



Allegheny County Sportsmen's League Legislative Committee Report

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ALLEGHENY COUNTY SPORTSMEN LEAGUE ON THE INTERNET <http://www.acslpa.org>

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DC/Heller Ruling Leaves Nation Polarized

by Dave Workman, Senior Editor

In the beginning, it was the Supreme Court's 5-4 ideological split that defined the Second Amendment as protective of an individual right to keep and bear arms regardless of affiliation with a militia.

But the historic ruling, written by Justice Antonin Scalia, quickly divided a nation, and in the aftermath there did not seem to be much middle ground. The evidence was clear, in the hysteria-steeped reaction by anti-gunners including Washington, DC, Mayor Adrian Fenty, California Sen. Dianne Feinstein, and Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, contrasting sharply with the victory remarks from gun rights leaders and activists, including Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association, and Alan Gottlieb, founder of the Second Amendment Foundation.

Perhaps Daley's outlook was glum because less than an hour after the high court announced its ruling, SAF and the Illinois State Rifle Association filed a federal lawsuit against Daley and the city of Chicago over the handgun ban there (see related story).

"This is a great moment in American history," LaPierre said. "It vindicates individual Americans all over this country who have always known that this is their freedom worth protecting."

"Wisdom and truth have triumphed over hysteria and falsehood," Gottlieb added. "This decision makes it clear that a right 'of the people' is a right enjoyed by, and affirmed for, all citizens. It destroys a cornerstone of anti-gun rights elitism, which has fostered—

through years of deceit and political demagoguery—the erosion of this important civil right."

Scalia's majority opinion brought to an end decades of dispute over the meaning of the Second Amendment.

The high court ruled that the amendment "protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home."

The opinion, supported by Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Anthony M. Kennedy, left the door open to regulation of the right, noting that "like most rights, the Second Amendment right is not unlimited."

"The court's opinion," Scalia wrote, "should not be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms."

The ruling also demolished the argument long advanced by anti-gunners that the 1939 Miller case (See Hindsight column in the July 1 issue of Gun Week) relegated the right to bear arms as being conditional to militia service.

But Scalia's majority opinion also castigated the arguments offered in the two dissenting opinions authored by liberal Justices John Paul Stevens and Steven G. Breyer, who were joined by David Souter and Ruth Bader Ginsburg. In Stevens' case, the majority opinion suggested that the argument put forth in his dissent that the Second Amendment's right to bear arms would "cause the protected right to consist of the right to be a soldier or to wage war"

amounted to "an absurdity that no commentator has ever endorsed."

The majority also stated that Stevens' arguments, based on his reading of the drafting history of the amendment, indicate that Stevens "flatly misreads the historical record."

Scalia also wrote that "Justice Breyer's assertion that individual self-defense is merely a 'subsidiary interest' of the right to keep and bear arms...is profoundly mistaken."

Scalia's opinion castigates dissenting minority rulings

Stevens lamented in his dissenting opinion that "I fear the District's policy choice (the gun ban) may well be just the first of an unknown number of dominoes to be knocked off the table" by the majority opinion. He argued that the majority opinion upholding an individual right interpretation amounted to "the announcement of a new constitutional right to own and use firearms for private purposes..."

Breyer contended that gun violence in modern-day America had created an environment in which handguns contributed to the problem. He stated that "there simply is no untouchable constitutional right guaranteed by the Second Amendment to keep loaded handguns in the house in crime-ridden urban areas." But Scalia countered in the finale paragraph of his majority opinion that, "We are aware of the problem of handgun violence in this country, and we take seriously the concerns raised by the many amici who believe that prohibition of handgun ownership is a solution...But the enshrinement of constitutional rights necessarily takes certain policy choices off the table.

"Undoubtedly," he continued, "some think that the Second Amendment is outmoded in a society where our standing army is the pride of our Nation, where well-trained police forces provide personal security, and where gun violence is a serious problem. That is perhaps debatable, but what is not debatable is that it is not the role of this Court to pronounce the Second Amendment extinct."

The ruling ignited a firestorm, with supporters of the ban complaining that it will lead to increased violence in Washington, DC, and across the nation.

Polls run by several news organizations found an overwhelming majority of on-line respondents supported the individual rights ruling That did not

stop the invective from spilling over on several newspaper forums It reached a fever pitch with the traditionally antigun Chicago Tribune calling for a repeal of the Second Amendment in an editorial the following day.

Within hours of the ruling, the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence was out with a fund-raising plea that declared, "The Heller decision will no doubt embolden ideological extremists to file new legal attacks on existing gun laws. But with the help of the Brady Center's legal team, those attacks can, and must, be successfully resisted in the interest of public safety."

They were attempting to raise \$50,000 by June 30, and it was not clear whether they met that goal.

"We disagree with the Court's decision giving individuals a right to possess guns for private purpose," the news release stated. "However, what is critically important is that all nine Justices agreed that a wide variety of gun laws are constitutional, including restrictions on carrying concealed weapons, guns in schools and other sensitive places, and bans on 'dangerous and unusual' weapons."

An anti-gun forum called "The Gun Guys" called the ruling a "misguided decision" that will lead to an increase in violent crime. They have an archive of stories about shooting victims called "America's Shooting Gallery."

"We only wish that the justices of the Supreme Court could have first looked at an archive similar to ours to see the devastation of guns in America," the website stated. "Maybe, the discussion and subsequent ruling from the Court would have had a different outcome." But LaPierre disagreed with that assessment.

"Our founding fathers wrote and intended the Second Amendment to be an individual right," he said. "The Supreme Court has now acknowledged it. The Second Amendment as an individual right now becomes a real permanent part of American Constitutional law."

The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008

SAF-ISRA, NRA launch federal suits vs. Chicago

by Dave Workman, Senior Editor

Within an hour of the Supreme Court's ruling on the Second Amendment, attorneys representing the Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) and the Illinois State Rifle Association (ISRA), and four

Chicago residents, filed a lawsuit in federal district court in Chicago, IL, to overturn that city's decades-old handgun ban.

One day later, the National Rifle Association (NRA) and four other citizens also filed suit against the city's decades-old handgun ban. The NRA's action is broader, however, in that the organization and four individual citizens in Chicago also seek to overturn longstanding bans in neighboring Morton Grove, Oak Park and Evanston.

The Heller ruling on the District of Columbia's handgun ban, which left anti-gun Chicago Mayor Richard Daley furious, had been expected to spawn similar lawsuits in cities including Chicago, New York and San Francisco (see related story) but the swiftness of the filing surprised some people. Chicago-area attorney David Sigale, who is working with lead attorney Alan Gura-- the man who successfully argued the Heller case before the high court—filed the papers within about 15 minutes of hearing the Heller case outcome.

"Our goal," Gura said "is to require state, and local officials to respect our Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms. Chicago's handgun ban, as well as some of its gun registration requirements, are clearly unconstitutional."

Alan Gottlieb, founder of the SAF, noted in a prepared statement that "Chicago's handgun ban has failed to stop violent crime. It's time to give the Constitution a chance."

ISRA Executive Director Richard Pearson added, "Chicago's registration scheme cries out for common-sense reform."

Curiously, Illinois' Sen. Barack Obama, waiting to officially secure his party's nomination for president at its convention in Denver, CO, offered a tepid reaction to the ruling, insisting that he supports the individual right to keep and bear arms, but adding that the decision still allows for local control measures. But a furious Daley called the ruling "very frightening" during a press conference at Chicago's Navy Pier.

Quoted by The Chicago Sun-Times, Daley told reporters, "Does this lead to everyone having a gun in our society? If they think that's the answer, then they're greatly mistaken. Then, why don't we do away with the court system and go back to the Old West?"

You have a gun and I have a gun and we'll settle in the streets."

Individual plaintiffs in the lawsuit are retiree Otis McDonald, former police officer Adam Orlov and David and Colleen Lawson.

McDonald is a retired maintenance engineer who worked at the University of Chicago and has been a Chicago resident since 1952. In the 1960s, this Army veteran, who served in Germany and came home to raise a family in Chicago, was a pioneer in integrating his local union, rising through the ranks until he became head of that local.

In addition to being a civil rights and union leader in the Chicago area, McDonald is also a community activist who has been threatened for his efforts to rid his neighborhood of drug dealers and other criminals. He owns a handgun, but cannot keep it inside the city because of the handgun ban.

"This lawsuit, I hope, will allow me to bring my handgun into the city legally," he said in an interview with Gun Week. "I only want a handgun in my house for my protection."

A former Evanston, IL, police officer, Orlov left law enforcement to attend business school. He now runs a Chicago trading company, dealing in stocks and other securities.

Orlov told Gun Week that he believes the Chicago handgun ban violates his constitutional right to have a handgun for his personal protection at home. He called the Chicago handgun ban "onerous."

The Lawsons have been near-victims of a home-invasion in which Colleen, alerted by a neighbor, was able to confront a trio of thugs as they tried to pry open the back door of the couple's Chicago home during an attempted afternoon home invasion. David was out of town at the time on a job. He is a software engineer, while she is a hypnotherapist.

Perhaps as alarming as the attempted break-in was the response from police. It took them more than a half-hour to respond to a life-threatening situation, and when they arrived, according to Colleen, "they basically just said there was nothing they could do." Attorney Sigale observed, The right to defend our homes and families against those will; would do them harm, whether a random criminal, violent ex-domestic partner, or other wrongdoer, is one of the principles upon which America was founded. It is time the city

of Chicago trust its honest, law-abiding residents with this constitutional right."

Details on the SAF lawsuit can be found online at "chicagoguncase.com."

In the NRA lawsuit, individual plaintiffs are Dr. Kathryn Tyler, Anthony Burton, Van F. Welton and Brett Benson. *The New GUN WEEK*, July 1, 2008

NRA, CCRKBA join forces in San Fran public housing suit

by Dave Workman, Senior Editor

First, it was the National Rifle Association (NRA) and Second Amendment Foundation (SAF) joining in a landmark lawsuit to stop the infamous New Orleans gun grab following Hurricane- Katrina in September 2005.

Two months later, SAF and NRA teamed up with the Law Enforcement Alliance of America and California Association of Firearms Retailers to successfully battle the city of San Francisco's gun ban measure, Proposition H, the day after voters passed the initiative.

Now, NRA has joined forces with the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA) in another lawsuit in San Francisco; this one aimed at overturning the city's ban on firearms in public housing.

That lawsuit came just 48 hours after the Supreme Court issued its historic ruling in the Heller case declaring the Second Amendment protects an individual civil right to keep and bear arms (see related story).

"Just because someone lives in public housing does not mean that person must surrender his or her civil rights, or their right of self-defense," said CCRKBA Chairman Alan Gottlieb. "This lawsuit seeks to restore the rights of those living in public housing to choose to own a gun for sport or to defend their families."

Attorney Chuck Michel represents the plaintiffs, as he represented the NRA and SAF in the Proposition H lawsuit.

This new legal action was filed in US District Court for the Northern District of California, San Francisco Division.

This could become a new experience for a California federal court, since the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals is one of the appellate

courts that had previously held the Second Amendment protects only some sort of "collective right" to bear arms while serving in a militia. Called the most liberal, and most overturned, circuit in the nation, if this case winds its way up to the 9th Circuit appellate court, judges there will have to deal with the Second Amendment in its traditional and historic context.

The lawsuit was filed in federal court against the City of San Francisco and the San Francisco Public Housing Authority to invalidate the City's ordinance (Police Code section 617) and lease provision that bans the possession of firearms in public housing, Michel said.

"Before the Second Amendment can be used to challenge unconstitutional regulations and laws at the state or local level, it must be 'incorporated' through the Fourteenth Amendment to apply to the state and local governments," Michel explained. "The lawsuit will serve to establish the incorporation doctrine in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeal, including California, and invalidate the existing ban on firearms in public housing in San Francisco in the process.

"As with the advancement of any civil right throughout history, subsequent litigation is essential in order to establish both the parameters of the Second Amendment's protections, and initially to establish that the Second Amendment restricts state and local governments from infringing on your right to self-defense," the attorney noted. *The New GUN WEEK*, July 1, 2008

Judge declines to block Florida guns-at-work law

A federal judge on June 26, the same day the US Supreme Court issued its decision in the DC v. Heller case, declined to stop Florida's new guns-at-work law from taking effect July 1.

The law, which Gov. Charlie Crist (R) signed in April, will allow employees possessing concealed handgun licenses (CPLs) to keep guns in their vehicles while parked on their employer's premises. Not only will employers not be able to stop them, they won't be able to ask whether an employee has a gun in his or her car, either, The Tampa Tribune reported.

Florida's fight over guns at work, which began in the state legislature in 2005, has pitted conservative factions against one another. The Florida Chamber of Commerce, arguing that the law violates property owners' rights, asked for an injunction in federal court in Tallahassee on June

25. On the other side: the National Rifle Association, which supported the new law, and the state, argued that the issue is a matter of an individual's right to bear arms. Chief District Judge R. Hinkle said he was neither granting nor denying the injunction, but other obligations and the need to research the case further will probably prevent him from ruling before mid-July, he said. The law not only grants employees with CPLs the right to keep guns in their vehicles, it permits customers to do so as well, but there's a catch, argued Barry Richard, the chamber's attorney, building on questions that Hinkle raised about the statute.

As the judge noted, the statute applies only to "employers" defined as businesses with at least one employee possessing a concealed weapons permit. If the business lacks such an employee, it does not qualify as an "employer," in which case, neither employees nor customers of that particular business have a right to keep a gun in their car on the premises.

A business might have a single employee with a CPL one day, but not the next, Richard argued— meaning that the customers' rights to have a gun on premises would change daily.

Attorney Jonathan Glogau, arguing for the state, said that both Richard and Hinkle were stretching the meaning of the statute. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

PA open carry activists file suits against Dickson City police

by Dave Workman, Senior Editor

Five open carry activists in Pennsylvania have filed two separate federal civil rights lawsuits against Dickson City police Officers Anthony Mariano and Karen Gallagher, and Chief William Stadnitski in the aftermath of a May 9 incident in which the plaintiffs were confronted and detained even though they had broken no laws.

Gun Week first reported the incident in the June 15 edition.

The first complaint, filed in US District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, alleges that Gallagher and Mariano "illegally threatened, harassed, detained and/or accosted" plaintiffs Richard and Judy Banks, Roger McCarren and Larry Meyer while they were dining at a restaurant Banks, McCarren and Meyer were all visibly armed, and were essentially minding their own business. The lawsuit asserts that the plaintiffs' rights were violated under the First, Fourth, Fifth and 14th Amendments.

The other lawsuit, filed individually by Edward J. Kraft Jr. names Gallagher, Mariano and the Dickson City Borough, but not Chief Stadnitski.

All four plaintiffs in the Banks lawsuit were with several other people, and according to filing papers, Banks,

McCarren and Meyer "were ordered (by Mariano and Gallagher) to report to a different section of the restaurant for 'investigation'." However, the lawsuit contends, there was no explanation of what was being investigated.

Banks refused to provide identification, believing that the officers had no justification to ask for it, so he was then, according to the lawsuit, "illegally and unjustifiably handcuffed, frisked, and arrested, his personal property illegally confiscated and he was thereafter placed in the back seat of the Dickson City marked police car."

Kraft's lawsuit details his encounter with Gallagher and supports the account of the incident contained in the Banks documents. In all, according to the two lawsuits, the officers had nine or 10 men in the group standing outside in the rain, coercing them to produce identification and concealed carry permits, the latter of which is not required in Pennsylvania if someone is carrying openly.

Gun Week earlier spoke to Stadnitski, who said this was the first incident in his 37 years in law enforcement that involved private citizens openly carrying a firearm, other than while hunting. He also maintained that his officers erred on the side of caution when responding to a 911 call from a restaurant patron that complained about people "brandishing guns."

"There was no ill will on our part," Stadnitski stated.

That is not how the incident is portrayed in the lawsuit filed by attorney Robert J. McGee, who is representing the Banks plaintiffs. He believes the incident began because another patron in the restaurant was "unhappy and uncomfortable that someone had a firearm in a holster on their hip" and called the police. He does not know who placed the initial 911 call.

Magee told Gun Week that the process could take some time, because the defendants have 30 days in which to respond, and then there will be motions, discovery, depositions and a conference, and all of that takes time. Likewise, the confrontation between Kraft and Gallagher, as portrayed in the lawsuit filed by attorney Johanna L. Gelb of Scranton, suggests that both Gallagher and Mariano acted "without cause or justification." In the Kraft lawsuit, it is alleged that "Mariano falsely informed the group...that they did, in fact, need a concealed weapons permit to openly carry a firearm in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

The Banks lawsuit also complains that Gallagher and Mariano "refused to return...a handgun which Banks had in his possession at the time..." They also seized a handgun from McCarren and "refused to return it to him, on the basis that, according to some type of illegal registry maintained or available to the Dickson City Police Department, the handgun was not 'registered' to...McCarren."

Banks was ultimately released after, according to the filing document, "Gallagher and Mariano realized they had no basis for placing (him) under arrest...but it was only after an extended period of time."

Banks' lawsuit also describes a confrontation between the officers and Judy Banks, who tried to videotape and audiotape the encounter between the officers and the three other plaintiffs. The officers ordered Judy Banks to stop recording "under threat of being arrested for violation of the federal wiretap law," the document states.

Meanwhile, Kraft alleges that "Gallagher and Mariano acted with a conscious and/or reckless disregard of the constitutional rights of Kraft to be free from unreasonable detentions, searches and seizures, and to be deprived of his property without due process of law."

Kraft's lawsuit says both officers "illegally threatened, detained, searched and seized him, and otherwise interfered with his rights under the Second, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments..."

The incident has infuriated open carry activists across the country, who have been following developments on OpenCarry.org, an Internet forum set up for the growing open carry community. This is not the first time an open carry confrontation between citizens and the police has resulted in a federal civil rights lawsuit. A few years ago, another such lawsuit was filed, according to Magee, who also represented the earlier client. That lawsuit was settled but the terms of that settlement were confidential, the attorney said.

Richard Banks is the founder of Pennsylvania Open Carry, an offshoot of OpenCarry.org
The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008

NEWS BRIEFS

Armed citizen foils bank heist in Michigan

An armed private citizen has been hailed as a hero for abruptly halting a bank robbery last month in Canton, MI, when a man identified as Joseph Webster of Ypsilanti told a teller that he had a bomb strapped to his waist.

Lebanese-born Nabil Fawzi, who spent time in the Lebanese army, was tipped to the robbery by another teller and without hesitation, drew a legally- concealed 9mm Beretta pistol and aimed it at Webster. Fawzi has a Michigan carry permit.

"You're not going to rob this bank today," Fawzi told Webster as he held the would-be robber until the police arrived.

When Webster handed the clerk a note about the bomb, he also warned against putting dye packs in the bag of loot. The teller hit the silent alarm to alert the police.

Fawzi appeared on the early morning "Fox & Friends" program, telling the audience that he tricked Webster into believing that he was an off-duty policeman. Actually, Fawzi is the proprietor of a gas station, and he frequently stops at the bank en route to his business in the morning.

According to The Ann Arbor News, Canton police Detective Sgt. Rick Pomorski discouraged armed citizens from intervening, and

suggested that they instead simply witness the event. He credited Fawzi with stopping the robbery, but contended that private citizens should not take direct action in such situations. *The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008*

Louisville, KY homeowner kills two teen burglars

As one of two home invaders aimed a gun at his head, a Louisville, KY resident reportedly faked a heart attack to distract the gunman long enough to draw his own handgun- and fatally shoot both thugs, according to The Louisville Courier Journal. Now it turns out that the thugs were armed with a gun that had been stolen from the Louisville Metro Police Department. According to WLKY Newschannel 32, it was not clear whether either of the dead teens had stolen the gun.

Dead are 19-year-old Earl Springer and Desmond Deshawn Turner. The homeowner, 70-year-old Billy Jackson, shot Springer in the chest and hit Turner in the neck and arm. He told authorities that he fired to defend himself and because he feared the gunmen were going to murder his wife, who was in another room

The Jacksons were cleaning up an apartment in their house that had been vacated recently, the newspaper reported. The thugs apparently forced their way in, and one drew a gun. It was when one of the suspects aimed the gun at his head that he faked the heart attack and pulled a handgun from his trouser waistband. The newspaper reported that Springer had been arrested May 23 for trafficking in a controlled substance and evidence tampering, and in May of 2007, he was convicted of carrying a concealed weapon, but a 60-day jail sentence was "conditionally discharged." Turner apparently had no criminal record. *The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008*

Cops lend radar guns

St. Joseph, MO, residents will get radar guns to nail speeders in their neighborhoods under a new program with the police department, according to The Daily Journal.

The new program was prompted by the limited number of officers available to catch speeders and because police want residents to become more involved in their neighborhoods. The department is seeking sponsors to buy two \$395 reconditioned radar guns to start the program.

Volunteers will run radar as part of a two-person team. One person will clock any vehicle traveling more than 10 mph over the speed limit, and the other person will write down the license plate and type of vehicle. If police later find the license plate and vehicle description match, a warning letter will be sent to the car's registered owner. *The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008*

S-F top cop skips qualifying

Looks like San Francisco Police Chief Heather Fong will be spending time away from the office...and on the gun range, after a report in The San Francisco Chronicle revealed that she had not qualified with her duty sidearm in several years.

The newspaper reported that Fong issued a statement in which she offered the alibi that "the duties of a police chief are demanding and time consuming."

"I acknowledge that I have not scheduled time for firearms re-qualifications," she said. "This will be addressed for future re-qualifications."

Gun rights activists seized on the disclosure, many noting that they practice far more often than the twice- annually mandated qualifications required for San Francisco police, including the chief.

The police commission appeared ready to take disciplinary action against the top cop.

Information about Fong's failure to fire her gun in qualifications came from a cop she disciplined for his involvement in the 2005 production of a controversial video that depicted officers responding to fake calls. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

Eagle slaying brings trial

An American Indian who shot a bald eagle for use in a tribal religious ceremony must stand trial, a federal appeals court has ruled, according to Associated Press and [Newsmax.com](#).

A three judge panel of the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver on May 8 reversed a 2006 lower court ruling that dismissed a criminal charge against Winslow Friday, a Northern Arapaho Indian who has acknowledged shooting a bald eagle in 2005 during the tribe's Sun Dance.

In dismissing the charge, US District Judge William Downes of Wyoming said the federal government has shown "callous indifference" to American Indian religious beliefs. Eagle feathers are a key element of ceremonies of the Northern Arapaho and many other tribes.

The appeals court ruled that American Indians' religious freedoms are not violated by federal law protecting eagles or the government's policy requiring American Indians to get permits to kill the birds. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

'Dressy' Taser totter arrested

What do you get when you combine a dress, pink rubber boots and a Taser in your wardrobe?

Well, in Thurston County, WA, you get arrested, and that may not only be due to the fact that this oddball ensemble showed up on the campus of Olympia's Capital High School on May 28...wrapped around a man.

Proving once again that truth is stranger—and sometimes more strangely dressed—than fiction, a 33-year-old guy identified by KING-5 news as Anya Adora was arrested after allegedly threatening students near the school's main entrance with the Taser. High school senior Ian Metz took one look at this guy and rushed to advise a teacher.

Maybe it was the pink boots that tipped off the cops that Adora might have been a couple of eggs shy of a breakfast. He was taken in for investigation of harassment and disorderly conduct, and was being held for a psychological evaluation.

There's a post script to all of this, according to KING. Adora had a Myspace page on the Internet, on which he had written pleasantries including "An eye for an eye, a child must die." He also had personal blog entries titled "Capital High School Tragedy" and "Dead kids are funny," the station reported. In the first blog, Adora reportedly wrote, "Can i (sic) please have someone to talk to about my gender issues?"

Metz told KING that he was coincidentally on the way to a psychology class when he encountered Adora. In the kind of understatement that usually comes with more age than this Olympia teen, Metz observed, "I've been learning about guys like this who may have issues. To me, I think he needs some help." If Metz doesn't get an "A" on his report card for that psychology class, there's no justice. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

No guns in suicide surge

Japan has reported a 2.9% increase in the suicide rate, with the bulk of the victims reportedly coming from among that nation's 30-something professional class.

The Times Online labeled it a "runaway suicide epidemic." What is not reported is that these suicides do not involve firearms. Tight gun laws in Japan have not prevented this suicide surge.

Instead, the newspaper reported, those taking their own lives are using hydrogen sulphide gas, which can be generated by combining "standard household products." Hanging and drug overdoses also account for some Japanese suicides.

More than 30,000 people committed suicide in Japan last year, the newspaper said. A study said that people in their thirties are most likely to take their own lives. Japanese officials blame "work-related depression" for the large number of suicides.

Japan has also reported a spike in the number of random stabbings. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

Prison time for ex-sheriff

From the "Only Cops Should Have Guns" file comes the story of former Robeson, NC, County Sheriff Glenn Maynor, who has swapped his badge for prison duds as he started serving six years in the gray bar hotel as a guest of the federal government.

Maynor pleaded guilty last autumn to lying to a grand jury. He also went down for misuse of federal funds, which earned him five of the six years he will be staring at bars and barbed wire from the inside.

The ex-lawman's trip to the calaboose is the result of a six- year investigation by federal and state officials into corruption in the Robeson County Sheriff's Department. Maynor was one of 22 lawmen who have gone down for all kinds of crimes, including arson and money laundering. That investigation was called "Operation Tarnished Badge."

The tough sentence came after US District Judge Terrence Boyle rejected a plea bargain in May that would have kept Maynor imprisoned for 18 to 24 months.

When Maynor took office, he promised the department would be honest, but instead of exposing corruption, he engaged in it. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

US indicts Canadian woman, on charges of running guns

A Windsor, Ontario, woman already facing dozens of Canadian charges was slapped with a US indictment on June 19 for her alleged role in a criminal organization that smuggled guns across the border from Detroit, MI, to sell in Windsor.

Investigators seized ammunition magazines, 235 rounds of ammo and 27 guns in downtown Windsor after the nine-month investigation. Eleven of the guns were loaded. Police intercepted

another 10 guns in Detroit that they say were headed across the border. It was the largest illegal gun seizure in Windsor history. Denisa Manga, 21, of Windsor, faces several US charges including smuggling, unlicensed dealing in firearms and unlawful transfer of firearms for allegedly sneaking caches of illegal guns from Detroit and selling them—including to undercover cops—in downtown Windsor.

In announcing the indictments, handed down, US attorney Stephen J. Murphy said the alleged conspiracy was "a drugs for-guns-and-cash smuggling operation."

He stressed the importance of cooperation between US and Canadian authorities to eradicate the illegal smuggling and selling of guns, which "terrorize" Canadian and US citizens. "To put up a real united front at the border and let criminals know that they may not respect the borders that exist, but there's a sovereign border between these two countries that are not going to allow for guns, drugs and other contraband to just shuttle without any sort of scrutiny," he said.

"This particular case is part and parcel of what we do so well in the U.S. attorney's office in Detroit. Our bread and butter has and will continue to be violent criminal activity and interdicting illegal guns and narcotics."

Murphy also announced during a news conference that five Detroit-area residents are charged in connection with the gun smuggling scheme besides Manga. They were identified as Terrance D. Coles Jr., 23, Craiprana C. Johnson Jr., 23, Chante R. Mark, 21, Larice R. Matthews, 21, and Rhonda M. Loving, 25. Are all charged with violating US smuggling and firearms laws.

Windsor police Chief Gary Smith, members of the OPP and representatives from several US police organizations also joined the news conference.

The 39-count indictment alleges the suspects illegally transported 27 guns from Detroit to Windsor between February and June and sold them to undercover Canadian cops.

Manga, along with her brother Julio Manga, 18, were arrested earlier in June in Windsor.

Denisa Manga faces another 26 criminal charges and 24 charges under the Customs Act in Canada.

Julio Manga is facing 14 criminal counts and 14 charges under the Customs Act in Canada.

Authorities alleged that Denisa Manga was one of the couriers who brought the guns across the border and sold them to undercover officers.

Assistant U.S. attorney Mark Chasteen said undercover officers completed 10 transactions with the gun smugglers. Police set up some other deals, but they fell through, he said.

Eight of the completed deals were done in Windsor. In those Windsor deals, the alleged smugglers traded the guns for US cash. The guns typically sold for about \$1,100 each. Some went for \$2,200 each, said Chasteen.

Denisa Manga faces the US charges for her alleged role in two of those transactions.

"She delivered them to the undercover officers and took money from the undercover officers, and brought the money back to the United States," said Chasteen.

She allegedly smuggled guns from Detroit and sold them to undercover officers on Feb. 5, and again on Feb. 13.

Murphy said the guns were smuggled across the border in false panels and hidden compartments of cars.

Smith said investigators gave Canada Border Service Agency the heads up so customs officers would let the alleged smugglers through the border. After that, police let them make their way into downtown Windsor, met up with them and bought the guns.

U.S. authorities said the two Detroit transactions involved suspects trading guns to undercover officers for what they thought was ecstasy. Prosecutors said Coles and Johnson arranged to trade guns for drugs and Mark did the same in a second deal. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

Australia's NSW upper house passes gun law reform measure

New gun laws passed in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) parliament will start unravelling strict measures brought in after the 1996 Port Arthur massacre, the NSW Greens say, according to the Australian Associated Press (AAP).

A bill, passed on on June 19 by the upper house of the state parliament, removes the 28-day waiting period for people with a registration waiting for a second or subsequent gun.

The Shooters Party-initiated bill also removes the need to register guns made prior to 1900 and introduces more exemptions for people without a license to participate at shooting clubs.

Greens MP Lee Rhiannon said the changes brought NSW "closer to the US with its liberal attitude to firearm use," reform measure AAP reported

"The Shooters Party's private member bill represents the first unraveling of national uniform gun laws developed after the Port Arthur massacre," Rhiannon said.

The bill was passed with the support of both the government and the coalition.

Rhiannon said the government backed the bill to gain Shooters Party support for its electricity privatization plans.

The government does not hold a majority in the upper house and will need the support of minor parties to pass its planned sell-off of the state's electricity retailers.

The Shooters Party's reform bill now goes before the lower house of the NSW parliament. [The New GUN WEEK, July 1, 2008](#)

Hindsight

DC vs. Heller decision offers much food for thought

by Joseph P. Tartaro, Executive Editor

The landmark Supreme Court decision in District of Columbia vs. Heller might have surprised some journalists, affirming as it did the majority opinion of the American people, an opinion which most newspapers did not share.

It delighted most proponents of firearms civil rights and self-defense. Some gunowners and activists may have been disappointed that it did not go far enough.

However, they should remember that this was a "keep" case, not a "bear" case. It affirmed the individual right to have arms, particularly handguns, in the home for personal defense. It overturned an outright ban on effective defense in the home, but

it left open to future decisions by future courts as to what other parameters of gun control would fence in future generalizations. It certainly disappointed most anti-gunners and perhaps even some who consider themselves proponents of firearms civil rights and the moral right to self-defense.

It angered some of the anti-self-defense crowd, such as the Violence Policy Center, which showered its vituperative wrath on the majority decision's author, Justice Antonin Scalia. It was a classic case of blaming the chief messenger for a ruling that was endorsed by four other justices. The VPC website, as well as the HuffingtonPost website, laced into Scalia for his 2007 World Forum award as Sport Shooting Ambassador, and showed the cover of the Gun Week Apr. 10, 2007 issue with Scalia's picture. They did not spread their vitriol to the rest of the majority. The Brady Campaign took the decision in a calmer vein. In fact, they took it to mean that Scalia's opinion had taken the extremes out of the gun issue debate; it hadn't put the anti-gunners out of business.

The New York Times, a key voice of the gun control movement, called Scalia's majority opinion his most important in his 22 years on the court. The Times took comfort in the fact that his opinion recognized that the justices were "aware of the problem of handgun violence in this country" and "take seriously" the arguments in favor of prohibiting handgun ownership. The Chicago Tribune may have keynoted the feelings of many anti-gunners when it called for repeal of the Second Amendment in its own editorial commentary on the Heller decision. An editorial in The New York Sun on June 27 raised some important things to remember when considering the impact of the Supreme Court's Heller decision.

The Sun may be as close as one can come to an objective, if not pro-firearms civil rights newspaper in New York City.

The Sun's noted in an editorial headlined to call attention to the First, Second and Fourteenth Amendments that "Both of the men running for president displayed their shortcomings yesterday in reacting to the Supreme Court's ruling that the Second Amendment includes an individual right to keep a handgun at home for self-defense. The amendments at stake include not only the Second but also the First and the 14th, so even those who aren't handgun enthusiasts or partisans of gun control will want to pay attention.

"Senator Obama's statement was the more astounding one, if only because it came from a professor of constitutional law and a former editor of the Harvard Law Review. It's hard to know where to begin. First was the audacity of Mr. Obama appearing to praise the court's finding that the Second Amendment right to bear arms applies to individuals and not only to militias. The ruling was made by a five to four margin, and two of the justices in the majority—the chief and Justice Alito—wouldn't be on the federal high court at all if Senator Obama had gotten his way during their confirmation hearings. Senator McCain voted to confirm both, while Mr. Obama voted against them. Should Justice Kennedy, 71, or Justice Scalia, 72, decide to retire in the next four years, there's little reason to think that a President Obama would fill the vacancy with a judge who would protect gun rights," The Sun continued, turning to an examination of McCain's as well as Obama's records.

"Then was Mr. Obama's statement, in respect of gun rights, 'I know that what works in Chicago may not work in Cheyenne.' It is true that our federal system gives state and local governments the ability to adjust policies to suit regional differences. But the federal courts have read the due process and equal protection clauses of the 14th Amendment, which was adopted in 1868 after the Civil War, to restrict the state and local governments from infringing on the rights enshrined in the federal Constitution. Imagine the fuss that would be put up by NARAL, for example, were Senator McCain to suggest that what works in New York as far as abortion rights may not work in Alabama. Or by the NAACP—and rightfully so—were Mr. McCain to suggest that what works in the North as far as integrated education doesn't work in the South. Do the people of Chicago not deserve as full a Bill of Rights as those in Cheyenne? If Mr. Obama truly believes that gun laws should be left to the states and local governments, the intellectually honest position would be to favor repeal of the Second Amendment.

"Meanwhile, Senator McCain greeted the decision with a statement that said, today's ruling recognizes that gun ownership is an important right—sacred, just as the right to free speech and assembly.' If Mr. McCain really believes the right to free speech is 'sacred,' why has he devoted so much time and energy in his congressional career to imposing new restrictions on campaign speech under the rubric of campaign finance 'reform'? Given all that Mr. McCain has done to shred the First Amendment with the McCain-Feingold law restricting the airing of television commercials mentioning candidates' names within 30 days of a primary or 60 days of a general election, his claim that he finds gun rights as 'sacred' as 'free speech' is entirely un reassuring.

"There are plenty of swing voters in swing states such as Pennsylvania and Ohio who own guns and would like to know that their Constitutional right to do so will be safe four years from now, regardless of who leaves the Supreme Court and who joins.

"And they have reason to be worried. Their civil rights yesterday were upheld by only the narrowest of margins. A single vote. The liberal wing of the court—encompassing Justices Ginsburg, Stevens, Souter, and Breyer—looked hard at the Second Amendment, and found that the Amendment doesn't protect the rights of ordinary gun owners. It took the conservative wing of the court— Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Scalia, Thomas, and Alito—joined by swing vote, Justice Kennedy, to see this as a civil rights issue and to rule accordingly.

"If ever a precedent were in peril, this is the one. The Supreme Court will no doubt hear a series of cases in the coming years challenging various gun laws, including perhaps those of our own city of New York. One reassurance as far as Mr. McCain goes is that President Bush, who signed McCainFeingold into law, also nominated the justices, Roberts and Alito, who made yesterday's majority ruling possible. The Second Amendment was adopted in 1791. Which may yet itself be the greatest reassurance, that we have a government not only of individuals with human frailties but of laws that have a way of outlasting both the judges and the politicians," The Sun's editorial concluded.

The opinion did not specify the standard by which the court would evaluate gun restrictions in future cases, but it showed us the road ahead. [The New GUN WEEK](#), July 1, 2008

NRA NEWS RELEASE

Department of the Interior Extends Deadline for Comments Regarding Right-to-Carry in National Parks and Wildlife Refuges Until August 8

Like a quarterback taking a knee in the fourth quarter, two of Congress's most ardent opponents of our Right to Keep and Bear Arms are trying to run out the clock on efforts to enhance your right to self-defense in our national parks and wildlife refuges.

For two months, we have been asking NRA members and gun owners to submit comments in support of allowing law-abiding citizens to carry their legally-owned firearms in national parks and wildlife refuges -- and tens of thousand of you have done so. The deadline to submit comments expired on June 30 -- or so we thought.

Rather than closing the proscribed comments period as scheduled and moving toward finalizing this federal regulation, U.S. Senator Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii) and U.S. Representative Raul Grijalva (D-Arizona), succeeded in delaying the implementation of the final rule by bullying the Department of the Interior (their respective congressional subcommittees have oversight of national parks) to extend the [deadline for comments](#) an additional 30 days! In a [letter](#) to Secretary Kempthorne, Senator Akaka and Representative Grijalva asked that the public comment period be extended, citing the recent decision in the [District of Columbia v. Heller](#).

In truth, however, now that the Supreme Court has affirmed that the Second Amendment guarantees an individual right, it is more important than ever that we move toward final resolution on this matter and extend the most basic right of self-defense to law-abiding citizens visiting national parks and refuges.

The goal of their strategy is clear. Extending the public comment period amounts to a blatant and intentional stalling tactic; further pushing back resolution on this matter, possibly until after the election, into a new Administration. This needless extension will also allow opponents of carrying guns in national parks (like the Humane Society of the U.S. and the National Parks Conservation Association) to rally their troops to express their opposition to this commonsense proposal.

While we disagree with the decision to extend the comments period on this issue, it is now more important than ever that we give the anti-gunners what they profess to want-additional comments. Gun owners, Right-to-Carry permit holders, and all Second

Amendment supporters must deluge the Department of the Interior with comments in support of this proposal! *The new deadline for submitting comments is August 8, 2008.*

Please submit your comments on-line at:

<http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main?main=SubmitComment&o=090000648066022a>

Or in writing to:

Public Comments Processing

Attn: 1024-AD70

Division of Policy and Directives Management

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222

Arlington, VA 22203

Please act today and forward this message and request to your family, friends, and fellow firearm owners!

--NRA-ILA

NSSF Bullet Points—07/07/2008

NSSF to Sen. Obama:

'Where Do You Stand on Gun Bans?'

