



eJournal

of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC

The Ninth Issue in our Inaugural Year — October, 2008

Finding An Attorney

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

As members of the Network have discovered by watching our three DVDs, we believe the armed citizen needs to carry in their wallet or purse the name and phone number of a local attorney, who is a member of the local bar association, on whom they can call as soon as the cops show up and start asking questions after a shooting. So how does one find that attorney?

First, one of the benefits of being a member of the Network is having access to our Attorney Referral list. But, as our members know, we do not yet have a lot of names on that list. That will change over time, and one of the primary missions of the Network is to expand that list and make it a valuable part of the member benefit package. We will not rest until we have at least one attorney in every state, and every major metropolitan area in the county. But, until that time, you still need an attorney! This article will help you find that attorney. And, when you do find that attorney, we would appreciate his or her name, since the contact is valuable to other Network members living in or visiting your city or county.

So, how can you go about finding an attorney? If you have a family attorney, ask if he or she would be willing to come to the scene of a shooting and protect your legal rights, should that become necessary. Share with this lawyer the DVDs we sent you so they can clearly understand their role. The attorney doesn't have to be pro-gun, although that would obviously help.

Another locale ripe for finding that attorney is your



local gun rights organization and your gun club. I suspect that most gun clubs have attorneys who are also members, because attorneys like to shoot, too. Of course, the gun club may have its own attorney to handle routine legal matters, and that professional would also be a great prospect. Likewise, many gun shop proprietors have an attorney who tends to routine legal matters, so ask your local gun shop owner if they know a good attorney in the area. I bet you will get a lead or two that way.

Finally, how about your friends? Simply ask your pro-gun friends for the name of their attorney. If they, too, don't have an attorney, make it a "friends" project to hunt down and secure a local attorney, and share what you find with one another.

Why Do You Rob Banks, Willie?

Legend has it that when asked that question, notorious bank robber Willie Sutton responded, "Because that's where the money is!" Sutton's memoir asserts that he never actually gave that answer, and claims it was a reporter's fiction. Still, the quote clings to Sutton's memory and legend. What does this have to do with finding a lawyer?

To paraphrase, "Where can I find a lawyer?"

"Go where the lawyers are!" That means check with your local bar association. A Google search for your county bar association will turn up attorneys' phone numbers, so

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give them a call. (It's free, and just takes a minute). Tell whomever answers that you are looking for a pro-gun attorney to represent you in a legal matter, and ask for a referral. The responses might be interesting, but what do you have to lose? In a rural county, the person answering might just start talking about their favorite blaster with you! If you don't get a good referral, ask if there is way you can pose the question to the local bar association. In my local bar association, several attorneys are shooters and one is the president of a gun club.

Finally, what would be the harm of simply looking in the Yellow Pages and making a few phone calls? "Hello, my name is John Smith, and I am looking for a pro-gun attorney to represent me on a legal matter. Do you know if any of your attorneys are shooters?" Now, it might take a few (free) phone calls to find one, but how difficult could that be? Once you get a positive response, make an appointment to confer with him or her.

One last area that might be fruitful is this: ask a local police officer which lawyers they respect in the area, or whom they might call if they needed an attorney. A police officer regularly sees many attorneys, and the officer you query likely has already selected an attorney to call in a legal emergency. In addition, the local union or fraternal organization that represents police officers have attorneys to represent the police officer in the event they shoot someone. This person or firm is also worth calling.

Closing The Deal

Okay, let's say you find a pro-gun attorney, and want to interview him or her. (For the sake of readability, I will switch to the pronoun "him," though I mean no disrespect to women lawyers.) Start by explaining that you are a member of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, and that you have been advised to seek an attorney to handle any future legal matters that might arise because you are an armed citizen. Do not say, "in case I shoot someone," or the lawyer may think you are a Looney Tune.

Tell him that you have a license to carry a concealed weapon, and have no criminal background. Explain that you are simply worried that if you need to defend your family or yourself, you might be arrested, so you want the name of an attorney you can call should this happen. Next, request an appointment to meet, and ask about his hourly fee. Be up front about any costs. Professionals like to get any financial matters out of the way first. Some attorneys have a "first consultation free" policy, others don't. Explain

that during this meeting you would like to review any statutory and case law for your state regarding self defense, and ask him if that is something he can research for you. If he can't, I recommend moving on to the next "applicant" in your lawyer search. If he isn't even interested enough to do a Westlaw search, then you need to find a more concerned attorney.

