



# eJournal

of the Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC

Fourteenth Issue — March, 2009 — Now In Our Second Year

## The Best Defense Highlights Tactics

by Gila Hayes

When Rob Pincus talks about training, his eyes light up, his words come faster, and his zeal is hard to ignore. In 2003, Pincus burst on the shooting scene as the director of shooting operations at the Elk Mountain Resort, developing a shooting and tactical facility dubbed Valhalla.

I caught up with Rob Pincus at the January 2009 SHOT Show, where we talked about his profession as a trainer (<http://www.icetraining.us/>), and his latest project, a television show he shares with Michael Bane and Michael Janich, called The Best Defense (<http://www.downrange.tv/bestdefense/>). In the interest of not diluting Pincus' enthusiasm, we transcribe the conversation as closely as possible to how it occurred.

**eJournal:** How'd you get into this business, Rob?

**Pincus:** I jokingly say that I grew up with access to firearms with no adult supervision. My father was a police officer; to him a firearm was a tool to him. There were guns in the house, but in my family there wasn't a passion for shooting. I just had to pick up that interest by myself. That interest led to me being out in the back yard shooting with a pistol and with a .22 rifle, without formal education or a lot of, "Do it this way, do it that way; you have to stand in this position or you can't hit the target."



Rob Pincus

So it was really an intuitive beginning, and that's a word that always comes up in my training: intuitive as opposed to instinctive. One is very different from the other. Instinctive stuff, we define as something that occurs naturally. It is just there. The ability to shoot a gun well is not just there, but there are intuitive ways to do it. I define intuitive as, "it works well with what the body does naturally."

If you pick up a hammer to drive a nail, you're going to figure out pretty quick that if you hold the heavy end, and swing the light end, it isn't going to work nearly as well as if you hold the light end and swing the heavy end and get that momentum going. I find shooting the same at the most fundamental, defensive level. We tell students, "Extend, Touch, Press."

In my instructor classes I ask, "If you only had 30 seconds to teach someone how to use a loaded gun to defend themselves, what would you teach them?" You're probably not going to teach them nomenclature and breath control. What it comes down to is stick the gun out in front of your eyes in your line of sight and parallel to your line of sight toward the bad guy and press the trigger relatively smoothly.

**eJournal:** Weren't you doing something of that nature in your short courses at Valhalla? You became famous for that.

**Pincus:** Well, we got a lot of notoriety. When you get positive articles about teaching people to shoot in GQ, and you're on World News Tonight, that doesn't happen

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because you're teaching concealed carry permit classes. That happens because you're teaching "Cartier" to how to shoot during a team-building event. See, you don't have a week to teach "Cartier" how to field strip a Glock and put it back together, because they don't care. They may never shoot again. You have an hour.

**eJournal:** How do you keep that safe?

**Pincus:** You have a high instructor to student ratio and a lot of control. You know, we may have sixty people that we have to run through in a day, but we only have six people on the line at any one time and they're in a very controlled environment.

When they come into a class, they get a 10-15 minute safety lecture and a basic overview and introduction, and then we put them behind a gun. We have instructors there to pick up and load the gun. The first time they pick up a gun, its loaded. They go to the ready position. There's a target about 10-12 feet away.

For that, all they need is, "Extend, Touch, Press," a little confidence and somebody watching. That doesn't mean they're ready to defend themselves, it doesn't mean they're ready to be responsible gun owners, it doesn't mean they're ever going to shoot again in their lives, but what it does mean is that they had a fast, fun introduction to defensive shooting.

I've heard back from people from Manhattan, who had never shot before in their lives that said, "Rob, I'm frustrated because I can't shoot in Manhattan." They never cared until they got that introduction. So that was the great thing about Valhalla.

**eJournal:** You're a cop's son. Did you follow him into "the life" or go into the military?

**Pincus:** Yes, I dabbled in about every aspect of the industry but I'm not one of those guys who stayed in for 25 years. I come from a varied background. I went to a military college and was commissioned as an officer in the Army Reserve. After graduating from a military college, I began doing a lot of executive protection work. I became a reserve deputy, then I became a full time officer, and went through the police academy, did the third shift patrol stuff, got on the SWAT team, but by no means do I ever say I



was a career SWAT guy. At the same time, I don't think an instructor has to have been in the student's shoes, he just needs to understand the concepts and the context of his student's shoes.

After getting out of the military and going to a few formal schools, I got the passion for the training side. I was networking and meeting people who were active in executive protection, law enforcement or in the military and working with them to develop my knowledge of what was going on.