Following the recent landmark Second Amendment ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, the National Shooting Sports Foundation sent presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) a letter, dated July 4, asking whether he believes laws in his hometown of Chicago that ban law-abiding citizens from having firearms, including handguns in their homes, violate the Second Amendment.

[Read the Letter](#) | [Press Release](#)

- [D.C. OFFICIALS WEIGH KEEPING SEMI-AUTO PISTOLS ILLEGAL](#) . . . Following the recent Supreme Court decision that ruled the Washington, D.C., handgun ban unconstitutional, officials in the District of Columbia are attempting to circumvent the high court by [outlawing semi-automatic pistols](#) in reluctant acceptance of revolvers. "The D.C. ban of semi-automatics is unjustified," said Smith & Wesson's Paul Pluff. "With all the safety features and reliability of today's semi-auto pistols, they have become an integral component for personal protection. With the adjunct of higher capacity revolvers and quality speed reloading devices, semi-automatic capacities should not be the excuse for the ban of these personal protection firearms." NSSF, which filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the Heller case that was cited during oral arguments and in Justice Scalia's opinion, will continue to fight any ban on firearms ownership for law-abiding citizens.
- [IN ONE YEAR, PENNSYLVANIA YOUTH SHOOT DOUBLES IN SIZE](#) . . . In just one year, the number of youths competing at Pennsylvania's annual [Scholastic Clay Target Program](#)

championship event doubled, [reports The News-Item](#). About 40 squads, or 200 young trapshooters -- up from 20 squads last year -- took part this past weekend at the event in Elysburg. "I think what happens is the kids who are doing it tell their buddies, and it kind of snowballs," said Greg Lucas, SCTP volunteer state director. Across the country, the story is similar as the popular NSSF program continues to grow each year. Learn more about SCTP, upcoming competitions and more at www.nssf.org/sctp.

- [AUDIT FAULTS NEW YORK CITY POLICE FOR LOSING TRACK OF GUNS](#) ... According to a New York City audit released last week, and [reported in the New York Times](#), nearly one out of three handguns and rifles that had been turned into the New York City Police Department could not be accounted for. "Perhaps Mayor Bloomberg's time, energy, and of course the taxpayer dollars he controls, would be better spent investigating his own missing firearms instead of harassing law-abiding, federally licensed firearms retailers from out of state," said NSSF Senior Vice President and General Counsel Lawrence G. Keane.
- ['WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE'](#) ... David Petzal, Field & Stream magazine's newly named full-time rifles editor and author of its online [Gun Nut blog](#), provided an interesting look at a recent issue of The New York Times following the Supreme Court's Second Amendment ruling. [Read Petzal's blog entry](#).

CCRKBA--NEWS RELEASE **WHILE BLOOMBERG FRETS ABOUT OUR GUNS, NYPD CAN'T KEEP TRACK OF THEIRS**

(07/02/2008)--BELLEVUE, WA – Anti-gun New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg should “mind his own store before telling others how to operate theirs,” said the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, after an audit found that the New York Police Department lost track of dozens of guns in its own storage lockers.

“While this guy has been bullying gun dealers around the country about so-called ‘slip-shod’ operations,” chuckled CCRKBA Chairman Alan Gottlieb, “his own police department seems to be slipping quite a bit on its own. Bloomberg needs to back off, shut up and get his own house in order before telling others how to operate.”

According to the New York Times, “nearly one out of three handguns and rifles that had been turned in to the police could not be immediately accounted for in a Manhattan property clerk’s office.”

“We’re waiting for Bloomberg to send a team of undercover vigilante investigators down there to find out what’s wrong,” Gottlieb said. “Can one of his infamous lawsuits be far behind?”

Bloomberg dispatched non-police “investigators” to run stings on gun shops in several states more than two years ago, ostensibly to show how easy it is to illegally obtain guns in other states. He then sued gun dealers in five states. This rogue operation landed the mayor’s office in hot water with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for jeopardizing on-going legitimate investigations. Ultimately the Justice Department warned the mayor not to pull that stunt again.

“If Mayor Bloomberg wants to find mismanagement of a firearms inventory,” Gottlieb stated, “he doesn’t need to send goon squads to Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia or anywhere outside of his jurisdiction. All he really needs to do is visit the police property room in Manhattan and turn his lawyers loose.

“It’s a pity that Bloomberg can’t lose his arrogant attitude as easily as his cops can lose track of their gun inventory,” he concluded.

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SAF NEWS RELEASE **SAF CALLS CHICAGO TRIBUNE PLEA TO REPEAL 2A ‘UNCONSCIONABLE’**

(06/27/2008)--BELLEVUE, WA – The Chicago Tribune’s call for repeal of the Second Amendment following the historic Heller Decision is an “unconscionable attack on the entire Bill of Rights and the freedoms it protects,” the Second Amendment Foundation said today.

In an editorial published on the day after the Supreme Court handed down its 5-4 ruling, the newspaper called the Second Amendment an “anachronism” that should be repealed. The newspaper supported its argument by falsely claiming that a 1939 case, U.S. v Miller, established the amendment as a “collective right” that applied only to service in some type of militia.

“The Chicago Tribune’s editors have demonstrated an appalling short-sightedness,” said SAF founder Alan Gottlieb. “If they are so willing to abandon one civil right for an entire class of American citizens, what’s next? Perhaps they would strip some citizens of their First Amendment rights to free speech or religion. Heaven help us should the Chicago Tribune editorial board one day decide that they don’t care for the editorial slant of their competitors at the Sun-Times, and call for a restriction on that newspaper’s freedom of the press.

“Once you make it acceptable to destroy one civil right,” Gottlieb observed, “it does not take a very big leap

to embrace limitations on, or the abolition of, another civil right.

“Not once, in all the years that gun rights organizations have been vilified in the editorial columns of the Tribune and other newspapers did anyone from the firearms community suggest we should repeal the First Amendment,” he stated. “Unlike elitist newspaper editors, gun owners understand that the Bill of Rights is an all-or-nothing document, not a civil rights buffet from which we can pick and choose the rights we want to enjoy and those for which we have no stomach.

“We have always known the Second Amendment affirmed an individual civil right, and a truly objective reading of history by the Chicago Tribune would – if they had any notion of objectivity – lead them to the same conclusion,” Gottlieb concluded. “A generation of parents and grandparents of those now writing such nonsense in the Tribune risked, and all too frequently lost their lives to defend all of the freedoms enumerated in the Bill of Rights. The Tribune editors may as well just spit on their graves.”

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GOA NEWS RELEASE

GOA Hits The Airwaves On Heller Decision -- Now looks forward to challenging other gun control laws around the country

Gun Owners of America E-Mail Alert
8001 Forbes Place, Suite 102, Springfield, VA 22151
Phone: 703-321-8585 / FAX: 703-321-8408
<http://www.gunowners.org/> -- Friday, June 27, 2008

Yesterday was a historic day for the gun rights movement.

For starters, Gun Owners of America is pleased that the U.S. Supreme Court, in the DC v. Heller opinion, struck down the handgun ban and trigger lock requirement in the nation's capital.

As a result, GOA experts have spent the last two days using radio, TV and print media to explain the Court's decision and its impact upon the future of the gun debate in America.

GOA's amicus brief urged the Court not to use the Heller case as a springboard to resolve the constitutionality of all of the nation's firearms laws. In fact, the GOA brief was the only one making the request not to rule on automatic weapons and other issues, upholding judicial restraint.

GOA is pleased that the judges heeded our admonition to limit the Court's holding to the case before it.

In so doing, the Court's decision -- in dissenting Justice Breyer's words -- "threatens to throw into doubt the

constitutionality of gun laws throughout the United States."

Notable gun banner, Dianne Feinstein, was equally upset, saying she was "profoundly disappointed" in the Court decision.

The U.S. Supreme Court also followed GOA's urging and refused to do any balancing of governmental powers and individual liberties -- it just ruled the ban was prohibited by the text of the Second Amendment, saying that its language elevates, above all other interests, the "right of law-abiding, responsible citizens to use arms in defense of hearth and home."

However, the Court stated its opinion should "not be taken to cast doubt" on at least some prohibited persons' restrictions, gun free school zones bans and dealer licensing requirements. This dicta implies that, in the future, courts might go further than the Constitution permits in upholding some gun restrictions.

Nevertheless, the Court's opinion directly conflicts with what anti-rights advocates -- like those in the Brady Campaign -- have been saying for years. So GOA welcomes the opportunity to continue our fight for the people's right to keep and bear arms.

GOA is already preparing to wage constitutional challenges to a range of laws -- federal, state and local -- that violate the Second Amendment principles endorsed by the Court in yesterday's majority opinion.

To contribute to these efforts, you can go to <http://www.gunowners.com/dogfund.htm> and make a tax deductible contribution to the Defend Our Guns (DOG) Fund. Contributing to this DOG Fund will allow our committed and courageous legal team to make Justice Breyer's fears a reality.

Gun Owners Foundation wants to lay the groundwork for the next battle in the Second Amendment war between those of us who love liberty and those who would allow the government to disarm us as the first step to our own enslavement.

Your contribution to the DOG Fund is tax deductible, and it will go a long way towards helping us preserve our Second Amendment rights -- not only for ourselves, but for our children as well.

ACSL: News links

08/07/06 Knife-Crime Supersedes Terrorism as England's Biggest Public Safety Concern

London, England (AHN) -- Knife-crime has replaced terrorism as the number one threat to public safety, according to British police.

With 18 murders by knife so far this year, and 9 of those occurring in the first 10 weeks, Deputy Commissioner Sir Paul Stephenson reportedly announced that the police

force is forming a special knife-crime unit, which will send officers specially trained to randomly search known gang members and their associates who are suspected of carrying or supplying the illegal weapons.

The increase in stabbings has been a growing problem in recent years. In 2007, 27 people were killed by the blade. Statistics show those at highest risk are young males, 14-24, often black or Asian inner-city gang members.

To combat this phenomenon, police initiated Operation Blunt 2 in May, in which officers used scanners similar to those found in airports to detect weapons. While 500 knives were seized, and 1,200 arrests made in the 27,000 searches, police are saying it hasn't done enough to stop the violence.

One statistic gathered under the Freedom of Information Act showed that every 24 minutes in the U.K. there is a knife crime. While the majority do not end in death, thousands every year incur injuries and trauma from stabbings.

Carrying knives is generally illegal in the U.K, unless the knife meets certain regulations. A folding pocket knife 3 inches or less is allowed.

Police say the majority of people caught carrying knives say they carry them for protection.

<http://www.allheadlinenews.com/articles/7011517800>

08/07/05 Kids' safety under the gun

Last week, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the District of Columbia's long-standing handgun ban. The American Academy of Pediatrics, a national organization of more than 60,000 pediatricians, had asked the court to uphold the ban.

Why do the doctors care? Every day, we see proof that gun violence destroys our patients' futures, stealing their childhood innocence and dreams and sometimes their lives.

Firearms injuries take the lives of more American children and young adults than all natural causes combined. Just in the past month, the constant drumbeat of headlines across the nation - including a 6-month-old girl from Mattapan who was shot and critically injured while in her father's arms - are stark reminders of the pain and destruction linked to firearms.

More than 3,000 American children and teenagers - eight every day, on average - die from firearms injuries. More than 17,000 - 48 every day - suffer non-fatal wounds.

The devastation caused by gun wounds ripples far beyond the victim. Some urban toddlers learn to hit the ground when they hear the pop-pop-pop of gunfire long before they learn their ABCs. Children, forbidden to play outside for fear of violence, grow obese indoors. Grieving family members and friends face a higher risk of

psychological problems. One young patient of mine goes out of his way on his walk to school, trying to avoid memories of seeing someone gunned down in a nearby park.

Last summer, a 15-year-old boy came into my office gripping a newspaper clipping with a graphic X marking the spot of all the shootings in his neighborhood that week. Pointing to a small street in the middle of the sea of Xs, he said, "This is where I live" and pleaded for help to get out.

These kinds of stories aren't rare. They should be.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has long advised parents to protect our children. Irrefutable research shows that when there is a handgun at home, the risk of unintentional, suicidal or intentional deaths for children and teens rises dramatically. In many cases, these studies simply show what every parent already knows: Kids are curious - if they find a gun they will check it out.

Teenagers are impulsive and act on their impulses. If they are sad or mad or just need to prove themselves, ready availability of a handgun can turn a bad day into a tragedy.

Young people in our communities are fighting back. They are joining organizations to counter the growth of gangs. They work with police to create neighborhood treaties. They volunteer to clean up their communities, create art in public spaces, help the elderly and teach younger kids after school and in summer camp.

In Boston this summer, community organizations ranging from Citizens for Safety to the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization are working tirelessly to keep our children safe.

But it shouldn't just be up to kids and good Samaritans to protect our children. Simple, common-sense regulation of handguns can save lives. There is simply no logical reason why a leading cause of childhood death and disability should be less regulated than cars or ground beef.

The Supreme Court failed to protect our children when it rejected D.C.'s sensible handgun ban.

We don't have that luxury. We cannot fail our children. For parents, that means standing up for the right to not have a gun in the house and to say "no" to letting their children play in homes where there are guns.

Parents must remember that the safest home is one without handguns. If there is a gun in the home, the risk to children can be reduced if the weapon is stored locked and unloaded. Law or no law, we can do better for our kids - and ourselves.

Robert Sege, director of ambulatory pediatrics at Boston Medical Center, serves on the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Injury, Violence and Poison Prevention.

http://news.bostonherald.com/news/opinion/op_ed/view.bg?articleid=1105047

08/07/05 Guns still elusive for D.C. residents

Those looking to buy firearms after the Supreme Court ruling against the District of Columbia's gun ban are out of luck. Purchasing regulations have yet to be written.

WASHINGTON -- Days after the Supreme Court ruled that residents of the nation's capital can keep handguns at home for self-defense, George Harley walked out of a Maryland gun shop disheartened, his goal of legally having a gun to protect his family put on hold.

Since before Harley, 30, was born, the District of Columbia has restricted its residents' ownership of handguns. After the high court's ruling was handed down late last month, Harley was one of several dozen Washington residents who came to the Atlantic Guns shop in Silver Spring, Md., just over the district line, to ask about buying a gun.

FOR THE RECORD:

Handgun ban —An article in Saturday's Section A on District of Columbia residents interested in legally purchasing handguns referred to a federal ban on the transport of firearms across state lines. In fact, the ban prohibits the purchase of a handgun in a state in which the buyer is not a resident unless the weapon is transferred for pickup to a federally licensed firearms dealer in the buyer's home state.

They were all told the same thing: Go home.

"Presently, there's no change to anything," said Atlantic Guns owner Stephen Schneider. "There's no procedure in place for them to purchase a handgun because regulations haven't been written."

Washington Mayor Adrian M. Fenty has vowed to have the strictest gun laws possible, and the city's plans for the registration process, expected to be released in about two weeks, is being closely watched.

"If the mayor was smart, he would have kept his mouth shut," said Deborah Curtis, co-owner and general manager of Blue Ridge Arsenal in Chantilly, Va., referring to Fenty's vocal support of strict regulations. "It just got people up in arms. He should have just let it play out."

On Tuesday, District of Columbia Council member Phil Mendelson introduced legislation to put the city in compliance with the Supreme Court ruling by allowing residents to have handguns in their homes for self-defense. Under normal circumstances, the bill, which has unanimous support, would be voted on in September, after the council returns from a summer break, but action could come sooner if emergency legislation is introduced, said

Jason J. Shedlock, an aide to Mendelson. The council's last session before the recess is July 15.

Even after guidelines are finalized, though, it's unclear how long it will take for Washingtonians to legally have handguns in their homes.

For instance, the federal ban on the transport of firearms across state lines means that gun shops outside the district could sell to a city resident, but the buyer could not leave the store with a weapon. The seller would have to transfer the gun to a federally licensed dealer in Washington, and the buyer would pick it up there. But there are no federally licensed gun shops in the district, police said.

Nor does there appear to be a rush by gun dealers to open a shop in the city. The firearms registration section of the Metropolitan Police Department has received only a trickle of inquiries. As of Thursday afternoon, the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the first contact for anyone wanting to open a gun shop, had received no applications, said Mike Campbell, a spokesman for the Washington field division.

If city officials "were to impose regulations [for opening gun shops] that imposed bureaucratic hurdles, they would face legal battles," said Robert A. Levy, a constitutional scholar at the Cato Institute, a libertarian policy research center. Levy recruited the plaintiff in the Supreme Court case and served as co-counsel. "If we find that those requirements are too burdensome, it would be a . . . violation of the court's ruling."

Curtis, whose gun shop is about 30 miles west of the Capitol, said she wouldn't consider opening a store in Washington. "For the average gun shop owner, you're not going to get rich selling," she said. "We don't live like that Nicholas Cage movie, 'Lord of War' " -- the story of an illegal arms dealer.

Bernie Conatser, owner of Virginia Arms Co. in Manassas, Va., said he watched the Supreme Court decision closely, but not strictly for business reasons.

"I don't think we had anything to gain from a financial perspective, at least in the short term," he said. "But the decision will have a far-reaching impact on 2nd Amendment rights."

The Supreme Court ruling has intensified a long-standing debate in the city, which battled a high crime rate both before and after the 1976 gun ban took effect. Last year, 181 homicides were recorded, a significant decline that came amid a national decrease in violent crime.

Harley, who lives in northeast Washington, just inside the district, said he wouldn't describe himself as a gun enthusiast. If he really wanted a gun, he said, he would be living a mile away in Maryland.

But he said he remembers when the city was dubbed the "murder capital" in the early 1990s.

He reads the newspaper daily, he said, and hears about

home-invasion robberies. And if something like that happens in his home, he said, he wants the security of a firearm to protect his wife and his 5-year-old daughter.

"Sit and wait," he said. "That's all we can do."

As he walked his dog in the Dupont Circle neighborhood Tuesday evening, another city resident, Costa Tsantalos said that he once opposed the gun ban -- but that was before he was a police officer in Norfolk, Va.

"I used to say, 'We should let the good guys have them, too,'" Tsantalos said as his Rhodesian ridgeback-pit bull mix eyed a squirrel. "But just seeing the staggering stupidity of people and their inability to control themselves, even good people, changed my mind."

Still, he said, he wants to buy a handgun for self-defense as soon as the law allows.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-dcgunban5-2008jul05,0,7778286.story>

08/07/02 NYPD Lacks Gun Control, Audit Finds

The New York City Police Department can't keep track of the guns it seizes, according to a report issued yesterday.

New York City Comptroller William C. Thompson Jr. referred to the NYPD's current system of holding surrendered and confiscated firearms as unacceptable and demanded immediate improvements after announcing yesterday the results of his audit in lower Manhattan.

In June of last year, Thompson's audit gauged whether the NYPD's Manhattan Property Clerk Division - which receives, catalogs and protects weapons brought into custody - was adequately doing its job. The audit said Manhattan officials failed to account for or find 94 of the 324 firearms specified, adding that other boroughs' property divisions were found in a "similar state of disarray."

Assistant Chief Michael Collins, an NYPD spokesman, said in a statement that "[e]very firearm involved in the comptroller's audit was accounted for, although some could not be immediately produced because they were removed from their original storage positions for court appearances, or destruction."

<http://www.officer.com/online/article.jsp?siteSection=1&id=42129>

08/07/02 Gun ruling shines spotlight on real problems

By CHARLES A. WILLIAMS III

I'M A CARD-carrying Democrat. Moreover, as a former co-chairman of Philadelphia Against Drugs, Guns and Violence, I abhor guns and the carnage they create.

While working with Operation Ceasefire, I helped to promote a program that promises a mandatory five years

tacked onto a defendant's sentence when the defendant uses a gun in the commission of a crime.

Rally after rally and march after march, we would talk about the need to put down guns and "stop the violence" - but let me be clear, at no point did I believe that restricting an individual's rights to own a gun would improve the situation in the communities hardest hit by drug-related gun violence.

So, when the Supreme Court ruled last week that the rights of a U.S. citizen to own a gun for hunting and personal protection could not be infringed upon, thereby making Washington's gun law illegal, I wasn't the least bit upset.

I never felt so good about a decision rendered by the court's conservative majority. I never thought that I would agree with Associate Justices Scalia or Thomas. (I generally despise the two, on the basis of their legal renderings.)

But Thursday's ruling makes perfect sense to this Democrat. (Alito and Roberts were spot on as well.)

The court's conservative majority decided to ignore the liberals who believe that the only way to make our communities safer is to impose further gun restrictions on law-abiding Americans.

Essentially, the court upheld the Second Amendment, which is contained within the U.S. Constitution, as . . . well . . . constitutional.

In my opinion, the National Rifle Association has always been right (pun intended) on this issue. Wrong on most others, but right on this one.

And this ruling will force liberals to focus on the real reasons for gun violence.

At some point, liberals and anti-gun folks will have to realize that it is failing families, schools and communities that lead to drug-related gun violence, not guns purchased by law-abiding citizens.

Even if you examine straw purchases, the impact is infinitesimal when compared with the impact of poor education, absentee fathers and a community lacking a moral focus and appropriate priorities. All of these things lead a young person to make the wrong choices, which is at the heart of our gun violence problem in urban America.

By the way, the same can be said for this silly public-relations hoax that we call gun "buyback" programs. What a waste of time, energy and effort. There is no research to demonstrate that such programs lead to even a slight decrease in gun violence.

So, why do we do them? We do them because it allows incompetent politicians to feel as though they're doing something. They want to be able to go back to their under-informed constituents and say, Hey! Look at me. I'm doing something about the 400 murders, on average, in

Philadelphia yearly, or the five or six gunshot victims a day! When they really aren't.

To add insult to injury, these ineffective buyback programs are usually supported by the very radio stations that are responsible for playing rap songs glorifying drug-dealing, homicide and gunplay. Hypocrisy, thy name is . . .

These are the kinds of things you won't hear from Al Sharpton's mouth. These are the words of truth, which many, though unwisely, choose to ignore.

IN OTHER WORDS, guns don't kill people - misguided, unloved, disconnected, uneducated, angry youth kill people. Youth without mentors and role models kill people.

So, those liberals who purport to really want to end senseless gun violence should focus on changing that unfortunate reality - instead of U.S. gun laws. *

Charles A. Williams III is a co-host of "Grimaldi vs. Williams" on the Big Talker 1210/AM. His Web site is drchuckspeaks.com.

http://www.philly.com/dailynews/opinion/20080702_Gun_ruling_shines_spotlight_on_real_problems.html

08/07/02 W. Valley man foils burglars - in his underwear, with a shotgun - The Salt Lake Tribune

WEST VALLEY CITY - Next time, maybe some pants?

Still, West Valley City homeowner Tony Gamonal managed to foil burglars when he took out after them with a shotgun -- and wearing only his boxer shorts.

2News reports today that he surprised the burglars, then armed himself to give chase. A nearby police officer joined him, eventually capturing one of the pair, a woman. The second suspect, a man, remained at large.

Gamonal says it wasn't until the capture that he realized he was outside, in the street, in his underwear.

"I looked down and said, 'Oh man . . . here I am,'" he told 2News.

Gamonal says this is the second time robbers have targeted his home in two weeks.

The last time, the hinges were cut off his gate and up to \$10,000 worth of property was stolen. The fence around his home has also been vandalized with spray-paint.

He says he's had it. And he plans to protect his home -- regardless of what he is, or is not, wearing

"If you can't be safe in your own home, where can you be?" Gamonal says. "There was no doubt; I was so mad that I would have shot them."

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_9763359?source=rss

08/07/01 Fed-Up Families Turn To Barbed Wire, Shotguns To Police Neighborhood

Homeowners: 'Someone Is Going To Get Hurt

SANFORD, Fla. -- Families in a crime-ridden Central Florida neighborhood are arming themselves with shotguns and talking about adding electric barbed wire to stop thieves targeting their homes.

"Somebody is going to end up getting hurt," resident Andrea Fine said. "The homeowners are tense. We are all on edge. For the first time in my life I'm really scared to live in my home."

Homeowners living near and on Sanford Avenue in Sanford said crime is so bad that some of them have been robbed three times.

"We were told they would come back and they came back," homeowner Pat Doughty said.

She is one of several residents who have armed themselves and plan to go to extremes to protect their property.

"My next thing is to put electric and probably some barbed wire or something," Doughty said. "I'm shooting the next person who comes in. Don't come on my property anymore."

Doughty said she is moving because of the crime.

"My kids call every day to make sure we are safe,"

Doughty said. "They want us to move and we are going to move because we can't put up with the crime."

Families said they want more police patrolling. But plans to add 10 more Sanford police officers could be in jeopardy because of budget cuts, Local 6's Erik von Ancken reported.

The city's police chief said he is working on a solution.

<http://www.local6.com/news/16756820/detail.html>

08/07/01 Rights, arms and the man

"A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Because of the inclusion of the M-word (militia), gun-control advocates have long argued that the Second Amendment applies to militia, but not to individual citizens.

Last week, the Supreme Court put an end to that nonsense when it issued a decision overturning the District of Columbia's 32-year old ban on handguns - even in citizens' own homes. In the 5-4 decision, Justice Antonin Scalia hailed "the right of law-abiding citizens to use arms in defense of hearth and home."

It was "an inevitable ruling," explained George Washington University Law Professor Jonathan Turley. "Even though I'm an advocate of gun control, it's very hard to read the Second Amendment and not see an individual right."

Yet, somehow, four justices did not see that the fundamental right - actually, it's more than a right, it's a basic human instinct - of self-defense. As Justice Stephen

Breyer wrote in one of two dissenting opinions, "The Second Amendment protects militia-related, not self-defense related, interests."

John Eastman, law school dean at Chapman University in Orange County, found it ironic that the four justices relied on an interpretation, albeit erroneous, of the framers' original intent - when they don't seem to care about original intent in so many other cases.

The dissenting four justices otherwise have agreed with Justice Anthony Kennedy when he wrote in another case that the court is supposed to determine whether death penalty cases are constitutional, based on "the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society."

But with this case, quipped Eastman, "Everyone seems to be an originalist now."

Justice John Paul Stevens accused the majority of engaging in judicial activism - by issuing a ruling that, after two centuries, directs federal courts to look at the right to bear arms as a fundamental right, even if it can be restricted.

But as Scalia wrote, "it is not the role of this Court to pronounce the Second Amendment extinct." And: "This Court first held a law to violate the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech in 1931, almost 150 years after the Amendment was ratified." And that was copacetic.

The reason for the 200-plus year delay, Eastman explained, is simple: "For most of our history, the question did not present itself."

In his dissenting opinion, Breyer argued that the Washington handgun ban does not preclude citizens from protecting themselves with rifles. To which Eastman countered, "Breyer seems never to have shot a gun." Handguns are easier to maneuver in small spaces; they are smaller, and hence harder to grab, and they are easier to handle for those with limited upper body strength.

Of course, the worst part of the Washington handgun ban is that it applied to an individual's home. That's right, the District of Columbia was legislating what citizens could have in their bedrooms.

"The NRA could not have written a law better for the purposes of challenge," Turley noted.

Do I want more guns? No. I don't want more abortions either, but I recognize women's right to abortion. And if women have a right to abortion, they certainly have a right to defend their bodies against intruders.

In the end, the court settled a matter that had been ruled by sensibilities. When fashionable people can afford to hire security guards or live in gated communities, they tend to think of self-defense as a neurotic obsession of the gauche and overwrought. They don't think they need handguns, therefore no one needs handguns. They are

undeterred by research that shows that their gun bans don't reduce crime, because it only matters that they mean well.

So they come to believe that they have the right to deny other less enlightened people the right to choose to defend their very homes - because they long ago blurred the line between a legal right and personal desire.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/07/01/ED7311HFIE.DTL&tsp=1>

08/07/01 Gun deaths at home are often suicides

The Supreme Court focused on self-defense. Some health researchers focus on suicide risk.

ATLANTA - The Supreme Court's landmark ruling on gun ownership last week focused on citizens' ability to defend themselves from intruders in their homes. But research shows that surprisingly often, gun owners use the weapons on themselves.

Suicides accounted for 55 percent of the nation's nearly 31,000 firearm deaths in 2005, the most recent year for which statistics are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention here.

There was nothing unique about that year - gun-related suicides have outnumbered firearm homicides and accidents for 20 of the last 25 years. In 2005, homicides accounted for 40 percent of gun deaths. Accidents accounted for 3 percent. The remaining 2 percent included legal killings, such as when police do the shooting, and cases that involve undetermined intent.

Researchers have concluded that in homes with guns, the likelihood that someone in the home will die from suicide or homicide is much greater.

Studies have also shown that homes in which a suicide occurred were three to five times more likely to have a gun present than households that did not experience a suicide, even after accounting for other risk factors.

In a 5-4 decision, the high court on Thursday struck down a handgun ban enacted in the District of Columbia in 1976 and rejected requirements that firearms have trigger locks or be kept disassembled. The ruling left intact the district's licensing restrictions for gun owners.

One study found that suicide and homicide rates in the district dropped after the ban was adopted. The district has allowed shotguns and rifles to be kept in homes if they are registered, kept unloaded and taken apart or equipped with trigger locks.

The American Public Health Association, the American Association of Suicidology, and two other groups filed a legal brief supporting the district's ban. The brief challenged arguments that if a gun is not available, suicidal people will just kill themselves using other means.

More than 90 percent of suicide attempts using guns are successful, while the success rate for jumping from high

places was 34 percent and for drug overdose was 2 percent, the brief said, citing studies.

"Other methods are not as lethal," said Jon Vernick, codirector of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research in Baltimore.

The high court's majority opinion did not mention suicide. But in his dissent, Justice Stephen G. Breyer used the word 14 times in voicing concern about the impact of striking down the handgun ban.

Researchers in other fields have questioned the public-health findings on guns.

The CDC, traditionally a primary funder of research on guns and gun-related injuries, cut back after Congress in 1996 ordered that none of the CDC's appropriations be used to promote gun control.

http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world_us/22751524.html

08/07/01 Lawsuit filed over Atlanta airport barring guns

ATLANTA (AP) - The nation's busiest airport is facing off with gun rights advocates over whether a new Georgia state law allows visitors to carry firearms at the international airport in Atlanta.

City officials in charge of the airport declared it a "gun free zone" when the new law took effect today. The airport's general manager says his message is simple: "Leave your firearms at home."

Atlanta officials say anyone carrying a gun at the airport could be arrested and charged with a misdemeanor.

But gun rights supporters have filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the designation.

The new state law allows people with a concealed weapons permit to carry guns into restaurants and state parks, and on public transportation.

Gun advocates argue that the Atlanta airport qualifies as public transportation. They argue weapons should be allowed in the terminal up to the point where passengers pass through security to board their flights.

http://www.policelink.com/news_feeds/visit?uri=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.whotv.com%2FGlobal%2Fstory.asp%3F%3D8583828

08/07/01 FBI Director Criticizes Supreme Court on 2nd Amendment Ruling

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — FBI Director Robert Mueller on Monday criticized the U.S. Supreme Court's recent ruling that Americans have a right to own guns for self-defense and hunting, saying it may harm efforts to deter violent crime.

Speaking at a convention of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators in Hartford, Mueller said the ruling "does throw a lot of things up in the air."

By a 5-4 vote last week, the nation's highest court struck down the District of Columbia's 32-year-old ban on handguns, the first major pronouncement on gun rights in history. It upheld the right for communities to license guns.

Mueller said communities will have to determine their own license programs. As a former Marine who served in Vietnam, he said "I tend to believe weapons harm people and more often than not they harm the people carrying them."

With his grandchildren going to college, Mueller said he hopes "those campuses will be weapons free."

Mueller said the FBI's top priority remains counterterrorism, counter-intelligence and protecting the secrets of the United States.

He said college campuses and small communities could be "potential incubators of terrorism" even while major cities such as New York and Los Angeles remain primary targets for terrorists.

"The fact is we can't rule out any community in the United States as a potential incubator of terrorism," Mueller said.

<http://www.policelink.com/news/35672-fbi-director-criticizes-supreme-court-on-2nd-amendment-ruling>

08/07/01 Des Moines Police Officer Arrested on Domestic Assault Charges

Des Moines Police say one of their senior police officers has been arrested. Senior police officer Clay Blanchard was arrested at his Des Moines home Monday afternoon.

The 56-year old Blanchard is charged with domestic assault causing injury, harassment, and obstructing an emergency phone call. Authorities say Blanchard, who's been with the department for more than 20-years, assaulted his wife Sunday night.

http://www.policelink.com/news_feeds/visit?uri=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.whotv.com%2FGlobal%2Fstory.asp%3F%3D8583828

08/07/01 Silver lining in gun ruling

Although the justices affirmed handgun ownership, they left room for restrictions.

Tom Teepen

is a columnist for Cox Newspapers in Atlanta

The gun lobby has finally won its dream ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court, but could it be that this is just the breakthrough that can finally lead to sensible gun control?

Going beyond even what the Bush administration had asked of it, a 5-4 majority of the justices held that "the right to bear arms" is a personal right and not, as federal courts have largely ruled since 1939, a provisional right pegged to maintaining public safety.

Writing for the majority, Justice Antonin Scalia argued that the Constitution's Second Amendment asserts "the

right of law-abiding, responsible citizens to use arms in defense of hearth and home."

It is hard to imagine that the Founding Fathers intended to be the willing armorers of urban gang warfare. But so it goes.

The court has ruled. That's that.

In quashing Washington D.C.'s near-total ban on handguns, the court has kicked over a hornets' nest of litigation.

The National Rifle Association has already filed a challenge to Chicago's similarly, if not quite comparably, stringent restrictions. Suits against New York City and San Francisco seem certain.

Expect, too, a rising tide of challenges to just about every gun control law. The NRA and the rest of the gun lobby had already been busy pushing state legislators to allow ever larger numbers of people to carry ever more sorts of firearms, even concealed, to ever more places: work sites, bars, churches, you name it.

But wait. Scalia also wrote, "Nothing in our opinion should be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of firearms."

The way, then, seems to lie open to what many gun-control advocates have argued all along are regulations that most people would consider commonsense safety precautions.

And into the bargain, the gun lobby has been shorn of one of its most lurid and panic-inducing claims, the slippery-slope argument that has had the NRA et al yelling for decades that every gun-control proposal would lead - and is even meant to lead - to government gun-confiscation.

It is set in stone now that that can't happen. Control proposals can be examined on their merits, exclusive of that doomsday scenario. Much will depend upon what the court makes of its own ruling. Does it follow, for instance, that because citizens have a right to some sort of a gun, they have a right to every sort?

Politicians who suggest reasonable controls are presumably now insulated from some of the mad-dog attacks that the gun lobby has excelled at and never shied from.

The irony in all this is that as a matter of practical politics, any broad barrier to firearms ownership has been off the table all along and was sure to stay off for any imaginable future. Outside a few large cities, the electorate wouldn't stand for it.

In any event, Charlton Heston can relax that cold dead hand. And over time, just maybe our long-clinched gun politics can loosen up, too.

<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/22751629.html>

08/07/01 5 die in knife rampage at Chinese police station

Attacker reportedly sought revenge after being accused of bicycle theft

BEIJING - A man armed with a knife stormed a police station in Shanghai on Tuesday, stabbing at least five officers to death, authorities said.

The Shanghai Public Security Bureau said in a news release that a 28-year-old man with the surname Yang set a fire outside the building's gate and then rushed inside and began attacking officers.

Five officers died after being taken to a hospital, while four other police officers and a security guard were hurt, the statement said. Some had chest wounds and others had bloodied faces, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, citing a witness with the surname Yi.

Yang, who is from Beijing and unemployed, said he was seeking revenge after officers at the station in Shanghai's Zhabei district investigated him last year for allegedly stealing bicycles, police said.

Yang was taken into custody at the station. Officers not armed?

It was not clear how the attacker managed to stab so many police officers and why he was not detained after setting a fire outside the building. Though Chinese police are permitted to carry guns, the attack took place in an office building and it was possible officers there were not armed.

A woman at the Zhabei district station referred questions to the Shanghai Public Security Bureau. Phones rang unanswered in the bureau's propaganda department.

Violent street crime is rare in China, where private gun ownership is virtually banned.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25475269/>

08/06/30 US waives gun restrictions for Beijing Olympics

President Bush on Monday lifted restrictions to allow firearms to be shipped to China for U.S. athletes competing in shooting events at the Olympic Games.

Bush also cleared the way for sending mobile high-definition television cameras embedded with military-grade gyroscopes to China for use by American filming crews.

Bush said the shipments will be approved on a case-by-case basis, and the equipment will be returned to the United States after the Games.

The restrictions are in place to bar the shipment of munitions and sensitive military equipment to China. http://articles.lancasteronline.com/ap/4/oly_bush_olympics

08/06/30 Some Gun Rules We Can All Agree On

Finally. After decades of ideological debates over the meaning of every word and comma contained in the U.S. Constitution's one-sentence Second Amendment, the Supreme Court has issued a ruling that should largely settle the matter.

In *District of Columbia v. Heller*, the court found that the Second Amendment protects an individual's right to bear arms, while also affirming the constitutionality of reasonable restrictions aimed at preserving public safety and deterring criminals from acquiring and using firearms. Now it's time for all elected officials to start working together to enact creative new solutions to violent crime.

For years, shouting matches over the Second Amendment drowned out reasoned discussion of any middle ground. One side argued for a handgun ban, the other for repeal of an assault-weapons ban. It made for good political theater, but it prevented progress on common-sense proposals that would achieve what both sides say they want: keeping criminals from illegally purchasing and possessing guns.

Two years ago, a group of 15 mayors came together to begin reclaiming this middle ground and working to toughen enforcement of federal laws. Today, our coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns has more than 300 members from every region of the country and from both major political parties.

Mayors – often the ones in charge of police departments – recognize that the constitutionally sound middle ground is large enough for all those who have a good-faith interest in keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and protecting public safety.

Every day, 34 Americans are murdered with a firearm. That's the equivalent of a Virginia Tech massacre. And like the Virginia Tech killer, most murderers purchase or possess their guns in violation of federal law. Our bipartisan coalition of mayors has identified four key reforms that would fix the federal government's primary tool for preventing illegal gun sales: the background check system.

- Close the gun-show loophole. Currently, licensed gun dealers are required to run criminal background checks on all buyers, but a loophole in the law enables criminals to avoid these checks if they buy from "occasional sellers" who don't have federal licenses. These unlicensed sellers, who often operate at gun shows, shoot a hole through the background-check system that allows criminals to purchase guns. That is why the major presidential

candidates have called for this gun show loophole to be closed.