Go into this search realizing that you may have to make three or four phone calls, but when you do find the one attorney who is enthused about your request, you likely have found your guy or gal. Lastly, be sure to ascertain that there is some reasonable way for you to contact the attorney after work hours. A pager number, cell phone or answering service should suffice. If he categorically states that he will not give you after hours contact information, then thank him for his time and move on.

The Meeting

When you go to your appointment, present a professional image. If you can, wear a sport coat and tie, but if nothing else, dress like you are at a job interview. If you go armed, please conceal discreetly. The lawyer and their staff should never know you are armed. Take along copies of your certificates of training. If things go well in the meeting, and the attorney agrees to do so, you may want him to start a documentation file for you. Also, you might want to copy and print the printable brochure (<http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/JoinNetwork.html>) from the Network's web site, along with anything else from the web site will explain your membership in the Network and what it means.

In addition, if you have already researched the statutes on self-defense for your state and applicable case law, bring any notes, state laws and other study materials

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to the meeting. Use a highlighter and mark any portion on which you want clarification. While the attorney should also have printed out applicable state and case law, if their court schedule or an earlier client ran over time, you will have written materials to which you can refer.

Vetting The Attorney

Each state has a state bar association, listing as members attorneys practicing in that state. Before your meeting, look up the lawyer's name on the state bar association web site, and find out some information about him. You should be able to find out how long they have been practicing, where they went to law school, and possibly if they have had any bar complaints against them. It would be good to know this information ahead of time. A bar complaint doesn't prove the complaint was valid, but it sure will impress your new attorney if you ask about it and let him explain what happened. Many times, clients file illegitimate bar complaints, in much the same way that armed citizens are wrongfully prosecuted.

Do you have a will? If not, ask if the attorney can help you prepare a will, since everyone needs one anyway. That helps cement your relationship, and is an easy test of how he works and the efficiency of his firm. There might be some other legal questions that have been pestering you for some time, and since you are paying for his time and expertise, you might as well ask them at your meeting.

My Closing Argument

Please understand, readers, that an armed citizen is only one small step away from being embroiled in the legal system to an extent that many gun owners cannot begin to fathom. If you shoot some, you REALLY need legal representation, and you need it immediately.

You don't need a high priced criminal defense attorney. After all, you didn't commit a crime, did you? But you do need someone to interface with the police as quickly as possible after the incident, before you answer questions with the police. In our DVDs, sent to each Network member when they join, we explain our views of how to best handle the initial interaction with the police, and if you follow that advice we believe law enforcement will treat you more professionally.

Even so, until we have attorneys in your area, it is incumbent upon you to find an attorney who can protect your rights after a shooting. And, when you do, please share

the name with us, and perhaps he can become a Network Affiliated Attorney and thus a Network member, too. In the end, we'll all be stronger.

Network Forum Activity Grows

With the Network membership count now exceeding 400, we are enjoying increased activity on the private, members-only forum. If you've not yet visited the forum, come take a look at <http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/forum/>. We think you'll find topics of interest, and no doubt questions to which you can contribute the answer. That is the goal of the members' forum: to provide a private place for members to discuss their mutual questions and concerns, share information and opinions, all without worrying about an Internet troll misconstruing their comments or a criminal using their information to hurt innocent people.

For example, just recently, we've had some great discussions about whether or not you should speak with police at all after a shooting, if pinning the grip safety of a 1911 really creates legal jeopardy, how and what different members carry for personal protection, plus there are other sections set aside for members to share their experiences, preferences and wishes in regards to handguns, shotguns and rifles, sections in which questions about state gun laws are posted, and more.

The Forum is closed to anyone who is not a Network member, and as such, we register each new member for participation on the forum. The usernames and passwords are printed on the membership cards, though the password can and should be changed by the member when they become active on the Forum. If you've lost track of your username and password, E-mail us at info@armedcitizensnetwork.org and we will send you your log in information.