**eJournal:** When did you begin to formulate Combat Focus Shooting?

**Pincus:** The fundamentals of Combat Focus Shooting might have existed when I was 12, but they weren't articulated until maybe 2002. When I started going to formal schools and my groups got tighter but my times got slower, and that never really made a lot of sense to me if I'm at ten feet and somebody's trying to kill me.

**eJournal:** How do you balance that?

**Pincus:** The balance of speed and precision is how we address combat accuracy versus precision accuracy.

**eJournal:** Is there a time for precision, too?

**Pincus:** Use as much deviation control as the situation dictates. The trick is to learn how to recognize that by frequent and realistic training, processing and research. That means talking to people who've been in shootings, looking at the dashboard video cameras, looking at the statistics, high level stress simulations, even people in IDPA matches. What are people doing? How are people

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reacting? What physical skills are they using? Which techniques are they using? What works well? What doesn't? And then look at real situations and ask, "What did they need to do?"

One of the things that I'm really harping on is in an article I wrote last year called "Respectful Irreverence." (See <http://tinyurl.com/c55cxg>) The idea is that I don't care who you are, if you come to me with a piece of information, I need to evaluate that objectively. I'm not going to always listen to you because of who you are; I'm not going to never listen to you because of who you are. I'm going to listen to your information and evaluate the information.

**eJournal:** Well, people want to know the "whys" behind any doctrine.

**Pincus:** Absolutely. One of the tenets of Respectful Irreverence is to avoid absolutes. Dogma really has no place in this industry. Always be ready to answer and ask the "Why" questions.

For example, take the way we recommend reloading, and the student says, "That makes so much more sense than what my sergeant tells me. I'm going to go back and tell 'em." I tell him, when you go back and tell them that this a better way to reload, don't say, "Because Rob Pincus told you!" Tell him it is a better way to reload the gun because you can do it without looking, it takes less fine motor skill, is something you can do in a confined space, is consistent with the location of the magazine, and is consistent weapon retention and with the ability to assess your environment while reloading. It lets you go back into a shooting position or stay in a ready position, or go back to holster. Tell him all those things. It really doesn't matter that Rob Pincus told you to do it. What matters is that you know how to do it and why.

**eJournal:** So you're not creating disciples?

**Pincus:** It's a real fine line. The marketing has to be there; people have to want to take a Combat Focus Shooting class in order for me to be able to spread the information. Luckily, over the last four or five years, I've been able to certify a lot of really good instructors, both in Europe and all over the U.S. who are now teaching Combat Focus Shooting.



I taught in 37 places last year, but there were over 200 Combat Focus Shooting classes taught last year in Europe and the U.S. The rest of them were taught by other guys, and a lot of really, really good instructors some who were on staff with me at Valhalla, others who were students that developed into instructors; quite a few of them were instructors who saw the videos that were distributed by the NRA.

Do you know that there've been over 1.2 million copies of just the Combat Focus Shooting videos alone distributed through the NRA? So a lot of people are seeing the program, and a lot of instructors are seeing the program, it's a great compliment to me and to the program and to the guys that helped me develop it.

**eJournal:** And you now have a new means of outreach, called *The Best Defense*. Please tell us about that. How did it get started?

**Pincus:** About three or four years ago, I was involved with the Outdoor Channel and another company that developed a show, Personal Defense TV with Tom Gresham (<http://tinyurl.com/cc37jt>), that is still in production. It's a great show! The show is not on Outdoor Channel anymore so they were interested in developing their own self defense show. At the Outdoor Channel, Michael Bane is the franchise when it comes to the shooting shows. I've been a guest on his show Shooting Gallery (<http://www.shootinggallery.tv/>) a couple of times. They went to him and said, "We want to do a defensive show internally. Who do you think we should get involved in this defense show?"

At some point my name came up. Mike Janich was another name that came up. Coincidentally, we had just worked together last April when he did two guest instructor spots on my Personal Defense videos series for the NRA. We were planning on doing more together. Then Michael Bane called us both and said, "Hey, we're thinking about doing this thing..." And it turned into this really great show.

Airtime on television is very expensive! Advertisers in this industry are paying anywhere from \$40,000 to \$80,000 for a 30-second commercial on the Outdoor Channel. The content that is delivered between those commercials has to be interesting, enticing, educational, entertaining; it has to be so many things for so many different people to fuel

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the machine. You don't very often get the opportunity to get on television, in front of millions of viewers, and say what it is that you want to say.

**eJournal:** What is your message?

**Pincus:** The message is about awareness, which leads to preparation, or response that can be more efficient. We have an entire 13-episode season, instead of having only five air minutes, like I normally do when I get invited to be on a show! All of a sudden, we had 90 air minutes over the course of 13 weeks which is a huge opportunity to start with extend-touch-press, and to get up to close quarters contact shooting, cold weather, shooting out of your pocket with your J-frame, and shooting inside of a vehicle when you get attacked there.