- End gun-dealer fire sales. If the federal government shuts down gun dealers for selling illegally, it nevertheless allows those dealers to sell off their inventory without conducting the background checks that it normally requires them to do. Imagine if a liquor store was shut down for selling to minors. Would anyone support a policy that would allow the owner to sell off all the remaining liquor without checking IDs? Of course not.

- Require gun dealers to do background checks on employees. Under the current law, if a person can't buy guns – because he or she has a criminal or mental-illness record – that person cannot sell guns, either. But the law fails to require dealers to conduct background checks on their employees, even though they already have background-check machines in their stores.

- Close the "terror gap." If the federal government can prevent a potentially dangerous person from getting on a plane, shouldn't it also be able to prevent that person from buying guns? Last year, the Bush administration endorsed a bill that will close the terror gap. Congress should make it law this year.

Recently, our coalition of mayors commissioned a bipartisan public opinion poll to ask Americans what they thought of these four ideas. In each case, more than 80% of Americans – including more than 80% of gun owners – stated their support. This is the vast middle ground shared by mayors across the country, and now that the Supreme Court has swept aside the old ideological debate, the only question remaining is whether Congress has the courage to join us.

Mr. Bloomberg is the mayor of New York City. Mr. Menino is the mayor of Boston. They are the founding co-chairs of Mayors Against Illegal Guns http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121478283640414407.html?mod=opinion_main

08/06/30 Grand Jury Clears TX Man for Shooting Men

A suburban Houston homeowner was cleared by a grand jury Monday for shooting to death two men he suspected of burglarizing his neighbor's home.

Joe Horn, 61, shot the two men last November after he saw them crawling out the windows of a neighbor's house in Pasadena, a Houston suburb.

Horn, a retired grandfather, called 911 and told the dispatcher he had a shotgun and was going to kill them. The dispatcher pleaded with him not to go outside, but Horn confronted the men with a 12-gauge shotgun and shot both in the back.

"The message we're trying to send today is the criminal justice system works," Harris County District Attorney Kenneth Magidson told reporters at the courthouse.

Horn's attorney, Tom Lambright, has said his client believed the two men had broken into his neighbor's home and that he shot them only when they came into his yard and threatened him.

The two suspected burglars, Hernando Riascos Torres, 38, and Diego Ortiz, 30, were unemployed illegal immigrants from Colombia. Torres was deported to Colombia in 1999 after a 1994 cocaine-related conviction.

The incident touched off protests from civil rights activists who said the shooting was racially motivated and that Horn took the law into his own hands. Horn's supporters defended his actions, saying he was protecting himself and being a good neighbor to a homeowner who was out of town.

"I understand the concerns of some in the community regarding Mr. Horn's conduct," Magidson said. "The use of deadly force is carefully limited in Texas law to certain circumstances ... In this case, however, the grand jury concluded that Mr. Horn use of deadly force did not rise to a criminal offense."

Magidson said nine of the 12 grand jurors would have had to vote in favor of an indictment in order for Horn to be charged.

Lambright said this week that his client regrets the shooting and would stay inside if he had it to do over again.

Lambright did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment from The Associated Press.

In the 911 call, a dispatcher urges Horn to stay inside his house and not risk lives.

"Don't go outside the house," the 911 operator pleaded. "You're gonna get yourself shot if you go outside that house with a gun. I don't care what you think."

"You wanna make a bet?" Horn answered. "I'm gonna kill 'em."

After the shooting, he redialed 911.

"I had no choice," he said, his voice shaking. "They came in the front yard with me, man. I had no choice. Get somebody over here quick."

Texas law allows people to use deadly force to protect themselves if it is reasonable to believe they are in mortal danger. In limited circumstances, people also can use deadly force to protect their neighbor's property; for example, if a homeowner asks a neighbor to watch over his property while he's out of town.

It's not clear whether the neighbor whose home was burglarized asked Horn to watch over his house.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/story?id=5278588&page=1>

08/06/30 Surprising fact: Half of gun deaths are suicides

Gun owners often use the weapons on themselves, not intruders

ATLANTA - The Supreme Court's landmark ruling on gun ownership last week focused on citizens' ability to defend themselves from intruders in their homes. But research shows that surprisingly often, gun owners use the weapons on themselves.

Suicides accounted for 55 percent of the nation's nearly 31,000 firearm deaths in 2005, the most recent year for which statistics are available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

There was nothing unique about that year — gun-related suicides have outnumbered firearm homicides and accidents for 20 of the last 25 years. In 2005, homicides accounted for 40 percent of gun deaths. Accidents accounted for 3 percent. The remaining 2 percent included legal killings, such as when police do the shooting, and cases that involve undetermined intent.

Guns in home increase likelihood of suicide

Public-health researchers have concluded that in homes where guns are present, the likelihood that someone in the home will die from suicide or homicide is much greater.

Studies have also shown that homes in which a suicide occurred were three to five times more likely to have a gun present than households that did not experience a suicide, even after accounting for other risk factors.

In a 5-4 decision, the high court on Thursday struck down a handgun ban enacted in the District of Columbia in 1976 and rejected requirements that firearms have trigger locks or be kept disassembled. The ruling left intact the district's licensing restrictions for gun owners.

One public-health study found that suicide and homicide rates in the district dropped after the ban was adopted. The district has allowed shotguns and rifles to be kept in homes if they are registered, kept unloaded and taken apart or equipped with trigger locks.

The American Public Health Association, the American Association of Suicidology and two other groups filed a legal brief supporting the district's ban. The brief challenged arguments that if a gun is not available, suicidal people will just kill themselves using other means.

More than 90 percent of suicide attempts using guns are successful, while the success rate for jumping from high places was 34 percent. The success rate for drug overdose was 2 percent, the brief said, citing studies.

"Other methods are not as lethal," said Jon Vernick, co-director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research in Baltimore.

The high court's majority opinion made no mention of suicide. But in a dissenting opinion, Justice Stephen

Breyer used the word 14 times in voicing concern about the impact of striking down the handgun ban.

"If a resident has a handgun in the home that he can use for self-defense, then he has a handgun in the home that he can use to commit suicide or engage in acts of domestic violence," Breyer wrote.

Researchers raise questions about findings

Researchers in other fields have raised questions about the public-health findings on guns.

Gary Kleck, a researcher at Florida State University's College of Criminology and Criminal Justice, estimates there are more than 1 million incidents each year in which firearms are used to prevent an actual or threatened criminal attack.

Public-health experts have said the telephone survey methodology Kleck used likely resulted in an overestimate.

Both sides agree there has been a significant decline in the last decade in public-health research into gun violence.

The CDC traditionally was a primary funder of research on guns and gun-related injuries, allocating more than \$2.1 million a year to such projects in the mid-1990s.

But the agency cut back research on the subject after Congress in 1996 ordered that none of the CDC's appropriations be used to promote gun control.

Vernick said the Supreme Court decision underscores the need for further study into what will happen to suicide and homicide rates in the district when the handgun ban is lifted.

Today, the CDC budgets less than \$900,000 for firearm-related projects, and most of it is spent to track statistics. The agency no longer funds gun-related policy analysis.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/25463844/>

08/06/29 How gun makers can help us

Make firearms manufacturers figure out how to reduce the 12,000 shooting deaths each year.

This year, about 12,000 Americans will be shot to death. It's a staggering figure, and even though lawmakers have continued to pass gun-control laws to try to bring the number down, they have not significantly reduced the murder rate. Indeed, for the last decade, guns have steadily remained the cause of about two-thirds of all homicides.

Gun manufacturers insist that these deaths are not their fault, preferring to pin the blame on criminals and irresponsible dealers. They have fiercely resisted even minimal restrictions on sales and have simultaneously washed their hands of responsibility for this "collateral damage."

On Thursday, the U.S. Supreme Court made the problem a little more difficult to solve, ruling in *District of Columbia vs. Heller* that the individual's right to bear arms is indeed protected by the 2nd Amendment -- and making

it clear that some laws banning guns would have a difficult time passing constitutional muster in the future.

What is to be done? The conventional regulatory approaches seem to be failing. A more recent strategy, in which victims or municipalities bring lawsuits against gun manufacturers or retailers, seems legally and politically unpromising since the 2005 passage of the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act, which shields gun manufacturers from civil liability.

We propose a new way to prod gun makers to reduce gun deaths, one that would be unlikely to put them out of business or to prevent law-abiding citizens from obtaining guns. By using a strategy known as "performance-based regulation," we would deputize private actors -- the gun makers -- to deal with the negative effects of their products in ways that promote the public good.

In other words, rather than telling gun makers what to do, performance-based regulation would tell them what outcome they must achieve: Reduce deaths by guns. Companies that achieve the target outcomes might receive large financial bonuses; companies that don't would face severe financial penalties. Put simply, gun makers -- whose products kill even when used as directed -- would have to take responsibility for curbing the consequent public health toll.

Under our plan, Congress might require gun makers in the aggregate to reduce gun homicides from 12,000 to, say, 7,000 in 10 years, with appropriate interim targets along the way. Individual firms would each have their own targets to meet, based on the extent their guns are currently used in homicides. Or Congress might simply leave it to neutral experts to determine just how much of a numerical reduction should be required -- and how quickly. Either way, the required decline would be substantial.

How would gun companies go about reducing gun deaths? The main thing to emphasize is that this approach relies on the nimbleness, innovation and experimentation that come from private competition -- rather than on the heavy-handed power of governmental regulation. Gun makers might decide to add trigger locks to their guns, or to work only with dealers who meet certain standards of responsibility. They might withdraw their semiautomatic weapons from the consumer market, or even work hand in hand with local officials to fight gangs and increase youth employment opportunities. Surely they will think up new strategies once they have a legal obligation and financial incentive to take responsibility for the harm their products cause.

Performance-based regulation leaves it up to them to decide. This is the same outcome-based approach that the No Child Left Behind program takes concerning schools. Through No Child Left Behind, parents and school

officials set achievement targets for students, and schools then have to figure out how to meet the targets. Similarly, performance-based regulation is used in a variety of pollution-control schemes and is becoming the preferred global strategy to combat climate change. For example, under pressure from coalitions of environmentalists, scientists and citizens, regulatory bodies are ordering public utilities to sharply cut their carbon emissions. The companies are responsible for designing solutions to best achieve that goal, which could include switching fuels, changing the way they produce electricity, installing scrubbers on smokestacks and so on.

Sen. Michael D. Enzi (R-Wyo.) has put forward a proposal along the same lines to target tobacco. Typically, anti-smoking organizations lobby Congress to give the Food and Drug Administration regulatory power over cigarette companies, and press locally to increase tobacco taxes, run more government anti-tobacco ads and boost enforcement of bans on sales to minors. Under Enzi's performance-based regulation plan, however, the tobacco companies would simply be told by Congress that they have to cut their customer base by about 50% in 12 years. It would then be up to the companies to figure out how to curtail smoking rates.

So how exactly might this work in the case of gun makers? For more than half of all gun homicides, law enforcement officials are able to identify the precise type of lethal weapon that was used. From that data, reliable statistical projections can be made to determine each company's approximate share of all homicides. Each company's quotas would be based on the data, and tied to an ever-decreasing number of deaths.

A more fine-tuned strategy would set different gun-death-reduction quotas based on the specific weapon -- with larger reductions mandated for guns that are more commonly used in homicides.

The plan might even include a "cap and trade" feature. If some gun makers managed to reduce the gun deaths caused by their product even faster than the rules required, they could sell that excess to other companies.

If gun makers fail to reach the performance targets, they would face substantial financial penalties that would hike the cost of the guns they make and drive home the huge negative social consequences they now cause.

Our proposal is not a tax on gun sales. As long as gun companies met their goals, they would pay nothing extra to the government. Indeed, the plan might reward them with bonuses.

Performance-based regulation is not about the government denying people access to guns. It's not an academic theory about the underlying causes of gun deaths, nor is it a restriction on the right of law-abiding

citizens to bear arms. Instead, it is a practical way to align the gun companies' interests with the public interest and, ultimately, to save lives.

Jeffrey Fagan is a professor of law and public health at Columbia University. Stephen D. Sugarman is a professor of law at UC Berkeley.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/opinion/la-op-sugarman29-2008jun29,0,1307373.story>

08/06/28 Father of shooter held in green card fraud

Federal agents arrested yesterday a Chester County man who they say lied about his membership in what authorities called an Irish terrorist organization to obtain a green card.

The arrest of Sean O'Neill, 48, of Pony Trail Drive, Willistown Township, came just days after Sean O'Neill Jr.'s release from juvenile detention for the August 2006 shooting death of his friend during a night of drinking and partying.

Sean O'Neill Sr. was held without bail yesterday in federal detention in Philadelphia. He is charged with use of a fraudulent green card, making false statements, and illegal possession of a gun silencer. A bail hearing is scheduled Wednesday.

O'Neill, the former owner of Maggie O'Neill's Irish Pub in Drexel Hill, was at the Jersey Shore on Aug. 31, 2006, when his son hosted a party without adult supervision at the family's home and fatally shot his longtime friend.

The elder O'Neill was arrested without incident at his home shortly before 6 a.m., said John Hageman, a spokesman for the bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The arrest team included agents from ATF, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and Pennsylvania State Police.

"Until I see the indictment, I can't comment," Vincent P. DiFabio, O'Neill's attorney, said yesterday.

A native of Coalisland, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, O'Neill was 17 when he pleaded guilty in Northern Ireland to being a member of Fianna na h'Eireann, a now-defunct radical youth group associated with the Irish Republican Army, said James Ellis, research and program director for the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism.

O'Neill was sentenced to prison in Northern Ireland in 1977, but neither the U.S. Attorney's Office nor federal immigration authorities would give further information about the charges in Northern Ireland or his imprisonment.

A spokesman for the Police Service of Northern Ireland in Belfast said he could not release criminal information.

O'Neill came to the United States in January 1983 on a six-month visa. In April, he bought a .38-caliber Colt revolver. O'Neill told the gun dealer that he was born in Irving, Texas, and gave a false date of birth, a story he

used to purchase at least three more guns in subsequent years, according to the federal affidavit.

In 1985, O'Neill applied for a green card, which allows permanent residency. Authorities allege that he made false statements that he had not been arrested or convicted. He denied affiliation with any anti-government groups, according to the affidavit.

The federal Immigration and Naturalization Service approved his request in 1987 and issued a green card. O'Neill renewed it twice without correcting information on his application, according to the affidavit.

O'Neill lied about his date of birth and citizenship to obtain several more weapons, including a .45-caliber Colt pistol in 1985, a 9mm semiautomatic in 1987, and a 9mm Keltec semiautomatic in 1997, according to the affidavit. He also falsely obtained a license to carry firearms and a sportsman firearm permit.

O'Neill has been arrested on weapons charges twice since he came to the United States in 1983, once by Haverford police in 1983 and again last year by state police, seven months after they searched his home in connection with his son's arrest. They found a Marlin Model 980 .22-caliber rifle with an attached Parker Hale silencer and a Ruger Model 77 rifle with a barrel threaded for a silencer. In both cases, the charges were dismissed.

Agents recovered a silencer yesterday at O'Neill's home and are checking whether it was obtained legally, Hageman said.

"You need to get permission from the chief law enforcement officer [of the township] and apply to the ATF to own a silencer," Hageman said.

Sean O'Neill Jr.'s release includes conditions that the teen must work at his father's construction company so he can pay restitution for Scott Sheridan's funeral, and that he can go out socially only when accompanied by at least one of his parents.

"We'll explore how this impacts on the conditions of Sean O'Neill Jr.'s release," said Joseph W. Carroll, Chester County district attorney, about the father's charges.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/22272244.html>

08/06/27 Both sides claim win on guns

Local advocates see positives in court ruling

They cheered. They jeered. And local residents on both sides of the gun-rights versus gun-control issue claimed validation from the U.S. Supreme Court's historic vote Thursday.

The narrow 5-4 ruling, which struck down Washington, D.C.'s handgun ban and affirmed Americans have a constitutional right to bear firearms in their homes to protect themselves, is being parsed by each side of the emotional issue today.

"I was ecstatic," said Donna Gerz, a West Lampeter

Township mother of two who is president of the 2,600-member Lancaster County Friends of the National Rifle Association. "We have something going in our favor for a change."

Gerz, who has a handgun in her home for protection, said, "I'm not sure in the long run what it will mean, but for law-abiding citizens, it's a plus."

At the Huntingpa.com Web site forum, members admitted to being moved to tears by the decision, which at least for now settles the long-standing question of whether citizens' Second Amendment right to bear arms was intended to guarantee an individual's right to own guns or was tied to a state militias, which no longer exist.

That militia argument was "utter nonsense," says John Shutter of Lancaster, a retired chief of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's enforcement division.

"The founders wanted everyone to be armed to protect themselves from government abuse," Shutter said.

"We have to count that as a win, that's for sure," said Stephen Mohr, a Bainbridge resident, former game commissioner and now president of the 30,000-member Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania.

"I wonder what message that sent to Philadelphia and Rendell and his folks," Mohr said, referring to Philadelphia's strongest-in-the-state gun controls and Gov. Ed Rendell's unsuccessful efforts for more gun restrictions on the state level.

But Mayor Richard Gray, a member of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, claimed the Supreme Court's first-ever decision on Second Amendment gun rights actually clears the way for reasonable gun-control regulations to succeed.

"The question of whether we can regulate registrations in our communities has now been resolved — we can," Gray said this morning from Gettysburg. He was referring to the Supreme Court's decision to leave intact Washington's licensing of guns and language that permitted "some measures regulating handguns."

"It gives us the go-ahead," maintained Gray. He vowed to continue to push for statewide legislation that would limit handgun purchases to one a month and for laws that would require people to report lost or stolen guns.

"They're talking about reasonable controls," Gray said of the Supreme Court's 5-4 majority. "Nobody I know wants to take guns away from law-abiding citizens for protection, hunting or firing at targets which they now have a formal right to possess. Now, taking reasonable steps to keep them out of the hands of people who should not have them has been authorized."

The ruling "certainly takes away the argument that they're unconstitutional," Gray said.

In a statement, officials with CeaseFirePA, a Philadelphia-based gun-control group, said, "The NRA

can no longer hide behind the Second Amendment and falsely claim the amendment prohibits any reasonable regulation of the right to keep and bear arms."

But Mohr has a different interpretation of the legacy of the Supreme Court decision.

"The ruling itself should send a message to all those folks who question the Second Amendment. That should be their first interpretation of it. And now the gun owners of America have to keep the pressure on. Once you get your foot in the door, you don't back out. You keep on going."

<http://articles.lancasteronline.com/local/4/223682>

08/06/27 Gun Lobby Quickly Sues To Overturn Chicago Ban

Conservative justices betray their principles to knock down Washington's gun law

WASHINGTON -- In knocking down the District of Columbia's 32-year ban on handgun possession, the conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court have shown again their willingness to abandon precedent in order to do whatever is necessary to further the agenda of the contemporary political right

The court's five most conservative members have demonstrated that for all of Justice Antonin Scalia's talk about "originalism" as a coherent constitutional doctrine, the judicial right regularly succumbs to the temptation to legislate from the bench. They fall in line behind whatever fashions political conservatism is promoting.

Conservative justices claim that they defer to local authority. Not in this case. They insist that political questions should be decided by elected officials. Not in this case. They argue that they pay careful attention to the precise words of the Constitution. Not in this case.

The political response to this decision from many liberals and Democrats was relief that the ruling still permits gun regulation, and quiet satisfaction that it will minimize the chances of the gun issue hurting Barack Obama in the presidential campaign. Some will rationalize this view by pointing to maverick liberal constitutional scholars who see a broad right to bear arms in the Second Amendment.

But these pragmatic judgments underestimate how radical this decision is in light of the operating precedents of the last 69 years. The United States and its gun owners have done perfectly well since 1939, when an earlier Supreme Court interpreted the Second Amendment as implying a collective right to bear arms, but not an individual right.

Here is what the Second Amendment says: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Thursday's narrow majority spent the first 54 pages of its decision, written by Justice Scalia, trying to show that even though the framers inserted 13 important words in front of the assertion of a right to bear arms, those words were essentially meaningless. Does that reflect an honest attempt to determine the "original" intention of the Constitution's framers? In fact, it was the court's four more liberal justices who favored judicial modesty, deference to democratic decisions, empowerment of local officials and care in examining the Constitution's actual text and the history behind it.

It was telling that while Justice Scalia argued the Constitution does not permit "the absolute prohibition of handguns held and used for self-defense in the home" -- note that the Second Amendment says nothing about "self-defense in the home" -- it was Justice John Paul Stevens in dissent who called for judicial restraint. He asked his conservative colleagues where they were able to find an expansive and absolute right for gun possession.

The court majority, Justice Stevens said, "would have us believe that over 200 years ago, the framers made a choice to limit the tools available to elected officials wishing to regulate civilian uses of weapons." But such evidence, Justice Stevens insisted, "is nowhere to be found" in the decision.

Justice Stephen Breyer also defended the rights of democratically elected local officials in a separate dissent, saying the D.C. ban was "a permissible legislative response to a serious, indeed life-threatening, problem."

In his intemperate dissent in the court's recent Guantanamo decision, Justice Scalia said the defense of constitutional rights embodied in that ruling meant it "will almost certainly cause more Americans to be killed." That consideration apparently does not apply to a law whose precise purpose was to reduce the number of murders in the District of Columbia.

Advocates of reasonable gun regulations found some silver linings in this decision, and it's true that a court ruling the other way could have strengthened the hand of political opponents of gun control by energizing their movement.

While criticizing the court majority, Paul Helmke, president of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, argued that the majority decision at least "permits restrictions on place, on types of weapons, on conditions of sale and on carrying concealed weapons."

The decision, he said in an interview, will make gun control less of a "wedge issue" by refuting the claim of gun control opponents that any restrictions on weapons lead down "a slippery slope to gun confiscation."

I hope Mr. Helmke is right. But I also hope this decision opens people's eyes to the fact that judicial activism is now a habit of the right, not the left, and that "originalism"

is too often a sophisticated cover for ideological decision-making by conservative judges.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08179/892932-35.stm>

08/06/27 At a weaponry center, cause for celebration

Shoppers at Cabela's, a firearms megastore, hailed the decision as a victory for gun owners.

HAMBURG, Pa. - If hunting is a religion in Pennsylvania - and many will testify that it is - then Cabela's is the temple.

Under the green roof of a single store as big as many suburban shopping malls, gun enthusiasts can inspect 500 rifles, shotguns and pistols behind glass counters that seem to go on forever.

Yesterday, Cabela's customers were singing hymns of gratitude to a U.S. Supreme Court that for the first time had certified the general constitutional right of sane, law-abiding citizens to own guns.

"That's great," said Jim Morgan, of Bath, Pa., who had just paid \$300 for a Ruger pistol and \$35 for a box of shells.

Morgan, a retired English teacher and school administrator who owns numerous guns, said the pistol was for his protection at his home in the Lehigh Valley.

"I no longer feel that the state, federal and local government can protect the right of an individual to pursue life without being attacked," he said. "Every day, you pick up the paper and read about somebody breaking into a house . . . or somebody being accosted on the street."

Gun rights have long been near the top of the political agenda in Pennsylvania, which has more licensed hunters - almost 1 million - than any state except Texas. Repeated attempts in the past decade to enact laws restricting the purchase of handguns to one a month have been blocked in the legislature. When Philadelphia adopted restrictive gun laws, state lawmakers quickly moved to strike them down.

In 2006, according to state statistics, 413,165 firearms were either purchased or privately transferred in Pennsylvania. Licensed dealers reported 164,212 handgun transactions and 248,953 long-gun transactions for the year.

So there was much satisfaction yesterday - though not a lot of surprise - in the court's ruling.

Hunters and gun-rights advocates said they knew that Second Amendment rights were on the court's agenda but had felt that the conservative leanings of many of the nine justices would protect their ability to own guns.

"We are ecstatic," said Melody Zullinger, executive director of the Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs. "We were optimistic this was the way the ruling would go."

The specific law banning handguns in people's homes that the court struck down applied only to the District of Columbia.

"The most important thing is, you shouldn't be punished just by where you live," Zullinger said.

Bill Miller, regional director of the Unified Sportsmen of Pennsylvania, said the ruling would delight the hunter, target shooter and outdoors person.

Miller said that there were already enough gun laws on the books but that many went unenforced.

"Every day, we have criminals who are locked up for using firearms in the commission of a crime, but unfortunately they don't get tried for the firearms offenses," said Miller, contending that the gun charges are often dropped during plea negotiations in cases of attempted murder or armed robbery.

"Take areas like Philadelphia. We don't need more gun laws. We need more jails," said Miller. "We don't have a place to put people."

At Cabela's, which sits at the foot of the Blue Mountain ridge along Interstate 78, the gun counters were about as busy yesterday as on any Thursday in June.

Several gun-buying patrons - all very much in favor of gun rights - said they had no problems with sensible gun regulations. They agreed with Justice Antonin Scalia, who wrote the court decision, that felons and the insane should not have access to firearms.

But the one-gun-a-month proposals went too far, said Rich Reedinger, of Petersburg, Pa., who retired two years ago as a parole agent in Montgomery County.

"It's ridiculous," he said. "It's not a gun problem. In Philadelphia or D.C., it's a drug problem. I think if they just enforce the guns laws in the books, they'd have a lot less troubles than they do now."

Reedinger, with his grandson, 12, had just left Cabela's via the cathedral-like front doors carrying a new Ruger rifle and 400 rounds of ammunition for what he called "varmint hunting" - mainly getting rid of groundhogs.

He said restrictive gun laws "punish" only lawful citizens who attempt to buy firearms legally.

"Who's being penalized? Me. The criminals are still going to be able to have guns."

Elsewhere in the state yesterday, the reaction of gun enthusiasts was much the same.

At the Firing Line, a pistol range and gun shop in South Philadelphia, owner Gregory J. Isabella said after the court ruling: "Phones have been ringing off the hook this morning. Today we had a customer from Upper Darby. Something happened where his girlfriend got spooked by a break-in or something, so they bought a shotgun."

He said he felt Pennsylvania gun laws were reasonable. A gun buyer must show a driver's license to a shop owner,

who then can do an instant check to see if the potential buyer has a criminal record.

"You can get a gun the same day," he said.

http://www.philly.com/inquirer/world_us/21930854.html

08/06/27 E.J. Dionne Jr.: Activist judges

Conservative justices betray their principles to knock down Washington's gun law

WASHINGTON -- In knocking down the District of Columbia's 32-year ban on handgun possession, the conservatives on the U.S. Supreme Court have shown again their willingness to abandon precedent in order to do whatever is necessary to further the agenda of the contemporary political right.

The court's five most conservative members have demonstrated that for all of Justice Antonin Scalia's talk about "originalism" as a coherent constitutional doctrine, the judicial right regularly succumbs to the temptation to legislate from the bench. They fall in line behind whatever fashions political conservatism is promoting.

Conservative justices claim that they defer to local authority. Not in this case. They insist that political questions should be decided by elected officials. Not in this case. They argue that they pay careful attention to the precise words of the Constitution. Not in this case.

The political response to this decision from many liberals and Democrats was relief that the ruling still permits gun regulation, and quiet satisfaction that it will minimize the chances of the gun issue hurting Barack Obama in the presidential campaign. Some will rationalize this view by pointing to maverick liberal constitutional scholars who see a broad right to bear arms in the Second Amendment.

But these pragmatic judgments underestimate how radical this decision is in light of the operating precedents of the last 69 years. The United States and its gun owners have done perfectly well since 1939, when an earlier Supreme Court interpreted the Second Amendment as implying a collective right to bear arms, but not an individual right.

Here is what the Second Amendment says: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Thursday's narrow majority spent the first 54 pages of its decision, written by Justice Scalia, trying to show that even though the framers inserted 13 important words in front of the assertion of a right to bear arms, those words were essentially meaningless. Does that reflect an honest attempt to determine the "original" intention of the Constitution's framers? In fact, it was the court's four more liberal justices who favored judicial modesty, deference to democratic decisions, empowerment of local officials and

care in examining the Constitution's actual text and the history behind it.

It was telling that while Justice Scalia argued the Constitution does not permit "the absolute prohibition of handguns held and used for self-defense in the home" -- note that the Second Amendment says nothing about "self-defense in the home" -- it was Justice John Paul Stevens in dissent who called for judicial restraint. He asked his conservative colleagues where they were able to find an expansive and absolute right for gun possession.

The court majority, Justice Stevens said, "would have us believe that over 200 years ago, the framers made a choice to limit the tools available to elected officials wishing to regulate civilian uses of weapons." But such evidence, Justice Stevens insisted, "is nowhere to be found" in the decision.

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Advocates of reasonable gun regulations found some silver linings in this decision, and it's true that a court ruling the other way could have strengthened the hand of political opponents of gun control by energizing their movement.

While criticizing the court majority, Paul Helmke, president of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, argued that the majority decision at least "permits restrictions on place, on types of weapons, on conditions of sale and on carrying concealed weapons."

The decision, he said in an interview, will make gun control less of a "wedge issue" by refuting the claim of gun control opponents that any restrictions on weapons lead down "a slippery slope to gun confiscation."

I hope Mr. Helmke is right. But I also hope this decision opens people's eyes to the fact that judicial activism is now a habit of the right, not the left, and that "originalism" is too often a sophisticated cover for ideological decision-making by conservative judges.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08179/892932-35.stm>

08/06/27 Lock and Load

Thirty-thousand Americans are killed by guns every year — on the job, walking to school, at the shopping mall. The Supreme Court on Thursday all but ensured that even more Americans will die senselessly with its wrongheaded

and dangerous ruling striking down key parts of the District of Columbia's gun-control law.

In a radical break from 70 years of Supreme Court precedent, Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the majority, declared that the Second Amendment guarantees individuals the right to bear arms for nonmilitary uses, even though the amendment clearly links the right to service in a "militia." The ruling will give gun-rights advocates a powerful new legal tool to try to strike down gun-control laws across the nation.

This is a decision that will cost innocent lives, cause immeasurable pain and suffering and turn America into a more dangerous country. It will also diminish our standing in the world, sending yet another message that the United States values gun rights over human life.

There already is a national glut of firearms: estimates run between 193 million and 250 million guns. The harm they do is constantly on heartbreaking display. Thirty-three dead last year in the shootings at Virginia Tech. Six killed this year at Northern Illinois University.

On Wednesday, as the court was getting ready to release its decision, a worker in a Kentucky plastics plant shot his supervisor, four co-workers and himself to death.

Cities and states have tried to stanch the killing with gun-control laws. The District of Columbia, which has one of the nation's highest crime rates, banned the possession of nearly all handguns and required that other firearms be stored unloaded and disassembled, or bound with a trigger lock.

Overturning that law, the court's 5-to-4 decision says that individuals have a constitutional right to keep guns in their homes for self-defense. But that's a sharp reversal for the court: as early as 1939, it made clear that the Second Amendment only protects the right of people to carry guns for military use in a militia.

In his dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens was right when he said that the court has now established "a new constitutional right" that creates a "dramatic upheaval in the law."

Even if there were a constitutional right to possess guns for nonmilitary uses, constitutional rights are not absolute. The First Amendment guarantees free speech, but that does not mean that laws cannot prohibit some spoken words, like threats to commit imminent violent acts. In his dissent, Justice Stephen Breyer argued soundly that whatever right gun owners have to unimpeded gun use is outweighed by the District of Columbia's "compelling" public-safety interests.

In this month's case recognizing the habeas corpus rights of the detainees at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, Justice Scalia wrote in dissent that the decision "will almost certainly cause more Americans to be killed." Those

words apply with far more force to his opinion in this District of Columbia case.

The gun lobby will now trumpet this ruling as an end to virtually all gun restrictions, anywhere, at all times. That must not happen. And today's decision still provides strong basis for saying it should not.

If the ruling is held to apply to the states, and not just to the District of Columbia — which is not certain — there will still be considerable dispute about what it means for other less-sweeping gun laws. Judges may end up deciding these on a law-by-law basis.

Supporters of gun control must fight in court to ensure that registration requirements and background-check rules, and laws against bulk sales of handguns — a major source of guns used in crimes — are all upheld.

The court left room for gun-control advocates to fight back. It made clear that there were gun restrictions that it was not calling into question, including bans on gun possession by felons and the mentally ill, or in "sensitive places" like schools and government buildings.

That last part is the final indignity of the decision: when the justices go to work at the Supreme Court, guns will still be banned. When most Americans show up at their own jobs, they will not have that protection.

This audaciously harmful decision, which hands the far right a victory it has sought for decades, is a powerful reminder of why voters need to have the Supreme Court firmly in mind when they vote for the president this fall.

Senator John McCain has said he would appoint justices like Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito — both of whom supported this decision. If the court is allowed to tip even further to the far right, there will be even more damage done to the rights and the safety of Americans.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/27/opinion/27fri1.html?_r=1&ref=opinion&oref=slogin

08/06/27 Justices, Ruling 5-4, Endorse Personal Right to Own Gun

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court on Thursday embraced the long-disputed view that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to own a gun for personal use, ruling 5 to 4 that there is a constitutional right to keep a loaded handgun at home for self-defense.

The landmark ruling overturned the District of Columbia ban on handguns, the strictest gun-control law in the country, and appeared certain to usher in a new round of litigation over gun rights throughout the country.

The court rejected the view that the Second Amendment's "right of the people to keep and bear arms" applied to gun ownership only in connection with service in the "well regulated militia" to which the amendment refers.

Justice Antonin Scalia's majority opinion, his most important in his 22 years on the court, said that the justices were "aware of the problem of handgun violence in this country" and "take seriously" the arguments in favor of prohibiting handgun ownership.

"But the enshrinement of constitutional rights necessarily takes certain policy choices off the table," he said, adding, "It is not the role of this court to pronounce the Second Amendment extinct."

Justice Scalia's opinion was signed by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Justices Anthony M. Kennedy, Clarence Thomas and Samuel A. Alito Jr.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens took vigorous issue with Justice Scalia's assertion that it was the Second Amendment that had enshrined the individual right to own a gun. Rather, it was "today's law-changing decision" that bestowed the right and created "a dramatic upheaval in the law," Justice Stevens said in a dissent joined by Justices David H. Souter, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen G. Breyer. Justice Breyer, also speaking for the others, filed a separate dissent.

Justice Scalia and Justice Stevens went head to head in debating how the 27 words in the Second Amendment should be interpreted. The majority opinion and two dissents ran 154 pages.

Justice Stevens said the majority opinion was based on "a strained and unpersuasive reading" of the text and history of the Second Amendment, which provides: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

According to Justice Scalia, the "militia" reference in the first part of the amendment simply "announces the purpose for which the right was codified: to prevent elimination of the militia." The Constitution's framers were afraid that the new federal government would disarm the populace, as the British had tried to do, Justice Scalia said.

But he added that this "prefatory statement of purpose" should not be interpreted to limit the meaning of what is called the operative clause — "the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Instead, Justice Scalia said, the operative clause "codified a pre-existing right" of individual gun ownership for private use.

Contesting that analysis, Justice Stevens said the Second Amendment's structure was notable for its "omission of any statement of purpose related to the right to use firearms for hunting or personal self-defense," in contrast to the contemporaneous "Declarations of Rights" in Pennsylvania and Vermont that did explicitly protect those uses.

It has been nearly 70 years since the court last examined the meaning of the Second Amendment. In addition to

their linguistic debate, Justices Scalia and Stevens also sparred over what the court intended in that decision, *United States v. Miller*.

In the opaque, unanimous five-page opinion in 1939, the court upheld a federal prosecution for transporting a sawed-off shotgun. A Federal District Court had ruled that the provision of the National Firearms Act the defendants were accused of violating was barred by the Second Amendment, but the Supreme Court disagreed and reinstated the indictment.

For decades, an overwhelming majority of courts and commentators regarded the *Miller* decision as having rejected the individual-right interpretation of the Second Amendment. That understanding of the "virtually unreasoned case" was mistaken, Justice Scalia said Thursday.

He said the *Miller* decision meant "only that the Second Amendment does not protect those weapons not typically possessed by law-abiding citizens for lawful purposes, such as short-barreled shotguns."

Justice Stevens said the majority's understanding of the *Miller* decision was not only "simply wrong," but also reflected a lack of "respect for the well-settled views of all of our predecessors on the court, and for the rule of law itself."

Despite the decision's enormous symbolic significance, it was far from clear that it actually posed much of a threat to the most common gun regulations. Justice Scalia's opinion applied explicitly just to "the right of law-abiding, responsible citizens to use arms in defense of hearth and home," and it had a number of significant qualifications.

"Nothing in our opinion," he said, "should be taken to cast doubt on longstanding prohibitions on the possession of firearms by felons and the mentally ill, or laws forbidding the carrying of firearms in sensitive places such as schools and government buildings, or laws imposing conditions and qualifications on the commercial sale of arms."

The opinion also said prohibitions on carrying concealed weapons would be upheld and suggested somewhat less explicitly that the right to personal possession did not apply to "dangerous and unusual weapons" that are not typically used for self-defense or recreation.

The Bush administration had been concerned about the implications of the case for the federal ban on possessing machine guns.

President Bush welcomed the decision. "As a longstanding advocate of the rights of gun owners in America," he said in a statement, "I applaud the Supreme Court's historic decision today confirming what has always been clear in the Constitution: the Second

Amendment protects an individual right to keep and bear firearms.”

The opinion did not specify the standard by which the court would evaluate gun restrictions in future cases, a question that was the subject of much debate when the case was argued in March.

Among existing gun-control laws, just Chicago comes close to the complete handgun prohibition in the District of Columbia’s 32-year-old law. The district’s appeal to the Supreme Court, filed last year after the federal appeals court here struck down the law, argued that the handgun ban was an important public safety measure in a congested, crime-ridden urban area.

On the campaign trail on Thursday, both major-party presidential candidates expressed support for the decision — more full-throated support from Senator John McCain, the presumptive Republican nominee, and a more guarded statement of support from Senator Barack Obama, his presumptive Democratic opponent.

Mr. McCain called the decision “a landmark victory for Second Amendment freedom in the United States” that “ended forever the specious argument that the Second Amendment did not confer an individual right to keep and bear arms.”

Mr. Obama, who like Mr. McCain has been on record as supporting the individual-rights view, said the ruling would “provide much-needed guidance to local jurisdictions across the country.”

He praised the decision for endorsing the individual-rights view and for describing the right as “not absolute and subject to reasonable regulations enacted by local communities to keep their streets safe.”