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Ammunition Economics



Guy Neill

by Guy Neill

Ammunition is expensive. If you haven't noticed that, you're either rich or not shooting enough.

If you have a gun for self defense, you should be shooting it regularly. "Regularly" varies with different people, but you might consider 50 rounds a month as a bare minimum. Several hundred rounds a month is much better with respect to improving your shooting skills.

If you should face a self-defense situation, it's too late to think about all the times you should have practiced. It's not the time to have to worry about how to work the gun. The benefit of practice is to make your gun handling skills a subconscious factor, allowing you to concentrate on the threat. It also allows improved accuracy. Only the hits count, so improved accuracy is a definite survival skill.

So how do you make your budget stretch to allow the most shooting? Reloading is the means to more shooting. Let's look at the costs.

The lowest priced factory ammunition is the generic stuff: the Winchester white box, UMC or American Eagle ammunition. These and others normally do not have expanding bullets (as wanted for defensive use), but do offer lower cost for practice.

You can expect to pay between \$25 and \$30 per 100 rounds for the generic types of ammunition. Move up to defensive ammunition and the price will double. There are those that say you should only practice with what you carry, but if you're shooting 500 rounds a month of defensive ammo, you will need to budget over \$600 for the ammunition. That's a bit steep for my budget.

On the other hand, 500 rounds of reloads, using the cases in which you do have to make the initial investment, can decrease the cost considerably. Let's look at the breakdown.

Since it's widely available, I looked at the online price

for Winchester SXT .40 S&W ammunition. MidwayUSA lists it for \$25.49 for a single box of 20. That doesn't include any shipping costs. That makes it a minimum of



Reloaded ammunition accumulates in the tray of the author's Dillon loader.

\$1.27 each time you pull the trigger. If you spring for a case of 200 rounds, the cost comes down to a mere \$1.15 per shot – again, with no shipping charges included.

Staying with [Midway USA](#), the cost breakdown for components looks like this:

Cases (new - 500)	106.99
Winchester Silvertip Bullets (500)	159.99
Primers (1000 Winchester)	26.99
Powder (Hodgdon HP38 – 1 lb.)	16.49
Total	310.46

That shows that you can shoot defensive-type ammunition for practice at about half the cost of factory ammo.

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Remember, though, that the cases can be used over, so the initial 500 cases should last at least four or five loadings, and likely more. I used the Winchester Silvertip bullets in place of the SXT simply because I didn't see any SXT bullets offered for reloading.

To put this in perspective, let's assume you are shooting 500 rounds a month, for six months. That's some \$3,450 for factory ammunition (assuming you buy it by the case - and, again, with no shipping costs) versus \$1,327.81 for the reloaded ammunition (with no shipping costs, either). That's a savings of \$2,122.19.

Realistically, there will be some investment in reloading equipment at the onset. The Dillon Square Deal is a nice progressive reloader that works well, especially if you are looking to load a single pistol caliber. Direct from [Dillon](#) it costs \$339.95, not including shipping. You'll also need a scale to set the powder measure. Dillon has a mechanical scale for \$49.95 or an electronic scale for \$139.95. There are numerous other scales available in a similar price range or for more. The equipment costs are easily covered by the savings over factory ammunition.

This means your first six-month investment (or a year if you stretch the 3,000 rounds to an annual basis) comes to \$310.46 for components plus the \$339.95 for the Dillon press, totaling \$650.41. Actually, you will need to add



Above: author's workbench with Dillon Square Deal press and other reloading accoutrements.

\$72.83 for additional primers and powder since the figures above were for 1,000 primers and only 1 pound of powder.

The exact amount of powder you need will depend on the powder. While I mentioned Hodgdon's HP38 above, and it is usable, you have many other powders from which to choose, and some will use more or less than others. I based the additional cost on 5.0 grains per round (which I have NOT checked to see if it's a valid load for the .40, so do not use it unless you have a published recommendation from the factory or a bullet manufacturer's reloading manual).

Speaking of which, you should also get one or two reloading manuals to consult for the actual reloading data. With

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Right: RCBS electronic powder scale. Below, left: Calipers for precise measurement of overall length.

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a couple of reloading manuals and some other miscellaneous accessories that can make reloading easier, you will still have less than \$500 in the equipment. As shown, the equipment pays for itself quickly.