I handle the firearms, and Janich handles the improvised weapons, the awareness, the knives, and the unarmed stuff. So we can start from simple striking all the way up to more complex, like, if someone blocks one of your strikes, what do you do to clear that out of the way and continue striking. Those things work efficiently together because we're able to build from week to week.

Each week, we look at different things. We started the show with safety at home, and in the fourth week, we deal with vehicle scenarios. Then we build to if you're in a convenience store and something happens.

We also have a great show dealing with women's assault prevention, which I'm really proud of, right in the middle of the season. But it's not women's assault prevention like, "hold your keys in your hand when you walk through a parking lot!" It's women's assault prevention like, if you're on a couch watching a movie with someone you know and trust, and they try to take advantage of having you there. What do you do then?

It's very efficient, real, context-based women's assault prevention. And that's going full circle, going back to Valhalla, where Tom Forman, the founder of Valhalla, and I worked very closely together on women's assault prevention. So a lot of the things that you see in *The Best Defense* episode on women's assault prevention, come full circle from being at a five-star resort, and developing an efficient way of communicating what's really important about women's assault prevention to somebody who only gave us an hour to teach them.

So, whether its something that I was doing in my backyard when I was twelve, or something that I learned in the police academy, or something that worked for me doing an executive protection job one time, what people get when they watch *The Best Defense* or when they come to an I.C.E. training course is the culmination of that twenty-five plus years of thought and processing and investigation and research and experimentation.

I think that's what you'll like about the classes and *The Best Defense* because they have a resonance of context, application, and practicality that you don't get if all you think about is shooting that three inch group on a square range on a piece of paper.

**eJournal:** Outstanding! When does the program air?

**Pincus:** *The Best Defense* is on at 4:30, 7:30 and 11 Eastern Time on Wednesday night on the Outdoor Channel.

**eJournal:** Good enough! Well, we'll make sure people know how to find the show. We're looking forward to seeing *The Best Defense* for many seasons so we can continue learning from you.

**Pincus:** We're planning season two now, and we're looking forward to continuing to bring people information that they think is important. One of the great things is the interaction we're getting with the viewers of *The Best Defense* at <http://www.downrange.tv/blog/>. We love to get feedback of what people think. That helps us build for season two and season three, and it really takes what people's concerns are into account when we develop future seasons.

**eJournal:** Rob, thank you so much for sharing your time with us! We're sure looking forward to seeing more of *The Best Defense*. ●

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Marty Hayes

## President's Message

by Marty Hayes, J.D.

Recently, I had the opportunity to create a presentation that I hope will greatly improve our outreach to armed citizens. This was done in conjunction with the National Rifle Association and the Second Amendment Foundation, along with Rob Pincus from I. C. E. training. Some of you may

already get these DVDs sent to you on a purchase option program by the fulfillment house that sends out the Personal Firearm Defense DVDs, as Rob has been producing this series for over a year. Up until now, he has reserved his DVDs for shooting and tactical instruction, and I was very honored to have been asked by Rob to help him present our message about the legal concerns.

It is my understanding that the DVDs are sent to many thousands of people each month, and so in a few months, when these DVDs hit the subscribers, I expect to see a huge bump in interest about the Network.

I must admit that during filming I was very much out of my element, being referred to as the "talent" all day long! The other DVDs in this series are very high quality, and I am looking forward to seeing what a good film studio can do to make me look my best. After about five hours of filming for the hour-plus DVD the film crew and director felt they had a pretty good product and we quit for the day. We will have the DVDs for sale through the Network when they come out, which I understand will likely be late in the year because there's a several month lag between filming and distribution.

In February, things slowed down for Network membership enrollment, and I want to ask each and every one of you to make an effort to spread the word about the Network. Remember, YOUR membership in the Network increases in value with each new member, as that means more money in the legal defense fund. After a year, we have yet to receive a request for financial aid from one of our members. That's great, both for the legal defense fund but also for our members, since it means no member was forced to use deadly force for self-defense.

In the next several months, the Network will be working hard on two main projects. The first project will be to see

if we can energize the formation of the Network Affiliated Attorney aspect of the Network. For members patiently waiting for a referral for your local area, thank-you for your patience. Now, I am going to ask a favor. Please look in the phone book or search the Internet for your local County Bar Association, then [E-mail me](#) the name, address, phone number and Internet contact information for that bar association. Using that information, one of us will contact the local bar county association in your area and see if we can get a name or names of pro-gun attorneys who might be willing to work with us to help our membership.

