your firearms.

### Membership Recruitment

Network growth continues with new members as well as renewals. The Network is about to top 2,000 members, which is a nice milestone for our young organization. Individual members continue to share information about the Network with their colleagues, Internet forums and blogs help spread the word, and the Network's affiliate instructors mention the Network and recommend membership to their students. Thanks to everyone who helps with membership recruitment. In addition, we have a couple of new membership promotional activities about to launch that should help stimulate the Network's growth. Both use the Network's new booklet on self-defense law mentioned by Marty in his column.

One promotion focuses on gun shops and encourages the stores to offer the booklet to each customer. Every gun owner should be aware of the facts in the booklet and presenting it as a gift from the Network and gun shop gives us a chance to explain to a gun owner why he/she should join the Network. We are starting with a test sample of stores and will eventually expand the project based on the feed-

back and suggestions we receive from the test sample to the 20,000+ gun shops nationwide.

We will also share the booklet with the Network's affiliate instructors and provide copies for them to give to their students. Have you attended any training courses this year? Now might be the time to plan for a new class. Check out the list of affiliated instructors on the web site. While many are "home based," some travel to training facilities throughout the country. All can provide outstanding training. Evaluate your needs and challenge yourself this year! If you see a state without a listed instructor but know someone in that state who would be a good addition, let

me know. I'll be happy to contact them and introduce them to the Network if they are not familiar with our mission.

Finally, we plan to contact each of the state rifle and pistol organizations and introduce them to the Network and offer a series of articles on self-defense law and the role of the Network. If you have a position in a state organization and would like to assume a leadership role of introducing the Network to your state members, please let me know.

If you have any suggestions or recruitment ideas that you believe we should consider, please contact me at [jvshuck@armed-citizensnetwork.org](mailto:jvshuck@armed-citizensnetwork.org).



Watch for an announcement of the Foundation's exciting fundraising auction of a Safe Direction Composite Armor Board like the one shown in use here.

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## Affiliated Attorney Question of the Month

We are delighted that, with the support of our affiliated attorney members, we can continue this column designed to introduce our members to our affiliated attorneys. Our goal with this column is to demystify aspects of the legal system for our readers.

This month, we queried our affiliated attorneys about their efforts *outside* the law office, asking—

*Sometimes our avocations reveal more about us than our vocations. With that in mind, affiliated attorneys, please take a paragraph or two to tell us about your pro-gun or pro-self-defense activities. Don't forget to mention things like classes you teach, Internet blogs or newspaper or magazine columns you write, public speaking, leadership or organizational positions held, or occasional activities you might forget, like helping to teach gun safety to Scouts, or serving as a safety officer at the local range.*

### Peter N. Georgiades

Greystone Legal Associates, P.C.

2130 Fox Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15203

412-381-8100 – [peterg@greystonelaw.com](mailto:peterg@greystonelaw.com)

[www.greystonelaw.com](http://www.greystonelaw.com)

There is no distinction between my profession and my avocations. I got into the legal profession because I have an emotional need to see justice, at least once in awhile. While this may ultimately turn out to be a fool's errand, it is no more foolish than getting into the legal profession to earn money.

I am the Executive Director of the [Firearms Instruction, Research & Education \(F.I.R.E.\) Institute](#), a non-profit, tax exempt educational organization dedicated to firearms training, particularly for people of average economic means. I have been a firearms and defensive tactics instructor since 1996, during which time I have been the Rangemaster (principal instructor) in hundreds of classes involving thousands of trainees. I lecture on firearms law and the law governing the use of force regularly, usually without fee. I have challenged irrational or illegal efforts to restrict firearms rights by suing and engaging in acts of civil disobedience (two arrests so far, no convictions). I do these things because justice is not possible where individuals are not respected, and individuals are not respected unless

they are empowered to stand up.

In the meantime, if you are one of those self-described rugged individualists who doesn't like lawyers, it doesn't bother me at all. When somebody shows up with a piece of paper to take your firearms, your home, custody of your children or your dignity, you can always call a diesel mechanic. Or you can woof. Either way, I will see a little justice.

### Debbe von Blumenstein

Attorney at Law

154 SW Oak Street, Dallas, OR 97338

503-831-1550 – [hotpotato59@hotmail.com](mailto:hotpotato59@hotmail.com)

[www.debbevonblumenstein.com](http://www.debbevonblumenstein.com)

Well, I write this in the evening after teaching my Legal Lessons 101 class to those with newly issued Concealed Handgun Licenses. I teach to all who are prepared to defend themselves and their loved ones from physical harm but also want to mentally and strategically arm and prepare against the legal jeopardy of the legal process which puts at risk the three most precious things: our life, our liberty and our livelihood.