If you decide you can or want to spend the \$3,450 on reloads, you will have almost 6,700 rounds for the same money the 3,000 rounds of factory would cost.

The above is all predicated on using some sort of defensive bullet – meaning a hollow point, usually. You can lower costs more by using non-expanding bullets. Still looking at Midway prices, 500 Hornady non-expanding bullets are listed at \$82.99. That saves \$77 for 500 over the Winchester Silvertip, or \$462 for the entire 3,000 rounds we have been dealing with.

Cast bullets used to offer even more substantial savings over jacketed bullets, but the gap has narrowed with metal prices soaring (along with gasoline and most other goods). Still, Midway offers cast bullets running \$62.99

per 500, or \$377.94 for 3,000, saving \$84 more dollars using reloads for the practice ammunition.

Some seem to think reloading is some sort of black art, complex and difficult. It's really easy, though you do need to pay attention to what you are doing, avoiding distractions. Many find they really enjoy reloading – sometimes to the point that it's hard to tell if they are reloading to shoot, or shooting to reload.

In a future installment, we'll look at the mechanics of reloading, going step by step to explain the process. Stay tuned.

About the Author:

Guy Neill's byline is familiar to readers of the IPSC journal "Front Sight," and it is with genuine pleasure that we introduce him to our Network members. He is a mechanical engineer, with extensive experience in the firearms and ammunition industries. His résumé shows stints at the Blount/CCI ammunition factory in Lewiston, ID, a time with Wilson Combat, plus life-time involvement with the shooting sports, including IPSC, the Bianchi Cup and IDPA. In a departure from the norm for this industry insider, he currently works for a steel company.

Foundation Account Nearing \$6,000

September was an excellent month for the Network, and as it grows, so does the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Foundation. As you may know, the Network allocates 20% of all membership dues to the Foundation.

Occasionally, callers seem confused by the dual function of the Network and its Foundation. Let's take a minute to clarify the roles of the Network and its Foundation.

The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC is a membership organization, established to educate and prepare armed citizens to interact with the legal system after using a gun in self defense. Think of the Network as a mutual support society for armed citizens. The Network is a for-profit limited liability corporation, expending its income on educational projects like the three DVD set members receive, as well as maintaining and servicing membership needs, providing a [bookstore](#) with discounted products for members, and always, striving to increase membership.

The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Foundation is a non-profit corporation, and its raison d'être is to accumulate and grow a fund from which monies can be granted when a Network member needs legal help after a shooting. This aid could take the form of a grant of assistance with legal fees, or providing expert witness or investigation

by leaders in the field of armed self defense, for example. Grants of financial assistance begin with a review of the facts of the case by an advisory board to determine the merits of the case. The advisory board is comprised of Network President Marty Hayes, Foundation President Vincent Shuck, and board members Massad Ayoob, John Farnam, Tom Givens and Dennis Tueller.

The current Foundation balance is only \$6,000 but still, it encourages us tremendously to watch this fund blossom from its zero balance six months ago when the Foundation became a full-fledged legal entity. This is why Network members recruiting other armed citizens for Network membership is so critical. When one of our members needs our support, our ability to help is in direct proportion to the size of our membership. It is that simple.

Vincent Shuck, president of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Foundation, commented, "Fortunately, our recruitment efforts are paying dividends as the membership roster increases each month. We especially appreciate it when our current members help recruit like-minded individuals who support our goals. After all, the strength of the Network and Foundation comes from an active and growing membership."

President's Message

Justice Denied

For six years, I have been working to get what I believe is a murder classified as a murder, as opposed to a suicide. This death happened in my home county, and involved a former Washington State trooper, who was found shot to death in her closet at 6 a.m. one morning in 1998 Here is the short version of the story.



Marty Hayes

What we know as fact is that she and her husband were splitting up, and she had made arrangements to leave him on the morning she was found dead. We also know as fact that she was in contact with her friends and family at 12:30 a.m. Evidence showed that she was found lying on the closet floor, covered with an electric blanket, with a gunshot wound to the right side of her head. Blood loss was substantial, and one crime scene photograph shows the firearm used resting precariously on the side of her forehead, covered by a pillow. A bullet hole has pierced the very same pillow, but it does not line up with the entrance wound on the side of her head, but instead, is several inches away. Oh, did I mention, the gun used was the husband's gun?