In addition, I expect to implement a "top down" attorney recruitment effort by contacting the state bar associations, along with the American Bar Association to see if we can get some national recognition in the legal arena, and perhaps shake loose a few barristers that way. Please understand that we are working on the attorney referral network, and we will continue to keep at it until we have a fully formed list. While I must admit that we have been tied up with other aspects of developing the Network, I want to stress that we have not abandoned the attorney recruitment work.

We are also starting work on our next DVD presentation, which should be ready as the premium for membership renewal in a few months. For our first members, we delayed your anniversary date until May 31; thus, we will work towards getting another DVD done in time for that renewal period. We are also working on our first logo item for sale to our members, that being a hat to wear at your local gun club. The embroidered proofs have arrived already, and we hope to have the hats available by May.



New Network ball cap.

Lastly, Vincent Shuck and I will be attending the RangeMaster Tactical Training Conference in April, to be held in Tulsa this year. I wrote about the 2008 conference in the March edition of the eJournal last year (<http://www.armedcitizensnetwork.org/EJournal.html>) and this year, we'll all be interested to get Vincent's thoughts on his experience. I will be presenting at this year's conference, giving a lecture on reducing liability for firearms instructors. We will also, of course, be promoting the Network to the 100+ attendees, and giving those who learned about us last year, an update on our progress. We also hope to do some filming for our next DVD at the conference.

## Vice-President's Message

### Dry Fire Practice

by J. Vincent Shuck



J. Vincent Shuck

Is there any chance you want to be a better shot with your handgun(s)? Better at mag changes/reloading? Faster at drawing and getting off that first shot? You and I probably share these and other range goals. One solution for me has been the use of dry fire practice. It's cheap, can be done right at home and has many supporters and followers, including some of the best professional shooters on the circuit.

Dry fire is pulling the trigger without live ammunition in the firearm. You are doing everything you would do at the range with live ammunition, but there is no explosion in your hand when the hammer drops. (Well, there's not supposed to be.) Here's how dry fire practice has helped me and how it may address some of your shooting issues.

First, the obligatory safety lecture. This activity can be dangerous, but following important and critical safety procedures, the danger can be alleviated. First, make sure the handgun is unloaded and even then, *follow all gun handling safety rules*. Make sure there is no live ammo in your dry fire practice room. That includes the full magazine you just removed from your carry gun, if that's what you intend to use during the session. And, even after you have unloaded your firearm and verified that it is unloaded by both sight and feel, it is still a functioning firearm. Thus, it must be treated as if it were loaded. In this regard, never point the dry fire gun at anything you are not willing to shoot. This brings up the need for a deliberately selected target/backstop – one that will absorb a bullet,

should one leave the "empty" gun. What is a safe target and backstop? Well, certainly not the sleeping dog next to the fireplace or an interior wall that has family members on the other side. Just follow this important rule: don't point the gun at anything you are unwilling to shoot. In other words, if you are willing to shoot the urn holding grandpa's ashes, then go ahead and use it as a target. If not, find something else. Final safety rule is to concentrate on what you are doing and if interrupted, you must start again with the unloading and verification process. I know it's

virtually impossible for a gun to load itself, but if I'm called away from my practice session to take out the trash, I'll either end the dry fire practice for this session or completely verify that the firearm is unloaded when I return.

What condition should you be in before starting a dry fire practice session? In short, a good one. You will be handling a firearm and you will be pressing the trigger. Concentration will be important and you must not mix guns and any adult beverage. This is not the time to claim, "since the gun is unloaded, it's OK to add that drink."

What about snap caps? Many gunsmiths, including the Technical Support staff at Brownells, Inc., recommend using snap caps to protect the firing pin or other parts of the action. If you want, consult your firearm manual or check with your gun manufacturer for their recommendation. Frankly, I rarely use snap caps.

I've found that my practice sessions can be used to offer attention to one issue or to a sequence of issues. Pick what you believe needs work (that's usually not too difficult for me) and begin your session. But, as you move from session to session, don't forget what was practiced

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before. If you need to remind yourself of a previous fundamental, make it a step in the new session. Any of these fundamentals can be practiced separately or as part of a sequence: stance, grip, sight alignment, sight picture, trigger control, follow through, drawing, holstering, and reloading.

During reloading practice, I've discovered some efficiency can be added to your practice if you drop your empty magazine on a bed or other raised platform; it reduces the distance and time to recover the dropped magazine. Start with an empty magazine in the gun, eject the magazine, grab a fresh one from your belt, insert the magazine and put your front sight back on the target.