Unlike the court’s ruling this month on the rights of the Guantánamo detainees, this decision, *District of Columbia v. Heller*, No. 07-290, appeared likely to defuse, rather than inflame, the political debate. The Democratic Party platform in 2004 included a plank endorsing the individual-rights view of the Second Amendment.

The case reached the court as a result of an assumption by the Cato Institute, a libertarian organization here, that the time was right to test the prevailing interpretation of the Second Amendment. Robert A. Levy, a lawyer and senior fellow of the institute, looked for law-abiding district residents rather than criminal defendants appealing convictions, to challenge the law.

Mr. Levy, who financed the case, recruited six plaintiffs. Five were dismissed for lack of standing. But the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit ruled in favor of one, Dick Anthony Heller. He is a security guard who carries a gun while on duty at a federal judicial building here and was denied a license to keep his gun at home. The court said Thursday that assuming Mr. Heller was not “disqualified from the exercise of Second

Amendment rights,” the district government must issue him a license

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/27/washington/27scotus.html?adxnnl=1&ref=opinion&adxnnlx=1214925224-UhHE4vh51P5Iq8XXrzDpTA>

08/06/27 ATF seizes weapons from Blackwater

Investigation concerns how they were obtained

The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives seized nearly two dozen automatic rifles from Blackwater Worldwide this week, apparently part of an investigation into whether the private security contractor obtained them illegally.

ATF agents confiscated the guns Tuesday, two days after a story in *The News & Observer* raised questions about Blackwater's deal to buy 34 guns for the Camden County Sheriff's Office -- nearly two automatic weapons for each of the department's 19 deputies.

Camden County Sheriff Tony Perry said Blackwater kept 22 of the guns at its Moyock headquarters, which is thought to be the world's largest private firearms training facility. It used the guns to train law enforcement officers and members of the military, and also may have used them to train foreign troops in anti-terrorism maneuvers financed by the State Department, officials said.

Half the guns were Romanian-made AK-47 assault rifles, and the others were Bushmaster XM15 E2S rifles, according to contracts between Blackwater and the Sheriff's Office. None of the deputies, though, was qualified to use AK-47s.

Generally, only government agencies, including local law enforcement, can own automatic weapons, according to federal law. Many police departments and sheriff's offices buy them for SWAT teams. The AK-47, however, is regarded as a poor choice for police work, in part because it's too powerful.

When an automatic weapon is properly registered to someone in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record, it's illegal for someone else to receive or possess it. The 34 guns are registered to the Camden County sheriff.

Blackwater President Gary Jackson, in a meeting with N&O editors and reporters last week, said the deal with Camden was legal. The company also issued a statement Thursday defending the gun deal.

"Some of the same ATF agents involved in the current inquiry have long been aware of this arrangement as a result of visits to our facility and audits of our firearms programs at Blackwater's request," Blackwater spokeswoman Anne Tyrrell wrote in an e-mail release. "As a company that is fully licensed to sell, provide training on, or even manufacture weapons -- including machine guns -- we have worked closely with the ATF to

ensure we are in compliance with all applicable federal firearms laws. We look forward to cooperating with the government to resolve this allegation."

Perry, the Camden County sheriff, said last week that he couldn't remember who had suggested the deal with his office and that he was cooperating with the ATF on the case.

He was traveling Thursday and couldn't be reached for comment on the confiscations.

The Raleigh ATF office referred questions about the case Thursday to the U.S. Attorney's Office. A spokeswoman there declined to comment, saying that she could not confirm or deny any investigation that might be pending.

Tyrrell said the ATF agents came to the company's headquarters Tuesday and took all the Camden County rifles stored there without giving an explanation.

"They came and asked to speak to someone from our legal department and asked to see the Camden County locker," she said in a telephone interview. "Our lawyer gave them access, and they took the weapons."

Jackson, the Blackwater president, signed two agreements in 2005 with Maj. Jon Worthington of the Sheriff's Office, who also has moonlighted at Blackwater as a firearms instructor, according to Perry. One was for the AK-47s, the other for the Bushmasters.

Blackwater paid for the guns, and the terms said the Sheriff's Office would have unlimited access to the rifles "for training and qualification, and state of emergency use."

The deal could be illegal, a law professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill said last week in an interview. When one person fills out the federal firearms registration form to get a weapon for someone else's use, that can be an illegal "straw purchase," said Richard Myers, adding that he had prosecuted several such deals while working as a federal prosecutor.

<http://www.newsobserver.com/917/story/1122205.html>

08/06/27 Court blows away gun ban

-4 VOTE | Ruling D.C. law is unconstitutional triggers lawsuit challenging Chicago's curbs -- but experts doubt significant change here soon

Chicago is in the cross hairs of the gun owners rights movement after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the District of Columbia's ban on handguns.

Within hours, the Illinois State Rifle Association filed suit in federal court in Chicago seeking to have Chicago's ban tossed.

The Supreme Court's 5-4 ruling struck down the District of Columbia's 32-year-old ban on handguns as incompatible with gun rights under the Second Amendment.

Daley rips gun ban double standard Cops: Few arrested for violating gun ban, proving ordinance is just symbolic

"Undoubtedly some think that the Second Amendment is outmoded in a society where our standing army is the pride of the nation, where well-trained police forces provide personal security, and where gun violence is a serious problem. That is perhaps debatable, but what is not debatable is that it is not the role of this Court to pronounce the Second Amendment extinct."
Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the majority

"Until today, it has been understood that legislatures may regulate the civilian use and misuse of firearms so long as they do not interfere with the preservation of a well-regulated militia. The court's announcement of a new constitutional right to own and use firearms for private purposes upsets that settled understanding, but leaves for future cases the formidable task of defining the scope of permissible regulations."

Justice John Paul Stevens, writing in dissent

"This is a very frightening decision for America. . . . Does this lead to everyone having a gun in our society? If they think that's the answer, then they're greatly mistaken. Then, why don't we do away with the court system and go back to the Old West? You have a gun and I have a gun and we'll settle in the streets."

Mayor Daley

"If hunters want to hunt, that's fine. It's when adults hunt children, that's the problem."

Arne Duncan, head of the Chicago Public Schools. Since the beginning of classes last fall, 26 students have died from gun violence.

"I'm still trying to figure out who we are more in love with, our children or our guns. It's crazy. I'm safer being a deer knowing people are hunting you."

Annette Nance-Holt, mother of 16-year-old Blair Holt, who was killed on a city bus last May.

"The justices just ruled today to uphold the Constitution. We all know that these anti-gun laws have been passed to the detriment of law-abiding citizens."

Deb Gales, who owns Deb's Gun Range in Hammond, Ind., just across the state line from Chicago.

"Today's ruling . . . makes clear that other municipalities

like Chicago that have banned handguns have infringed on the constitutional rights of Americans. Unlike the elitist view that believes Americans cling to guns out of bitterness, today's ruling recognizes that gun ownership is a fundamental right -- sacred, just as the right to free speech and assembly."

Sen. John McCain, the presumptive Republican nominee for president

"I have always believed that the Second Amendment protects the right of individuals to bear arms, but I also identify with the need for crime-ravaged communities to save their children from the violence that plagues our streets through common-sense, effective safety measures. The Supreme Court has now endorsed that view, and while it ruled that the D.C. gun ban went too far, Justice Scalia himself acknowledged that this right is not absolute and subject to reasonable regulations enacted by local communities to keep their streets safe."

Sen. Barack Obama, the presumptive Democratic nominee for president

"We've been preparing for this for a while," said David G. Sigale, attorney for the gun owners rights group and four Chicagoans who want to keep handguns in their homes. "It's pretty much exactly what we were hoping for."

The 5-4 ruling by the court's conservative majority was so close to what the gun rights advocates were expecting that they did not have to rewrite the lawsuit, Sigale said.

The Supreme Court's ruling appears so definitive that the collapse of Chicago's gun ban seems inevitable, said DePaul University Law Professor Jeffrey Shaman.

"The Chicago ban on handguns will be struck down," Shaman said. "The court has abandoned years of precedent. Previous decisions by a number of courts, including the Supreme Court, have taken the position that the Second Amendment is a collective right in order to maintain 'a well-regulated militia' instead of an individual right, and the court has now reversed that and taken the position that the Second Amendment is an individual right and has ignored the dire need for gun control we have in the nation; ignored all the statistics that there are tens of thousands of shootings a year; ignored all the murders and assaults and robberies committed with guns."

The justices wrote, "We are aware of the problem of handgun violence in this country. ... But the enshrinement of constitutional rights necessarily takes certain policy choices off the table."

Some gun-control laws, such as background checks, bans on felons owning handguns, bans on guns near schools and bans on automatic weapons, appear likely to survive the ruling. The justices wrote that weapons available at the time the Second Amendment was written,

including handguns and muskets, cannot be banned, while M16 rifles probably can be, Shaman said.

"The fact is the ban has been in effect in Chicago since 1982, and Chicago has been a pretty violent city since then," said Sigale, who practices law in Lisle and is co-counsel with lawyer Alan Gura of Alexandria, Va., who successfully challenged the D.C. case. "I don't believe the gun ban in Chicago has made people safer."

Lawsuits can take years to work their way through the courts.

"I don't think we're going to see a year from now any significant changes to what's in place in the City of Chicago or what's in place in the State of Illinois," said Tom Menard, executive director of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. "The sky is not falling."

State Rep. Harry Osterman (D-Chicago) fell two votes shy of passing a bill requiring stricter background checks before people can buy handguns in Illinois. The ruling won't prohibit him from trying again. Likewise, gun owners rights advocates have failed to pass a bill to allow residents to carry concealed weapons.

"There hasn't been much progress on either side," Osterman said.

"I don't think this will have any effect on the City of Chicago at all," said Illinois Concealed Carry's John Birch. "I expect Mayor Daley will completely ignore the court, and I think he's got the power to do that. But it's still a good decision for the rest of the United States."

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/washington/1027715.CST-NWS-guns27.article#>

08/06/27 Cops: Few arrested for violating gun ban

CHICAGO | Ordinance is just symbolic

The Chicago Police Department seized more than 13,000 guns last year, but only a handful of people were arrested for violating the city's handgun ban, records show.

Chicago Police spokeswoman Monique Bond said 74 people were arrested in 2007 and 83 people in 2006 for failing to register their handguns, an ordinance violation.

Thousands of people were arrested on more serious charges of unlawful use of a weapon -- a state offense that is not jeopardized by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision Thursday to overturn Washington D.C.'s handgun ban.

City officials don't want to lose Chicago's handgun ban, saying it gives them another tool to fight gun crime. Veteran Chicago Police officers said the numbers show the ban is largely symbolic.

"Criminals will continue to carry guns, and law-abiding citizens will continue to keep them in their homes for self-defense," one commander said.

So what kinds of guns are the crooks carrying?

Most of the guns submitted for ownership traces in criminal investigations in Chicago last year were

revolvers. The .38-caliber revolver was No. 1, with 1,941 submitted, followed by 1,242 9mm semiautomatic handguns and 962 .22-caliber revolvers, according to the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The .38 and 9mm handguns are more powerful; revolvers typically are cheaper on the street because they have a smaller bullet capacity, experts say.

ATF records show 4,446 revolvers, 4,277 semiautomatic pistols and 1,325 rifles -- including more than 160 with calibers associated with assault and sniper rifles -- were submitted for traces in Chicago last year.

The guns included those recovered as evidence in violent crimes, guns seized from people charged with illegal gun possession and guns found in searches.

Of the guns submitted for traces in homicides, 71 were semiautomatic pistols, 55 were revolvers and five were rifles. Of the guns submitted for traces in assaults, 79 were semiautomatic pistols, 55 were revolvers and 13 were rifles, records show.

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/24-7/1027974.CST-NWS-trace27.article>

08/06/27 News Flash: The Constitution Means What It Says

Justice Antonin Scalia's majority opinion in yesterday's Supreme Court decision in *District of Columbia v. Heller* is historic in its implications and exemplary in its reasoning.

A federal ban on an entire class of guns in ordinary use for self-defense -- such as the handgun ban adopted by the District of Columbia -- is now off the table. Every gun controller's fondest desire has become a constitutional pipe dream

Two important practical issues remain. First, will this ruling also apply to states and municipalities? That will depend on whether the Supreme Court decides to "incorporate" the right to keep and bear arms into the 14th Amendment. But in the middle of his opinion Justice Scalia acknowledges that the 39th Congress that enacted the 14th Amendment did so, in part, to protect the individual right to arms of freedmen and Southern Republicans so they might defend themselves from violence.

My prediction: This ruling will eventually be extended to the states.

Second, how will the court deal with firearms regulations that fall short of a ban? The majority opinion strongly suggests that such regulations must now be subjected to meaningful judicial scrutiny. The exact nature of this scrutiny is not clear, but Justice Scalia explicitly rejects the extremely deferential "rationality" review advocated by Justice Stephen Breyer.

Most likely, gun laws will receive the same sort of judicial scrutiny that is now used to evaluate "time, place and manner" regulations of speech and assembly. Such regulations of First Amendment freedoms are today upheld if they are narrowly tailored to achieve a truly important government purpose, but not if they are really a pretext for undermining protected liberties.

My prediction? Because gun-rights groups like the NRA have so successfully prevented enactment of unreasonable gun laws, most existing gun regulations falling short of a ban will eventually be upheld. But more extreme or merely symbolic laws that are sometimes proposed -- whose aim is to impose an "undue burden" by raising the cost of gun production, ownership and sale -- would likely be found unconstitutional. All gun regulations -- for example, safe storage laws and licensing -- will have to be shown to be consistent with an effective right of self-defense by law-abiding citizens.

Justice Scalia's opinion is exemplary for the way it was reasoned. It will be studied by law professors and students for years to come. It is the clearest, most careful interpretation of the meaning of the Constitution ever to be adopted by a majority of the Supreme Court. Justice Scalia begins with the text, and carefully parses the grammatical relationship of the "operative clause" identifying "the right to keep and bear arms" to the "prefatory clause" about the importance of a "well-regulated militia." Only then does he consider the extensive evidence of original meaning that has been uncovered by scholars over the past 20 years -- evidence that was presented to the Court in numerous "friends of the court" briefs.

Justice Scalia's opinion is the finest example of what is now called "original public meaning" jurisprudence ever adopted by the Supreme Court. This approach stands in sharp contrast to Justice John Paul Stevens's dissenting opinion that largely focused on "original intent" -- the method that many historians employ to explain away the text of the Second Amendment by placing its words in what they call a "larger context." Although original-intent jurisprudence was discredited years ago among constitutional law professors, that has not stopped nonoriginalists from using "original intent" -- or the original principles "underlying" the text -- to negate its original public meaning.

Of course, the originalism of both Justices Scalia's and Stevens's opinions are in stark contrast with Justice Breyer's dissenting opinion, in which he advocates balancing an enumerated constitutional right against what some consider a pressing need to prohibit its exercise. Guess which wins out in the balancing? As Justice Scalia notes, this is not how we normally protect individual rights, and was certainly not how Justice Breyer protected

the individual right of habeas corpus in the military tribunals case decided just two weeks ago.

So what larger lessons does Heller teach? First, the differing methods of interpretation employed by the majority and the dissent demonstrate why appointments to the Supreme Court are so important. In the future, we should be vetting Supreme Court nominees to see if they understand how Justice Scalia reasoned in Heller and if they are committed to doing the same.

We should also seek to get a majority of the Supreme Court to reconsider its previous decisions or "precedents" that are inconsistent with the original public meaning of the text. This shows why elections matter – especially presidential elections – and why we should vet our politicians to see if they appreciate how the Constitution ought to be interpreted.

Good legal scholarship was absolutely crucial to this outcome. No justice is capable of producing the historical research and analysis upon which Justice Scalia relied. Brilliant as it was in its execution, his opinion rested on the work of many scholars of the Second Amendment, as I am sure he would be the first to acknowledge. (Disclosure: I joined a brief by Academics for the Second Amendment supporting the individual rights interpretation; one of my articles was cited by Justice Scalia and another by Justice Breyer in his dissent.)

Due to the political orthodoxy among most constitutional law professors, some of the most important and earliest of this scholarship was produced by nonacademics like Don Kates, Stephen Halbrook, David Kopel, Clayton Cramer and others. Believe it or not, Heller was a case of nearly first impression, uninhibited by any prior decisions misinterpreting the Second Amendment.

Last but not least, tribute must be paid to the plaintiffs – Shelly Parker, Dick Anthony Heller, Tom Palmer, Gillian St. Lawrence, Tracey Ambeau, and George Lyon – who went where the National Rifle Association feared to tread, and to their lawyers Robert Levy, Clark Neily, and lead counsel Alan Gura. I was privileged to witness Mr. Gura argue the case – his first Supreme Court argument ever – and he was outstanding. Heller provides yet another reminder of the crucial role that private lawyers play in the preservation of our liberties.

Mr. Barnett, a professor at Georgetown Law, is the author of "Restoring the Lost Constitution: The Presumption of Liberty" (Princeton, 2004).

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121452412614009067.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

08/06/26 McConnell Statement on Supreme Court Ruling of D.C. v Heller

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell released the following statement Thursday following a 5-4 Supreme Court ruling upholding the Second Amendment rights of citizens of the District of Columbia:

“Today the Supreme Court ruled that the Second Amendment protects the individual right of law-abiding citizens of the District of Columbia to protect themselves in their own homes. This landmark ruling will ensure that regardless of where citizens reside, the government will respect their rights that are guaranteed by the Second Amendment.”

<http://mcconnell.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=299786&start=1>

08/06/26 Repeal the 2nd Amendment

No, we don't suppose that's going to happen any time soon. But it should.

The 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is evidence that, while the founding fathers were brilliant men, they could have used an editor.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

If the founders had limited themselves to the final 14 words, the amendment would have been an unambiguous declaration of the right to possess firearms. But they didn't and it isn't. The amendment was intended to protect the authority of the states to organize militias. The inartful wording has left the amendment open to public debate for more than 200 years. But in its last major decision on gun rights, in 1939, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously found that that was the correct interpretation.

On Tuesday, five members of the court edited the 2nd Amendment. In essence, they said: Scratch the preamble, only 14 words count. (Click [here](#) to read the full decision)

In doing so, they have curtailed the power of the legislatures and the city councils to protect their citizens.

The majority opinion in the 5-4 decision to overturn a Washington, D.C., ban on handgun possession goes to great lengths to parse the words of the 2nd Amendment. The opinion, written by Justice Antonin Scalia, spends 11 1/2 pages just on the meaning of the words "keep and bear arms."

But as Justice John Paul Stevens wrote in a compelling dissent, the five justices in the majority found no new evidence that the 2nd Amendment was intended to limit the power of government to regulate the use of firearms.

They found no new evidence to overturn decades of court precedent.

They have claimed, Stevens wrote, "a far more active judicial role in making vitally important national policy decisions than was envisioned at any time in the 18th, 19th, or 20th centuries."

It's a relief that the majority didn't go further in its policy-making on gun control. The majority opinion states that the D.C. handgun ban and a requirement for trigger locks violate the 2nd Amendment. By virtue of this decision, Chicago's 1982 ban on handguns is not likely to survive a court challenge. A lawsuit seeking to overturn the Chicago ordinance was filed on Thursday by the Illinois State Rifle Association.

The majority, though, did state that the right under the 2nd Amendment "is not unlimited." So what does that mean? The majority left room for state and local governments to restrict the carrying of concealed weapons in public, to prohibit weapons in "sensitive places such as schools and government buildings," and to regulate the sale of firearms. The majority allowed room for the prohibition of "dangerous and unusual weapons." It did not stipulate what weapons are not "dangerous."

Lower courts are going to be mighty busy figuring out all of this.

We can argue about the effectiveness of municipal handgun bans such as those in Washington and Chicago. They have, at best, had limited impact. People don't have to go far beyond the city borders to buy a weapon that's prohibited within the city. (Click [here](#) for gun-related crime statistics)

But neither are these laws overly restrictive. Citizens have had the right to protect themselves in their homes with other weapons, such as shotguns.

Some view this court decision as an affirmation of individual rights. But the damage in this ruling is that it takes a significant public policy issue out of the hands of citizens. The people of Washington no longer have the authority to decide that, as a matter of public safety, they will prohibit handgun possession within their borders.

Chicago and the nation saw a decline in gun violence over the last decade or so, but recent news has been ominous. The murder rate in Chicago has risen 13 percent this year. Guns are still the weapon of choice for mayhem in the U.S. About 68 percent of all murders in 2006 were committed with a firearms, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

Repeal the 2nd Amendment? Yes, it's an anachronism.

We won't repeal the amendment, but at least we can have that debate.

Want to debate whether crime-staggered cities should prohibit the possession of handguns? The Supreme Court has just said, forget about it.

http://newsblogs.chicagotribune.com/vox_pop/2008/06/repeal-the-2nd.html

08/06/26 Gun Lobby Quickly Sues To Overturn Chicago Ban

U.S. Supreme Court: Americans May Own Guns For Protection, Hunting; Ruling Casts Doubt On City's Decades Old Law

CHICAGO (CBS) — A U.S. Supreme Court decision has been the talk of the nation on Thursday. A handgun ban in Washington, D.C. has been struck down by the high court.

As expected, strong reaction has been pouring in on both sides of this emotional issue.

Gun control advocates like Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley were outraged, while gun rights activists have already sued to overturn a similar ban in Chicago.

The 5-4 ruling specifically struck down a ban on handguns in Washington, D.C. The court ruled that the District of Columbia's 32-year-old ban on handguns is incompatible with gun rights under the Second Amendment.

The decision goes further than even the Bush administration wanted, and leaves most gun laws intact, but could invalidate Chicago's.

Chicago has a similar ban on handguns and within minutes of the high court's ruling, the Illinois State Rifle Association began the court fight to get Chicago's ban overturned as well.

In Chicago, unless your gun was purchased before the ban went into effect in 1982, it is illegal to possess a handgun within city limits. Only police officers, aldermen and a handful of others are exempt from the ban. While other firearms can be registered, under current law, handguns cannot be registered and are considered illegal.

But gun rights advocates hope to change that. The Illinois State Rifle Association filed a lawsuit with just that purpose in mind at 9:15 a.m.

"We want to overturn this ban. It's pretty onerous. It takes the right of self-defense away from every Chicago citizen," said Richard Pearson, director of the Illinois State Rifle Association.

The National Rifle Association also plans to file lawsuits in Chicago and several suburbs, as well as San Francisco, challenging handgun restrictions there based on Thursday's outcome.

Illinois State Sen. Kirk Dillard said at least one-third of the households in his hometown, Hinsdale, have guns, one of the highest percentages in the state. He hailed the Supreme Court decision, saying, "I think the ruling today is good news. The criminals have guns, but law-abiding citizens should not have their rights jeopardized."

As pleased as Dillard and other suburban Republicans

in DuPage County were with the Supreme Court ruling, in Chicago it was a very different story among top democrats.

Mayor Daley, a proponent of strict gun control laws, wasn't happy about the Supreme Court ruling, calling it "a very frightening decision."

"If they think that's the answer ... they're greatly mistaken. Then why don't we do away with the court system and go back to the Old West, you have a gun and I have a gun, and we'll settle it in the streets if that's they're thinking."

"It is frightening that America loves guns," the mayor said, "and to me, I think this decision really places those who are rich and those are in power, they'll always feel safe. Those who do not have the power do not feel safe, and that's what they're saying. If you're elected officials, you feel safe. You cannot carry a gun into a federal building. You cannot carry a gun into a federal court. So they're setting themselves aside, and really, they're saying to the rest of America that the answer to all the constitutional issues is that we can carry guns. And I just don't understand how they came to this thinking."

Gov. Rod Blagojevich said, "the decision of Supreme Court today is very scary and it's a big blow to those of us who believe in common sense gun laws ... so they ain't always right and on this case, they're wrong again."

Some experts said the Supreme Court left room for local handgun controls in Chicago and suburbs such as Morton Grove and Oak Park, to survive, but only after a significant rewrite.

Gun control activists Pam and Tommie Bosley hope strict gun control laws stay in place. They have been on a door-to-door anti-violence crusade ever since their 18-year-old son Terrell was shot and killed leaving a South Side church two years ago.

"We doin' it for these guys, the little guys and for you all, that's why we're out here I can't bring my son back," Tommie Bosley said as he lobbied neighbors on the South Side.

Pam Bosely said, "We protected him as much as we could, but as you say, he's not here, so with the guns out on the streets, there's no way you can save and protect your children."

Tommie Bosely said, "I think what's going to end up happening ultimately is you're going to have private citizens who are not equipped to use handguns taking the law into their own hands."

But gun rights supporters say that's exactly what some people are forced to do already -- defend themselves -- and guns can help them do that.

Alan Gottlieb, of the Second Amendment Foundation in the state of Washington, told reporters that Chicago's

handgun ban has failed to stop violent crime.

That has been one of the mantras of the gun lobby.

But a supporter of Chicago's law responded that facts are stubborn things, noting that murder and other gun violence here are far lower than a decade ago, claiming Mayor Daley's stringent gun enforcement deserves much credit.

Maria Ramirez couldn't agree more. She wears her son's picture close to her heart. It's all she has of him; 16-year old Matthew Michael Ramirez died in 2006 after someone pulled a trigger.

"I don't want another mother to wake up like I do...look in son's bed, praying it's a bad dream," Ramirez said. "These guns that are gotten legally in the first place end up becoming illegal on the streets."

Her black market sales fear was a concern for law enforcement, too. The people on the frontlines already respond to thousands of gun related calls every year.

"If the result of this ruling is more guns on the street it's going to make it more challenging for law enforcement," Daley said, predicting an end to Chicago's handgun ban would spark new violence and force the city to raise taxes to pay for new police.

Pearson said "I say that's probably untrue." Pearson said he believes crime only rises with gun laws like Chicago's "because criminal element knows people don't have a firearm for self defense."

That's one reason he was prepared to fight for an individual's Second Amendment rights. "Sure, I think it's an uphill battle ... freedom always is."

Pearson predicted that the fight that began with the filing of a lawsuit against Mayor Daley and the city at 9:15 a.m. Thursday would take between 18 months and two years to resolve. He said that if the Illinois State Rifle Association loses its lawsuit, it would appeal all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

But Chicago's Corporation Counsel Mara Georges said the city shouldn't have to defend its gun law, because the Supreme Court's ruling doesn't apply here.

"Our ordinance continues to be valid law. The Supreme Court did not say that the Second Amendment right to bear arms extends to state and local governments and in fact, there's Supreme Court precedent that it does not."

The U.S. Supreme Court had not conclusively interpreted the Second Amendment since its ratification in 1791. The amendment reads: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed."

The basic issue for the justices was whether the amendment protects an individual's right to own guns no matter what, or whether that right is somehow tied to service in a state militia.

Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for four colleagues, said

the Constitution does not permit "the absolute prohibition of handguns held and used for self-defense in the home."

In dissent, Justice John Paul Stevens wrote that the majority "would have us believe that over 200 years ago, the Framers made a choice to limit the tools available to elected officials wishing to regulate civilian uses of weapons."

He said such evidence "is nowhere to be found."

Gun rights supporters hailed the decision. "I consider this the opening salvo in a step-by-step process of providing relief for law-abiding Americans everywhere that have been deprived of this freedom," said Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president of the National Rifle Association.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., a leading gun control advocate in Congress, criticized the ruling. "I believe the people of this great country will be less safe because of it," she said.

With an epidemic of gun violence in Chicago this year, Daley and other officials and activists have been lobbying for stricter state gun laws.

But some defenders of gun rights say just the opposite of Mayor Daley, arguing instead in favor of the theories of economist John Lott, now of the University of Maryland.

The onetime University of Chicago professor argued in his 1998 volume, *More Guns, Less Crime*, for a statistical correlation between laws allowing people to carry concealed handguns and a drop in crime rates. Lott theorized the crime rate dropped because criminals were deterred by the possibility of confronting an armed victim.

Lott also claimed the Chicago gun ban was to blame for an increase in crime.

Critics of Chicago's gun ordinance also say the law already aims to keep guns out of the hands of criminals, and that law-abiding citizens should be allowed to possess any firearm they desire.

The Washington, D.C., gun ban was taken to the Supreme Court by way of the case of Dick Anthony Heller, 65, an armed security guard. He sued the District of Columbia after it rejected his application to keep a handgun at his home for protection. His lawyers say the amendment plainly protects an individual's right.

North suburban Morton Grove was the first municipality in the country to enact a handgun ban, in 1981, according to the *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. The ban survived a court challenge, and the Chicago ordinance proposed by Ald. Edward Burke (14th) passed the following year, in the wake of assassination attempts on President Reagan and Pope John Paul II.

Evanston passed a handgun ban later in 1982, and Oak Park in 1984, among other municipalities.

Before Thursday, the last Supreme Court ruling on the

topic came in 1939 in *U.S. v. Miller*, which involved a sawed-off shotgun. Constitutional scholars disagree over what that case means but agree it did not squarely answer the question of individual versus collective rights <http://cbs2chicago.com/local/supreme.court.handguns.2.757471.html>

08/06/24 Tougher gun laws to get a look

Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper will consider tougher gun laws and adjusted nightclub operating hours after a child was shot in the Curtis Park neighborhood and a gunfight erupted in Lower Downtown over the weekend.

The shootings have alarmed community members who fear a "summer of violence," he said.

"Let me be clear: This community will not accept violence — not a day of it, not a week of it, not a month of it — and certainly not a summer of it," the mayor said Monday.

Hickenlooper will look at Denver's gun laws to ensure they are as effective as they can be in keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals and young people.

"There are a number of other cities addressing gun laws," he said. "We want to look at the matrix of our existing laws and see if some of these other laws are able to help."

He offered no specifics but pointed to Philadelphia, where authorities have tried to restrict gun owners to one purchase per month and allow judges to order guns taken from people deemed to be a threat to themselves or others.

Denver District Attorney Mitch Morrissey, who appeared with Hickenlooper and Police Chief Gerry Whitman, said state laws could supersede any changes to city gun rules.

Less than 36 hours after third-grader Sierra Moore was shot Friday, as bars closed and revelers poured into LoDo's streets early Sunday, a shootout broke out in a pay parking lot at 18th and Market streets.

Police made an arrest in Sierra's shooting but are still seeking a man who fled the LoDo parking lot after firing as many as nine bullets in the parking-lot gunfight. The two events appear to be unrelated.

Another man, who had a shotgun, was firing at the man who fled when two gang-unit officers, who were patrolling nearby, arrived. He turned the shotgun on the officers and they returned fire, shooting him dead.

Police identified the dead man as Mark Tabullo-Zuniga, 23.

"He went down and handed the gun to his partner, who was also shot" by police, Whitman said. The second man, identified Monday as Andres Castillo, 27, was in serious condition at Denver Health Medical Center.

Sgt. Vince Lombardi and Officer Jason Simmons, who shot the men, are on paid administrative leave while the shootings are investigated.

More than 20 rounds were fired in the lot, which was crowded with people getting their cars, Whitman said.

Four bystanders were hit with shotgun pellets, though none of their injuries is serious. Another pellet tore through Simmons' shirt.

Neither the shooting in Curtis Park nor the LoDo battle was gang related, Whitman said. But he wouldn't say whether any of those involved were gang members.

The violence erupted as Denver is about to host the Democratic National Convention in August.

Many of those visiting the city are expected to spend time in LoDo. City Council President Michael Hancock said those coming to Denver for the convention shouldn't be worried.

"Downtown will probably be the safest place to be when the convention is in town," Hancock said.

About one year ago, Hickenlooper said, the city brought bar owners together to discuss changing the 2 a.m. bar closing time, but no changes were made. He hopes to bring the owners together once more to talk about changing closing hour.

Whitman said there has been discussion of staggering closing times. But if bars are left open longer, even if no alcohol is served for the last hour or more, it will require more police to patrol them, he added.

Bars throughout the city contribute to the rowdiness that accompanies closing time when they fail to cut off those who have had too much to drink, he said.

But alcohol wasn't the primary factor in two men opening fire in a crowded lot, he said. "These two guys are just criminals."

Denver City Council members were taking a wait-and-see approach before advocating any significant changes in how the city handles LoDo bars or neighborhood patrols.

Councilwoman Judy Montero, who represents LoDo, said she will ask Whitman to review the Police Department's safety plan for the area to determine whether changes are needed.

"It's a volume issue because so many are coming out at the same time and converging in the same area," Montero said.

http://www.denverpost.com/breakingnews/ci_9678073

08/06/24 New law allows shooting at burglars

A license to kill or a leg up for law enforcement - the verdict may still be out, but the Knesset approved the "Shai Dromi Bill" on Tuesday, an amendment to the Penal Law aimed at giving property owners more freedom to use fatal force against people who break into their homes, businesses or farms.

The legislation, named for the Negev farmer who in January 2007 shot at a group of people who broke into his farm to steal livestock, killing Khaled el-Atrash. Dromi was charged with manslaughter, a move that caused a public uproar. In the ensuing year, bumper-stickers appeared on cars nationwide bearing the phrase "We are all Shai Dromi," expressing a lack of faith in the police's ability to stop property crime, particularly in rural areas.

The Knesset vote Tuesday evening reflected that wave of support, with the bill, sponsored by MKs Yitzhak Aharonovich (Israel Beiteinu), Yisrael Katz (Likud), and Tzvi Hendel and Eli Gabai (National Union-National Religious Party), easily passing by 44-7.

"The incident involving Shai Dromi raised awareness of the number of incidents of robberies that became life-threatening and of the distress of Israeli farmers who must deal with crime with almost no recourse," Gabai said after the legislation was approved. "The law attempts to restore deterrent capacity, to make the police's work easier and to reduce crime throughout the country."

"Now, homeowners, ranchers and farmers will be certain that their home is their fortress," Aharonovich said.

But left-wing and Arab parties were less than enthusiastic. MK Zehava Gal-On (Meretz) described the bill as "a death penalty for property crime."

"Thieves and robbers should be punished, but we should not allow property owners to determine an immediate death sentence," said MK Ahmed Tibi (United Arab List-Ta'al), who mounted a fiery opposition to the bill from the Knesset speaker's podium.

Unlike earlier restrictions on criminal liability in cases of self-defense, under the new law a property owner does not have to face "a real danger to his own or another person's life, freedom, bodily welfare or property" to justify shooting. However, "the provision will not apply if the [property owner's] act was manifestly unreasonable under the circumstances in order to repel the intruder or enterer.

<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1214132677640&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FShowFull>

08/06/24 Authorities capture 325 more fugitives in Pa.

Federal authorities say they arrested more than 325 fugitives wanted for crimes including murder, drug dealing and sexual assault in sweeps in the western and eastern Pennsylvania.

Among those arrested in last week's sweeps were four homicide suspects and 33 sex offenders. Authorities also seized money, heroin and crack cocaine.

The roundup was part of Operation FALCON, a program coordinated by the U.S. Marshals Service. The program has resulted in the capture of more than 36,500 fugitives nationwide since its inception three years ago.

In central and northeastern Pennsylvania, agents nabbed nearly 200 fugitives earlier this month.

FALCON stands for Federal and Local Cops Organized Nationally.

http://articles.lancasteronline.com/ap/4/pa_fugitive_round_up

08/06/24 2 charged after gun battle, chase in Lancaster

LANCASTER, Pa. - Two motorists have been accused of shooting at each other as they raced through Lancaster. Twenty-nine-year-old Carlos Montano and 27-year-old Pablo Franco Jr. face multiple counts of aggravated assault and other offenses.

Police say the chase started late Sunday night after Montano leaned out his window and fired into Franco's vehicle. Montano then sped away with Franco following him.

Authorities say the men exchanged shots and the chase continued for several blocks. Franco eventually went home and called 911.

Lancaster police Chief Keith Sadler says it's amazing no one was hurt

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/20736949.html>

08/06/24 Suspected home invader shoots himself

A Terre Hill man, holed up in a mobile home in South Carolina, took his own life on Sunday rather than surrender to police.

Travis Meints, 21, shot himself in the head with a 9 mm handgun near Greer, S.C., an autopsy by the Spartanburg County Coroner's Office concluded Monday.

Meints was believed to have been involved in a nearby home invasion robbery earlier in the day. Police had tracked him to the mobile home, the Greenville News reported today.

Children ages 2, 3 and 4 were inside the home at the time, and a SWAT team was outside according to the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Office incident report.

The children weren't harmed, Spartanburg Sheriff spokesman Maj. Dan Johnson. The case remains under investigation, Johnson said.

Police investigators believe Meints was staying at the mobile home, at 660 Dean Road, because he kept clothing and suitcases there, Johnson said.

Two sisters, Allison Ziolkowski and Morgan Ziolkowski, along with Jason Wentz and the three children, lived at the home, Johnson told the Greenville News.

A home on Air Park Drive, where Meints was suspected of committing armed robbery earlier in the day, is in the vicinity of the Dean Road home, he said.

Meints was suspected of taking money, cell phones, a

knife and a Ford Taurus from the home, according to a police incident report.

The car was later seen at the mobile home. About two hours after the armed robbery, police surrounded the mobile home.

Meints was pronounced dead at the scene Sunday night, said Robin S. Forrest, chief investigator of the Spartanburg County Coroner's Office.

<http://articles.lancasteronline.com/local/4/223518>

08/06/25 Car may provide clues in pastor's shooting

WV WAYNE -- The Wayne County Sheriff's Department is asking for the public's help in their quest to solve the shooting death of the Rev. Mark McCalla. Investigators are asking for any information regarding a mid-sized car with a New York license plate. A witness spotted it in the area close to the time of McCalla's June 19 death at the Beech Fork State Park rifle range.

Detectives also want any information concerning the vehicle's passenger. He is described as a 6-foot white male wearing a mohawk hair style.

Sheriff David Pennington did not have a description of the vehicle's driver. Anyone with information should contact the Wayne County Sheriff's Department at 304-272-6378.

A state forestry worker found McCalla's body at the rifle range. The 48-year-old from Huntington died from a single gunshot wound to the head. Investigators believe the shooter fired in close proximity to McCalla. After the shooting, his body was dragged about 20 yards.

The shooting took place in a secluded area. Pennington does not believe anyone witnessed the attack.

Pennington said detectives are checking with rental car companies in the region to locate the vehicle with New York tags.

McCalla, an avid outdoorsman, was pastor at Highlawn Presbyterian Church in Huntington. Mourners attended his funeral Monday.

The victim's wife, the Rev. Pamela McCalla, released a prepared statement this week to The Herald-Dispatch. She expressed thanks to the community and a desire to know answers.