The husband's statement asserts that apparently the couple stayed awake talking until 4 a.m. He says he fell asleep sometime thereafter, at which time she got out of bed, got his gun, made a little nest of pillow and blanket in the clothes closet, covered herself with an electric blanket and then shot herself. He says because he was asleep he didn't hear the gunshot, though it occurred approximately 15 feet away from him.

Police records show that the husband dialed 9-1-1 at 6 a.m., and calmly told dispatch that his wife shot and killed herself, and asked them to send an ambulance.

After about a three-month investigation, the local sheriff's department, believing the husband's story, closed the case as a suicide, discounting the incredible amount of circumstantial and physical evidence indicating this death was a murder.

For the next two years, the mother of the deceased trooper and others conducted an independent investigation. After being presented with their additional evidence, the sheriff's department publicly announced they were

re-investigating the case, but my review of the substance of their re-investigation, makes it clear that they merely attempted to justify their original findings, not find the truth. After the reinvestigation, I became involved in the case, providing some crime scene analysis and ballistic testing. This was six years ago, and now, the case is potentially headed for resolution.

A couple of years ago, I discussed this case with attorney Royce Ferguson (the criminal defense attorney on the Network's third DVD) and he agreed to represent the trooper's mother in a legal challenge to the coroner's determination of suicide. You see, in addition to law enforcement's investigation, the local coroner also has a legal duty to investigate suspicious deaths and make a determination as to the manner of death (accidental, suicide, homicide or undetermined). This official is currently under court order to justify his ruling of suicide and the court will stand in judgment on his work. Within a few months, the mother of the shooting victim will have an independent finding from the judge in the case as to the manner of her daughter's death, which if it comes out the way we see the evidence, it will force law enforcement to finally do their job.

So, you ask, what does this story have to do with the Armed Citizen's Legal Defense Network? It is a striking example of how your shooting might be investigated, and how local law enforcement and prosecutors can absolutely misinterpret (either intentionally or unintentionally) the evidence, resulting in a wrongful legal outcome. The Network exists to make sure our members have all the legal advantages working for them, to counter the system if they are wrongfully prosecuted. For more information on the case mentioned above, go to www.justiceforronda.com. Until next time.

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Book Review

**The Farnam Method of Defensive Handgunning, Second Edition, 272 pages
by John S. Farnam
ISBN 0-9659422-4-4 \$25.00**

A short list of the topmost firearms instructors working today would certainly include the name of John Farnam, beloved teacher, sage writer, amusing commentator and a man touting the philosophy of living and doing with total commitment. Over the years, John's inspirational tone has intensified, until we could almost call the latest edition of "The Farnam Method of Defensive Handgunning" a treatise on why we do what we do.

After the acknowledgements and introduction, the author opens with a chapter on mental toughness. Using the analogy of grass eaters and meat eaters, Farnam paints the picture of a warrior who responds indignantly to crime, exudes self confidence, and has the heart to fight when necessary. "To us, life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing," he posits.

"Victory dwells in the fighter's heart, not in his tools. A gun, any gun, is just a machine," the author writes on the next page, as he introduces the interface between human and equipment. A glimpse of the famous Farnam humor slips out when the problem of denial is addressed. "When the question is naively asked, 'How often are people really killed around here?' the correct answer is, 'Only once!'" and then he gives the Keys to Survival, a brief bulleted list that distills volumes of personal safety information into four applicable actions.

The author's instruction on home defense in Chapter 2 goes far beyond fending off an attack at home "Tactics is the 'art of advantage,'" Farnam writes, and ascribes prevailing over a home intruder to alertness, preparation, training, equipment, strategic position, tactics, tenacity and luck. This he follows with a classic Farnamism, "Floundering in indecision will almost certainly prove fatal."

Conventional wisdom for surviving a home intruder has long recommended staying in the safest part of the home, awaiting police response. Conversely, if a shooting has occurred, Farnam recommends that the home's occupants get into the car and leave the area before calling police. He makes a persuasive argument for so doing that



may outweigh the hazard of additional criminals waiting outside. This is a creative alternative to the safe room concept and before discarding it out of hand, you should read Farnam's advice.