You can incorporate a trigger press if you desire. A slide lock reload can be practiced with the firearm on target and the slide locked back, drop the magazine, reload from your belt with a magazine that has several snap caps or inert practice rounds, rack the slide or use the slide release and complete the procedure with a clean trigger press. Don't forget to notice – did the front sight move when the trigger was pressed? Depending on which gun forum you read, tactical reloads are either necessary and should be practiced or unnecessary and should never be practiced. Which ever side you are on (this week) you can practice tactical reloads during one of your dry fire sessions. Besides, knowing how to do a smooth tactical reload looks cool at the range, so why not get better at it?

During your practice sessions, focus on being smooth. Use a mirror, as long as that gives you an acceptable back stop. If you decide you are going too fast for accurate shots or for a perfect trigger press, slow down.

Use a timer to start your draws and set a par time that gives a second beep that tells you when the set time is up.



*Dryfire gear: A redundantly checked, unloaded gun, no ammunition in the dryfire area, Blade-Tech's dryfire barrel, and Safe Direction's ballistic containment Academy pad.*

Do you want to draw and fire (accurately of course) your first shot in less than 2 seconds? Less than 1.5 seconds? Set the timer and practice!

With all of this practice, how do you know if you are improving? The timer previously mentioned is a good way but I've found that a laser can usually tell the awful truth about my trigger press. On a laser-equipped firearm, you should observe the laser dot reacting to the hammer fall/striker movement and tell whether that trigger press was perfect. The laser shows the amount of movement and where the muzzle was pointing at the time of "discharge." If there was movement, you have some more work to do. But don't just add another 10 minutes of time, repeating what you did wrong, analyze whether the problem was from

a poor stance, weak grip or poor trigger press - or from all of them - and then work on the problem(s).

In summary, dry fire practice works to give you muscle memory through repetition. Follow all safety rules and concentrate on improving each of your shooting fundamentals. And now knowing that I may have just given my range competitors too many suggestions, I'm off to my own session of dry fire practice ...

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*Editor's note: The author is a Network-affiliated attorney who writes frequently for his local newspaper. When he originally penned the following to deal with church security, I asked if he felt the principles could be more widely applied. He agreed, and the result shares not only ideas about how to increase security for business premises and meeting places, but also addresses an important side-issue: steering clear of liability pitfalls.*

*by Mark Knapp*

Threat response strategies focus on preventing violence. The following suggestions apply to the workplace and areas open to the public when it may be cost prohibitive to retain professional security officers.

Identify volunteers and employees that have experience as police officers. Training can be acquired quickly but a lack of good judgment about armed self defense can create legal liability and a bad image for your business. Good judgment usually involves experience. The Lethal Force Institute is an excellent place for your personnel to get trained regardless of previous levels of experience.

You do not want to deter visitors from coming onto your premises while appropriately armed. Armed visitors may save someone's life. Criminals will not hesitate just because they see a sign that bans weapons on your premises.

### **Professionals and Volunteers**

You are expected to take reasonable precautions to protect employees and invitees that enter your premises from *foreseeable* threats. Keep in mind that uniformed police officers have been targeted first in many of the mass shootings that have occurred. The presence of a uniformed officer is a good thing but one or more armed volunteers in plain clothes needs to be backing up the officer(s).

Security guards need to be licensed and properly supervised. Do nothing to indicate that any of your volunteers are security guards without undergoing the appropriate legal procedures. Discuss appropriate responses and involve the employees that you have identified, including armed volunteers that will be going about their normal

## **Attorney Comments on Defending the Workplace**

activities in such a way that they are prepared to react if a threat materializes. Designate areas of responsibility for various volunteers.

If volunteers are identified as security personnel and/or wear clothing that indicates they are official security personnel, you may be in violation of the law. Additionally, this creates more potential for liability if an incident occurs in which someone is injured by the commission of a negligent act or the failure to take appropriate action.

Wearing clothing that identifies members of the "security" team encourages visitors to rely on the presence of security and marks designated individuals as potential targets. Such *reliance* raises the potential for legal liabilities. The first principle of self-defense is that each of us has the primary obligation to protect ourselves *and our loved ones* from death or grave bodily harm.

### **Action Items**

Be alert to surveillance. Many times the mere fact that terrorist surveillance teams realize they are being observed will prevent an attack from developing.

You should have personnel at doors and in the parking lot that know what to look for. Observe and keep a written log of people making notes or photographing your premises. Make sure that "gatekeepers" know about Domestic Violence Protection Orders reported by employees and provide information about threats so that your key personnel know what to look for and how and to whom unusual observations should be reported.

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1. Have someone prepared to get out of the immediate area and call the police immediately. Only one person should talk to the police. Conflicting information is not helpful for 911 dispatchers.

2. Give the location in the building where the disturbance is occurring and let the police know when there are armed volunteers engaging the "active shooter" (bad guy).