I also counsel many beyond legal safeguards and help folks escaping a violent environment on how to make safety plans and gather resources for protection.

I have also testified before Oregon's Senate Committee when the Marion County District Attorney's office was trying to pass a bad law. It was a law that on first blush appeared to be protecting domestic violence victims but when scrutinized was actually attempt to get at people's firearms. (It was not passed).

*Continued on page 13*

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David Blinder

Continued from page 13

### Jon H. Gutmacher, Esq.

200 N Thornton Ave., Orlando, FL

407-650-0770 – <http://www.floridafirearmslaw.com/>

I author and publish the book *Florida Firearms - Law, Use & Ownership* which has sold over 140,000 copies in Florida and is revised yearly, with free updates on my website. I answer on the average of 10 - 30 email questions weekly from my website [www.floridafirearmslaw.com](http://www.floridafirearmslaw.com), and have a blog linked from that site that covers certain current weapon and self-defense issues in more depth.

I am an NRA certified firearms instructor and Refuse to Be a Victim instructor, I donate my teaching services to charity events about twice a year, and lecture in larger presentations on weapon and self-defense issues about four times yearly, including to law enforcement.

I have written a featured column for one or more Florida-based sporting and gun magazines since 1973 continuously except for the past four months, and will probably begin writing for another Florida magazine in about three to four months.

### President's Message — Continued from page 11

See what I mean?

We also get requests for financial assistance from non-members, who promise to sign up for membership if we will give them thousands of dollars of financial assistance. I hate to tell these folks that we must save our legal defense funds for our members, though I expect all our members appreciate it when I do just that!

We also recently had an inquiry about whether or not we would "cover" someone who shot a dog in self defense, and was facing a felony animal cruelty charge. Well, to answer this question, I had to let the poor folks know that we don't "cover" anything, because we are not an insurance policy. But, that aside, if the person had been a member, then yes, we likely would have helped out if they were charged with a crime after shooting an attacking dog. It might not have received a full [Boots on the Ground](#) response, since these kinds of incidents are not why we started the Network, but we certainly are not going leave a member fluttering in the wind either. If asked by a Network

### Thomas Cena, Jr.

Attorney at Law

2115 N. 30th St., Ste. 201, Tacoma, WA 98403

253-572-5120 – [tomc5@nventure.com](mailto:tomc5@nventure.com)

My shooting related activities began in my fifties with a purchase of a handgun and obtaining a concealed pistol license in December, 2004. Afterwards I attended courses in firearms training at The Firearms Academy of Seattle (2005-2007), in Lewis County, Washington, LFI One (2009), and "Combat Focus Shooting" (2010).

I am a certified NRA range safety officer and have acted as such at my local gun club in that club's Defensive Pistol League activity. I have also acted as a RSO at another club location for an activity called "Shooting like the Good Old Days, Shooting While Moving." I am one of a group of people who are slated to participate as an instructor in a handgun safety certification program at my club. I shoot IDPA occasionally and, since I shoot a lot, I reload handgun and .223 ammunition.

*We appreciate the contributions our affiliated attorneys make to the Network, including their interesting responses to questions posed in this column. Contact information for our Network affiliated attorneys is linked at the Members page of our website under Attorneys.*

member, we will consider these incidents on a case-by-case basis.

The reason I shared the details of this month's non-member requests is simply to let you know how much we here at the Network appreciate your foresight in joining the Network BEFORE you are involved in an incident.

Thank you for belonging to the Network. I'll see you next month. ●

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## 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 continue the *Question of the Month* feature, which this month asks—

**As an instructor, what do you do to keep your skills and your knowledge sharp and current and how does your own study, training, practice and professional development efforts reflect in the classes that you teach?**

**Roger Moore**

P O Box 2069, Estacada, OR

503-348-7354 – [gunsmartfirearmtraining.com](http://gunsmartfirearmtraining.com)

To keep fresh, I try to take as many classes from other instructors as I can because I view myself as a continuing student. I find it useful to take both repeats of classes I've taken, but also take classes in things I don't have as much expertise in. It is good to put myself in the position of a new shooter or new skill acquirer because it helps me to relate better to my students. However, I am not only looking for physical techniques, but also new instructional techniques.

I also watch instructional DVDs and read magazines to put the techniques shown to use in my own training. That way, I can keep what works (for me) and acknowledge the rest. Knowing the other techniques is valuable because what might not work for me, still might work for a student. However, DVDs aren't a replacement for in-person training with another instructor.