For surviving an attack, the author offers a great section on getting to and using protective cover, including a list of common use of cover errors and their cures. Defining his rollout method of shooting from behind cover, the author warns against popping out repeatedly, explaining his dislike of the "quick peek" technique. And finally, if good cover is unavailable, Farnam explains that anything, even mere concealment, can provide useful distraction. Additional lessons address using cars, when targets move, multiple targets, and other principles plus a discussion of common tactical errors.

It is not until the third chapter that Farnam covers the hardware – until this point, defense consists of thought directing action. Now, the author outlines pros and cons of most common defensive tools ranging from aerosol sprays, to a variety of firearms. He weighs match-grade accuracy against the accuracy of which a super-reliable gun is capable. "In order to stay alive long enough to finish the fight, you're going to have to deploy your weapon (blade, pistol) quickly, then cut and shoot decisively, perhaps at multiple targets at various ranges, with sufficient accuracy to stop the fight and sufficient speed to allow you to seize and hold the agenda. We have to equip ourselves to fight, not play games!" he emphasizes.

Though the title identifies this as a book about defensive handgunning, many of the initial chapters are useful to one living where guns are prohibited, under age persons, and travelers abroad. No one should miss Chapter 4 on "The Stealth Existence," even if they read not another word. The information is top rate. The same holds true for Chapter 7 "When Confronting Criminals." Understanding crime, victim selection, and defense responses may be summarized in the author's thought, "Victimizers may not be well armed, well trained or skilled in any other way. But they are willing to attack and that gives them a critical advantage, which even seasoned fighters and gunmen often fail to overcome."

Use of deadly force is a topic of concern to the Network and its members. Because the author's terminology differs somewhat from that used by other instructors, a thoughtful study of Farnam's chapter entitled "Self-Defense" helps the reader clarify and better define when employing

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deadly force is acceptable. These elements established, the author goes on to teach how to show one's innocence, including a great response to the hackneyed question, "Did you shoot to kill?"

The chapter on "Interacting with Law Enforcement Officers" is sure to open new lines of inquiry, especially for anyone conditioned to be cooperative toward authority. The author's advice to agree to questioning only with legal counsel present, as well as suggested dialog with police officers to achieve that goal deserves several detailed readings to lodge the concepts firmly in mind. He explains, "I am not advocating non-cooperation with police. What I'm advocating is smart cooperation. If you are suspected by police of committing a crime, you need not and should not 'cooperate' in your own prosecution. Despite what they may try to tell you, you are not required to become a witness against yourself." The education of free citizens continues in the next chapter on arrest and search law, and in the epilogue.

"The Farnam Method" is so chock-full of wisdom that I'm tempted to quote section after section, but suffice it to say that the information in "First Aid for Gunshot Victims," "Firearm Safety," "Accidental and Unintentional Discharge," plus the chapter defining the various operating systems common to handguns all contain vital information and Farnamesque good sense you should not miss, like this axiom: "The more safe a gun is, the less ready. The more ready, the less safe."

I have long recommended this and earlier editions of "The Farnam Method" to students wanting to better understand the nomenclature and actual variations in the different types of handgun operation: revolver v. semi-auto, and all the myriad iterations on the semi-auto theme. Why should this be confusing? As Farnam says, "The two terms double and single-action are so muddled that they have now become inexplicit and virtually useless for the purpose of any accurate description of an autoloading handgun operating system." Pity the beginner, fascinated with semi-auto pistols, who wants to understand why a Beretta can be a double action semi-auto and so can a Glock! Still, in chapters 14 and 15, Farnam tackles the topic, and does the best job to date making order out of verbal chaos.

In addition, Farnam offers an encyclopedic resource of pistol nomenclature and function, the likes of which no instructor teaching at the beginning level should be without.

The author adds information on administrative and tactical gun handling in an extremely detailed chapter that ends with this admonition, "Guns are never safe. They must always be handled and stored with reasonable caution and proper procedures."