3. You need an exit plan for your employees. Visitors will follow the leaders and employees. These leaders may be women or men. They need to know a place to go outside of the building in which the threat is developing.



your rounds travel upward, thus minimizing the chance of stray rounds hitting innocent bystanders.

2. Rush the shooter while he is distracted, use cover and tell people around you to get down on the floor.

3. Focus on the weapon and on keeping the shooter from hurting others. Once the shooter has been subdued, call for medical assistance.

4. When law enforcement arrives, do what the police tell you to do. Identify the wrongdoer to the police and make sure the police know that innocent people were about to become victims! Point out evidence such as spent casings, weapons, etc. but do not provide details without a lawyer present.

### Unavoidable Trouble

If dealing with an armed troublemaker, armed volunteers should use cover but also move quickly to intercept the active shooter. Stay in control and walk purposefully. Keep the possibility of "outriders" in mind and protect your weapon from well-meaning bystanders that may try to grab the weapon!

If you are armed, you should avoid any physical contact that may lead to losing control of your weapon. Get weapons retention training if you have not already done so.

Remember the 21-foot rule. Stay at safe distance and wait for law enforcement. Holster your weapon before the police arrive--but stay prepared. Keep distance between you and the perpetrator. Do not attempt to handcuff or make any physical contact with an aggressor. You are not trained to do that. If there is even a possibility that the troublemaker is armed then stay behind cover at all times if possible.

Be aware of strategies like—

1. By kneeling and shooting from close to the floor,

Every situation is governed by specific facts. Get training in the laws of self defense and know the laws of your jurisdiction. Talk to local police. Ask them to discuss your threat response plan with you. How will your actions (or failure to act) impact innocent members of the public when the threat of deadly force materializes? ●

*Network affiliated attorney Mark Knapp is a lawyer that deals with legal issues involving possession and use of firearms and tireless supporter of the armed citizen and his or her rights. You'll enjoy his blog at <http://www.firearmslawyer.net/blog/index.php>*

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## Book Review

### Training Log Book

Compiled by Rob Pincus  
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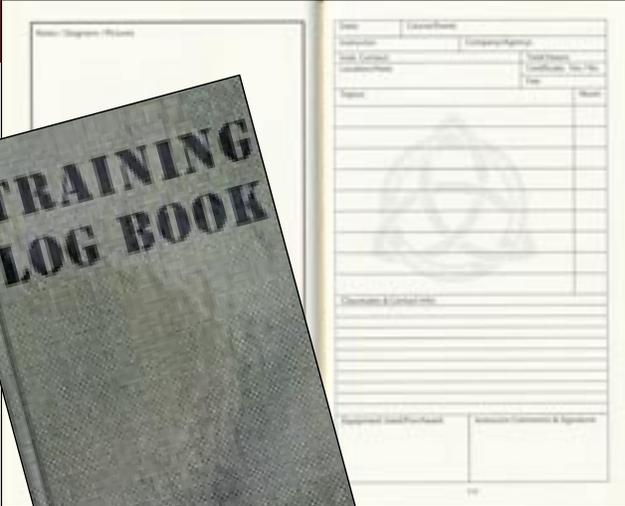
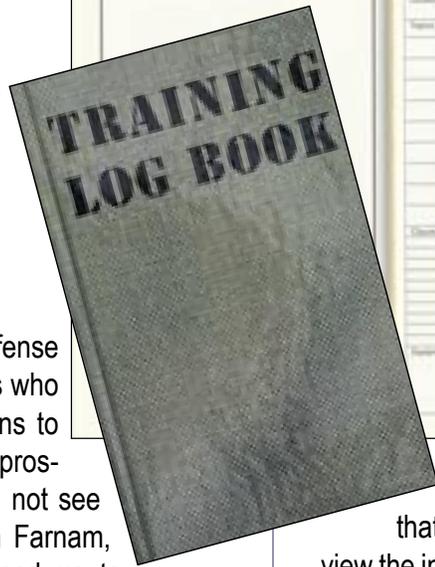
*Reviewed by Marty Hayes, J.D.*

The Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network, LLC was founded by trainers who recognized the need for armed citizens to unite for their own protection against prosecutors who want to make headlines, not see justice done. Trainers such as John Farnam, Tom Givens and Massad Ayoob joined us to breath life into the Network.

In addition, we have seen over 50 instructors from across the nation join the Network as Network Affiliated Instructors, people who passionately believe in the right to armed self defense, and who have dedicated their lives on either a full-time or part-time basis to teaching armed self defense. One of these instructors is Rob Pincus, formerly the training director of Valhalla and now running his own company called I.C.E. Training, (<http://www.icetraining.us/>). I met Rob a couple of years ago, and last year he asked me to contribute to a project he was working on, called the *Training Log Book*.