I try to practice those things I need work on, not just the things I'm good at. I won't improve overall doing the same old thing I'm already good at. Certainly, it is necessary to maintain skills by working on those that I'm accomplished at, but to grow, new skills and techniques must be tried. Recently I bought a trap machine to practice shooting clay pigeons because I figured I could use some work shooting moving targets and I've not had much experience with the clays. Doing so has helped keep shooting fun!

I find it useful to have a goal in mind when I start a training session because that gives direction so the end result isn't just flinging bullets down range. Today it will be shooting moving targets, tomorrow it might be using a gun much too big for my hand (or much too small), the next might be shooting while moving to see what is necessary

to still get accurate shots on target. I don't always get the optimum result the first time, but that it is okay because it helps to identify what I have to do with gun X or skill Y to put hits where they need to be, and it is part of the learning process.

I recently bought a "gun cam" video camera that aids in the post training session debriefing. The camera doesn't lie and analyzing what the video shows versus what my memory says happened has been interesting. It can be used not only for point of view when shooting, but also can be worn while watching my students to give them more feedback after their lessons.

The camera is an interesting addition. I originally got one so I could see the sight picture on the shotgun while shooting clays but my first camera didn't provide good enough clarity to see the birds so it didn't accomplish the intended purpose. The camera was one billed as what an LEO would wear in the field on the hat or lapel and creates okay stuff at close distances but probably would still have worked if the clays were bigger.

I just got another camera and put it to use over the weekend. The first video from it was promising – the video was larger and clearer. The mount was on the earmuffs and not directly in line with the sights but with some tweaking, should probably work for that and other tasks.

I put the things I learn from the classes I take, my own training sessions, and what I see in DVDs into the curriculums of the classes that I teach because having additional techniques to show students is a good thing; "one size" and "one style" really don't fit everyone.

*Continued on page 16*

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## Foothills Firearms Training Center

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As an older instructor whose reflexes are slowing down and whose muscle tremors are speeding up, I am spending less time on honing my own skills and more time making sure I can convey the appropriate knowledge and skills to my students.

I read to find current local events that support what I teach students. I watch training videos and YouTube clips to give real life situations to my students. I require my students to complete training evaluations in order to find areas in my training that can be improved.

## The Gun Guy®

Rick Jennings  
Red Lion, PA  
<http://www.gunguy.net>

My website (see above) is a prolific source of information for those interested in firearms (the only such website consistently placing in the upper 25 of the "100 Top Guns and Gear" listing). I have email "clicks" for readers to submit questions and answering many of those questions involves some in-depth research both in my library and on the Internet. When they learn, I learn.

Also, in both live-fire and classroom presentation, questions arise that are not easily answered. I've never been one to "BS" my way through a question and, if I don't have a proper answer immediately available, I assure the student I will find out and provide the answer later. Again, I learn along with the student.

I subscribe to several "gun rags," as well, and I review, daily, several news sources on the Internet to keep

abreast of current events. I subscribe to email newsletters from GOA, CCRKBA, JFPO, CMP, SAF and others for current legislative alerts, too.

Keeping up-to-date on news and legislation allows me to answer inquiries that come, in large part, from CCW holders or prospective holders.

## Ryan Hatch

Portland, OR  
585-737-6958 - <http://www.hatchtraining.info/>

Every time I go to the range, I try something new. A new drill or a new scenario forces me to pay attention and reconsider my approach. It can feel very satisfying to run drills that I have already mastered, but trying something new and failing is a much better way to learn. Pushing myself and finding out what I do not know or cannot do is an essential part learning new skills. Pushing myself and finding out what I do not know or cannot do is an essential part of learning new skills. Once I know my limitations, I can seek out the proper training to overcome them.

To keep my skills current, I spend several hours each week reading recent articles, research papers, and books on firearms, self protection, and crime. I discuss what I find with friends and colleagues. When I find something I have not seen before, I research it further and see how I can integrate it into my own training. If I find it worthwhile, I integrate it into the training I provide to my students.

I also attend classes taught by other instructors several times a year. Exposure to new methods and techniques is important in updating my skills, but I also find it beneficial to be the student. Periodically going through the learning process in a class setting helps me communicate more effectively with my own students. For me, these classes are as much about learning the class topic as they are about learning how to teach the topic effectively.

Continued on page 17

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## **Mad Duck, TTC**

John D. Farquhar

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Well, in addition to regular practice, I try to attend another instructor's course once or twice a year (this year Ken Hackathorn, and hopefully Louis Awerbuck). There's nothing like a fellow professional to spot the beginnings of bad habits and I may also pick up something I didn't know that I can pass on to my students.