"I never imagined at the time that I would have to rely on that kindness and support because of the murder of my husband," she said of the community. "I would like to face the person who did this senseless act to ask for an explanation ... to explain away the void in our family, his church and this community. I cannot think of a single good excuse for this person's actions."

Pennington said the victim's outdoor hobbies included firearms. He owned several firearms, including rifles and handguns.

Two of McCalla's guns and a wallet were taken from the crime scene, Pennington said. State police divers searched a nearby lake Monday and Tuesday for the missing items to no avail.

Investigators have not said if one of the missing guns was used in McCalla's death.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is tracking the serial numbers for McCalla's guns. Pennington said the bureau already identified the number for one of the missing guns. That number was placed into a national criminal database.

Investigators also are checking pawn shops for the missing firearms.

The ATF, State Police and the sheriff's department continue working the case with other agencies. Pennington would not identify those agencies for fear it would lead to speculation about the case.

The motive for the fatal attack continues to baffle investigators. Pennington said they have several leads pointing in different directions but would not elaborate. He said no evidence connects those theories to a possible motive.

"One would assume it was a robbery without knowing anything else, but I don't know everything yet," he said. "We have a lot of work to do. The leads are coming in slow. They are positive leads, and it just takes time to do an investigation of this kind. You can't be too careful when investigating a murder."

Pennington said detectives are analyzing many pieces of evidence. He hopes that gives better direction to the investigation.

Investigators are reviewing recent reports of stolen guns at the rifle range. County and state authorities received similar reports in the past few months. They indicate guns were stolen as the victims replaced paper targets at the range. Deputies have not linked those reports to McCalla's death.

<http://www.herald-dispatch.com/homepage/x2102938085/Car-may-provide-clues-to-shooting>

08/06/24 Philly police officer shot apprehending suspect

PHILADELPHIA - A Philadelphia police officer was shot in the arm, but authorities say he and his partner still managed to capture two robbery suspects.

Police public affairs Lt. Frank Venore says the officers stopped their patrol car when they saw two men apparently robbing another person about 1:30 a.m. Tuesday in South Philadelphia.

Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey says the officers began chasing the suspects. One suspect turned and fired several gunshots. One struck one of the officers.

Ramsey says the wounded officer still managed to arrest a suspect and his partner chased down the other and apprehended him.

Officials say the wounded officer, a 29-year veteran of the force, was taken to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in good condition. Ramsey says a gun was recovered.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/20734174.html>

08/06/24 Gun charge for Hornets' Rasual Butler

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. - New Orleans Hornets guard Rasual Butler, a product of Roman Catholic High and La Salle University, has been charged with flashing a loaded gun near a South Florida nightclub.

A witness told investigators that Butler pulled out a gun near a South Beach club early yesterday, according to a Miami Beach police report. Butler was sitting in an SUV when officers arrived and found a loaded gun in the vehicle.

"We take these matters very seriously, and we'll work with all appropriate authorities," Hornets general manager Jeff Bower said in a statement.

Butler faces charges of carrying a concealed firearm and improperly displaying a firearm. He was released on \$6,000 bond yesterday afternoon, a Miami-Dade County Corrections Department spokeswoman said.

It was not immediately known whether Butler had an attorney.

In Philadelphia earlier this month, Butler hosted the Rasual Butler All-City Basketball Classic, a showcase tripleheader for underclassmen high-school basketball players at Ben Franklin High. Butler did not attend the event, but purchased uniforms for players in all three games, and sneakers and gym bags for the rising juniors and seniors. *

<http://www.philly.com/dailynews/national/20732229.html>

08/06/24 Aaron McKie's charged with lying on gun paperwork

COMING OFF the bench as both a point guard and shooting guard, Aaron McKie was such a big gun for the 76ers in the 2000-01 season that he was named the NBA's Sixth Man of the Year.

Yesterday, the former Temple University court star, recently released by the Memphis Grizzlies, found himself in a different kind of court after he was arrested on charges that he had lied on application forms to purchase a gun in Pennsylvania.

At the time he filled out the forms, he was the subject of a protection-from-abuse order filed by the mother of one of his children, which prohibited him from possessing, transferring, or acquiring any weapons during the time it was in effect.

McKie, 35, accompanied by his attorney, Brian McMonagle, turned himself in to Pennsylvania State Police yesterday morning and was arraigned during the afternoon before Montgomery County District Judge Christopher Cerski in Oreland, Pa.

He was charged with a felony count of violating the Uniform Firearms Act by making a false written statement in the purchase of a firearm, and with a misdemeanor count of making a false statement to authorities.

The felony charge carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.

McKie was released on \$50,000 unsecured bail and returned to his Narberth home, McMonagle said.

Following the court hearing, McMonagle told reporters that McKie's alleged wrongdoing had resulted from an "honest mistake."

"If he spent a little more time and care in filling out this report, I think we wouldn't be here," McMonagle said. "He simply made a mistake and he feels bad about it."

During the April 8 gun-buying trip, McKie went to Abington Gun Sports Store in Upper Moreland Township, Montgomery County, and tried to buy a .38-caliber Smith and Wesson handgun and a 9 mm Ruger handgun, according to the affidavit of probable cause.

Two of the several forms that McKie had to fill out to complete the purchase asked questions about his eligibility to own a gun, according to Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Ferman.

In filling out one federal form, Ferman said, McKie denied that he was subject to a court order that would restrict his ability to harass, stalk or threaten his "child or an intimate partner or child of such partner."

And on a state form, McKie denied that he was a subject of "an active Protection From Abuse Order," according to the affidavit of probable cause.

McKie's information was then entered into the Pennsylvania Instant Check system, an automated system by which gun dealers can determine whether someone can legally purchase a weapon in the state.

"The PIC system denied Mr. McKie the ability to purchase the firearms, and he left," Ferman said.

Pennsylvania State Police then ran a background check on McKie, which brought up the protection-from-abuse order filed Sept. 27, 2007, in the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas and which was in effect for a year.

"It was an order that was entered by consent and in his presence - meaning that he agreed to the entry of the order, he was present in court and he signed in court acknowledging his receipt of the order," Ferman said.

Yesterday on Comcast SportsNet's "Daily News Live," McMonagle said that his client had agreed to the protection order but was not in court as Ferman had said.

Ferman and McMonagle both declined to release more information about the parties involved in the order.

In August 2001, a girlfriend of McKie's, Kianna Williams, filed for a protection-from-abuse order and filed a palimony suit claiming adultery, cruelty and abuse.

About a month later, Williams dropped her request for the abuse order after a dramatic day of testimony that chronicled her stormy relationship with the Sixers player.

"He backhanded me in my face and I flew over the bed,"

Williams testified in court on Sept. 13, 2001.

She also said that McKie had dragged her into another room and told her he wanted her to get an abortion.

A source close to McKie said yesterday that Williams was the same woman who brought the protection-from-abuse order against McKie last year.

McMonagle told reporters that his client thought that all he needed in order to buy a gun in Pennsylvania was a clean criminal record. He said that McKie even called another attorney after the gun-store owner denied his application and found out why he was denied, but that by then it was too late.

McMonagle said that McKie was only trying to purchase the guns to protect himself and his two daughters, who are now ages 19 and 9.

"Unfortunately, Philadelphia's become a pretty dangerous place, and for athletes like himself there's certainly no good reason for them not to try to protect their families and themselves," McMonagle said.

On "Daily News Live," McMonagle said that McKie was devastated that he had to face criminal charges and is concerned about any damage to his reputation.

"Aaron feels horrible about this and is greatly concerned about the perception that it creates," McMonagle said.

"But I think at the end of the day, when everybody sees how this unfolded, hopefully fair minds will prevail and we will be able to resolve this."

In the wooded stretch of Narberth where McKie lives, folks were surprised by his arrest. The former Sixer is regarded by some as a regular guy who plays with his kids on the front lawn and helps his next-door neighbors shovel their driveway.

"He's quiet, but he does go out of his way to be nice and say hello," said Sandy Edelstein, who lives across Centennial Road from McKie. "If he's driving by in the morning and my kids are waiting for the bus, he makes a point of waving to them."

McKie usually has several relatives staying at his house, including his mother, Edelstein said.

"It's kind of sweet," she said. "He's just a family guy."

News of McKie's arrest left Edelstein and other neighbors surprised, but "at the same time, he didn't go out and commit some big crime. That would be shocking," she said.

Sixers spokesman Michael Preston said that the team had no comment on yesterday's proceedings.

McKie is due back in court for a preliminary hearing July 3.

http://www.philly.com/philly/hp/news_update/20732204.html

08/06/24 Poor record keeping blamed for three-time felon avoiding life sentence

Poor record keeping by Philadelphia's courts kept a federal judge yesterday from giving a possible life sentence to a gunman accused of trying to kill a city police officer.

Instead, U.S. District Court Judge Anita B. Brody reluctantly concluded she could not impose more than 10 years in prison on defendant Germaine Battis.

Battis, 36, already had three felony convictions when prosecutors say he pulled a gun and tried to shoot Officer Christopher Rommel on a Frankford street on March 22, 2003.

Rommel told Brody that three of his fellow officers had been killed by repeat offenders like Battis.

"People like this, who have been on the streets, they get out of jail, and they do this over and over," he told Brody. "This defendant showed no regard whatsoever for human life."

Brody sentenced Battis to 10 years on federal firearms charges, and said the prison term could have been much longer but Philadelphia "Common Pleas Court messed up" by failing to keep sufficient records of one of the three prior felony convictions at issue.

"For better or for worse," the judge said, "I am now limited to 10 years."

Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark S. Miller said that Battis could have gotten up to life in prison as an armed career criminal if Battis had been convicted of three violent felonies or serious drug offenses.

Battis had two prior convictions for aggravated assault and one for possession with intent to deliver drugs.

But Assistant Federal Defender Mark Wilson argued that the city court records from the drug case did not clearly show the specific crime of which he had been convicted - and that the offense should not be counted as one of the three necessary for a longer sentence.

Brody called it "irresponsible" that there wasn't an available transcript from the city drug case.

"This was a case in which, frankly, the state must have had a very strong interest. It involved the potential shooting of a police officer, and they didn't preserve enough evidence for me to be able to properly sentence" him, said Brody. Philadelphia Common Pleas Court Administrative Judge D. Webster Keogh, who handled the Battis drug case, could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Battis' sister, Dionne, asked Brody to show mercy, saying her brother had grown up in the ghetto and gotten involved with the "wrong people." She said he had won academic awards in school and could have gone far in life.

"He's a kind-hearted person," she said.

Miller said that Battis was a dangerous felon.

"There isn't one reason to show one ounce of compassion for Mr. Battis at this point," said Miller, who said he believed the records were clear enough to warrant a longer term. "The streets of Philadelphia . . . don't need to see him again."

In 1991, court records show, Battis was sentenced to seven to 23 months in jail for aggravated assault. In June 1994, he got two prison sentences - 2 1/2 to 5 years in the drug case and 10 to 26 years for another aggravated assault.

Battis was paroled in February 2001, Miller said.

And on March 22, 2003, he was charged with attempted murder. The incident occurred when Rommel was responding to a call about a man with a gun at a bar, and he realized he had just driven past someone matching the description of the gunman.

He went up to Battis, who struggled and pulled out a gun, but fortunately, Miller said, Rommel pushed the muzzle away from his head just as Battis fired the gun.

The case was thrown out by a Philadelphia Common Pleas Court judge, but Miller said that the state Superior Court reversed that ruling. He said the District Attorney's Office was preparing the case for trial.

Rommel, meanwhile, said his brush with Battis was a life-altering event. Every day now, before he leaves for work, he tells his children and his wife that he loves them.

Just in case.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/20732839.html>

08/06/24 Man who stashed mom in freezer guilty on gun charges

A Cranberry man charged with hiding his mother's body in a freezer so he could collect her monthly retirement checks was found guilty yesterday of unrelated firearms charges in Butler County Common Pleas Court.

Philip Faxon Royer Jr. pled not guilty to carrying a firearm without a license. He faces up to four years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. He is currently out on bond and will be sentenced July 2.

The verdict came nearly two years after an unloaded handgun was found in a handmade cardboard holster in Mr. Royer's vehicle. Officers later found 14 rounds of ammunition in a magazine in the driver's seat visor.

In August 2006, the body of Mr. Royer's mother was found in a basement freezer. Bobbie Royer, 90, had lived with Mr. Royer in Cranberry and died of natural causes in August 2006. Mr. Royer is accused of hiding her body so

he could continue to collect her Social Security and pension checks, which totaled \$1,287 per month.

Mr. Royer was charged with misdemeanor counts of abusing a corpse and criminal attempt at theft by deception in January 2007. Pretrial conferences will probably take place later this summer, said standby defense attorney Gerry Cassidy.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08176/892095-54.stm>

08/06/23 Man gets 22 years for plotting Calif. attacks

SANTA ANA, Calif. - One of four men accused of plotting from behind bars to attack military sites, synagogues and other targets in California was sentenced Monday to 22 years in federal prison.

Levar Haley Washington, 30, was sentenced by U.S. District Court Judge Cormac J. Carney after pleading guilty last year to conspiring to levy war against the United States and using a firearm to further the conspiracy.

Prosecutors said Washington used a shotgun to rob a Torrance gas station on July 4, 2005. He was part of a prison gang cell of radical Muslims that planned attacks in the Los Angeles area and intended to finance them through robberies, prosecutors said.

Two co-defendants, Kevin James and Gregory Patterson, also pleaded guilty to the terrorism conspiracy charge and will be sentenced later this summer. A fourth man, Hammad Samana, was found unfit to stand trial and is being treated in a federal psychiatric facility, said Thom Mrozek, U.S. attorney's spokesman.

Washington said the government had exaggerated the group's intent, but Carney disagreed, saying the "nature and scope of the terrorist acts ... are truly frightening." Washington's attorney, Ellen Barry, did not immediately return a call Monday.

Prosecutors alleged that the plot was orchestrated by Washington, Patterson and Samana at the behest of James, an inmate in Sacramento who founded the radical group Jamiyyat Ul-Islam Is-Saheeh.

Washington converted to Islam and then tried to recruit other members, authorities said, including men who had no criminal records and could acquire weapons without suspicion. He and Patterson also robbed about a dozen gas stations to raise money for the attacks, Mrozek said.

http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/nation_world/20665639.html

08/06/23 'One Gun a Month' Bill Headed for Vote in NJ

(CNSNews.com) - Legislation that would make it illegal for holders of a New Jersey handgun-purchaser permit to buy more than one firearm during any calendar month is going before the state assembly on Monday, June 23.

"There's no good reason why anyone would need to purchase large quantities of handguns all at the same time," said Assemblywoman Joan M. Quigley (D-32nd District), a sponsor of Assembly Bill 339, in a news release. "Criminal applications or unrecorded resale are the obvious implications of purchasing handguns in bulk." Quigley added that passage of the measure -- a similar version of which was approved by the Assembly last year but failed in the state Senate -- "would help curtail gun access by criminal street gangs."

State Sen. Brian P. Stack (D-33rd District) agreed with the goal of Quigley's bill in a statement of his own.

"Current laws allow one-stop shopping for gangs to outfit their membership with weapons," Stack noted.

"Prohibiting individual handgun purchases to one a month will help curb the number of guns that end up on the street and in the hands of criminals."

Under another provision, law enforcement agencies and officers purchasing handguns for use by officers in the performance of their duties would be exempt from the measure, as would collectors of firearms as curios or relics who have a valid Collector of Curios and Relics License issued by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

A buyer or seller who violates the bill could face up to 18 months in prison, a fine of up to \$10,000 or both.

However, Dave Workman, communications director with the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA), told **Cybercast News Service** on Friday that the measure is unnecessary because honest citizens "have already been pre-certified by the state" through a 13-point background investigation.

Multiple handgun permits could not be used during the same 30-day period, Workman said, and permits that could not be used before their expiration date would become useless.

But worst of all, he said, the legislation fails to address the true source of "gun violence" -- criminals. A New Jersey court recently invalidated similar legislation brought at the local level, holding that there is no rational relationship between restricting the number of firearms purchased by law-abiding citizens and crime.

Still, Quigley's measure isn't the only legislation coming before the state Assembly in the next few weeks that has proponents of gun rights concerned.

Assembly Bill 2116, sponsored by state Assemblyman Reed Gusciora (D-15th District), would ban the sale of .50-calibre rifles, which the New Jersey official called "powerful battlefield-styled weapons that would be devastatingly lethal in the hands of terrorists."

"In a post-9/11 society, there is simply no reason for .50-caliber weapons to be available for civilian use," noted Gusciora in a news release. The weapon has a firing range

of up to 2,000 yards, and its ammunition is the largest round available in the civilian marketplace.

"With the continued rise in gang violence across the state and the fact that New Jersey possesses numerous chemical plants and rail yards vulnerable to attack by .50-caliber weapons, we have a serious responsibility to stop these inherently deadly weapons from falling into the wrong hands," he said.

To accomplish this, the legislation would revise the definition of a "destructive device" to include weapons of .50 caliber or greater, making it unlawful to possess the firearms. The current definition only applies to weapons of .60 caliber or greater and explosive or incendiary devices.

While the bill includes an exemption for antique firearms, antique handguns and traditional muzzle-loader rifles, Gusciora said the assault-style weapons have no legitimate sporting purpose.

Under the measure, a person illegally possessing a .50-caliber weapon would face a \$15,000 fine and up to five years in prison.

Gusciora said his bill gained increased significance after six men were charged in May 2007 with planning an assault on Fort Dix to kill "as many soldiers as possible" using military-grade weapons like mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47s.

"Fifty-caliber guns are inappropriate and unnecessary for civilian use and sale," he said. "These are military weapons designed specifically for the battlefield. There is no justifiable reason they should be available in the open market."

The New Jersey Libertarian Party disagrees. On the organization's Web site, they called the bill "a slap in the face to collectors, historians and the patriots who used these firearms to win the very freedoms this legislation now seeks to take away."

"The legislation makes the fundamental mistake of banning guns based on the size of the hole in the barrel rather than punishing criminal behavior," the group continued.

Workman of the CCRKBA agreed, telling **Cybercast News Service** on Friday that the "one-gun-a-month" idea and .50-caliber firearms have become "poster children for the gun control lobby" in New Jersey.

"These bills make great headlines, but they actually accomplish nothing," Workman said, "other than demonizing firearms and making people think that banning guns is a good idea."

<http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewNation.asp?Page=/Nation/archive/200806/NAT20080623a.html>

08/06/22 Groups take aim at gun law

PANAMA CITY -- A local gun storeowner believes the "guns at work" law will offer needed protection for people who might encounter threatening situations while traveling for their job.

The Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Retail Federation opposes the legislation, which allows Floridians to keep a gun in their locked cars on work premises if they have a concealed weapons permit. The groups filed suit in federal court in Tallahassee, seeking to block the legislation from taking effect July 1. A hearing for an injunction is scheduled today.

The Florida chamber's stance is "a business owner should be able to decide if employees can or cannot bring guns on their property," according to the group's Web site.

Van Morgan, owner of Morgan's Archery & Firearms Pro Shop, said employers' rights and discretion must be balanced with employees' personal property rights.

Morgan said a business is overstepping authority and infringing on the Second Amendment by telling people what they can or cannot keep in their cars. If someone were injured or killed while driving to or from work or somewhere on the job, Morgan said the employer "has some culpability by not allowing you to bear arms."

Morgan, a National Rifle Association member, has personal appreciation for such threatening circumstances. His wife, Joann, had been leaving work after sunset with a briefcase, and on several occasions, drivers followed her, believing Joann might have had money in the briefcase, he said.

"She said, 'I think I need a gun,'" Morgan said. Her employer had no policy against it.

Several lawmakers who voted for the bill, including Rep. Jimmy Patronis, R-Panama City, and the bill sponsor, Sen. Durell Peaden, R-Crestview, said they did not know how many companies had policies against guns in vehicles. Patronis, who co-owns Capt. Anderson's Restaurant, said he understands why some businesses want to prohibit firearms in vehicles, but he believes the final bill balanced customer and employee safety.

"To have the gun in your car, you must have a concealed weapons permit. And getting that permit involves background checks, firearm training, licensure requirements," said Patronis, also a NRA member. According to numbers from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and estimates from the NRA, 490,760 current permit holders legally could keep their guns at work, of an estimated 6 million gun owners in Florida.

Some of the arguments made against the "guns at work" law are that it poses an increased danger to worker and customer safety, so insurance companies could increase premiums to businesses. Instead of a policy prohibiting

guns inside vehicles, Patronis said his family chooses to keep a deputy on patrol at the restaurant.

Plaintiffs' stance

The retail federation represents 11,000 businesses in Florida, and the chamber represents 139,000 businesses. In their federal lawsuit, the organizations said the law violates the Fifth and 14th Amendments and is in direct conflict with the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

The plaintiffs contend the Florida law essentially infringes on private property rights and the rights of businesses to establish safety policies, and there is no compensation for that infringement. They also say the bill is unconstitutional for failing to exempt businesses such as day-care centers, orphanages, shopping malls, mental institutions "or other property on which children or mentally or physically incapacitated persons regularly gather." Morgan said he does not think the law will prompt a significant number of people to obtain a concealed weapons permit and purchase a gun to keep in their car at their work site.

"Most people who want to keep a gun in their car do so already," Morgan said.

http://www.newsherald.com/news/florida_4602_article.html/gun_law.html

08/06/22 Blackwater using cache of AK-47s

Rifles given to sheriff in deal that skirts law

The private military company Blackwater has found an unusual way to skirt federal laws that prohibit private parties from buying automatic weapons. Blackwater bought 17 Romanian AK-47s and 17 Bushmasters, gave ownership of the guns to the Camden County sheriff and keeps most of the guns at Blackwater's armory in Moyock.

Tiny Camden County -- population 9,271 -- is one of the most peaceful in North Carolina. In the last 10 years, there have been two murders, three robberies and seven rapes reported. The sheriff has just 19 deputies.

Sheriff Tony Perry said his department has never used the 17 AK-47s outside of shooting practice at Blackwater. None of his 19 deputies are qualified to use the AK-47s, Perry said, and his department's need for automatic weapons is "very minimal."

In the summer of 2005, Blackwater CEO Gary Jackson signed two agreements with Maj. Jon Worthington of the Sheriff's Office. Worthington has worked as a firearms instructor for Blackwater.

"Blackwater has financed the purchase of 17 Romanian AK-47 rifles for the Camden County Sheriff's Office for use by Sheriff's Office," the agreement says. "The Camden County Sheriff's Office will have unlimited access to these rifles for training and qualification, and state of emergency use." Worthington and Jackson also signed an agreement

for the purchase of 17 Bushmaster XM15 E2S automatic rifles.

Why did Blackwater strike this deal with the Camden County sheriff?

"Because they needed guns, I imagine," Jackson said.

Jackson said Blackwater was a good corporate citizen that provided equipment and training, often free, to local law enforcement.

Did Camden County need more automatic weapons than deputies?

"They are very well equipped," Jackson said.

Perry said he can't remember who came up with the idea for the weapons deal. He said the county was trying to put together a SWAT team at the time.

Not the best choice?

The AK-47 would be a poor choice of weapon for a SWAT team, said John Gnagey, executive director of the National Tactical Officers Association, the national organization of SWAT officers.

As a combat weapon, the AK-47 is too large and powerful for SWAT teams, Gnagey said. It is rugged but relatively inaccurate.

"And there's the perception problem," Gnagey said.

"Every terrorist attacking the U.S. is armed with AK-47s."

Most SWAT teams use the H&K MP5 submachine gun or the Bushmaster M4, he said.

Under federal law, only government agencies -- military or law enforcement -- are allowed to acquire and possess automatic weapons. There is an exception for automatic weapons purchased before May 1986, when the law went into effect.

Firearms dealers are allowed, under strict conditions, to acquire an automatic weapon if they need to demonstrate the weapon to a police department or other government agency interested in buying the weapon.

Under federal law, it is illegal for a person to receive or possess an automatic weapon that is not registered to that person in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. The 34 weapons are registered to the Camden County sheriff. Seventeen AK-47s and five Bushmasters are stored and used at Blackwater. The other 12 Bushmasters are assigned to Camden County deputies, the sheriff said.

Weapons' use defended

Jackson, the Blackwater CEO, said he was not violating federal firearms law.

"I don't believe so," Jackson said. "As long as I have contracts, I can buy fully automatic weapons."

Jackson and Erik Prince, Blackwater's owner, said Blackwater used the AK-47s in training to familiarize police officers or members of the military with a foreign

weapon that they might come across while making an arrest or on a battlefield.

Blackwater may also use the AK-47s to train military personnel from other countries who come to the United States for anti-terrorism training funded by the State Department, Prince and Jackson said.

"If the contract tells us to, we do it," Jackson said.

The agreement between Blackwater and the Sheriff's Office could be an illegal straw purchase, said Richard Myers, a law professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A straw purchase, Myers said, is when one person fills out the federal firearms registration form to obtain a weapon for another person's use.

"I prosecuted several when I was with the U.S. attorney," Myers said. "If I were Blackwater's attorney, I would be concerned about whether this is a genuine purchase or a straw purchase."

Sheriff Perry said he did not consult a lawyer about the agreement until recently, when the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the FBI inquired about the arrangement. Last year two former Blackwater employees pleaded guilty to federal firearms violations. They were sentenced to probation on the condition that they assist federal investigators.

Perry said his department was cooperating fully. "We're not a target," Perry said. "We may be a victim in it."

<http://www.newsobserver.com/917/story/1116379.html>

08/06/21 Off Duty Officer Kills Gunman Outside of Megachurch

ROCKWALL, TX – An off-duty Garland police officer who intervened in an argument between two motorists in the parking lot of a Rockwall megachurch shot and killed one of the men when a gun was pointed at him, police say.

Witnesses told police that the man who died, 31-year-old Royse City business owner Troy Van Pool, pulled a gun on the officer first.

Police say Mr. Pool got into an argument with another driver along Interstate 30. They both pulled onto an off-ramp near Lake Pointe Church.

Mr. Pool steered his late-model Ford Mustang into the church's parking lot behind the other man, then pulled up beside him, Rockwall police Lt. Carl Alsabrook said. He "had his windows down and was getting into some type of verbal altercation," Lt. Alsabrook said.

The off-duty, plainclothes officer, Brandon Hernandez, was in the parking lot and tried to step in.

"The officer asked him to leave the scene, basically, 'Hey, this is over – why don't you leave?'" Lt. Alsabrook said.

Witnesses said Mr. Pool raised a gun at the officer, who fired several shots. Mr. Pool died at the scene.

"At this time, the investigation is ongoing," Lt. Alsabrook said. "No decision's been made regarding charges, if any, that will be filed."

Mr. Hernandez has been a patrol officer with Garland for about 10 years. He also serves on the agency's SWAT team.

Mr. Pool lived in Royse City with his wife and 12-year-old son. He ran a business wiring homes for security and entertainment systems.

He underwent a root canal Thursday afternoon and last spoke with his wife about 5:15 p.m. on his way home, family members said. The shooting occurred about 6 p.m.

"I don't know how sedated or anything else he was," said his brother, Tracy Pool.

He said his brother enjoyed his work and was committed to his wife and son.

"He just loved his family dearly," Tracy Pool said. He said his brother and his wife married young and faced many obstacles.

"They've done such an unbelievable job of raising a wonderful kid – he is nothing short of spectacular," Tracy Pool said.

"I can't sing both of their praises enough – what they've done, how they've stuck it out, stayed together. They were very committed to making their family work, and they did that."

<http://www.policelink.com/news/32984-off-duty-officer-kills-gunman-outside-of-megachurch>

08/06/20 Ex-cop sentenced for explosion that took part of his arm

A former Pittsburgh police officer was sentenced to 52 months in federal prison this morning for possessing an improvised explosive device that blew up in his Oakdale trailer.

Paul Anthony Palmer Jr. got a five-month break on the advisory sentence of 57 months, because, according to the judge, he already suffered some punishment by losing part of his left arm in the explosion.

"The biggest victim of this incident was the defendant himself," said U.S. District Judge David S. Cercone. "There's already been some punishment imposed against him."

Mr. Palmer, who worked as a city officer for more than 10 years, pleaded guilty to possession of an unregistered firearm in March.

When North Fayette officers searched Mr. Palmer's home, they found numerous components for improvised explosive devices, including cardboard tubes, black powder, red phosphorous and a green pyrotechnic fuse hidden in the padding of an armchair.

Defense attorney James A. Wymard said his client never intended to harm anyone with the devices.

"He used those to go out in the woods and blow up pumpkins, which is a common practice in the area where he lives," Mr. Wymard said.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08172/891418-100.stm>

08/06/20 Man in gun crackdown gets 5-10 years for robbery

A Port Richmond man who was among the first people arrested in a crackdown on "straw purchases" of firearms has drawn a mandatory five- to 10-year prison term for a March 2007 armed robbery that netted him a cell phone. Gregorio "Gregg" Rodriguez, 25, was sentenced Wednesday by Common Pleas Court Judge Lisa M. Rau based on his guilty plea to robbery and firearms charges involving the stickup of two people in Port Richmond. He did not fire, and neither victim was injured, Assistant District Attorney Sharon Piper said.

Piper said Rodriguez had been incriminated by a woman who cooperated with prosecutors after admitting she sold three guns to Rodriguez. He could not legally buy firearms because he is a convicted felon.

Rodriguez was one of 17 people whose arrests were announced in August by District Attorney Lynne M. Abraham and state Attorney General Tom Corbett. The arrests were by a state-local Gun Violence Task Force created to reduce gun violence by going after those who buy guns and resell them to street criminals
<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/pennsylvania/20594509.html>

08/06/20 Walsh: Why are some people so gun-crazy?

My 20-month-old nephew loves Elmo and Dora. He also has started making explosion and gunfire noises. I get the inevitability of little boys' fascination for guns. What I can't figure out are the men and sometimes women who don't grow out of the gun-crazy stage of childhood, who need to have a handgun on their hips at all times, who need their neighbors to notice.

Ten of them stormed the West Valley City Council meeting last week to back up Travis Deveraux, a 36-year-old credit card company worker who was detained by police last December while exercising with his Smith & Wesson.

"I don't blame them for being a little bit extra careful," Deveraux said. "But there's a line they crossed between being a little bit careful and a little bit too careful." I thought there was no such thing as "too careful" - especially with a gun. But the OpenCarry crowd's literal interpretation of the "right to bear arms" and self-appointment as our "well-regulated militia" undercuts careful law enforcement, membership in a civil society and even reason.

It's in the Constitution, their thinking goes. They are

"peaceably going about their business while armed," standing on the watchtower, the last line of defense against government tyranny and crazed criminals. We should thank them.

I understand the thrill of firing a Glock (I've done it), the euphoria of hitting the center of a target (and that too), generations of family deer-hunting weekends and the legitimate self-preservation instincts of Utah's elected concealed weapon carriers.

But the OpenCarry movement is a mystery to me. What kind of psychology - overcompensation, paranoia, antisocial personality - is behind that thinking? Steven Gunn, an attorney and board member of the Gun Violence Prevention Center of Utah, believes it's pure ego. "We have inconsiderate boors walking around on the street carrying firearms openly," says Gunn. "I don't think they are truly afraid for their safety. Most of them are trying to make a statement about the 2nd Amendment." Anthropologist Charles Springwood says open carriers are trying to "naturalize the presence of guns, which means that guns become ordinary, omnipresent, and expected. Over time, the gun becomes a symbol of ordinary personhood."

OpenCarry.org, run by two Virginia gun lovers, claims 4,000 members nationwide. According to the Legal Community Against Violence in San Francisco, just seven states prohibit packing in public and eight restrict carrying handguns openly without a permit.

Utah's OpenCarry activists put on a show for the Los Angeles Times a few weeks ago, trying to appear warm and fuzzy, shopping at Costco, just like you and me - but with their handguns flapping in the breeze. They meet once a month at restaurants like Denny's and Sweet Tomatoes to socialize.

"We don't want to show up and say, 'Hey, we're here, we're armed, get used to it,'" Kevin Jensen told the Times reporter.

But that's just what the showdown in West Valley City was about. The cowed mayor and city council members referred the case to the officers' professional standards review board.

Police are struggling to strike a balance between gun owners' rights and those of the rest of us.

"There has to be some common sense on their part too; they have to take into consideration the concern that they cause other citizens," says Layton Police Chief Terry Keefe. "I do not walk around when I'm off-duty with a weapon displayed."

Salt Lake City Police Chief Chris Burbank would rather gun owners get concealed weapon permits than carry openly.

"In light of Trolley Square, mall shootings, school shootings, anyone walking around with a gun potentially

creates a lot of phone calls for us," Burbank says. "How do you expect an officer to deal with that - other than to point a gun at them and go through the process [of elimination]? There's no other way to make that determination safely without putting officers at risk." Utah lawmakers set up this stalemate when they wrote the state's anything goes concealed weapon law. They deliberately left open a loophole for those who carry their guns out in the open. Under Utah law, open carriers must be 18 years-old and keep their bullets out of the chamber. That's it. No training, no background check required. "Second Amendment questions aside," says Springwood, a professor at Illinois Wesleyan University, "the real debate seems to me a cultural and social one: Do we want a society in which it is an unconscious emblem of everyday life that folks move about with 'portable killing machines' strapped to their bodies?"

Legislators already have made that decision for us; we're living in the modern heart of the wild, wild West.

http://origin.sltrib.com/news/ci_9648769

08/06/20 Bank robber sentenced to 115 years

Involved with 2 accomplices in 9 holdups that netted nearly 122G

Convicted bank robber Kevin Taylor of West Philadelphia must have been plotting and scheming the whole time he was in prison on consecutive federal and state sentences for drug trafficking.

As soon as he got out of jail - still under supervised release by the feds - Taylor, 44, of Pennington Road near Brookhaven Street, and two pals started holding up banks at gunpoint.

The three were convicted of holding up nine banks, including eight in New Jersey and one in York, Pa., and taking nearly \$122,000, during a nine-month period from 2005 to 2006.

Yesterday, U.S. District Judge Robert B. Kugler in Camden gave the Philadelphia man some time in jail to think: 115 years - a virtual life sentence.

And should he ever get out, Taylor must undergo three years' supervised release.

After a three-week trial ended in a hung jury in February, a second trial, lasting four weeks, began a week later. Warned of a potential 115-year sentence, Taylor was offered a plea and turned it down.

On March 19, Taylor and the group's ringleader, Steven Gantt, 40, of Camden, were convicted of conspiracy to commit bank robbery and of brandishing a firearm in a crime of violence.

Gantt had just been released from prison after serving a 96-month sentence for robbing 14 banks. He's scheduled to be sentenced on June 25.

A third bank robber, Walter Johnson, 33, of Camden, cooperated, testifying against Gantt and Taylor, and received a nine-year sentence.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jacqueline Carle said that more than 25 victims testified about the nine robberies. "There were so many victims," she added. "There must have been at least 90 in all."

One teller, who was four months pregnant, had a "gun stuck in her face. And on the way back over the counter, [Taylor] kicked her in the stomach," said Carle, who prosecuted the case with James P. Lynch.

"One or two months later, [the teller] had a ripped placenta," she added. Her twins were born prematurely; one died 12 days later. The teller couldn't return to work and was in therapy for 1 1/2 years for post-traumatic stress syndrome.

During the bank robbery, the gunmen ordered everyone to get on the floor. But a woman, who had a knee replacement, "was thrown to the floor because she didn't move fast enough," said Carle.

The trio was arrested after an eight-month FBI investigation, which included law enforcement officers from nine local jurisdictions.

The three began their bank-robbing spree on Dec. 2, 2005, hitting eight Commerce Banks and one PNC branch, before it ended on Aug. 1, 2006. Their hauls varied from \$2,226 to \$34,000. *

http://www.philly.com/philly/hp/news_update/20593829.html

08/06/20 Chicago 8th-grader charged with bringing gun to graduation

An 8th grade student was held in lieu of \$150,000 bail Wednesday on charges that he brought a handgun to graduation.

Prosecutors said Akeem Williams, 15, arrived at Chicago's Wadsworth Elementary School in the Woodlawn neighborhood dressed to graduate Monday. He was still wearing those clothes at a brief bond hearing Wednesday. He was charged as an adult since he carried the gun onto a school campus.

Prosecutors said Williams had not been scheduled to graduate.

Upon entering the school, he showed the gun to several students and threatened to shoot rival gang members, they said. During the ceremony, Williams and several others got on stage and flashed gang signs.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-school-gun-chargejun12,0,5808868.story>

08/06/19 After Nine's Gun Ruling, N.Y.'s Gun Laws May Be Next

If gun enthusiasts are victorious this month when the Supreme

Court declares what rights exist under the Second Amendment, their next target may be New York City's strict gun control laws.

The federal high court may issue its historic decision on gun rights as early as today, and certainly by no later than month's end.

Obtaining a gun license in New York City is now a lengthy and costly endeavor. In the span of a decade, a New Yorker with a licensed handgun at home will pay more than \$1,000 in fees.

Some of the obstacles facing prospective gun owners in the city may change if the Supreme Court rules that individuals have a constitutional right to keep a gun for protection.

"If there is an individual right, then bureaucratic discretion in permitting and registering guns is going to be minimized," a lawyer who financed the case currently before the Supreme Court, Robert Levy, said, adding that "you cannot allow bureaucrats the option of denying people constitutional rights."

The Supreme Court's ruling is highly anticipated because the Supreme Court has said little in its history about whether the Second Amendment protects individual gun ownership or just the right of states to organize militia units.

The Second Amendment case before the nine is a legal challenge to Washington, D.C.'s gun control laws. Washington has a near-complete ban on handguns and requires that shotguns and rifles be disassembled or fixed with a trigger lock when kept at home.

The bent of the questions the justices asked at oral argument in March left little doubt among legal experts that a majority will recognize an individual right to own guns. It's possible that a ruling that strikes down Washington's federal law could have no effect on municipal gun control laws elsewhere. The Second Amendment, the Supreme Court could decide, poses a limit on the gun control enacted by the federal government, but not on a state's power to police guns. But that is a remote possibility, given that the judges have read the equal protection clause to restrict the states from violating rights enshrined in other amendments to the federal constitution.

Mayor Bloomberg has emerged as a foe of the gun industry. In the name of public safety he has pressed lawsuits against firearm manufacturers and sellers across the East Coast. The city's gun control laws have not changed dramatically during his administration.

Mayor Bloomberg's criminal justice coordinator, John Feinblatt, said that the decision from the Supreme Court

will "not in any way" force a change to New York's laws.