The *Training Log Book* is a hardcover, 6x9 book with a dual purpose. Filled with over 30 essays by some of the top instructors in the business, it is a very interesting compilation of thoughts by guys like Clint Smith, John Farnam and James Yeager, to name just a few. Rob asked me to write on the topic, "What other advice to you have for anyone looking for, attending or evaluating a defensive/tactical training course?" And, while I was able to form a cogent thought or two regarding the topic, I enjoyed comparing my thoughts to those of the other contributors who were asked the same question.

It is my understanding that Rob will be publishing additional training logbooks, with different (and perhaps a few of the same) contributors being asked to write on a different subject. These contributions comprise half of the 224-page book, with the remainder being a series of pages designed for the book owner to log their training endeavors,



shooting experiences, classes attended and simply any shooting or training event that you want to document. The pages are formatted to allow the user to fill in the blanks, as is shown in the adjacent picture.

As you know, here at the Network we strongly believe in documenting your training in order to be able to

testify as to any number of specific knowledge that you possess. You see, a jury will be allowed to view the incident for which you are being tried through your eyes. The reasonable man doctrine, a principle by which an individual's behavior is judged, measures your defense responses against what a reasonable and prudent person would have done under the same circumstances, knowing what you knew at the time.

It is universally accepted, however, that if that knowledge is not documented as being known to you at the time of the assault, then it is unlikely the judge will allow that little tidbit of information in at trial. If the owner of this book takes training and self defense preparation seriously, there should never be a question regarding whether or not you knew a vital a piece of information prior to the assault.

I strongly advise anyone who takes their training seriously to pick up a copy of *The Training Log Book* and use it. Cost is \$24.95, and they are available direct through I.C.E. Publishing Company or in the Network store at [www.shoparmedcitizensnetwork.org](http://www.shoparmedcitizensnetwork.org) at the usual Network member discount.

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Gila Hayes

## Editor's Notebook

### Cowardly or Wise?

When public opinion opposes you and your way of life, it is hard to recognize the fundamentals over which you're arguing because of all the distractions. In the ever-raging debate about whether or not Americans should be allowed to own, carry and defend them-

selves with firearms, gun owners are often led off point by numerous successful tactics of misdirection.

This column will be longer than usual, because I feel compelled to drag these issue kicking and screaming out into the light of day where we can identify that which harms us and that which, ghost-like, is frightening, yet insubstantial. When the battle is clearly defined, we engage in skirmishes more likely to produce positive results. If we are merely flailing wildly at frightening specters, we waste limited and valuable resources, be that time, money or energy.

I think we can stipulate that the right to own, carry and use a guns is in peril. If we resolve to fight for gun rights, we ought to know what we are fighting to save. What are our reasons, as law-abiding citizens, for wanting unrestricted ownership of firearms? The answers vary, though the most common are 1) armed self defense, 2) hunting, and 3) shooting sports.

Is one item on that list more important to most gun owners than others? Let the marketplace answer. Do you think the 1.2 million background checks that, we are told, went through the National Instant Check System (NICS) since the election, are primarily to transfer side-by-side sporting shotguns? Are the purchasers stocking up on .416 Weatherby bolt action rifles for their next African safari?

Or are those transactions for handguns and semi-automatic carbines like AR-15s? I believe that supposition is supported by the undocumented but undeniable buying frenzy for magazines, ammunition and cartridge components. I doubt anyone, whether pro-gun or anti-gun would deny that in record numbers American citizens are opening their wallets to stock up on guns and ammunition primarily suitable for defense purposes.

### Who Are We?

At odds with buying trends, however, is the manner in which we armed citizens portray ourselves to society in general. Under the benign leadership of our many gun rights activist organizations, gun owners are described primarily as safety-conscious shooting sports hobbyists and as hunters, with a careful, delicate nod occasionally given to gun ownership for self defense.

In last month's editorial, I questioned the wisdom of spending blindly to recruit new hunters and sports shooters, while refusing to recognize how many self defense gun buyers make gun manufacturing a profitable industry. This month, reality's harsh light shines a little closer to home. Too often, individual gun owners following the lead of large and influential gun rights organizations are loath, nay, frightened to declare publicly, "I own guns for self defense."

Consider just one example of our duplicity. At work, when someone conversationally asks, "What did you do this weekend?" too many of us answer, "Um, I was at a, um, err, a *safety* class." If you're feeling particularly confident, you might answer, "I went to a marksmanship class." What dread prevents us from saying, "I attended Massad Ayoob's Judicious Use of Deadly Force seminar...I was at Tom Givens' Combative Pistol class ... I was training with John and Vicki Farnam when they taught Defensive Urban Rifle."