I spend a few hours a week checking on the Internet for new firearms, ammo, etc., as well as news events covering shootings, and gun rights and I get several monthly publications to keep abreast of what is going on.

When I see articles or videos with new training techniques I practice them, to see if they make sense, and if they are practical for the students I train. The classes are always evolving with new material and new information.

## **Threat Management Training, LLC**

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Over the years I have continued to attend classes and train with different instructors. This way I can not only learn different skills and techniques but I also learn different teaching methods. Techniques that work for me might not work for others, so it is important to learn different styles of teaching and adapt it to your lessons.

In addition to attending classes, I try to do what I tell my clients: practice, practice, practice! I do not have the

benefit of having a range in my back yard but I do have one about twenty miles from my home so I get out there and do drills when I can. I practice building searches with dummy guns when it is practical and do my dry fire drills. Being an instructor doesn't mean you have reached a place in life where you don't need to practice. It means you have reached a place where it is important to continue to practice because you are the one who must be able to show how to do things correctly.

I enjoy reading and I have a good collection of books that relate to defense training. I encourage my clients to read and watch videos and I do the same. This helps to keep the mind involved and also helps to find out what other people are teaching. It is critical that the videos that you watch teach good skills and techniques. I have sent videos back where the instructor did stupid things such as continually sweeping the class with the muzzle of his pistol or charge into a room of multiple BGs and engaging them instead of calling in the proper authorities. I do not encourage these practices and do not want these references in my library.

I try to incorporate my learning into my programs. I feel it is important to keep updating my learning and to continue to practice. I encourage my clients to learn from others and I encourage my advanced students to help others learn. I bring back to my programs what I have learned from others, even if it doesn't work for me doesn't mean that others won't benefit from the lessons I have had the opportunity to experience. It is important to share experiences. Every person will pick up something different from the same lesson. "He who teaches learns," and we can learn lessons from everyone. Look around; be aware; learn the lessons from your life. ●

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## Book Review

### ***Concealed Carry: The Shooter's Guide to Selecting Handguns***

By Wiley Clapp

Published by Paladin Press

ISBN 978-1-58160-367-5

111 pages, lavishly illustrated

*Reviewed by Gila Hayes*

The byline of Wiley Clapp is a familiar one to anyone who reads the gun magazines and has come to appreciate his gun articles. Always on the outlook for new titles to add to our Network online bookstore, I thought I'd take a look at this well-known author's opinions about selecting guns for concealed carry. As I read the first chapter, I was reminded of the times I've visited with the author, and his quiet, gentlemanly mien comes through clearly in his prose, seasoned with the occasional down-home-ism, but direct, to the point, and infused with his convictions.

In the first chapter, discussing the increasing trend of private citizens carrying guns for self defense, Clapp acknowledges that the reader may well have already come to similar conclusions, though the author's outline of the why and how are a nice confirmation that other thinking, experienced people have recognized the dangers and decided that guns for personal protection are the best preparation. Without wasting a lot of words, he covers legalities, misuse of firearms, Constitutionality and more.

The balance of power and concealability or carryability takes center stage in the second chapter. Clapp quickly acknowledges that the gun we can conceal and carry may not be the most powerful, high capacity model marketed, warning that "...the longer you go without your gun, the sooner the day comes when you need it and don't have it." The author's warning against rationalization that leads to leaving home without a gun is a theme he mentions throughout his discourse. And here he broaches the book's raison d'être, writing, "It's the search for a perfect gun—accurate, shootable, and powerful, but reduced in visibility and weight so as to be your constant companion."

The author's discussion of "what constitutes enough gun" is important, and if you've been compromising with a sub-caliber handgun because it is something you can carry effortlessly, you may want to give this section serious consideration. Appropriately, the author dedicates the next chapter to ballistics, followed by one on caliber, which Clapp calls "bottom-line numbers."



As the author strives to explain the differences between revolvers and autoloaders and the several variants within those two categories, he spices up the narrative with bits of history, like the origin of the now-common term, "double action." I've been around this stuff for years and never heard the real reason for that term, and while *The Shooter's Guide to Selecting Handguns* is perhaps oriented toward the beginner, jewels like this keep the experienced shooter engaged, too. There is even more diversity with the semi-auto pistol, and Clapp does a good job of explaining each. In reading it, I was reminded of a student we had a few years ago that was completely obsessed with gaining a thorough understanding of the difference between single action, traditional single/double action, double action only, and other trigger options. To make matters worse, it seemed that every book or magazine this student read only confused the issue. Had I been aware of this excellent chapter in *The Shooter's Guide to Selecting Handguns*, I could have saved the poor fellow a lot of heartburn!