"If the court finds, as most people predict it will, that the Second Amendment provides an individual right to gun ownership," Mr. Feinblatt said, "that will not have an effect on reasonable regulations."

Still, both sides on the debate over municipal gun control expect the ruling from Washington to set off an unprecedented wave of litigation over gun control nationwide.

"I think the real risk here is not what the court will say," Mr. Feinblatt said. "The risk here is that, after years of criticizing litigation, the gun lobby will get in the litigation business and become litigation-happy."

The lawyer who argued against Washington's ban before the Supreme Court, Alan Gura, said: "I do expect there will be other litigation."

He added: "There are going to be some gun laws that will not survive, and others that do."

Mr. Levy, speaking from his home in Asheville, N.C., said he had no plans to organize a suit challenging New York's laws, as he had done in Washington. Still, Mr. Levy, who is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, said gun control restrictions in New York would make a good target for a lawsuit.

He described New York's gun control laws as being less restrictive than those in Washington or Chicago, "but worse than just about everybody else."

Getting a handgun license in New York is time-consuming and expensive. The general counsel to the New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, Patrick Brophy, said that shepherding an application for a gun license often requires four trips to police headquarters and a six-month time wait.

Gun rights proponents interviewed cited two items in New York's gun control laws that would be especially vulnerable to legal challenge depending on the Supreme Court's ruling. One is a requirement that firearms generally be kept inoperable when not being handled. The other is a licensing fee of \$340 that New Yorkers must pay every three years in order to keep a handgun at home or at a business.

"Does it constitute an infringement of an individual right guaranteed by the Bill of Rights to charge a citizen \$340 every three years for exercising that right?" Mr. Brophy asked, adding that he believed it was an infringement. "You can't tax a right out of existence and call it a user fee," he said.

Mr. Feinblatt said that the licensing fee didn't raise an issue. "Nobody who pays the fee likes to pay the fee, but there isn't a constitutional right not to have a fee," he said.

<http://www.nysun.com/new-york/after-supreme-court-gun-ruling-ny-may-be/80314/>

08/06/19 5 men now charged in Harrisburg, Pa. slaying

HARRISBURG, Pa. - Five men are being held in the shooting death of a man outside the Jazz Land nightclub in Harrisburg.

Mayor Stephen Reed on Wednesday announced the arrest of 23-year-old Michael Brown and 19-year-old Daniel Johnson on criminal homicide and conspiracy charges for the killing of 25-year-old Mylik Young. Young was found fatally wounded inside his car Feb. 29. He died a short time later.

Twenty-five-year-old Ricardo Antequera was previously charged with the illegal transfer of a handgun, 28-year-old Santos Gutierrez was arrested on multiple firearms violations, and 35-year old Kendric Lewis is charged with hindering apprehension or prosecution and for giving false information.

Reed says Johnson was arrested in Philadelphia on a separate and unrelated homicide charge.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/20559554.html>

08/06/19 Many Guns Go Missing From Shops, Study Says

WASHINGTON — More than 30,000 firearms are unaccounted for in gun dealers' inventories nationwide, according to a new study by a gun control group. Further, the group, the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence, says its finding most likely undercounts the missing firearms, since the data used, from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, are drawn from the compliance inspections that were conducted at gun dealerships in the 2007 fiscal year. Just 10,000 dealers were inspected, one-sixth of the nation's total.

The center, which released the study Tuesday, is calling for increased regulation of gun dealers, including a requirement that they take physical inventory of their firearms to account for each weapon annually. At present, dealers need keep a record of their acquisition and disposition of firearms, but not a regular inventory.

"We've seen that guns that dealers claim are lost are frequently sold to gun traffickers and sold off the books," said Daniel R. Vice, a senior attorney for the Brady Center.

The Brady Center was founded by James Brady and his wife, Sarah, after the 1981 assassination attempt on

President Ronald Reagan left Mr. Brady, the White House press secretary, partly paralyzed. The center sees a direct correlation between missing firearms and street violence. "Anything that makes it easier for dangerous criminals to get guns is a danger for public safety," Mr. Vice said. The National Rifle Association sharply criticized the report.

"No one in America should place any faith in any alleged study coming from the Brady campaign," said Andrew Arulanandam, a spokesman for the N.R.A.

"If anyone is breaking the law, they ought to be charged criminally," Mr. Arulanandam said. "There are plenty of laws on the books that address that issue, and all that needs to be done is those laws need to be enforced."

A spokesman for the firearms bureau, Nicholas Colucci, said that in his experience, many gun dealers did take inventory annually or even more frequently, although not required to do so by federal law.

Mr. Colucci also said shops from which most of the 30,000 weapons were missing had since gone out of business, some because their licenses had been revoked as a result of the inspections. No firearms were missing, he added, at 90 percent of the inspected businesses

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/19/us/19guns.html?_r=2&ref=us&oref=slogin&oref=slogin

08/06/19 After Nine's Gun Ruling, N.Y.'s Gun Laws May Be Next

City's Restrictions Described as 'Good Target' for Suit

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gun ownership or just the right of states to organize militia units.

The Second Amendment case before the nine is a legal challenge to Washington, D.C.'s gun control laws. Washington has a near-complete ban on handguns and requires that shotguns and rifles be disassembled or fixed with a trigger lock when kept at home.

The bent of the questions the justices asked at oral argument in March left little doubt among legal experts that a majority will recognize an individual right to own guns. It's possible that a ruling that strikes down Washington's federal law could have no effect on municipal gun control laws elsewhere. The Second Amendment, the Supreme Court could decide, poses a limit on the gun control enacted by the federal government, but not on a state's power to police guns. But that is a remote possibility, given that the judges have read the equal protection clause to restrict the states from violating rights enshrined in other amendments to the federal constitution.

Mayor Bloomberg has emerged as a foe of the gun industry. In the name of public safety he has pressed lawsuits against firearm manufacturers and sellers across the East Coast. The city's gun control laws have not changed dramatically during his administration.

Mayor Bloomberg's criminal justice coordinator, John Feinblatt, said that the decision from the Supreme Court will "not in any way" force a change to New York's laws.

"If the court finds, as most people predict it will, that the Second Amendment provides an individual right to gun ownership," Mr. Feinblatt said, "that will not have an effect on reasonable regulations."

Still, both sides on the debate over municipal gun control expect the ruling from Washington to set off an unprecedented wave of litigation over gun control nationwide.

"I think the real risk here is not what the court will say," Mr. Feinblatt said. "The risk here is that, after years of criticizing litigation, the gun lobby will get in the litigation business and become litigation-happy."

The lawyer who argued against Washington's ban before the Supreme Court, Alan Gura, said: "I do expect there will be other litigation."

He added: "There are going to be some gun laws that will not survive, and others that do."

Mr. Levy, speaking from his home in Asheville, N.C., said he had no plans to organize a suit challenging New York's laws, as he had done in Washington. Still, Mr. Levy, who is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, said gun control restrictions in New York would make a good target for a lawsuit.

He described New York's gun control laws as being less restrictive than those in Washington or Chicago, "but worse than just about everybody else."

Getting a handgun license in New York is time-consuming and expensive. The general counsel to the New York State Rifle and Pistol Association, Patrick Brophy, said that shepherding an application for a gun license often requires four trips to police headquarters and a six-month time wait.

Gun rights proponents interviewed cited two items in New York's gun control laws that would be especially vulnerable to legal challenge depending on the Supreme Court's ruling. One is a requirement that firearms generally be kept inoperable when not being handled. The other is a licensing fee of \$340 that New Yorkers must pay every three years in order to keep a handgun at home or at a business.

"Does it constitute an infringement of an individual right guaranteed by the Bill of Rights to charge a citizen \$340 every three years for exercising that right?" Mr. Brophy asked, adding that he believed it was an infringement. "You can't tax a right out of existence and call it a user fee," he said.

Mr. Feinblatt said that the licensing fee didn't raise an issue.

"Nobody who pays the fee likes to pay the fee, but there isn't a constitutional right not to have a fee," he said.

<http://www.nysun.com/new-york/after-supreme-court-gun-ruling-ny-may-be/80314/>

08/06/18 Gun Sales Increase Among Women

Point and pull; that is how some gun retailers tell their inexperienced gun customers how to go about using their newly purchased handguns. And, from what they say, women are a growing demographic.

Owner of Po Boys Guns and Ammo, Ron Bass, says, "Handgun sales are probably the hottest thing going right now because of the things going around in the country, and also because of the crime that we have."

More women look into the idea of getting a handgun and retailers sell more varieties that seemingly were designed with women in mind.

"It is called the hammerless; it doesn't have a hammer on the backside of it, so it's easy to carry and that's because it doesn't get caught in a purse like regular revolvers do. We also offer a semi automatic," said Derek Kilgore with Sportsman's Outfitters. "Women come in about every five or six. Women that come in, we sell about two guns to a woman."

That brings up the question, nationally and locally, are more guns in more purses the right way for people to protect themselves and their belongings?

Houston County Sheriff Andy Hughes says, "Criminals need to know that people are armed and they are tired of being victimized. You need to know how you're going to react, and my number one tip for someone is don't buy a handgun if you are not willing to take a life. If you are not willing to take a life in defense of your own or another, then don't buy or possess a handgun."

According to Sheriff Hughes, in the past year, the sheriff office has issued 6400 gun permits. Handgun permits obtained at the sheriff's office are valid for one year and are honored in 22 states across the United States.

They are looking into a gun training facility so that people can learn how to use those weapons.

<http://www.wtvnews4.com/home/headlines/20500044.html>

08/06/18 Gun toters want cops to holster harassment

WEST VALLEY CITY - With his Smith & Wesson .40-caliber semi-automatic holstered on his right hip, Travis Deveraux addressed the mayor and City Council on Tuesday.

Deveraux says he has been harassed by West Valley City police for carrying that gun and treated like a criminal.

"A criminal does not want [police] attention, and they will not openly carry a gun," Deveraux said.

With 10 other gun-toting civilians - who came from as far as Bountiful, Santaquin and Lehi - to support him, Deveraux told the council that their police department has consistently overreacted to his gun carrying. And in one occasion last year, he said, the police officers violated his civil rights.

Deveraux said he was walking around his neighborhood to exercise last December, when he was stopped by a Granite School District officer and "informed that if I touched my gun, I would be killed." The officer called West Valley City Police Department, Deveraux said, three squad cars arrived, and he was detained and his gun taken from him - then, after a few minutes, he was released.

Those were violations of his federal and state constitutional rights, said the Swede who became an American citizen this January.

And they are civil rights abuses that he has only encountered in West Valley City, Deveraux said.

"I don't blame them for being a little bit extra careful," he said, noting that the crime rate is high in Utah's second largest city, "but there's a line they crossed between being a little bit careful and a little bit too careful."

Assistant Police Chief Craig Black said he hadn't been aware of the incident involving Deveraux until hearing about it at the City Council meeting. He said there would be a review of the case by the professional standards board to determine what happened.

Matt Murray, of North Salt Lake, said he has never been

bothered by any police officers for openly carrying his gun. Kevin Jensen, of Santaquin, said he has had a few police encounters that were "very professional . . . they just want to make sure you're not a nutcase." But Lehi resident Jeramiah McDonald said he has had problems similar to Deveraux's.

McDonald said that because he is only 19, he can't apply for a concealed-weapons permit and his only option is to openly carry his guns. Because he felt police officers violated his civil rights, McDonald filed a lawsuit.

Deveraux said he doesn't want to sue anyone, or get an officer fired or fined. He wants West Valley City officers to be trained, or receive more training on gun rights.

Mayor Dennis Nordfelt encouraged Deveraux to file a complaint with the professional standards review board, which oversees any resident problems with the police department.

Black said his officers are trained on gun laws.

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_9619863

08/06/18 1 Charged, 3 Sought in Florida Mall Shooting

Police say one man is behind bars in connection with a shooting at a Florida shopping mall.

Police are looking for three other suspects in the shooting at the Lakeland Square mall, which sent one person to the hospital Tuesday. The victim, 18-year-old Andre Maurice Warner, is in stable condition.

Police say 18-year-old Ariel Scott is charged with attempted murder, shooting in an occupied dwelling and carrying a concealed firearm.

Shots were fired Tuesday afternoon inside the mall near the food court. Police have not determined a motive.

Lakeland is about 40 miles west of Tampa.

<http://www.officer.com/online/article.jsp?siteSection=1&id=41891>

08/06/18 Immigration prosecutions increase sharply

They now account for as much as half the federal criminal caseload. Most sentences average one month.

WASHINGTON - The Bush administration has sharply ratcheted up prosecutions of illegal immigrants along the U.S.-Mexico border in the last year, with increases so dramatic that immigration offenses now account for as much as half of the nation's federal criminal caseload.

In the widening crackdown, administration officials prosecuted 9,350 illegal immigrants on federal criminal charges in March, a 73 percent increase over prosecutions a year earlier and a record high, statistics released yesterday showed. Those convicted have received jail sentences averaging about one month.

The prosecutions are among the most visible steps in a larger effort that includes work-site raids, increased border

patrols, and the use of technology and fences. Often controversial, the patchwork of measures represents the administration's response to failed congressional efforts last summer to overhaul federal laws.

Administration officials and conservative groups have lauded the surge in prosecutions. But critics say data show that illegal immigrants are still trying to enter the country. And some lawyers contend that the push to criminalize illegal immigrants is overwhelming a federal court system with limited resources and higher priorities. Even so, administration officials announced this month that they would funnel more resources toward the effort, called Operation Streamline.

"The results of this criminal prosecution initiative have been striking," Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said.

Chertoff's agency and the Justice Department jointly run Operation Streamline, recently announcing a plan to assign 64 prosecutors and 35 staff members to prosecutions along the Southwest border. The operation began as a pilot around Del Rio, Texas, in 2005 and spread to other areas. Under the program, officers and prosecutors practice "zero tolerance," and jail times can range from two weeks to six months.

Chertoff said this works "because these illegal migrants come to realize that violating the law will not simply send them back to try over again, but will require them to actually serve some short period of time in a jail or prison setting, and will brand them as having been violators of the law. That has a very significant deterrent impact."

The statistical analysis released yesterday was compiled by Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, considered an authoritative source for such figures. It called the increase "highly unusual."

Operation Streamline's larger aim is to give the administration another tool to use in its crackdown on illegal immigration, said Susan B. Long, a TRAC co-director and Syracuse University professor.

"What it means is that immigration cases are dominating the federal court system these days," Long said. "The volume of cases is really huge. This is a big deal."

Of 16,298 federal criminal prosecutions recorded nationwide in March, immigration accounted for more than half, Long said. The next highest number of prosecutions was for drug offenses at 2,674, followed by 702 prosecutions for white-collar crime.

Clearinghouse researchers found that all but 142 of the 9,350 new federal immigration prosecutions in March occurred in certain areas along the border with Mexico. Texas was most active, followed by Southern California. http://www.philly.com/inquirer/special/immigration_debate/20249884.html

08/06/18 N.Y. transit officer pleads guilty in Berks robbery

READING - A suspended New York City transit policeman remains in federal custody following a guilty plea in the April 10 armed robbery of a Berks County bank.

Federal charges are also pending against Christian Torres, 21, in two bank robberies in New York City. He pleaded guilty Monday in Reading to robbing a bank in Muhlenberg Township using a firearm. -

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/new_jersey/20250019.html

08/06/17 Suspended NYC policeman pleads guilty in robbery

READING, Pa. - A suspended New York City transit policeman remains in federal custody following a guilty plea in the April 10 armed robbery of a Berks County bank.

Federal charges are also pending against 21-year-old Christian Torres in two bank robberies in New York City. He pleaded guilty Monday in Reading to robbing a bank in Muhlenberg Township using a firearm.

The weapons charge carries a mandatory seven-year sentence under federal guidelines, in addition to the robbery sentence.

Authorities say \$116,000 was taken in the Muhlenberg Township robbery. Torres was apprehended in a minivan a few blocks from the bank when employees alerted police with a silent alarm.

He's accused of robbing a bank branch in Queens twice in 2007, once taking \$16,000 and a second time making off with \$102,000.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/20008069.html>

08/06/17 Road rage shooting being called self-defense

JEFFERSONVILLE, Ind. (WAVE) -- Police are calling it a case of violent road rage after a man is shot at a Jeffersonville, Indiana intersection. WAVE 3's [Scott Harvey](#) reports on the incident that happened at the corner of Allison Lane and 10th Street around 3 p.m. Tuesday.

It is a case of road rage with a twist. Detectives working the case tell us the shooter hasn't been charged, because it appears to be a case of self defense.

It's not the sort of thing you normally see on your commute home from work.

"People were standing in the parking lot. Nobody was doing anything, but talking on cell phones, so I told my girlfriend I was going to walk over and see what was

going on," said Robert Bagshaw. "As I got closer the guy was talking about he'd been shot."

Investigators say it started as an altercation between a man riding a motorcycle and a woman driving a SUV behind him.

"He said they came flying up on him when he was getting ready to turn," said Bagshaw. "So he slowed down on his turn, next thing you know they rolled up a little bit more. They had a few words. He jumped off his bike."

"She never got out of the vehicle and that is where the shooting occurred," said Det. Todd Hollis with the Jeffersonville Police Department.

Bagshaw says the man had a single gunshot to the chest. He waited with the motorcycle rider until EMS arrived. He told us the man kept talking about the argument at the car.

"Supposedly she thought he had spit at her, but he said his false teeth fell out, so she shot him," explained Bagshaw. "So, I mean, there may be a little more to it than what the other guy is saying of course."

And investigators say there is. No charges have been filed against the woman, because police say at this point it appears to be self-defense.

"Exactly what he said or what his actions were, how threatening they were, will be determined through the investigation," said Det. Hollis.

Det. Hollis told us the woman was completely cooperative. So much so she called 911 from the scene. Police say she does have a permit to carry the snub-nosed .38 caliber revolver used in the shooting.

"It does belong to her," said Det. Hollis. "We ran a check on it to make sure it's wasn't stolen. She does carry it in the car for her protection. She told us that."

Regardless, Det. Hollis says this should be a lesson on how not to deal with road rage.

"If someone cuts you off or if someone acts aggressive on the road, the best thing to do is get away from it," said Det. Hollis. "If they are acting aggressive to a point to where they are dangerous, call police."

The man was taken to University Hospital in Louisville and at last check was in surgery. His condition is unknown at this time.

Police say they will continue to investigate, but ultimately the Clark County Prosecutor's Office will have the final

say if charges will be filed.

http://www.wave3.com/Global/story.asp?S=8515337&nav=menu31_2

08/06/17 Flurry of gunfire touches all of us

With sickening frequency in recent days, shots echoing across Toronto have triggered fear of another "summer of the gun." The list of people killed and injured by bullets has brought back dark memories of 2005, when a long, hot summer of violence was capped by the year-end slaying of 15-year-old Jane Creba on Yonge St.

A repetition of that frightful chapter in the city's history may yet be avoided, although that will surely be of small comfort to families already grieving the loss of sons cut down in early adulthood.

Life for the parents of Oliver Martin and Dylan Ellis, both 25, will never be the same after the pair were sprayed with bullets while sitting in a car early Friday morning. They were joined in death by 19-year-old Claudio Alamos, who was shot in the neck outside a pizzeria early Sunday. And five more people suffered various bullet wounds in a spate of other weekend gun incidents.

Police need help from the public. Up to 200 people were at a house party on Sunday in Scarborough when three people were hurt by gunfire. One hopes that at least some of them will come forward.

Beyond that, every effort should be made to sweep guns and gangs from Toronto's streets. In giving young people in troubled neighbourhoods a sound alternative to gang life, additional recreation and job programs would be useful.

And Canada should also ban the ownership of handguns, except by police, the military and a few elite competitive target shooters. No one knows the origin of the firearms used in the tragic killings of the past few days. But the more than 535,000 handguns legally owned by Canadian collectors and gun club members provide a ready pool of weapons for criminals to steal, with fatal results. Just one pistol taken from its legal owner was used in five separate incidents, including the murder of a 24-year-old youth worker in 2003 and the shooting of a TTC driver in the face in 2006.

Toronto remains a relatively safe place, with cities such as Winnipeg and Vancouver registering higher rates of gun violence. But this city can't afford many more grim weekends like the one just past. Every effort must be taken to make the last few days a tragic anomaly.

<http://www.thestar.com/comment/article/444364>

08/06/17 Day rejects gun ban

Target criminals, not innocent firearm owners, he says

A handgun ban isn't the answer to Toronto's gun violence, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day insists.

"Studies in a variety of jurisdictions around the world show that if you want to see gun crime reduced you've got to go after the criminals," Day said during a press conference at Polson Pier yesterday.

He said a Canada-wide handgun ban would divert limited police resources to "going after innocent firearm owners." Day's comments come after a weekend of gun violence in the city that started with a double murder Thursday night. By Sunday morning, one man was killed and four people were injured in three separate shootings.

Following Thursday's fatal shooting, Mayor David Miller repeated his call for a nation-wide handgun ban.

The Conservatives are working to fight gun crime, Day said, pointing to funds allocated for hiring new RCMP and municipal police officers and tightening up laws for gun-related crimes.

The government is also putting money into tightening up cross-border gun smuggling, he said.

"This is where our officers work in conjunction with U.S. officers to vigorously go after gun smuggling which we know is a concern and a problem," Day said.

"We want to go after the people involved in the smuggling.

"We say this is the way to see gun crime reduced."

<http://www.torontosun.com/News/TorontoAndGTA/2008/06/17/5899811-sun.html>

08/06/17 Gun Beats Bomb in Bank Robbery

(WXYZ) -- An attempted bank robbery in Canton played out like a scene from a movie Monday when a man who police say claimed to have a bomb was stopped by a customer armed with a pistol.

The drama started just after the Comerica bank on Michigan Ave. opened around 9 a.m. Police say 54-year-old man Joseph Webster from Washtenaw County walked up to a teller and handed her a note claiming he had a bomb strapped to his body.

The fast-thinking teller hit the silent alarm while filling a bag with \$1 bills -- until, police say, Webster demanded "bands of 50s and 100s." Another teller saw the situation unfolding and alerted Nabil Fawzi, 39, a long-time customer.

Fawzi, who spent six years in the Lebanese army, took matters into his own hands.

He tells WXYZ.com he pulled out a .9 mm handgun (for which he had a CCW permit), racked a bullet in the chamber, pointed it at Webster and announced, "You are not robbing this bank!"

The startled Webster countered with, "but, I have a bomb" -- but Fawzi wasn't impressed. "I don't care. You are not robbing this bank!" was the reply from the other side of

the gun. He then forced the Webster into a chair and held him at gunpoint until police arrived.

Police tell WXYZ.com there were no injuries, no issues with Fawzi's CCW permit, and no bomb found at the scene.

Webster was arraigned Tuesday afternoon and charged with one count of bank robbery, one count of armed robbery, and a habitual third offense. He faces 25 years to life in prison.

http://www.wxyz.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=deb8d417-008a-4e73-8386-1237c14d1376

08/06/17 Suspended NYC policeman pleads guilty in robbery

READING, Pa. - A suspended New York City transit policeman remains in federal custody following a guilty plea in the April 10 armed robbery of a Berks County bank.

Federal charges are also pending against 21-year-old Christian Torres in two bank robberies in New York City. He pleaded guilty Monday in Reading to robbing a bank in Muhlenberg Township using a firearm.

The weapons charge carries a mandatory seven-year sentence under federal guidelines, in addition to the robbery sentence.

Authorities say \$116,000 was taken in the Muhlenberg Township robbery. Torres was apprehended in a minivan a few blocks from the bank when employees alerted police with a silent alarm.

He's accused of robbing a bank branch in Queens twice in 2007, once taking \$16,000 and a second time making off with \$102,000.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/20008069.html>

08/06/17 bioMETRX, Inc. Gun Storage Products Endorsed by the Handgun Club of America

JERICO, N.Y., June 17 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- bioMETRX, Inc. (OTC Bulletin Board: BMRX) a leading developer of finger recognition consumer products, today announced that the Handgun Club of America has endorsed the Company's gun storage products. HCA members are showing great interest in bioMETRX's smartTOUCH(TM) bioVAULT 2.0 and bioBOX products, which allow access to stored firearms with the touch of a finger, and recognition taking less than one second. These safes can be used for controlled access of handguns, ammunition, weapons, as well as other valuable items including jewelry, pharmaceuticals, coins, stamps, stocks, bonds, critical data and other personal documents. "For years, handgun owners have wanted a home safe to make their firearms instantly accessible," says Gayle Teskey of the Handgun Club of America. "Now with one swipe of

your finger, the bioVAULT 2.0 allows you to get to your pistols quickly and easily."

The bioVAULT 2.0 is capable of storing up to 50 authorized fingerprints in its flash memory and offers such accessories as a wall-mounting unit for extra security and more permanent placement. A security cable that is very similar to locking a bicycle to a bike rack is also available for more portable usage, allowing the bioVAULT 2.0 to be transported to different locations and easily locked to any secure item.

The bioBOX offers a sleek compact design, the ability to store up to 3 users, and is great for travel. A wall mount is also available for mounting the bioBOX to any surface for a more secure storage of valuable items.

<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/biometrx-inc-gun-storage-products,435542.shtml>

08/06/17 The cops came, searched and left a mess for puzzled homeowner

Four young residents of a North Philadelphia house who circulated petitions questioning police-surveillance cameras were rousted from their home Friday and detained 12 hours without charges while police searched their house.

Daniel Moffat, 28, a co-owner of the house, said police had no warrant when they entered. The house was examined by officials from several government agencies and then shuttered by the city's Department of Licenses and Inspections.

"This leaves me homeless, without access to things I need. My whole life is disrupted," Moffat said yesterday.

The raid on the property on Ridge Avenue near Parrish Street was led by 9th District Police Capt. Dennis Wilson, who was quoted in an online story by the *City Paper* as saying of the residents: "They're a hate group. We're trying to drum up charges against them, but unfortunately we'll probably have to let them go."

Reached yesterday by the *Daily News*, Wilson said he was unable to comment.

Police spokesman Lt. Frank Vanore said police had gone to the property because a nearby surveillance camera had been spray-painted and rendered inoperable, and interviews with neighbors led police to suspect that "people in this house were possibly involved."

Vanore said that when Moffat and others declined to identify themselves and cooperate, police entered the property because "they had probable cause to believe there was trespassing or even burglarizing."

Once inside, Vanore said, police saw things that prompted them to obtain a search warrant, such as protest literature, anti-police graffiti on walls, and the construction of what police thought might be a bunker on the roof.

Before the day ended, the property also was visited by members of the state police, the Fire Marshal's Office, and the Philadelphia Housing Authority. Details of the story are in dispute.

Viewed from the sidewalk, the property doesn't look inhabited. The first floor is a decrepit storefront covered by a metal gate. The second-floor windows are covered with plywood.

But Moffat said that since he and Robert Gilbert bought the place four years ago, they've repaired the roof and worked to restore the interior. Moffat said he and three friends who live there are active in the Francisville community, distributing free food at times and helping with a community garden. Co-owner Gilbert does not live there.

Moffat grew up in Southern California and attended San Francisco State University before moving to Philadelphia in 2003.

He said he isn't a member of any political group, but he said he and others in the house recently circulated petitions that raised questions about the appearance of surveillance cameras in the neighborhood and about the beating of three suspects by police that was seen on a TV video.

Moffat said police did not mention damage to any surveillance camera when they arrived Friday morning. He said Wilson had told him police had received a complaint that the residents of the house were living there illegally.

Moffat said he had been intimidated by the presence of the officers and told Wilson, falsely, that he didn't own the property, but could call the owner. He said he asked Wilson if he had a warrant, and none was produced. Moffat said he was handcuffed and placed in a patrol car while police entered the building, began a search and arrested the other three residents. Moffat said once the search began and L&I officials were called, he told Wilson that he owned the property and could show him a deed inside, but that Wilson wasn't interested. He asked what they were accused of.

"You're not being charged, you're being investigated," he said Wilson told him. At another point Wilson said, "call it a kidnapping." Then after about two hours, Moffat said, he was taken to jail.

"We're going to do you a favor," Moffat said Wilson told him. "It's a very hot day, and we're going to bring you down the district and put you in a cell so you don't overheat."

Moffat and his housemates weren't released until after midnight. but Moffat said he was told the house was sealed, and they could only come in the next day with a police escort to retrieve personal belongings.

"When I got to my room, it had been thoroughly searched," Moffat said. "All my photographs on the floor, all my filing cabinets emptied. It was a wreck. Some of the stuff from my room was in other rooms."

Moffat said he was given a property receipt indicating his laptop computer is now in the possession of the State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation, Intelligence Division.

State Police spokeswoman Cpl. Linette Quinn said she didn't know anything about the raid or whether state police had the computer. "You have to talk to Philadelphia police," she said.

Philadelphia police spokesman Vanore said he didn't know why the state police were brought in, but said there may have been protest literature involving the issue of police-surveillance cameras in other states.

Vanore said when police entered the property, they saw anti-police graffiti on walls, including the phrase, "kill the pigs." He said there was spray paint, including some that matched the color sprayed on the police surveillance video.

And he said the structure on the roof "was similar to what we saw on Osage Avenue," referring to the rooftop fortification built by the radical group MOVE before the 1985 confrontation that killed 11 people.

The bunker charge provoked a chuckle from Moffat.

"It's a greenhouse," he said.

Moffat said the anti-police graffiti was on the wall of an adjacent building accessible from his roof, he said, and it was there when they moved in.

Moffat said they had a box with some spray paint, since they'd been doing renovations. But he adamantly denied having anything to do with spraying the surveillance camera.

Kirk Dorn of the Philadelphia Housing Authority said the city called his agency to seal up the property because they'd determined it was unfit for human habitation. It didn't have proper running water and had holes in walls and floors.

Moffat acknowledged that he didn't have proper permits for renovations he was doing, but insisted that the place had running water and flushing toilets, and that any holes in floors were "tiny, where vents had been." Vanore said police will conduct a forensic examination of the items taken from the property to see if any charges are warranted.

Moffat and co-owner Gilbert said they're exploring their legal options. Moffat is now staying with friends. *

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/20006679.html>

08/06/16 Female Intruder Shot After Stabbing Spring Hill Woman

Boyfriend Grabs Gun During Struggle In Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH -- Police are investigating reports that a female intruder was shot in the hand after entering a house in Pittsburgh's Spring Hill section.

According to police, a woman entered a home in the 100 block of Rhine Place, spraying another woman with Mace before stabbing her, according to a witness.

The boyfriend of the victim grabbed a gun and shot the intruder in the hand, police said.

<http://www.thepittsburghchannel.com/news/16622032/detail.html>

08/06/16 EDITORIAL: The right to arm

Most Americans believe that owning a gun is the right of every citizen. According to a Gallup poll, 73 percent of the U.S. public believe that the Second Amendment guarantees individuals the right to gun ownership.

Therefore the Heller decision, which is expected any day now, could play a pivotal role in the 2008 presidential campaign. Former Ohio Secretary of State-turned-pundit Kenneth Blackwell calls it "the Roe v. Wade" of gun rights and suggests that the case (and its results) will ripple beyond District borders to impact "90 million American gun owners."

It was six D.C. residents, fed up with escalating crime and the inability to protect themselves in their city they love, who filed suit in 2003 to challenge the constitutionality of the District's ban on handguns. The lawsuit was dismissed but reversed on appeal by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, which found that the petitioner: 1) had standing to bring the lawsuit, 2) is protected by the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms (handguns) and 3) therefore, the District "is not open to ban them."

Last year, D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty failed in his petition to rehear the appeal, paving the way for both defendant and plaintiffs to petition the Supreme Court. That brings us to where we are today, in the midst of a presidential election when opinions on every matter are measured at every turn and the issue of "gun rights" is beginning to weave its way in and out of the political debate.

Generally speaking, more gun owners identify as Republicans (53 percent) than identify as Democrats (39 percent), according to Gallup. And a Harris poll, out this week, backs that up. It found that 51 percent of Republicans and 41 percent of Democrats support an individual's right to bear arms.

While the justices are expected to make their decision based on rule of law, not public opinion, the weight of whether the two presumptive presidential candidates are in sync with the public's views on the issue should not be lost among voters. But nailing either candidate down on the

matter is dicey. We know Barack Obama referred to Hillary Clinton as "Annie Oakley," suggesting that she attempted to pander to gun owners during the primary campaign. But Mr. Obama didn't do himself any favors with his "they cling to guns" remark. Mr. Obama has also opposed "right to carry" laws, voted to ban almost all rifle ammunition and has endorsed a complete ban on handgun ownership.

John McCain has caught grief from gun advocates for his support for closing gun-show "loopholes." But he is seen by many in this same group as the "lesser of two evils." Mr. McCain also joined close to 300 other lawmakers in signing a court brief which supported lifting the D.C. gun ban, and he delivered a laudable speech to the National Rifle Association's annual conference last month, addressing what he considers Mr. Obama's glaring contradiction on gun rights: "Let's be clear if ... Obama is elected president, the rights of law-abiding gun owners will be at risk."

The Gallup poll cited also found that the majority of Americans don't actually own a firearm (only 35 percent say they do). But that doesn't mean they forfeit the right to purchase one if they so desire. We hope the majority of justices agree.

<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2008/jun/16/the-right-to-arm/>

08/06/16 Reporter accused of taking gun into courthouse

A radio reporter was arrested this morning and accused of trying to take a loaded handgun into the Allegheny County Courthouse.

The county sheriff's office said KDKA reporter Rob Milford was stopped at 9:25 a.m. after a .38 caliber snub-nosed revolver was found in his briefcase at a courthouse screening station.

He was to be arraigned today on charges of carrying a firearm without a license and entering a court facility with a firearm.

"It's very early and we're looking into it," said KDKA program director Marshall Adams. "We'll be conducting a full investigation."

Mr. Milford, 53, of Castle Shannon, was at the courthouse to cover the trial of the East End rapist, Mr. Adams said, and he emphasized that there was no undercover effort on the part of the radio station to test courtroom security with a concealed weapon.

It was the second incident in a week in which a person with a loaded gun was stopped at the courthouse. On Thursday, 22-year-old Shadina Garner, who was to be a witness in a case, was stopped with a .32 caliber handgun in her purse.

Mr. Milford, a morning general assignment reporter, arrived at KDKA in April 2006 after working for CBS Radio News and Fox News Radio. He reported from the Iraq war twice, once when he was embedded during the initial invasion in 2003.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08168/890315-100.stm>

08/06/16 Reporter charged with taking gun to Pa. courthouse

PITTSBURGH (AP) -- A radio reporter was caught with a loaded handgun in his briefcase Monday as he entered a courthouse to cover a trial.

Rob Milford, 53, a general assignment reporter at KDKA Radio, was charged with possession of a firearm in a court facility and carrying a firearm without a license. He was carrying a .38-caliber revolver, the Allegheny County Sheriff's office said.

Milford told authorities he didn't realize the gun was in his briefcase, said Allegheny County Sheriff William Mullen. Milford acknowledged that he had possessed the gun for a while, but it did not belong to him, Mullen said. Local authorities were asking the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to help find the owner. KDKA Radio General Manager Marshall Adams told The Associated Press the station was looking into what happened.

A phone number for Milford could not immediately be found. Adams wouldn't comment on whether Milford had an attorney.

Milford has worked at the station since 2006. Before that, he worked at Fox News Radio and CBS Radio covering everything from hurricanes to the Iraq war.

This is the second time in a week that someone has been charged with trying to bring a gun into the courthouse.

On Thursday, a woman who was a witness in a criminal case was arrested when security screeners found a semiautomatic handgun in her purse. She told authorities she didn't know the gun was in her purse.

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/P/PA_REPORTER_COURTHOUSE_GUN_PAOL-?SITE=KDKAAM&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

08/06/16 Cops kill man stomping tot

TURLOCK, Calif. - Police killed a 27-year-old man as he kicked, punched and stomped a toddler to death despite other people's attempts to stop him on a dark, country road, authorities said.

Investigators yesterday were trying to establish the relationship between the suspect and the child they say he killed Saturday night. The Stanislaus County coroner said that the boy appeared to be between 1 and 2 years old,

based on his size, according to county sheriff's deputy Royjindar Singh.

"It's been a long night of wondering, 'Why?' - not only for the officers and the passers-by who stopped and tried to help out, but for anyone. Why would somebody do this?" Singh said.

Singh said the boy's injuries were so severe, the child will have to be identified through a blood or DNA test.

<http://www.philly.com/dailynews/national/19967004.html>

08/06/16 Sheriff to Jackson: Gun protest misses mark

In an open letter to the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran said this weekend that protesting against a Lake Barrington gun manufacturer would not solve the growing problem of gun violence.

In a statement that noted his office spent \$5,200 providing security at an August 2007 protest outside D.S. Arms, 27 W. 900 Industrial Ave., Curran suggested it would be more beneficial to find alternative solutions to curb random acts of violence involving guns.

On

Saturday, Jackson and members of the Rainbow Push organization held a second protest and prayer vigil on the grounds of D.S. Arms. Curran's statement said that "the cost of (security for) this visit by the Reverend Jackson has yet to be determined."

The group is upset that too many young people have easy access to guns, and that gun manufactures are at the root of the problem. In the rallies outside D.S. Arms, Jackson and Rev. Michael Pflieger of St. Sabina Church in Chicago and protesters have said they are trying to make communities aware that guns were taking more lives each day.

Curran defended D.S. Arms, saying the company is a manufacturer and wholesaler of guns and does not sell guns to the general public. "I am sympathetic to anyone that loses a loved one to the senseless violence of a gunshot," Curran said. "However, we must examine why a human being would fire a gun at another human being?" Curran said there were many factors that contribute to violence other than access to firearms. The sheriff told Jackson that children needed to be taught the sanctity of human life, community leaders should examine why young men kill each other and parents should encourage sexual abstinence for kids and young adults.

"I would encourage Rev. Jackson to consider my suggestions."

08/06/16 Today's guns make talk of 2d Amendment quaint

C. William Schwab is a trauma care physician Brendan G. Carr is an emergency room physician.

We are all too familiar with how damaging handguns can be. Almost every night, medics bring us patients either lifeless or writhing in pain with multiple gunshot wounds. The disruptive force of gun death is broadcast on the faces of the parents and grandparents as we look them in the eye to tell them, "I'm sorry, your son has died."

The effects of greater firearm lethality are seen daily in the emergency rooms across America, from big cities to rural towns. The impact of this trauma is reflected in the policy statement of our professional organizations.