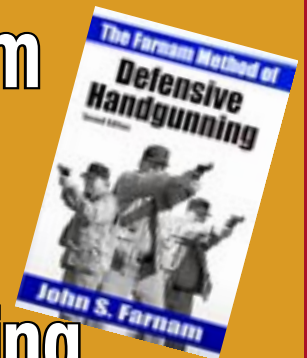
In the final quarter of the book we come to the topic the author referenced in his introduction when he wrote that defensive firearms training is much more than learning "psycho-motor subroutines." Chapters 18-24 outline and illustrate the Farnam handgun shooting method, addressing stance, grip, draw, trigger control, reloading an empty gun, and reducing stoppages.

"The Farnam Method's" textbook style isn't always easy reading, but the topic coverage is extremely comprehensive, and this book offers much for even the experienced student of armed defense. Occasionally, I would appreciate a bit more in the way of visual illustration, but words are one of John Farnam's great gifts, and his detailed explanations are clear and comprehensible. The question after reading a Farnam book is not, "What did I learn?" but rather, "How can I remember all those great lessons?"

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The Bible and Self Defense



In recent eJournals, the author has analyzed Biblical teachings about using force in self defense from both an Old Testament and New Testament viewpoint. In this installment, the last of the series, he considers scripture that some interpret as directives to behave passively in the face of violence.

by Dr. Richard Seim

“And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, ‘Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?’ ” (Matthew 26:51-54).

So, doesn't Jesus clearly tell us here NOT to use our "swords?" The last sentence (verse 54) is the key. In order for Jesus to fulfill His assignment, he had to be arrested, be hung on the cross, and die (as well as be buried and rise the third day). “How then will the Scripture be fulfilled?” According to the Bible, Jesus was on a very clear mission. The Apostle Paul certainly understood that as he summarized that purpose, “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Jesus told Peter to put his sword away because the purpose for which Jesus came to earth was in the process of being accomplished that very night. The context is clear and has nothing to do with self defense. As J. Vernon McGee said while commenting on these verses, “In other words, ‘I don't need your little sword, Peter. I haven't come to put up a battle against the religious rulers. I have come to die for the sins of the world.’ ”¹

Notice that he told Peter to “put your sword back into its place.” He did not tell him to throw it away and never pick it up again. In affect He said, “Peter, in order for my Father's will to be accomplished, these fellows must arrest me. Now, put your side arm away—you may legitimately need it another time—but let my Father's will be done now, namely my death, burial, and resurrection.” Although Peter did not completely understand, he complied with Jesus' wishes.

Finally, Jesus was very clear to tell his followers the importance of being prepared for self defense. Immediately before he told Peter to put his sword away, Jesus “... said to them, ‘But now, whoever has a money belt is to take it along, likewise also a bag, and whoever has no sword is to sell his coat and buy one’ ” (Luke 22:36). Allow me to take the liberty here to do a 2008 cultural paraphrase of this passage, “But now, whoever has a wallet is to take it along, likewise also a backpack, and whoever has no handgun is to sell his coat and buy one.”

Rome had quite a highway system in that day. Most people traveled by foot and in small to medium sized groups because of the highway bandits. Jesus even used a hypothetical story of someone wounded by highway bandits in his parable of The Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37). Jesus' parables were commonplace stories that the people would immediately be able to identify with. That Jesus used the common problem with bandits along the highways reveals the fact that everyone was familiar with the reality of that kind of situation. The reason Jesus told his disciples even to sell their coat in order to carry a Roman short sword was for the purpose of self defense.

“But now, when Jesus sends out his apostles into all the world after his resurrection They will need even protection and at times so badly that a sword will be worth more to them than their outer robe, the latter being a great necessity, especially as a covering at night when they were camping out in the open. So Jesus tells the apostles to buy a Roman short sword, if necessary, even at the price of their outer robe. It is better to freeze at night than to be killed” (R. C. H. Lenski).²

As we established in these five articles, the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, clearly teaches that it is our

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responsibility to protect ourselves and others:

- We are not to murder, but may use lethal force to protect ourselves, our family, and others.
- In a corporate setting, we may defend each other as necessary.
- If possible, we may defend one who is being attacked by a violent person.
- We are to leave vengeance in the hands of God and the court system.
- Jesus instructed His followers about the importance of always carrying a side arm.