Over the years, I've certainly glibly sidestepped the opportunity to identify myself as a personal defense gun owner now and again. I bet you've done it, too. Why did we do it? Why did we refuse to say, "It was a GREAT weekend! I attended Tactical Response's Fighting Shotgun class"? Excuses leading the pack include-

- I might lose my job;
- I hate the way people tease, "Ooooh, who ya getting' ready to kill?" or "I'd better mind my manners around you, then, or you might just shoot me;"
- I'd probably get expelled from the university;
- If word gets around that I have guns, my house will be burgled;
- Someone one will report me and then I'll be on a list for confiscation when the gun ban comes.

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Some of the most articulate instructors and advocates of armed self defense recommend that armed citizens avoid identification as gun owners. Be careful with that NRA bumper sticker, I've been warned, it may lead a burglar to your home. Though I'm not as influential as those top tier firearms instructors, I have, myself, advised women to keep secret the gun they carry for self defense.

Along the same guidelines, some gun owners avoid subscribing to gun magazines for delivery with their other mail. Over the years, I've been asked to put firearms class materials in plain, unmarked envelopes, and more recently changed the words "Armed Citizens' Legal Defense Network" to "ACLD Network" on our mailing labels. Yes, you will notice that in response to member requests, the Network doesn't identify our packages as coming from a gun-related organization, though our name is still clearly printed on our envelopes.

At the opposite extreme, are the open carry proponents who endure criticism from members of the public, police field interviews and often harsh advice if not outright arrest, as well as considerable personal inconvenience.

At opposite ends of the extremes of open carry and utter secrecy, the yin is never admitting to *anyone* that you own a gun; the yang is an in-your-face practice like open carry, even in areas hostile to citizen possession of firearms! The latter contributes to a healthy debate, and serves the greater good by asking armed citizens to examine our own secretiveness or exhibitionism.

We can certainly understand the secretiveness, because an awful lot of people have found themselves punished for merely speaking of themselves as gun owners. A Connecticut professor called the police after three university students spoke at a communications class about allowing teachers and students to carry concealed weapons on campus. One student was summoned to the police station where he was questioned about the location of firearms registered in his name.

Think you're OK once you're older and get out of school? Think again.

Police took a Wisconsin man planting trees in his own fenced back yard into custody at gun point because his neighbor phoned the police to ask if it was legal for his neighbor to be openly wearing a holstered handgun out in his yard. Law enforcement seized the gun, holster and

ammunition, despite the fact that Wisconsin is considered an open carry state see State v. Hamdan, 264 Wis. 2d 433, 665 N.W.2d 785 (Wis., 2003). The accused was charged with disorderly conduct, and during court proceedings the judge opined that he did not believe a person had a right to openly carry a firearm on private property. The defendant, Brad Krause, was eventually found not guilty.

Gun ownership isn't a religion, so I guess it is unreasonable to expect gun owners to take a stand that could cost a job, student status at an exclusive university, or attract intrusive law enforcement investigations. Still, I fear mightily that unless we develop strategies that will bring us out of the closet, unless we live honestly and unless we quit hiding that we are gun owners, legal gun ownership will be even more severely restricted or regulated out of existence entirely.

Still, reality dictates that there is no reason to advocate actions that our ranks will not take. So how about this? An author on the Buckeye Firearms Association web site pens a charming narrative in which an every-day, normal guy explains to a friend that being a gun owner doesn't make him much different than anyone else. Check it out at [the Buckeye Firearms web site](#) and then decide how you will demonstrate to society that people who own guns for self defense is just as ordinary as driving a car, playing golf, or any other accepted behavior. ●



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](mailto:editor@armedcitizensnetwork.org).

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

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

We welcome your questions and comments about the Network. Please write to us at [info@armedcitizensnetwork.org](mailto:info@armedcitizensnetwork.org).

Print and  
mail this form  
or click here to  
join on-line.



### How to join - mail in form

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

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

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

#### APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the Network? \_\_\_\_\_

#### BACKGROUND CHECK—PLEASE PROVIDE ONE:

License to carry a concealed handgun copy attached

Other background check

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternatives only by prior arrangement with the Network

#### ---- \$85 MEMBERSHIP FEE ----

Check enclosed       Charge my card

#### CREDIT CARD CHARGE AUTHORIZATION

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

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Account Number

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

CVV Code \_\_\_\_ 3 digits on back of card

Full billing address for that account:

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(Street Address or Box Number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City)

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(State and Zip Code)

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

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(Signature authorizing charge)

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