And, honestly, beyond the genuine pleasure of reading Wiley Clapp's prose, I think that experience illustrates one of the greatest reasons to own this book – to have on hand an authoritative work that is also easily readable, ready to lend to friends who want to understand more about self-defense guns. But getting back to the subject of the book's title, having lain the groundwork in the first half of its pages, by Chapter 6, the author launches into a comparative study of different handguns, beginning with what he terms the "Small Autos." Not surprisingly, "Small Revolvers" follows, and you can easily guess the format for larger framed guns of both types.

Often books like this just sort of run out of steam at the end, but not so with *The Shooter's Guide to Selecting Handguns*. Clapp writes a succinct but complete summation of his thesis in the final chapter that pounds home the points he believes are most important. He repeatedly stresses that finding the right gun to carry goes far to avoiding that dangerous rationalization that the gun is too much effort to carry and maybe today you won't need it, so it is left at home in the safe.

Though I've been carrying the same gun for years so won't probably be buying any of the pistols Clapp recommends, and I may even have the temerity to find one or two points upon which the author and I don't see eye to eye, I have to say that I enjoyed reading *The Shooter's Guide to Selecting Handguns*, learned a thing or two, and now have a great book that I can share with people. ●



Gila Hayes

## Editor's Notebook

### Infighting

Gun owners got unexpectedly swept into the fight over yet one more piece of what is by all reports shoddily-written legislation put forth by the current denizens of Washington D.C. This won't come as news to many of our members, but if you've been on vacation without cellular, internet or print media, most of the story is at [http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544\\_162-20008783-503544.html](http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20008783-503544.html) or just Google the words NRA, DISCLOSE, HR 5157 and the word "carve out."

The thing most disturbing to me was how quickly the members of our own coalition – gun owners – turned on one another, and on what is often thought of as the biggest dog in the fight, the National Rifle Association. Over the last several weeks, it has seemed as if anyone with a chip on their shoulder or an inferiority complex was eagerly posting online to see if they could bash the NRA and boy, howdy, they publicly aired the dirty laundry this time!

I have to think that those opposing private gun ownership – the Democratic majority, the anti-gun activists and people who think that it is desirable to restrict basic, Constitutionally-assured rights were exchanging high-fives and toasting their success when they heard the cacophony of growling and snapping among gun owners as the smaller dogs tried to rip the guts out of the big dog, the NRA.

Should the NRA have allowed themselves to become a pawn for the corrupt politicians wishing to pass the DISCLOSE Act (HR 5175)? If I ruled the world, I would have avoided that outcome. Apparently a lot of gun owners thought the same, only they expressed it with considerably more venom. By all means, those in opposition should tie up every phone line into the NRA headquarters, expressing their horror and fear that the carve-out protects the NRA but not smaller, but equally vital gun-rights activist organizations like JPFO, GOA, SAF and all the rest right down to the state-level organizations and city-level shooting clubs. That is the responsible way to urge the big dog down the right path. Wounding the poor thing scarcely does any good, and carried to illogical extremes trying to kill off the NRA only leaves gun owners without a pow-

er player on the legislative scene. Yes, the intermediate and small sized organizations are crucial, yet none has the long history, size, strength, membership and connections of the NRA. We all have a role to play and instead of turning on one another like rabid beasts, we should turn our wrath on Congress where HR 5157 was spawned.

Now, I am sure that a certain percentage of our members are NRA-haters. There are plenty of gun owners who simply cannot stomach compromise, extremely long-term strategies, and the insular nature of old, large organizations. With respect to these opinions, it remains my firm belief that we achieve nothing good by eviscerating organizations that pursue the same goals for which we stand, even if we don't agree with the various strategies the others use and how they tackle one challenge or another.

Now, with HR 5175 passed in Congress, legislation that encroaches on free speech dashes off to try its luck in the Senate. One can only imagine the celebration among government functionaries who not only have made it over the first hurdle on their race to diminish the vigorous debates that have always characterized American political activism, but that they have also ripped the scab off of the divisiveness that lies just under the surface of the community of American gun owners, another freedom-loving segment of the citizenry they fear and hate. This has been a bad episode for all who love freedom. ●



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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>.

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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](mailto:info@armedcitizensnetwork.org).

# Armed Citizens' LEGAL DEFENSE NETWORK, LLC



## How to join

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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/html>). You will also receive a membership card with your user name and password for the member's Internet forum and other areas of the Network web site restricted to members only, as well as your coupon code for the 20% discount at the Network's on-line book and DVD store.

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