We began this series by quoting this report: "(December 9, 2007): After killing two people at a Christian training center in Arvada, Colo., 24-year-old Matthew Murray went to Colorado Springs intending more murder and mayhem. Murray shot and killed two girls in the New Life Church's parking lot, then headed inside the building where thousands of worshippers were concluding a service" (March 5, 2008, WorldnetDaily.com).

What we have learned from the Bible in this five-part series is that we are, in fact, responsible to defend ourselves and others. It may not be a question of defending oneself against someone intent on taking their life. It may be, like it was for Jeanne Assam on December 9, 2007 at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, whether many others are maimed or killed...

"Investigators have announced this afternoon that Assam's bullets struck gunman Matthew Murray, identi-

fied late Monday as the man responsible for both Sunday shootings in Colorado, several times but that ultimately he died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, the El Paso County Coroner's Office announced today... Regardless, officials have credited Assam for calmly and coolly **stopping the massacre before more innocent bystanders were killed**" (ABCnews.com, December 11, 2007, emphasis mine).

In this day of terrorists and shooters shooting up churches, it is incumbent upon churches to put reasonable security in place. The Bible teaches that we may defend ourselves and others from those who would inflict upon us grave bodily harm or death. Without a doubt how this responsibility is enacted will be up to each individual as well as to each local congregation.

¹ J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, Based on the Thru the Bible Radio Program., electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1981), 4:142.

² R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 1067-8.

About the author:

Dr. Richard Seim is senior pastor at the Renton, WA Trinity Baptist Church. In addition to his calling as a Christian pastor, the author teaches NRA gun safety classes, and has graduated from multiple classes taught by the Lethal Force Institute and the Firearms Academy of Seattle, Inc.

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Editor Gila Hayes

Editor's Notebook

Presidential Election: What's the Bottom Line?

The election on Nov. 4th challenges the careful, contemplative voter to decide if the single issue of gun rights eclipses all the others. The vote is seriously complicated by distress gun owners feel about Senator McCain's record on gun legislation. Attitudes of

retribution for McCain's 2004 amendment to impose gun show restrictions, his public statements that he favors certain firearms restrictions, and lukewarm support for gun rights fuels rhetoric from conservatives and gun owners who thunder their uncompromising intent to never give McCain their political support.

There have been times when using the voting booth to express these kinds of convictions didn't present much of a downside, but in my opinion, November 4th, 2008 is simply not one of those times. This year, the Democrats control the Congress with little hope that this election will change control of the house. Ditto for the Senate. Now, this certainly won't be the first time a single political party controlled the Presidency, Congress and the Senate, but the peril to our right to armed self defense really has never been this extreme.

Being strongly inclined toward political independence, leaves me with little patience for partisan politics. I lack the blind faith to make a simple alignment with Republicanism in general, nor could I imagine giving a wholesale endorsement to the politics of the Democrats or any other party, for that matter. Party politics, unfortunately, are the entire game in the presidential election.

This presidential election asks us to weigh the threat Democrats controlling the House, Senate and Presidency pose to our rights to own and use guns for self defense. What barriers would impede restrictions on firearms types reaching far beyond magazine capacities and the presence of bayonet mounts? What would prevent nationwide gun registration schemes? Confiscation of firearms deemed unsuitable for possession by common citizens?

Many gun owners have extremely strong, even rabid, opinions about one candidate or the other. That's part of

being politically involved. Tonight, as I ponder the election, network television is trotting out polls and queries put in front of allegedly undecided voters who watched the candidates debate. I am amazed that any citizen could remain undecided about a race in which the differences are as distinct as they are in this election season.

I believe we must decide which of our political hot buttons is foundational to promoting personal freedom. Will we sacrifice the right to defend our very lives for perceived economic security, healthcare or changes in distribution of the taxation burden? For different environmental policies? To end or to prolong U.S. involvement in the Middle East?

I have a deep respect for the sanctity of the individual vote, so rarely do I presume to ask anyone to consider voting one way or another. It's bad enough that our opinions are manipulated as much as they are by the news media, devotees of one party or the other, by family members or co workers, and others. We are susceptible to that manipulation when we fail to take the time to really understand the bottom line for ourselves.

As November 4th looms, please take the time to understand what is at stake and if your conscience guides you in the same direction as mine, please vote to preserve our right to self defense.



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.

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