The American College of Surgeons and the American College of Emergency Physicians support legislative and public health efforts to prevent firearm-related injuries and deaths. This includes the enforcement of current laws against possession, purchase, sale or use of firearms.

In 1976, Washington became the first major American city to ban handguns. But since that day, handgun technology has changed dramatically. In fact, the editor of Shooting Sports Retailer, a gun industry magazine, observed in 1997: "Firepower is increasing. So is the killing potential as guns shrink in size and concealability."

We hope the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court will take that fact into account when they decide this month whether the District's handgun ban is constitutional.

Here in Philadelphia, the deadly shift can be measured by the rate of violence in 2006, which resulted in more than 2,000 shootings, 400 murders, and 3,000 assaults with a gun. In 2007, Philadelphia had the highest homicide rate among the 10 largest cities.

Thirty years ago, the vast majority of handguns in America were relatively low-caliber five- and six-shot revolvers. Today, the modern handgun market is defined by increased lethality. The bulk of handguns manufactured are semi-automatic pistols: faster-firing weapons with detachable ammunition magazines that allow the gun to be reloaded in seconds. It is easy to see why the likelihood of inflicting wounds and the severity of the resulting injuries have increased.

On one end of the lethality spectrum are "Pocket Rockets," a palm-sized pistols with ammunition magazines that can hold up to 16 rounds. At the other end are "assault pistols," larger, military-style weapons designed to lay down a wide field of fire, sometimes referred to as "hosing down" an area.

The killing power of most guns on the street are somewhere in between. There are literally hundreds of models of high-capacity pistols from a wide array of domestic and foreign manufacturers, each new, more powerful version pushing older models aside as gunmakers work to carve out their own territory in our nation's domestic arms race.

It has been more than 30 years since the D.C. handgun ban was passed. During that time, the handgun industry has changed, and the lethality of its products has increased. Yet debate over the fate of the D.C. law, and what a decision overturning it may mean for other localities across the nation, is often approached from Second Amendment absolutism, with little regard for how much things have changed since the time of the Founding Fathers.

As physicians, we know the reality of handgun violence. To acknowledge this reality and its impact in America today is to realize that the District of Columbia's law is one to be emulated, not undermined.

C. William Schwab is chief of the Division of Traumatology and Surgical Critical Care at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. Brendan G. Carr is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. E-mail them at Brendan.Carr@uphs.upenn.edu.

<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/19967479.html>

06/06/15 Sheriff: Gun protests misdirected

The Rev. Jesse Jackson's protests against a Barrington gun manufacturer are costly to taxpayers and his efforts are misdirected, Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran said Saturday.

Jackson and a group of community residents, gun control advocates and ministers held a prayer vigil Saturday at Barrington gun manufacturer D.S. Arms. "D.S.Arms is a mere backdrop to our deepest concerns," Jackson said, according to a release from the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

Jackson announced plans Saturday to enlist Barrington churches, city officials and students into a coalition to march against violence "in the tradition of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Mahatma Gandhi and Jesus Christ.

"We have the right to live safe and secure, no matter where we live in America," Jackson said. "As fathers, we are fighting to save our daughters and sons from the threat of bullets and guns.

"How can we be fighting a war to stop weapons of mass destruction overseas and allow these weapons on our streets at home?"

Jackson was joined at the vigil by Rev. Gregory Livingston, field secretary for Rainbow PUSH Coalition; Rev. Walter Blaylock, president of the northwest suburban chapter of Rainbow PUSH Coalition; and Jennifer Bishop, program director for victims and survivors for the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence.

Bishop said Jackson and Rainbow PUSH Coalition have partnered with the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence to pressure state and federal legislators into passing gun

laws that will stop the flow of handguns and military-style automatic weapons.

"These kids aren't just killing each other," Bishop said. "Fifty-five percent of all suicides are completed by using firearms."

Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran agrees that the violence must be stopped, but he is critical of the protests at D.S. Arms.

In a statement issued Saturday, Curran stated Jackson's protest at D.S. in August 2007, where he was joined by the Rev. Michael Pflieger, cost "the taxpayers of Lake County" approximately \$5,200, because of the security detail that was provided by the sheriff's police. The security cost of Saturday's protest was not yet available.

"D.S. Arms is a wholesaler of guns and does not sell guns to the general public," Curran said, "although it will sell guns to licensed gun stores that sell guns at the retail level. The largest percentage of D.S. Arms guns are sold to the government (this includes the United States Military and numerous law enforcement agencies)."

I believe that the Reverend Jackson's efforts could be better utilized than demonstrating in front of a licensed wholesaler of guns," Curran said.

Curran said efforts to stop abortion, address the lack of male role models for young men and reduce sexual promiscuity could do more to affect violence in the streets than protests at a gun manufacturer such as D.S.

"Raising children is a difficult job and it is even more difficult when we do not have a certain level of maturity," part of Curran's statement said. "This is a message that needs to be given especially by those that claim to be delivering Gods message."

I would encourage the Rev. Jackson to consider my suggestions, however while he is here we will fully protect and treat him with all the love and respect that we would show to any visitor," Curran said

<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/barrington/news/1006973,ba-protests-061508-s1.article>

06/06/15 Hunting strengthens bond between father, two sons

This Father's Day we explore the special bond between father and son. Of course, we take our hats off to all the men raising daughters, too. Raising a child is a tall order, and raising them well is another thing entirely. So for all the fathers trying make a difference, we wish you a Happy Father's Day.

Find more Father's Day stories, 1C.

By Juliana Goodwin

The first day of deer season was a rite of passage in the Jones family.

And even though the oldest, Ryan, lives in Virginia, he still comes home for it.

"I come back not so much for the deer hunting, but the camaraderie. It's just the getting away and guys being guys around the campfire telling hunting stories," Ryan Jones said.

"It is one of my favorite times of the year."

Ryan, 26, Cameron, 23, father Grant and grandpa Ernie Jones have done this for years.

"That is one of those things that holds us together," said Cameron.

A family bond

Shared activities bond fathers and sons, said Grant Jones, a psychologist.

"From my readings and research, part of the thing that bonds father and son is common activity, similar interests," Jones said. "With my boys, they loved sports, hunting, fishing, outdoor stuff, so that was a natural bond for us."

Grant Jones is professor of psychology at Evangel University. Ryan Jones is getting his doctorate in psychology. Cameron majored in psychology but plans to go to law school.

Their father coached their sports teams, took them on mission trips and always made time for them, they said.

"That is one of the things that I am most thankful for every day is how great a father my dad has been as far as being understanding, promoting good qualities, interacting with us and stressing family," Ryan said.

They even had their dad as a professor in college and tried to take liberties, but he wouldn't let them get away with it. Both sons agree that the time they spend together as a family is precious.

What they don't agree on are their hunting records.

Cameron says he's landed the biggest buck, and while Ryan may not admit it, everyone knows it.

"He had to go to a private stocked land to get his deer," Ryan said. "If we are going on equal hunting ground, I have the biggest buck."

One thing is for sure -- they are both better shots than their father.

"He really is the greatest father I could ever imagine having," Ryan said, then added, "even though he's a lousy hunter."

<http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080615/NEWS01/806150353>

06/06/14 US court's ruling on guns set to start a political war

ONE month after the California Supreme Court made gay marriage a potential presidential election issue by legalising same-sex unions, the US Supreme Court may be about to do the same for gun laws. Not since 1939 has the court considered the meaning of the Second Amendment

to the Constitution, which pro-gun activists claim confers on Americans the right to bear arms.

Gun-control advocates, working from the same script — "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed" — argue that it serves only a collective right, for members of a state militia.

Seventy years ago legal opinion agreed, opening the way for cities and states to regulate handguns. A challenge to that ruling is due to be resolved this month. If the court rules in favour of individual rights, it could trigger constitutional challenges to gun laws nationwide.

"This could be a salient issue, one of the things that defines the differences between the candidates," says James Gimpel, professor of government at the University of Maryland. "It's also the kind of thing that could help John McCain energise what has so far been a quiescent Republican rank and file."

Richard Heller, a Washington DC man who carries a gun at work as a security guard, wants the court to overturn a 1976 local law that prevents most citizens from keeping handguns at home. Mr Heller claims the ban violates his right to self-defence. Last year an appeal court sided with him, finding that the city did not have the power to regulate handguns, so the case was referred to the country's highest court. Washington argues that handguns — easily concealed, easily transported and "uniquely dangerous" — have no place in cities.

Guns claim dozens of American lives daily, about 30 of them murders. In the terms of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, this represents a Virginia Tech massacre every day, a toll that goes largely unnoticed. Some legal observers suggest that since most freedoms conferred by the Bill of Rights, such as freedom of speech, are interpreted as individual rights, the right to bear arms should not be treated differently. Brady Campaign senior attorney Daniel Vice said: "It's never wise to predict before the court rules what they are going to do. But we are hopeful, from the court's questioning, that even if they say there is an individual right to bear arms for private purposes ... short of a gun ban, reasonable gun laws would still be permitted.

"The court may strike middle ground by saying there is a right to possess guns for private purposes, but the Government can regulate that in a reasonable way.

"That would be very interesting because that would take away one of the gun lobby's most powerful arguments they use to alarm their members: that if you require background checks on all gun sales, that would lead ultimately to gun

confiscations." At present buyers of weapons sold privately or at gun shows are not subject to background checks for criminality or mental instability.

<http://www.theage.com.au/world/us-courts-ruling-on-guns-set-to-start-a-political-war-20080613-2q9j.html>

08/06/14 My gun, my right. We'll see

As Toronto's mayor calls for a handgun ban, America's highest court is deciding the fate of a similar law south of the border. Canadian legal experts are watching closely

As Mayor David Miller and provincial leaders urge Ottawa to outlaw handguns, Americans are waiting to see if the United States Supreme Court will shoot down one of that country's strictest gun control laws.

The court is expected to deliver its judgment this month in the case known as *Columbia v. Heller*, which challenges the District of Columbia's ban on private handgun possession. At the forefront of the challenge are six individuals, including Dick Heller, 67, a Washington D.C. security guard who wants to bring his revolver home with him after work.

"Mr. Heller lives in a rough neighbourhood. There's some bullet holes next to his door," his lawyer, Alan Gura, said in an interview. "There's been some shootings in the neighbourhood and it's not the safest part of Washington."

The case marks the first time since 1939 the court has turned its focus to the meaning of the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which, in curiously awkward syntax says, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Over the years, those words have been embraced by both sides of the firearms debate, most vigorously by members of the gun lobby as proof that individual Americans have an inalienable right to own guns.

But the court never actually went that far in the 1939 case, which began in Arkansas when two alleged gangsters and moonshiners, Jack Miller and Frank Layton, challenged a federal ban on the possession of sawed-off shotguns. The court upheld the federal restrictions, passed in response to the St. Valentine's Day massacre involving Chicago gang members in 1929, and offered a short, somewhat ambiguously worded judgment that seemed to suggest the Second Amendment gives people the right to own weapons only in conjunction with militia service – not a broad right allowing any individual to own guns. This time, the Supreme Court is being asked to address the issue head-on.

After oral arguments in March, many legal experts felt the nine-member bench would offer a constitutional interpretation that gives Americans the right to own guns for personal use, the only mystery being how far the court will go in allowing governments to restrict that right for public safety reasons.

"It seemed pretty clear there was a majority, maybe even a substantial majority, to hold the Second Amendment did protect an individual right to bear arms and that right is subject to reasonable regulation," said Mark Tushnet, a Harvard University law professor and author of a recent book entitled *Out of Range, Why the Constitution Can't End the Battle Over Guns*.

"And it seemed like there was going to be a majority that said a complete ban was not a reasonable regulation," Tushnet said in an interview.

Whatever the U. S. Supreme Court decides, legal academics north of the border say the ruling is unlikely to have much of an impact on Canada's legal landscape because our Constitution is so different, even through politicians in both countries are struggling over gun violence.

There's simply no escaping the fact the U.S. Constitution enshrines the right to bear arms, whether it's for military or private use, and there's no similar right in Canada, said Sanjeev Anand, a law professor at the University of Alberta.

"In fact, we have not enshrined property interests at all in the Canadian Constitution or the Canadian Charter (of Rights and Freedoms)," Anand said.

Socially and politically, it may be a different story. Canadian lobby groups may try to exploit the ruling to support their philosophical stance on guns, but others may simply look upon it with voyeuristic interest at what those sometimes perplexing Americans are doing, said Osgoode Hall law professor Allan Hutchinson.

Oddly enough, even if the court does strike down D.C.'s handgun ban, it's unclear whether it would make any difference to the crime rate. After all, at various times during the 32 years it has been in place, Washington has been known as the murder capital of the U.S.

"The best judgment you could make is that handgun bans have no effect one way or another," said Tushnet, who, for his book, examined research on the effectiveness of the measures.

"Gun control people say they reduce gun violence; gun rights people say they increase violence because people don't defend themselves."

He believes there's nothing "politically feasible" that could be done in the U.S. to reduce gun crimes. While a complete ban on existing weapons might have some effect, that's not going to happen and probably couldn't be enforced anyway, Tushnet said.

"There are a lot of guns around the country, so even if half of all guns are confiscated and destroyed, there would still be a very large number of guns in the U.S."

<http://www.thestar.com/News/article/443381>

08/06/14 Teacher files charges vs. kid over gun sketch

A Taunton teacher is pressing criminal charges against a 10-year-old student after she caught the fifth-grader drawing a menacing picture that depicts him, a gun and a figure of her with a "bullet hole" in her head.

But the boy's furious mother said she plans to fight the charge in court and believes Taunton police and her son's teacher at the Mulcahey Middle School overreacted to the drawing.

"Bringing charges against a 10-year-old? I'm irate. It's caused a lot of turmoil to my son," said Angela Smithson, who has enlisted the help of the American Civil Liberties Union to fight the charge.

The teacher, Karen Boudreau, 44, filed a police report Wednesday after she yanked away from Cullen Smithson a drawing that depicted a girl named "Kailey" as well as a figure named "Mrs. Boudreau," both with the words "bullet hole" next to them. A stick figure named "ME" is shown next to a gun, according to the report.

Cullen will receive a summons to court to determine if there is enough evidence to proceed with criminal charges, police said.

Boudreau told police she wanted to file charges "in the hopes that the system could help the child," according to the report, which indicates that Cullen has unspecified "behavioral issues." She told police "in this day and age with school shootings, she also has to think about the safety of the remainder of her class."

Boudreau believed Cullen was angry with her because she forced him to redo math work, according to the report.

Boudreau declined to comment.

Superintendent

Arthur Stellar said the decision to seek criminal charges is up to each teacher. "I don't know what her rationale was," he said. "The point is the student ought to learn a lesson."

Smithson said while her son deserved the suspension, he shouldn't be treated like a criminal. "He did not threaten. He was making a picture for himself. He wasn't showing anyone. He didn't go up to the teacher and give it to her. There were no threats." Cullen gets good grades and does not get in trouble at school, she said. She also said her son works out his anger through drawing, she

said. Sarah Wunsch, an attorney for the Massachusetts ACLU, called the accusations "appalling." "This is sad that a teacher felt she needed to draw a child into the criminal justice system," she said, adding she believes the charge won't stand up in court because it doesn't constitute a threat. "Everybody tells us this is not a kid who has serious problems."

Experts

in school safety generally agree that filing criminal charges against kids should be a last resort. Dr. Ronald Stephens, head of the National School Safety Center in Westlake Village, Calif., said schools should have a team that includes counselors and police to evaluate perceived threats from children. "You have a threat assessment team sit down and determine what action should be taken," he said. "School should be a safe place. . . . Teachers have been targeted and I can understand why they might be gun-shy."

However, Susan Cole, of Massachusetts Advocates for Children and Harvard Law School, sided with Cullen's mother. "The drawing presented a perfect opportunity to address a child's underlying needs," she said. "Instead, by isolating, stigmatizing and criminalizing this behavior, what may have been an innocent action or a call for help could become a much bigger problem." <http://www.bostonherald.com/news/regional/general/view.bg?articleid=1100720&srvc=rss>

08/06/13 Quebec man acquitted in police officer slaying

A jury in Quebec has acquitted a man of first-degree murder in the deadly shooting of a Laval police officer who raided his home last year.

Basil Parasiris was acquitted on Friday by a 12-person jury at the Longueuil courthouse, on Montreal's South Shore.

He was charged with first-degree murder in the death of Const. Daniel Tessier, who died after being shot three times last spring after he entered Parasiris's Brossard home with a battering ram during a botched drug raid.

The verdict means the jury believed Parasiris's self-defence argument was enough to raise a reasonable doubt about the charges.

The father of two insisted he believed his family was being attacked by home invaders when a police team swarmed their house on March 2, 2007.

Believing the invaders were going to harm him, his wife and his children, Parasiris testified he had no choice but to shoot.

It was only after Tessier was lying on the ground that Parasiris realized he was an officer, he told the court.

Wife bursts into tears

Parasiris's wife, Penny Gounis, yelled "Oh my God" as the verdict was read out, and then burst into tears.

Crown prosecutors said they would take some time to consider whether they'll appeal. Quebec Superior Court Judge Guy Cournoyer had already acquitted Parasiris of the attempted murder of another officer, Const. Stéphane Forbes, who was shot in the arm during the raid.

Two weapons-related charges were also dropped earlier this week.

Cournoyer also declared the warrant police used to enter the home to be illegal — a ruling that was kept from the jury while it deliberated the verdict for three and a half days behind closed doors.

Parasiris was granted bail after his arrest, unprecedented in any previous Canadian police officer slaying.

Police to review guidelines: chief

Laval police Chief Jean-Pierre Gariépy expressed dismay at the decision, and reiterated the reason his officers entered Parasiris's home in the first place.

"Beyond the verdict, it is useful to remember that Mr. Parasiris had four firearms in his home and only one was legally registered," Gariépy told a news conference Friday night. "We found a variety of drugs and 17 cellphones and pagers in the home."

But Gariépy also acknowledged the trial had raised concerns about how the police operation was conducted.

He said the force will recommend that Quebec's Public Security Department review the guidelines and training for "dynamic entries," and that it clarify the procedures for obtaining search warrants.

Tessier's death and Parasiris's murder trial have been difficult on police officers across Quebec, the province's federation of municipal officers said.

But the federation is disappointed to learn Parasiris will walk on the murder charge.

"We were looking for something else, we have to be truthful about that," president Denis Côté said on Friday. "We have to sit down and see what the verdict was about." There could be lessons to learn from the raid on Parasiris's home, Côté said, but he refused to say officers involved in the bust were to blame for what happened.

Public Security Minister Jacques Dupuis said he will not be commenting on the verdict at this time.

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/montreal/story/2008/06/13/qc-parasiris0613.html#articlecomments>

08/06/13 Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition - 2008 style

The bulge under your fellow worshipper's suit jacket may not just be a bible tucked into the vest pocket.

Church-goers are more likely to be packing heat in the pews after deadly shootings at an Arvada missionary training center and a Colorado Springs megachurch, reports **Hector Gutierrez**.

Complicating the issue is the fact that many pastoral staffs don't know who among their flock is carrying a concealed weapon, security and law enforcement officials said Thursday during an informational meeting at the Heritage Christian Center in Arapahoe County. The meeting is a prelude to a three-day conference in November hosted by the National Association of Church and School Security. John Casey, the former security director at New Life Church in Colorado Springs, where Matthew Murray shot and killed twin sisters in December, said that after the gunfire ended several congregants raced to their vehicles to retrieve firearms.

"It looked like an NRA convention," said Casey, who is president of Paragon Training Group Inc., which consults with churches, Christian schools and daycare centers on security.

Arriving Colorado Springs police officers were forced to sort out whether the congregants were also the bad guys and whether more attackers were involved, Casey said. "It caused a lot of confusion," he said.

At the time of the killings, the security detail for New Life Church had a plan in place, assigning two plainclothes guards to be armed and two others to be unarmed. They also had an intelligence official who was aware of the earlier shooting in Arvada, he said.

Littleton police Sgt. Gene Enley said he attended a meeting at which 10 people showed up, and he asked how many carried firearms to their places of worship.

"Ten people raised their hands," the sergeant said. "Nine said that no one knew they carried guns."

Casey said it was up to each pastor to adopt a policy on whether church members should be permitted to carry firearms onto church grounds.

Ever carry a gun to church? Know someone who does? Should churches prohibit firearms in the sanctuary - or at least know who's packing?

http://blogs.rockymountainnews.com/rockytalklive/archives/2008/06/praise_the_lord_and_pass_the_a.html

08/06/13 It's time for a ban on handgun bans

As politicians across Canada contemplate yet another layer of laws to address the issue of urban gun crime, it may be time to consider what harm is done by such well-intentioned but impractical legislation.

The Post has reported that outright bans on handguns have been tried from Great Britain to Japan, almost invariably resulting in a rise, rather than a decline, in violent crime. Part of this phenomenon must be written down to the opportunity cost of such feel-good legislation.

To wit, when politicians pass laws that will be obeyed only by the law-abiding, they content themselves that they have taken action. As a consequence, while our leaders are absorbed with media interviews and mutual congratulations, the original and drastic problem is left to fester.

And so a ban on handgun bans would seem in order. This would disarm politicians of the fantasy that they have addressed the problem and compel them to confront criminals head-on.

For politicians facing rising crime, it is the easiest thing in the world to target law-abiding citizens. Confronting actual criminals, on the other hand, can be tricky. Increased police presence and arrests can antagonize the voting base of a liberal politician and put him on the business end of unkind editorials in left-leaning newspapers. But if such a leader is serious about dealing with crime, he must see his job as a service, not a sinecure, and let the chips fall where they may.

Much is made of the transformation of New York City from a crime-ridden disaster to America's safest big city under former mayor Rudy Giuliani. It must be remembered that this turnabout was attained not through politically correct legislation, but by robust, responsible policing, and in defiance of sharp liberal criticism.

Conversely, the mayors of Toronto, Montreal and Halifax have joined together to call for a ban on handguns across Canada, following on municipal-level actions directed at collectors and competitive target-shooters. But what good is that to citizens preyed upon by criminals who do not trouble themselves with Canada's already onerous permit and registry system before acquiring their firearms?

It is a disgrace to the modern metropolis that the term "home invasion" has entered our lexicon in recent years. That is, thugs break into a residence while its inhabitants are home, robbing and terrorizing them -- or worse. What is the effect of a well-intentioned and highly publicized ban on guns on this hideous urban phenomenon? Will home invasions increase or decrease if violent criminals have the assurance that their victims are not armed?

It is not the law-abiding citizen in the privacy of his home who requires the attention of the law but the criminal who would enter that dwelling with ill intent. The former deserves the law's protection; the latter, its reprimand.

The argument is often made that a ban on handguns is not the complete solution but it is a good first step. This might be true if such bans were accompanied by robust policing with the full-throated support of elected officials. But words on a page are no substitute for boots on the ground, and any proposed solution to crime that does not augment the arrest and prosecution of criminals is doomed to failure.

Sanctimony never stopped a bullet, and no criminal has ever been frightened by a photo-op. As New York's example shows, urban gun crime can be combated, but we need leaders who would rather be practical than popular.

theojpcaldwell@yahoo.com - Theo Caldwell, president of Caldwell Asset Management, Inc., is an investment advisor in the United States and Canada.

<http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/story.html?id=583259>

08/06/12 Gun linked to NJ shooting found in NY weapons seizure

NEWARK, N.J. - A gun linked to the execution-style slaying of three college-bound Newark youths last summer was recovered from a reputed gang member in New York and may have been used in several other killings, authorities said Thursday.

Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota said the .357-caliber revolver was used in the schoolyard shootings last August that rocked Newark, a city where the homicide rate had risen more than 50 percent since 2002.

According to Spota, investigators were able to tie the gun to the crime with ballistics evidence. He said the gun's serial number was defaced but that investigators were able to retrieve it.

The gun was seized on March 24 as part of an ongoing weapons crackdown on Long Island.

During the undercover investigation that led to the seizure, Spota said the suspect, Alvaro DelGado of Bay Shore, N.Y., indicated that the gun has "has 10 bodies on it."

Law enforcement authorities from at least two other jurisdictions outside New York have expressed interest in examining the gun for possible crimes in their area, including one double homicide, Spota said. He did not identify those jurisdictions.

Killed in the Newark attack were Terrance Aerial, 18; Dashon Harvey, 20, and Iofemi Hightower, 20, all of whom were shot in the head after being ordered to kneel in front of a wall, authorities said.

Aerial's sister, Natasha, was shot in the head but survived and helped police identify at least one of the suspects. Police have said she is currently in a witness protection program.

Spota said DelGado is a high-ranking member of the El Salvador-connected MS-13 gang. Some of the six suspects in the Newark schoolyard slayings were thought to have ties to the gang, though local authorities have downplayed those allegations.

MS-13, which stands for Mara Salvatrucha, originated in Los Angeles among immigrants from El Salvador in the 1970s and 80s and has since spread to parts of the U.S. and Central America, where it is involved in human

trafficking, kidnapping, and drugs and weapons smuggling, according to federal authorities.

According to authorities, DelGado was storing the revolver, which had five rounds in its chamber when it was recovered, and a loaded, sawed-off shotgun in a dresser when they were seized.

DelGado, 25, faces two counts of criminal weapons possession and one count of criminal sale of a firearm. He was being held in lieu of \$200,000 cash bail.

All six suspects in the Newark killings, three adults and three juveniles, were arrested within two weeks of the killings and pleaded not guilty. They are awaiting trial.

At the time of killings, the Aeriels and Harvey were students at Delaware State University, while Hightower was in the process of enrolling there for the fall semester.

http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/new_jersey/19845724.html

08/06/12 CA Gun permits sought in suit

TORRANCE: Civil rights case challenges long-standing policy

A Torrance man has filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the city for its long-standing policy of not issuing concealed weapons permits.

Also named in the suit were Torrance Police Chief John Neu and all seven members of the City Council.

The chief, mayor and city attorney all declined to comment on the lawsuit they were served with Tuesday.

David W. Spears, 43, alleges the policy is in "willful disregard of the law" and seeks to overturn it.

Spears, a revenue investigator for the city of Lynwood who lives in Torrance, sought the permit for his .45 caliber subcompact Glock pistol.

Spears said in his lawsuit he is often "accosted, confronted and threatened by hostile individuals and would-be criminals demanding money" in the course of his duties, as well as when he is off-duty in Torrance.

He stated he needs the gun to protect himself, and contends he meets all the requirements for a concealed weapons permit.

That includes demonstrating he has "good cause" for the permit, has no criminal record and is not a "prohibited person" under federal or state law.

In an interview, Spears said he also holds a concealed weapons permit from the state of Utah that is valid in about a dozen states, but not California.

Nevertheless, Spears contends that when he applied for a permit in Torrance, he was issued an application form, but at the same time received a letter from the Police Department stating that "we do not have records on the issuance of any such permits, since it has been the long-standing practice of our chiefs of police not to issue such permits to citizens."

"Defendants' formal policy is logically and clearly intended to put a 'false face' on defendants' public persona, making it appear that defendants comply with the requirements and rules of the Department of Justice and with (the) Penal Code - when they actually do not," Spears' lawsuit alleges.

"Instead, defendants willfully disregarded and ignored their own written policies and procedures, willfully disregarded and ignored the law, and willfully violated plaintiffs' constitutional rights in order to deprive him of a means of self defense."

One of several supporting documents to the lawsuit includes a letter from the state Department of Justice that states the Police Department is required to notify the agency of any license denials and retain records of those denials.

Terry A. Nelson, Spears' attorney, said in an interview that the Police Department doesn't follow those requirements either.

"It would be funny if it weren't so serious, but Torrance totally acts in the concealed carry weapon permit arena in violation of federal law," Nelson said. "I speculate that the reason they don't is if they kept the records they'd show numerous applicants being told, 'don't bother'" to apply.

This isn't the first time Torrance's policy of not granting concealed weapons permits has come into public view.

A Daily Breeze survey in 1994 found that virtually no local police chiefs, who have the discretion under state law to issue concealed weapons permits, did so.

"I didn't want to be responsible for someone out there carrying a gun," former Torrance Police Chief Don Nash is quoted as saying in the article. He granted only one permit during 22 years as chief - to a South Bay prosecutor who had been threatened.

"The premise is that you assume some kind of responsibility," Nash added. "I didn't want it on my conscience if someone out there shot somebody."

A major exception in the early 1990s was the liberal policy of Ted Cooke, then police chief of Culver City, who had issued 25 percent of the 508 permits issued countywide in 1993.

Nelson, a member of the National Rifle Association, cited two court cases in his suit to support his client's position.

In one 1976 state case, a judge held that a policy of "uniformly denying all applicants" constituted an abuse of discretion.

Another 1984 ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco held that a policy of uniformly denying all applicants was a violation of equal protection and due process.

"To us it is a pretty open-and-shut case," Nelson said. "They have literally sent (my client) a letter admitting they are violating the law and violating his constitutional rights."

http://www.dailybreeze.com/ci_9569649

08/06/12 Teen Shot, Killed In Hunting Accident

Grandfather Says His Gun Accidentally Discharged
LAVACA COUNTY, Texas -- A 14-year-old boy was accidentally shot and killed in a hunting accident by his grandfather, investigators said.

According to the Lavaca County Sheriff's Office, Taylor Michalec's grandfather said he was walking behind the teen when the trigger on his AK-47 assault rifle snagged a branch and discharged, striking the teen in the back.

The shooting happened Wednesday afternoon near County Road 290, about five miles west of Moulton, Texas, about 100 miles east of San Antonio.

Both his father and grandfather tried to administer CPR, but when EMS responders arrived, the teen was pronounced dead. Michalec had just completed his freshman year at Steele High School, where he was a member of the football team.

Lavaca County investigators said they will not file any charges on the boy's grandfather because the shooting appeared to be an accident.

<http://www.ksat.com/news/16589436/detail.html>

08/06/12 Sheriff says woman tried to take gun into courthouse

A 22-year-old woman was carrying a semiautomatic gun in her purse as she tried to enter the Allegheny County Courthouse today, county Sheriff William P. Mullen said. Guards detained Shadina Garner after she put her purse through the security scanner and they discovered the gun, a .32 caliber foreign model. She said she hadn't put the weapon in her purse.

Ms. Garner now faces charges of carrying a firearm without a license and possession of a firearm in a courthouse. She will be arraigned later today. The Allegheny County District Attorney's office will ask for a \$500,000 bond.

An arrest warrant had already been issued for Ms. Garner because she didn't show up for an earlier court appearance as a material witness. She had planned to meet with an assistant district attorney today, Mr. Mullen said.

This is only the second time in the past two years that a civilian has tried to bring a firearm into the courthouse, he said.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08164/889482-100.stm>

08/06/12 Crime firearms traced to Georgia

Brady Center review used ATF data, but agency disputes conclusion.

Georgia gun stores supplied more guns that were later recovered at crimes in other places than any other state in the nation, according to a Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence review of 2007 federal data.

As a source for guns, Georgia outranked much more populous states such as Florida, which was second, and Texas, which was third. According to the Brady Center, federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives data showed 2,631 crime guns recovered in other states were traced to Georgia stores.

Georgia, as in virtually every other state, is its own biggest provider of guns recovered at crime scenes here, 5,008, according to ATF data. The Brady Center said that number represented 75.8 percent of all guns recovered at Georgia crime scenes.

Last year, there were 11.7 gun deaths for every 100,000 people in Georgia compared with a national rate of 10.35 per 100,000, the center said.

"We hope these numbers will send a message to the [Georgia] Legislature that it's time to stop pandering to the gun lobby and do what's necessary to protect communities and families around the state and the country," said Daniel Vice, senior attorney at the Brady Center in Washington. But ATF and gun proponents found flaws in the Brady Center's calculations.

ATF supervisor Todd Reichert in Washington noted that the agency's data included some gun sales that were originally made as much as 10 years ago, which is much longer than the two-year "time to crime" ATF considers an indicator of a possible illegal gun sale.

Reichert also said not all law enforcement agencies report recovered crime guns for tracing. And, he said, spikes in the numbers come after ATF helps police agencies clear backlogs as those departments begin reporting recovered crime guns to the federal agency.

Lawrence Keane, senior vice president and general counsel for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, trade association for the firearms industry, accused the Brady Center of pandering to gun-control advocates and mischaracterizing the ATF gun tracing data, which the law limits.

"You cannot draw any statistical information from trace data. It's not particularly meaningful information," Keane said. "It is propaganda by the Brady Center to advance their anti-gun legislation to restrict the Second Amendment rights of law-abiding Americans. They apparently have no respect for the Georgia Legislature, and they have no respect for state sovereignty."

Georgia has long had the overall reputation as a gun-friendly state. Its firearms law is the minimum required by federal statute; sales are allowed only to adults who have no criminal records and have not been involuntarily committed to a hospital for mental illness. And on July 1,

a new state law will let permitted gun owners carry weapons on mass transit and into restaurants if the gun owners are not drinking alcohol.

"Our laws are, if anything, too restrictive," said Bob Thornton, who is on the executive committee for the Georgia Sport Shooting Association. "The laws in place are certainly not lax, as the Brady organization would imply."

But the Brady Center consistently has given Georgia a failing grade on its state-by-state scorecard. "It's unfortunate that this is a distinction Georgia has had two years in a row," Vice said.

GUNS AND CRIME

1: Rank of Georgia in number of crime guns traced to in-state gun dealers and recovered in other states

2,631: Number of crime guns traced to Georgia

11.7: Number of gun deaths per 100,000 people in Georgia in 2007

<http://www.ajc.com/search/content/metro/stories/2008/06/12/guns.html>

http://www.ajc.com/search/content/metro/stories/2008/06/11/guns_in_crime.html?cxntlid=inform_art

08/06/12 Orange County charges security guard with impersonating an officer

The retail employee carrying a loaded gun in a restaurant told police in Orange that he was a counter-terrorism agent with the Department of Homeland Security

A store security guard who told police he was a counter-terrorism agent with the Department of Homeland Security was arraigned Wednesday on charges of impersonating an agent and carrying a loaded firearm. He pleaded not guilty to all the counts.

Orange police arrested Kevin Javaheri, 49, in late February after they approached him in a strip mall restaurant where he was sitting with a loaded gun in a shoulder holster, said Deputy Dist. Atty. Keith Bogardus. A photo ID attached to the holster said Javaheri was a DHS agent assigned to "Counter Terrorism Intelligence Operations." He also had hundreds of fake business cards that identified him as a DHS agent.

Authorities do not know whether Javaheri used the ID or the business cards to get access to secure places, Bogardus said, but he had claimed to be a DHS agent at least once before.

In September, Javaheri told Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies that he was a DHS agent after filing a report that his car had been burglarized. Although deputies found it suspicious and took a report, they did not charge him at the time, Bogardus said.

Javaheri is a security guard who has worked at several stores, including Burberry and AutoZone, in Southern

California, Bogardus said.

According to state records, Javaheri has a firearm permit that allows him to carry a weapon in his job as a guard. He is not allowed to carry a loaded weapon off-duty, Bogardus said. "He was not working in his capacity as a security guard at the time," he said.

Javaheri faces one felony count of possession of a forged government seal and misdemeanors for carrying a loaded firearm in public and misrepresenting himself as a peace officer, with a sentencing enhancement for impersonating a peace officer during the commission of a felony.

After the hearing, Javaheri posted a \$25,000 bond and was released. He is expected back in court July 9.

If convicted, he will face a maximum sentence of four years

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/orange/la-me-agent12-2008jun12,0,7542460.story>

08/06/11 Ohio Governor signs bill on self-defense shootings

(COLUMBUS, OH) - A bill giving the benefit of the doubt to Ohioans who shoot intruders has been signed into law by Gov. Ted Strickland.

The governor called the measure "common sense legislation" as he signed it Tuesday.

When the new law takes effect in early September, it will be presumed that anyone who injures or kills an intruder in their home or car will have acted in self defense.

Republican state Senator Steve Buehrer sponsored the bill and says it will make Ohioans feel safer in their homes.

Prosecutors have complained that it could allow drug dealers to claim self defense in shootings during deals gone sour.

<http://www.wxix.com/Global/story.asp?S=8462658>

08/06/11 Man used 2-year-old son as human shield

(HAMMOND, IN) - Court records say a Chesterton man used his 2-year-old son as a human shield in a fight with two park rangers.

Joshua Don Young refused to pour out his beer at a federal campground on May 3rd.

Alcohol is prohibited at the Dunewood Campground in the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, where the rangers found Young with his child. Young's refusal to cooperate sparked an altercation.

The records show Young took one ranger's baton and hit both rangers in the head with it. After pepper spray failed to subdue Young, a ranger drew her gun. The documents say that's when Young grabbed his son and held the boy in front of his body.

Young was arraigned yesterday in U.S. District Court in Hammond and charged with two counts of assaulting federal officers.

<http://www.wxix.com/Global/story.asp?S=8463676>

08/06/11 Charley Reese: Constitution guarantees gun rights for people, not militia

Niccolo Machiavelli, who was a sort of Karl Rove of his day, though with more integrity, said of the Swiss that they were "the most free and most armed people" of Europe. Get it? The connection between arms and freedom?

That statement is still true of the Swiss. Many people know that they practice neutrality, but not many know that they practice armed neutrality. If the gun controllers' claim that the mere presence of arms leads to mayhem were true, the Swiss would have wiped themselves out years ago.

There are guns and gun ranges all over the place. You would be hard-pressed to find a Swiss home without a firearm and ammunition. Yet, the Swiss have a very low crime rate.

If you were a robber or a rapist, who would you rather have as a victim? Someone who is armed, or someone who is defenseless? Even a stupid criminal knows the answer to that question.

If the police can protect us - which is another claim the gun-control people make - then why are so many people murdered, raped and robbed? Even the television fictional stories tell you the answer to that. The cops get there after the crime has been committed. Otherwise, there wouldn't be a crime scene. Nearly all the cop shows open with the police looking at a dead, unarmed body.

Do you really believe that the men who had just fought a long and bloody war against the British and were writing what we call the Bill of Rights had this conversation:

"Well, let's see. We've guaranteed freedom of assembly, of religion, of speech and of the press. Oh, my gosh, we've forgotten the duck hunters. They'll raise heck if we leave them out, so we'd better write an amendment for them."

The Second Amendment has nothing whatsoever to do with hunting. It states: "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

The men who wrote these amendments were pretty darn fluent in English. If they had intended the right to keep and bear arms to apply only to the militia, they would have said so. They would have written "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the states to arm their respective militias shall not be infringed."

They didn't say that. The main sentence says "right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

"People" means everybody, not just the members of the militia. The subordinate clause, "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state," just gives one, but not the only, reason why all the people have a

right to keep and bear arms. The militia, after all, was drawn from the people. It was not the Army. The first meaning of "bear," by the way, is to carry, bring or take. Americans have the right to keep arms and to carry them. The word "regulate" in those days meant trained, and do you notice again the connection between arms and freedom? The subordinate clause refers to a "free state." Obviously, an unfree state would not allow the people to be armed.

The Founding Fathers were not urban neurotics like so many of today's politicians. They were almost all outdoor people. Guns were to them just tools, like their axes or plows. You couldn't survive in the wilderness without firearms, and at the time of our Revolution, there were only about 3 million people from Maine to Georgia. Nor were there any police forces. There was no Secret Service, FBI or any of the other alphabet law-enforcement agencies. If you decided to travel, you traveled at your own risk, and you can bet people traveled armed. When I was last at Williamsburg, Va., they had a room in one of the historical houses arranged as if a traveler had just arrived and unpacked. There on top of a dresser was a pistol.

- Write to Charley Reese at P.O. Box 2446, Orlando, FL 32802.

<http://www.news-press.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008806110345>

08/06/11 New CA law, lots of questions about ammo

Answering common questions about the new law requiring non-lead ammunition for big game and non-game hunting, which goes into effect July 1:

Question: Which areas are affected?

Answer: The law affects all areas determined to be within historic California condor range. This includes deer-hunting zones D7 and D8 in Fresno, Madera and Tulare counties in addition to most of the South A zone.

Question: What are non-lead bullets?

As defined by the Fish and Game Commission, non-lead bullets must contain less than 1% lead by weight. Copper is the most common substitute.

Question: What types of ammunition are legal in the non-lead zone?

A list of approved bullets and packaged cartridges can be found at www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/hunting/condor/certifiedammo.html.

Question: Does the lead ban apply to target shooting? No. It affects only hunting.

Question: Why aren't small-game mammals like tree squirrels and cottontails included?

It's definitely a gray area. The easiest explanation is that those carcasses are typically not left in the field, leaving nothing for condors to feast on.

Question: What happened to the coupon program that was included in the original bill?

It disappeared because of a lack of funding.

Question: Does the new law include depredation permits for offending wildlife?

Yes. Permit holders will be required to use non-lead ammunition within the specified condor range.

<http://www.fresnobee.com/sports/outdoors/story/661195.html>

08/06/11 Wake delays action on weapons ban

RALEIGH - Citing additional insurance concerns, Wake County schools staff will wait until August before presenting draft revisions to the district's deadly weapons bans aimed at allowing student marksmanship teams to participate in approved firearms competitions.

In response to the public outcry after an East Wake High School club team was banned from competing in a state-sponsored marksmanship tournament, school board members asked staff to draft a policy to allow teams to compete.

In March, the team at East Wake was barred from competing in the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission Hunter Education Tournament one day before a regional competition.

An area superintendent and an East Wake principal determined the school's 22-year participation in the tournament violated Wake's policy barring firearms and other deadly weapons from school campuses.

The last-minute ban garnered national attention. Several pro-gun groups protested the decision. School staff members were expected to have a draft policy Tuesday but delayed another month to address requirements brought up by the school system's insurer.

Among the requirements:

- * Create a master plan for a shooting range in line with the state's Hunter Safety Program. Students would be required to have supervised practices and competitions.

- * Draft safety rules that would be approved by the school system's risk manager.

- * Provide hand-washing stations to prevent students from being exposed to too-high levels of lead.

"It's not going to be on somebody's farm," said Ann Majestic, the school board's lawyer.

School board members Lori Millberg and Patti Head said they want the policy in place in time for the new school year.

"We need to be able to do this for this fall," Head said

<http://www.newsobserver.com/news/story/1103702.html>

08/06/11 Concealed carry proposal gets support of sheriff

Legal issues could still prevent the issuing of gun permits.

ROCKFORD —

Winnebago County Sheriff Dick Meyers lent his considerable support to the county's concealed carry debate.

Meyers was the last of 30 speakers to take the podium, and he received a standing ovation for his efforts.

"Let me get it out of the way," he told the crowd. "I do not have a problem with concealed carry."

He said that "20 years ago, I would have told you different," but "we're at a point where we don't have a choice."

The County Board is drafting a resolution that will authorize the sheriff to issue gun permits to qualified citizens. Although the resolution is still in draft form, at least 13 of the 28 board members have already signed on. Although he supports the idea of concealed carry for the county, Meyers said he would not issue permits, even if the board passes the resolution, if he is told by the state's attorney's office or the Illinois attorney general's office that doing so would be a violation of state law.

"If our attorneys say we can issue a permit, that's what I'll do," Meyers said. "If they say I can't, then I won't, and that's probably when the courts will get involved."

Shortly after the meeting broke up, Meyers elaborated a bit, saying that while he doesn't think all the supporters of the resolution can legally do what they want and that some of the facts they are citing might not be accurate, he understands the need for citizens to be able to arm themselves.

"Wisconsin almost passed it; if they did, we'd be the only state without some sort of concealed carry," he said.

"I just think that this is what's coming, and from a public safety standpoint, it's the right thing to do."

Although the sheriff was the most well-known of the pro-resolution crowd, several others took the podium in support of the resolution. Of the 30 speakers, only two came out against the proposal.

A number mentioned the shootings at Northern Illinois University as to why citizens should be armed, and some referred to the U.S. Constitution, particularly the Second Amendment, as a basis for their beliefs.

A few came from out of county, drawn to the Memorial Hall meeting to show their support for what was happening in Winnebago County.

"There's nothing worth dying for in my wallet," said Mark McGee. "My family, that's a different story."

Another man, Robert Stoner of Rockford, told a story about how he was almost carjacked in the early 1980s and only got out of the jam when he stuck a gun in his assailant's face.

"Back then, it was only a misdemeanor (to carry a concealed firearm)," Stoner said. "Nowadays, it's a felony and I'd be locked up for it."

Kirby Miracle, also of Rockford, said enacting a concealed carry system would help the city and the county attract visitors.

Tom Owens, the County Board member who presided over the meeting, said the turnout at the public hearing proved the people of Winnebago County were embracing some form of concealed carry.

<http://www.rrstar.com/communities/x816777156/Concealed-carry-proposal-gets-support-of-sheriff>

08/06/11 Militia probe began at 'flamethrower party,' agent says

Two men with alleged ties to area militias -- who are self-proclaimed "survivalists" -- will remain in the Allegheny County Jail pending disposition of their charges in federal court on weapons violations.

Perry Landis, 62, of Du Bois, Clearfield County, is charged with selling blasting caps to undercover agents on Sept. 29, 2007, and March 27.

During a hearing this afternoon before U.S. District Magistrate Judge Amy Reynolds Hay, FBI agent Daniel Yocca testified that Mr. Landis crafted "one hell of a mean grenade," using pill bottles and CO-2 cartridges to provide propulsion. He also made an ammunition belt to store several medicine bottle grenades at one time.

Mr. Yocca told the judge that Mr. Landis is the sergeant at arms of a group called the Brookville Tiger Militia, which met in a cabin on his property.

He also testified that Mr. Landis told undercover officers that if Hillary Clinton won the presidency, it would be a good thing because she would demand disarmament, and "we would come out of the woodwork."

Earlier in the day, Judge Hay ordered that Marvin E. Hall, of Rimersberg, remain in custody. He is accused of making exploding golf balls and a host of other weapons. Judge Hay deemed him a flight risk and a danger to the community.

Mr. Hall was arrested Sunday in a raid during which federal agents seized a laundry list of ammunition, explosives and firearms from his home.

FBI agents and the Pennsylvania State Police had been investigating Mr. Hall since 2005, when undercover agents met him at a "flamethrower party," a gathering for neighbors, gun owners and aspiring militia members in Clarion County, Mr. Yocca said.

The FBI launched its probe to "target militias and individuals in militias who have a propensity toward violence," but Mr. Hall told undercover agents he was not part of such a group, Mr. Yocca said. However, he continued that, if need be, he would associate himself with a group called the 91st Warrior, the agent testified.

During the investigation, Mr. Yocca said, Mr. Hall offered an undercover officer a CD detailing how to turn

an AK-47 into a fully automatic weapon; gave the agent two home-made plastic golf balls filled with exploding powder for use as miniature grenades; and told an officer that he continued to manufacture grenade launchers in a hidden-away machine shop.

Mr. Hall in 1999 was sentenced to 27 months in federal prison for possessing unregistered firearms. Mr. Yocca testified that Mr. Hall told an agent he would make two more grenade launchers for each year he spent in federal prison.

Morgan Jones, of Lucinda, Clarion County, and Bradley Kahle, of Troutville, Clearfield County, are also charged in related but separate investigations by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Mr. Jones will have his detention hearing tomorrow afternoon.

Mr. Kahle had a detention hearing this afternoon before U.S. District Magistrate Judge Keith A. Pesto in Johnstown. He was granted bond provided he followed a number of conditions.

<http://pittsburghpost-gazette.com/pg/08163/889094-100.stm>

08/06/10 Task force arrests 13 in gun crackdown in Philadelphia

PHILADELPHIA - More than a dozen people are under arrest following a crackdown on illegal gun transfers in Philadelphia.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett and Philadelphia District Attorney Lynn Abraham announced the arrests Tuesday.

Thirteen people are facing charges that include the illegal transfer or use of firearms. Many of the guns were later used in violent crimes.

Police say one suspect purchased two handguns and a shotgun on the street and used one of the firearms in a drive-by shooting. Another suspect purchased 26 handguns between 1995 and 2003 and illegally sold 23 of them. One of the weapons was recovered in a murder investigation.

Corbett and Abraham say 179 arrests have been made and 265 firearms seized since the task force was started in December 2006.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/wires/ap/news/state/pennsylvania/19718344.html>

08/06/10 Family of man killed by officer outraged

The family of a Louisiana man killed by a Columbus police officer Friday night acknowledges that he was carrying a gun but says he shouldn't have been shot. Relatives of Edward Hayes, 31, including a brother and cousin who were with him when police first confronted

them, say he was running away from officers and never intended to use the gun he had tucked in his waistband. "He was saying, 'Don't shoot! Don't shoot! I got a gun but don't shoot!'" said his younger brother, Dwayne Hayes. "He was trying not to get killed," said grandmother Cecelia Callender.

She and other relatives who traveled to Columbus from Louisiana after hearing of the shooting gathered yesterday at a relative's home on the West Side.

Edward Hayes had his hand on the gun as he ran, Dwayne Hayes said, but he said he never saw his brother take out the weapon.

Hayes was shot at Mount Vernon Avenue and N. 17th Street on the Near East Side about 11 p.m. by Officer Fredrick Hannah, an officer for nine years who has been involved in two prior shootings. The men he shot in those cases survived, and the Police Division said Hannah, 35, was justified both times.

The allegations raised by Hayes' family were rebutted by the head of the local police union, who said the shooting would not have occurred if Hayes and others in the car weren't carrying illegal guns.

"Our officer has a responsibility to react to a suspect's actions, and he did so," said Jim Gilbert, president of the Fraternal Order of Police Capital City Lodge No. 9. "The burden is not on us to wait and be fired upon."

Police have released few details of the shooting, saying Hannah and Edward Hayes had a "brief confrontation" and that Hayes "displayed a gun" after running from a car. A paramedic could be heard saying over Fire Division radios that night that Hayes was shot in the upper back or back of his neck. He died a short time later.

Two other suspects, Lester K. Joseph, 31, and Dwight T. Jackson Jr., 30, were caught and arrested. Joseph, the car's driver and Hayes' cousin, was charged with carrying a concealed weapon and improper transport of a gun. Jackson was charged with carrying a concealed weapon and tampering with evidence. Dwayne Hayes wasn't charged.

Columbus Safety Director Mitchell Brown told City Council members last night that Police Division officials already have begun an investigation of the shooting. He said he has asked the city's Community Relations Commission to put together a group of residents to "mitigate any overreaction" in the Mount Vernon area. About 25 people, including Hayes' family, stood at last night's council meeting as Near East Side activist Barry Edney called on the city to suspend Mayor Michael B. Coleman's summer strike-force initiative, which puts extra police in high-crime areas. Hannah was part of that detail when he shot Hayes.

Edney said he witnessed the shooting. He said Hayes was chased by police and shot after pleading for his life.

"We're going to make sure justice is served, even if we have to get the federal government in," said Edney, who was escorted out of City Hall by two police officers after speaking beyond the council's three-minute limit.

Police said they first approached the parked car in which Hayes was sitting because they suspected a drug deal was occurring, although no drug charges have been filed.

Police recovered three guns.

In a brief telephone interview from the Franklin County jail, Joseph said he heard the shots that killed his cousin. He said they ran because they wanted to ditch the guns and avoid arrest, but they wouldn't have shot at the police officers. "Everything is happening so fast, I'm discombobulated," he said.

Dwayne Hayes said he saw his brother run past him but didn't realize until later that he had been shot.

Elaine Valentine Hayes said her son had no drugs.

"Say my child had a gun and you're telling the truth, but say my child had drugs and you're lying," she said.

Louisiana court records show that Jackson and Joseph have prior drug convictions, but Dwayne Hayes insisted the group was only socializing with some young women when police rolled up.

Family members said Edward Hayes was killed on his oldest daughter's 16th birthday. He had been visiting Columbus from New Orleans for a graduation party and a wedding.

"They should have arrested him and let a judge decide," said his father, Don Hayes Sr., who worked with him in catering at the New Orleans zoo. "This boy was not going to shoot somebody. He was murdered."

"OK, he was wrong for having a gun, but he still was a human," Valentine Hayes said. "There's a punishment for everything. But is the punishment death?"

tdecker@dispatch.com

rvitale@dispatch.com

"Our officer has a responsibility to react to a suspect's actions, and he did so."

Jim Gilbert

Fraternal Order of Police

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2008/06/10/SHOOTFOLO.ART_ART_06-10-08_B1_GJAEU6Q.html?type=rss&cat=&sid=101

08/06/10 Packing heat sure makes Pitt interesting

By Mike Seate TRIBUNE-REVIEW

Before classes adjourned for the academic year, students at the University of Pittsburgh squared off over whether guns should be legally carried on campus.

Although the Students for Concealed Carry on Campus have yet to convince lawmakers to allow them to pack .45s alongside their copies of Roget's Thesaurus, I hear the pro-

gunplay group plans a major offensive aimed -- pardon the pun -- at overturning the campus anti-gun policy.

With that in mind, we'd like to imagine a day in the life of Pitt's SCCOC leader David Brytus if he succeeds.

- 8 a.m.: Awoke to the sound of gunfire outside my dorm room. Either some of my well-armed fellow students are taking care of business, or I've overslept and missed morning target practice again

- 9:13 a.m.: I'm glad I stay armed at all times, but I've got to remember to unholster my weapon before hopping in the shower. This is the fourth imported Italian leather holster I've ruined this semester!

- 9:49 a.m.: I'm sure that's the last time that old blue-haired lady in the cafeteria tries to short me with just one scoop of hash browns. A few hollow-points fired at close range had her dishing out potatoes like an eight-armed Irishman.

- 12:52 p.m.: Clicked off my safety and kept my trigger finger itchy as two large, corn-rowed black guys forced their way onto a Student Union elevator beside me. I was about ready to lock and load until I realized they were the school's new starting backfield.

Funny -- shouting "Go Panthers!" didn't seem to make them feel any more comfortable.

- 2:00 p.m.: Issued all-points bulletin and gathered my boys after reports surfaced that al-Qaida operatives had invaded campus and taken over programming at WPTS, the campus radio station. And get this -- the freedom-hating terrorists showed up right in the middle of my favorite heavy metal show! Let's roll, men!

- 2:30 p.m.: Hard time explaining to the campus police why we shot up that bunch of Asian students hosting the International Hour on WPTS. How was I supposed to know the difference between Indians and Arabs?

- 4:35 p.m.: Will to power, my butt! My philosophy professor can discuss whether my term paper had a firm grasp of Nietzsche all day -- but he can't argue with my Glock, which he tried to do before I plugged him. I'll bet I get an A this term!

- 7:00 p.m.: Off to find some tracer rounds. How's a fella supposed to see what he's shooting at after dark anyway?

- 11:01 p.m.: Headed to the Original Hot Dog Shop for a couple beers and large fries. Left my jacket open so everyone could see how big my gun is, but no one seemed impressed or intimidated. Bartender says everyone here carries a gun, which means one thing:

Must buy bigger gun!

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/opinion/columnists/seate/s_571826.html

08/06/10 Attorney general says mentally ill should not get guns

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper says patients who are ruled mentally ill by the courts should not be able to obtain guns.

A Senate committee is to consider a bill Thursday to keep guns away from those who have been involuntarily committed.

Cumberland Sen. Tony Rand offered the bill to require court clerks to enter mental health commitments into a national database, which would provide the information for gun permit background checks.

Cooper says the information could help prevent tragedies like the shooting at Virginia Tech from happening in North Carolina.

The News & Observer of Raleigh said Cooper's office issued a statement saying the bill would bring North Carolina in line with a federal provision that prohibits those who were committed from buying or carrying guns.

<http://www.wral.com/news/state/story/3017973/>

08/06/10 Three in custody on weapons charges after feds raid homes

PITTSBURGH - Federal agents raided at least two homes and took three Western Pennsylvania men into custody - one of them as he left church - after seizing an unknown number of weapons.

Prosecutors were seeking to keep the defendants jailed until trial, but would not say why. Indictments returned last week remained under seal.

Morgan Jones, of Lucinda, Marvin E. Hall, of Rimersberg, and Perry Landis, whose address was not immediately available, appeared before a federal magistrate on Monday and remained jailed until a detention hearing Wednesday. A fourth man was set to appear before a federal magistrate in Johnstown, but prosecutors would not release his name. Special Agent William Crowley, spokesman for the Pittsburgh FBI office, would not say what was seized during searches at Jones' and Hall's properties. But Jones' wife and Hall's girlfriend told The Associated Press that guns were taken from both locations during Sunday's raids.

Neighbors saw a plane, bomb squads and dogs on Morgan Jones' property in Clarion County on Sunday, The Derrick of Oil City reported.

At the detention hearing, prosecutors must present arguments and evidence about why the men should stay in jail until they stand trial. By law, the government must prove the men are dangerous, a risk to flee prosecution, or both; prosecutors did not say why they planned to seek detention.

Hall's girlfriend, Melissa Huet, 34, also was indicted but was not in custody Monday. She told The Associated Press that Hall is 50. The other men appeared to be older than Hall.

"They're a bunch of old men who sit around and talk and don't do anything," Huet said, when asked what she knew about the charges before the hearing. She said an informant has given the government information about the men.

Jones' wife, Donna, said her husband is a gun collector, not a criminal.

"I think the charges are going to be exaggerated," she said, accusing federal agents of overkill for arresting her husband as he came out of church.

"I believe going and taking him at church is nothing but showboating," she said. "All they had to do was knock on our door."

U.S. Magistrate Amy Reynolds Hay told Hall he is accused of possession of a firearm by a felon and transfer of an unregistered firearm, both on Jan. 11.

Hall pleaded guilty in Pittsburgh to possessing unregistered firearms in November 1998 and was sentenced to 27 months in prison, according to federal court records.

Hay read the charges against each man in court, but indictments returned last week remained under seal Monday afternoon, so details of the accusations were not immediately available.

The magistrate told Jones he is charged with selling a firearm to someone in another state while Landis faces two charges of transferring unregistered firearms, once in September and again in March.

All men were to receive federal public defenders after the magistrate determined they could not afford attorneys.

Donna Jones said she was staying with her daughter because federal agents still were searching her property on Monday. Morgan Jones told the judge he operates a muffler shop, garage and junk yard.

<http://www.observer-reporter.com/OR/...-Weapons-Raids>

08/06/10 Second Amendment: A Valued Target for Students

Dwight Springthorpe learned how to shoot out of necessity. Growing up in rural North Carolina, his parents' farm was plagued with coyotes. Springthorpe learned gun safety and marksmanship from his father. And, he says, he was pretty effective in keeping the coyotes off his family's land.

Now a senior at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Springthorpe continues to shoot for sport as president of the Tar Heel Rifle and Pistol Club (THRPC). For college students to participate in a gun club – or even work on their own to start one – seems almost an anachronism, antithetical to the political correctness of the academic world.

But, as HUMAN EVENTS found, it's a lot more common than most of the academic world would have us believe

for one reason: students value their Second Amendment rights and are willing to work to protect them.

Although he enjoys taking the Mauser 98 rifle he custom built with his dad to the local range for a good time with friends, Springthorpe takes more pride in defending the principles of the Second Amendment every time he takes aim.

"Just as college students learn about the importance of free expression and the right to a fair trial, I believe they should have equal access to an education concerning the right to self-defense," said Springthorpe, a physics major. "Though the use of force is always unfortunate and, I feel, should be avoided if at all possible, the Second Amendment ensures that the last and, perhaps most vital, line of defense remains."

The THRPC began three years ago when a student active in UNC's Student Congress sought to develop a firearms sports and Second Amendment organization.

The club has since experienced significant growth, with 180 students now listed as members on the mailing list. The campus student government recognizes THRPC as a legitimate student organization, entitling the group to annual funding. Such support has allowed the club to host major events at no cost to the participants. Large events at the beginning and end of the school year are designed to teach new shooters about gun safety and basic shooting techniques

"Each event starts with a discussion about gun safety and safe operation of the firearms that will be used that day," Springthorpe explained. "This is followed by an opportunity to participate in various live fire exercises under the auspices of an instructor."

Since weapons of any kind are prohibited from the UNC campus, as is the case at most colleges and universities, all events occur off campus. Several local ranges provide access to facilities and certified instructors.

Among the national organizations aiming to help college students defend the Second Amendment is the Leadership Institute's Campus Leadership Program. Based in Arlington, Va., LI affiliates itself with conservative organizations like Gun Owners of America and sends field representatives across the country to help students start independent conservative organizations, including those that seek to preserve gun rights.

According to Ed King, an LI campus services coordinator, there has been a steady increase over the past two years. LI currently works with 136 gun groups. Of those, 84 were created in the past calendar year. California, often touted as a blue state, surprisingly shares the highest number of groups with Pennsylvania, as eight groups are scattered across both the Golden and Keystone states.

Several factors have led to the increase, but above all, a stronger focus on self-defense has emerged in the wake of campus shootings, according to King.

“Recent events, such as the shooting at Virginia Tech, have reinforced an entrenched narrative in mainstream media: There must be stricter gun control,” King said. “Officials respond to that pressure with stricter gun control legislation that fails to decrease gun violence.” Conservatives, according to King, understand that to effectively counter gun violence, there must be a responsible armed citizenry.

“Conservative students are organizing to fight the unconstitutional and ineffective ban on the 2nd Amendment on most college campuses,” King said. Over 200 other collegiate shooting programs across the country provide students with the opportunity to show off their skills and shoot competitively. According to Victoria Croft, National Manager of the NRA Collegiate and School Programs, no outward trend is apparent with the number of competitive clubs increasing or declining.

“I can say that the clubs remain a stable number from year to year,” said Croft, who plans the NRA’s collegiate pistol championship. “Some may be disbanded for a variety of reasons, but we have new ones being developed routinely. It seems to equal out comfortably.”

Students are also beginning to recognize the tremendous amount of scholarship money that is available to collegiate shooters, according to Damaso Torres, co-founder and now national executive director of Students for the Second Amendment, a nonpartisan student organization whose primary missions are to educate and stimulate debate on campuses about the Second Amendment.

“Many local SF2A chapters and similar groups frequently host ‘day at the range’ events to introduce their classmates to the safe enjoyment of the shooting sports,” said Torres, a graduate student at St. Mary’s University studying international relations.

SF2A was founded in 2000 by two university students in Texas who wanted a vehicle by which they could organize and host bi-annual skeet and trap shoots for college students. The organization has since grown from two South Texas chapters to chapters in 22 states. In 2002 SF2A introduced its Collegiate Firearms Instructor Program, which certifies college students as NRA instructors. To date, the program has introduced over 6,800 youth to the safe enjoyment of shooting sports and traditions, according to Torres.

“It was realized that the greatest need for this training was in youth serving organizations,” Torres said. “It seems we have lost one generation of sport shooters, perhaps two. We see it as our mission to help pass on our shooting, hunting and outdoor traditions.”

The University of Vermont Shooting Sports Club began in 2003 as a way for student gun enthusiasts to meet and shoot together. Sixty members are currently on the mailing list, and around 15 active participants show up for the frequent trap and 5-stand shooting events, as well as service rifle clinics and firearm safety classes. The group hosted its first collegiate trap and 5-stand shoot last fall with Yale University and the University of Connecticut, and about three dozen student shooters participated.

According to Jay Tuttle, club president, the group possesses no specific agenda to defend the Second Amendment, although their ability to enjoy the sport of shooting depends on the amendment’s preservation.

“We have everyone from every end of the political spectrum,” Tuttle said. “We do let members know about what bills are going through, and we inform our membership of what’s going on that could affect our Second Amendment rights. If there was something that was going to be affecting our club activities, then yes, our club would have an official response to it.”

With no political conflicts on campus, the club’s primary problem is storage because students cannot keep firearms on campus property. Currently Tuttle and the other club officers keep their guns in safes in off-campus apartments. Student shooters at Hillsdale College in southern Michigan will not have a problem storing their firearms in a few years. The college purchased 72 acres of land three miles south of campus for a shooting range, set to be completed this fall. Long-term plans include a storage locker for student weapons. The land purchase was funded in part by the Roland Ebersole endowment, which promotes Second Amendment rights.

Next spring Michigan State University is set to open a 23,000-square-foot shooting sports facility with indoor archery and small-bore rifle ranges and three outdoor archery ranges. The MSU archery team and Air Rifle club will primarily utilize the center.

Of course, college students have not only formed shooting clubs to spark awareness for gun rights. On campuses across the country students have utilized their First Amendment freedoms to stimulate discussion about the amendment closest to their hearts. Several student protests and demonstrations over the last few years have garnered nation-wide media attention.

Nearly all colleges and universities nationwide ban firearms on campus. Students for Concealed Carry on Campus (SCCC) would like to change that, contending that concealed-carry permit holders should be able to bring legal weapons to campus to defend themselves.

In just one year, SCCC has recruited over 30,000 members, aided by the use of a Facebook group. College students make up 90 percent of the members, while the other 10 percent consists of faculty, parents, and

concerned citizens. Almost 350 chapters have been established across the country in 45 states and Canada. Virginia Tech even now has a chapter. To place the numbers into perspective, approximately one out of every 630 college students in the United States is now a member of SCCC.

To start a dialogue with fellow students and faculty members about the Second Amendment, the SCCC sponsored its second national collegiate empty holster protest in April.

University of Central Florida students wore empty gun holsters around on campus in protest of a state law that prohibits students and staff from carrying guns on campus. The university's Knights Rifle Association, a group of students who educate peers about Second Amendment rights and other gun-related issues, hosted the protest.

"I think students should have the option to protect themselves on campus," said Peter Ciosi, KRA president.

"We have seen too many tragedies occur because a crazed student got angry at life and decided to take it out other people by bringing weapons on campus. In my mind it makes absolutely no sense to ban students with the proper permits [with a 4 hour safety and training course and full background checks] to bring guns on campus."

The University of Colorado-Colorado Springs chapter of SCCC wore empty holsters around campus as well during the week-long campaign.

"The group was formed after the Virginia Tech shootings and in response to a newly created ban on guns at their university—a policy they consider unconstitutional and that leaves students unable to protect themselves," said Nicole Gonzalez Knowlton, a LI campus services coordinator.

To make a point about the Second Amendment, a conservative student newspaper at Clemson University sponsored a drawing for an AK-47 rifle in 2006.

According to Amanda Carey, editor of the Tiger Town Observer, the raffle served as the publication's way of celebrating the freedoms and rights granted to American citizens and students alike in the Second Amendment.

"It is so important for our generation to stand up for this right, especially as we see other individual freedoms come under attack every day," the Clemson junior political science major said. "Gun control advocates use fear as a tool to regulate civil liberties, yet every American has the right to protect him or herself. To take that away is not only unconstitutional; it is removing our last defense in preserving our country, our freedom, and our lives."

Female students have become more open to the idea of protecting themselves by carrying a handgun instead of waiting for police to respond to a crime scene.

"College students, including females, have the right to protect themselves and their loved ones, just as any other

American should have that right," said Marinelle Thompson, founder and president of Second Amendment Sisters, a women's advocacy group dedicated to preserving the basic human right to self-defense. "College women are often targets of rapists and worse because they must walk across a dark campus at night to get to classes or to their dorm."

At the University of North Dakota last year, Females for Firearms organized an on-campus protest when housing officials attempted to ban firearms from students' campus apartments.

"[The ban] was especially trouble for women on campus who rely on their Second Amendment right for protection from possible break-ins and attackers," said Craig Burgers, an LI Campus Services Coordinator.

The protest drew attention from a variety of media, including local television and radio, as well as the Associated Press.

"The support they generated from this protest was amazing," Burgers said. "Not only did they get a positive response from the University of North Dakota community but even state representatives took note."

For many students, the issue comes down to safety more than pushing a political agenda. According to the SCCC Web site, chapter organizers come from diverse political backgrounds: "Among SCCC's organizers you'll find at least one conservative Republican, at least one liberal Democrat, and at least one moderate Independent."

Although THRPC exists to promote Second Amendment rights, firearms education and enjoyment of firearms-related sports, Springthorpe stresses that no conservative pre-requisite exists.

"Outside of Second Amendment issues, we strive to remain apolitical so people of any background feel comfortable and welcomed into the world of firearms and shooting sports," he said.

The students' actions reflect a possible change in the national attitude toward gun rights. Although groups like the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence boast large numbers of followers, a recent poll shows a decline in support for gun control laws.

In an online survey last month by The Harris Poll, a two to one plurality of Americans expressed beliefs that the Second Amendment supports an individual's right to bear arms. Most strikingly, though, the results show that those in favor of stricter gun control are no longer the majority. Ten years ago, 69 percent favored stricter gun control; in the most recent poll, however, 49 percent now support stronger measures.

The trend among America's future leaders – and the strength of the gun clubs proliferating around the country – may be a strong indicator that the days of draconian gun control measures are just about over.

Cassandra Kane is a HUMAN EVENTS intern. She is a senior at Lebanon Valley College in Annville, Pa., studying English and political science

<http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=26905>

08/06/09 Homeowner hits home invader with shotgun blast; Deputies following blood trail

DENVER - Becky Howard woke up to the sound of shattering glass.

She woke her husband Troy, who grabbed the double barrel shotgun resting in a corner.

"I closed the bedroom door and locked it," Becky Howard said. "He got the gun and I got in the closet."

It was almost 3 a.m. when Troy Howard reached for his shotgun. He had two shells in the gun and feared that wouldn't be enough to stop the intruder.

Whoever was in the house approached the bedroom door. Troy Howard said the intruder sounded like he was about to rush in and Troy saw the doorknob turn.

"Whoever it was, they meant business," Howard said. "They came charging."

He got behind the door so that whoever wanted in wouldn't have a shot at him.

Troy jammed the shotgun and fired one shot. He jammed the gun again and fired once more, leaving blackened holes in the wooden bedroom door.

"I knocked that door back shut," Troy Howard said.

The 71-year-old retired Marine said he wasn't scared.

"If they tried to come in here, shoot 'em," Howard said he was thinking.

Meanwhile Becky Howard stayed scared in the closet.

"I knew we were going to be killed," Becky said. "I just prayed - that's all I knew to do - that we would be all right."

She said she'd never been so scared in her life. She'd check out the place on Catawba Burris Road after being away to see that nothing had been moved.

"I didn't think about them doing it while we were in the dead of sleep," she said.

The would-be thief or thieves didn't take anything, Becky Howard said.

Lincoln County Sheriff's Office wasn't sure if more than one person was inside.

"My purse was sitting on the dining room table," said Becky Howard, 68. "Troy's wallet was on the bar."

At least one of the shots Troy Howard fired met its mark. The injured intruder left blood spots in the home and on the cement near the side entrance.

Deputies followed a trail of blood out of the residence, down the driveway and short distance south on Catawba Burris Road. They aren't sure whether more than one person was involved in the break-in.

Lincoln County and Department of Correction K-9 units searched the area but lost the scent, according to a press release. A search did not locate the suspect and a reverse 911 call warned residents about the break-in.

Sheriff's officials halted the search around 1:30 p.m.

Monday, but the investigation is ongoing.

The break-in will mean changes at the Howard home where the couple has lived since 1961.

"We're going to have a security system put in for one thing," Becky Howard said. "New doors with dead bolts and a phone in the bedroom."

http://www.gastongazette.com/news/county_21445_article.html/lincoln_door.html

08/06/09 Defining The Second Amendment

Anticipating the Supreme Court's expected late June decision in District of Columbia v. Heller, which will decide the constitutionality of a D.C. law restricting gun-ownership rights, many analysts have turned to the Founders' writings in an effort to understand the Second Amendment. What analysts need to do - recognizing that language and word usage change over time - is turn to America's first dictionary.

The Second Amendment states simply, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

The Supreme Court questioned whether the D.C. statue "violated the Second Amendment rights of individuals who are not affiliated with any state-regulated militia, but who wish to keep handguns and other firearms for private use in their homes."

For the answer, turn to Noah Webster.

Known as the "Father of American Scholarship and Education," Webster believed that popular sovereignty in government must be accompanied by popular usage in language. In "A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language," published in 1806, and "An American Dictionary of the English Language," published in 1828 and adopted by Congress as the American standard, Webster defined all the words in the Second Amendment. "People" were "the commonality, as distinct from men of rank," and "Right" was "just claim; immunity; privilege." "All men have a right to secure enjoyment of life, personal safety, liberty and property," he wrote.

Thus in the language of Webster's time, "the people" meant individuals and individuals have "rights."

"Keep" was defined as "To hold; to retain one's power or possession; not to lose or part with ... To have in custody for security or preservation"; "Bear" as "to carry" or "to wear; name; to bear arms in a coat"; and "Arms" were defined as "weapons of offense, or armor for defense and protection of the body."

Only civilians would "bear arms in a coat" - soldiers carried muskets in their hands, while officers carried pistols in holsters.

Thus the words "keep and bear arms" suggest a right to hand-held arms as a person could "bear," such as muskets, pistols and swords, but not cannon and heavy ordnance that a person could not carry.

"Infringe" was defined by Webster as "... to violate, either positively by contravention, or negatively by non-fulfillment or neglect of performance."

"Militia" was defined as "able bodied men organized into companies, regiments and brigades, with officers ... and required by law to attend military exercises on certain days only, but at other times left to pursue their usual occupations" and "Regulated" as "... subject to rules or restrictions." A well-regulated militia consisted of civilians, not soldiers.

During most of our history an exhaustive analysis of the Second Amendment would never have been necessary. The meaning of each word would have been obvious to citizens of the time.

It was only in the late 20th century that an Orwellian view of the Second Amendment gained currency. Within this distorted language prism "the people" would come to mean the states or state-conscripted militia; "right" would mean governmental power; and "arms" would not include ordinary handguns and rifles.

Individuals have the right to have firearms in their houses and carry them for protection, and the government may not violate that right.

Modern contortions of language can't change that meaning because we can still refer to Noah Webster.

Stephen P. Halbrook, an attorney and research fellow at The Independent Institute, Oakland, CA (www.independent.org), is the author of "The Founders' Second Amendment: Origins of the Right to Bear Arms."
<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2008/jun/09/na-defining-the-second-amendment/>

08/06/09 Seattle mayor bans guns on city property

SEATTLE — Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels has signed an executive order that asks all departments to come up with a plan within 30 days to ban guns at all property owned by the city.

The mayor's office says a public hearing will be held to gather comment on Monday's order but it does not require city council approval.

Nickels says the added gun restriction is needed because of a shooting at last month's Folklife Festival at the Seattle Center that wounded two people.

Police Chief Gil Kerlikowske (ker-lih-KOW'-skee) says the mayor's order will help protect people at civic events.

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2004467136_apwaseattleguns1stldwritethru.html

08/06/09 D.C. COPS SET UP CONTROVERSIAL

CHECKPOINT: *Effort designed to curb gun violence; methods questioned by civil liberties groups.*

*Civil liberties groups are keeping a close eye on police in Washington D.C. who are patrolling a vehicle checkpoint set up Saturday in a neighborhood plagued with gun violence.

The checkpoints were announced after eight people were killed in the city last weekend, most in Trinidad - a neighborhood near the National Arboretum in the city's northeast section. Already this year, the district has had 22 killings — one more than in all of last year.

Folks driving through Trinidad are being stopped by police in neon yellow vests and asked for identification. Those who don't have a "legitimate purpose" in the area, such as a church visit or doctor's appointment, were told to make a u-turn and head back.

"Trinidad should not be treated like Baghdad," said Mark Thompson, the leader of the NAACP's local police task force. Thompson was joined Saturday morning by about a dozen activists representing myriad groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union, at the intersection where the checkpoints began in the evening. They warned of legal action if residents' constitutional rights were violated.

"It seems interesting that police are willing to easily cast aside fundamental freedoms for quick-fix, lazy law enforcement tactics," said Johnny Barnes, executive director of the ACLU for the National Capital Area.

"We're going to do everything to make sure that the rights of citizens are protected."

Interim D.C. Attorney General Peter Nickles and Mayor Adrian M. Fenty have insisted that the checkpoints are a legal and necessary step to stop a spike in violence.

"It would be unconscionable, maybe even a dereliction of our duty, for the police chief and I to not do something different, to not turn up the heat," Fenty said.

The checkpoints will be enforced at random hours for at least five days, though it could be extended to 10 days, police said. Officers will search cars only if they observe guns or drugs. Pedestrians will not be affected.

<http://www.eurweb.com/story/eur44186.cfm>

08/06/09 The violent wake of gun control

A 25-year-old Tokyo man, describing himself as "tired of living," yesterday killed seven and injured 12 more people. He did it without a gun.

He would have killed and injured more, but he was stopped by the mere threat of a policeman's gun.

My point?

Japan has among the very strictest gun control laws in the world. And that is precisely why one disturbed young man with a truck and a knife could wreak such carnage in a bustling neighborhood.

Tomohiro Kato drive his truck into a crowd of pedestrians shortly after noon, then jumped out of his vehicle and began stabbing any strangers he could reach.

One policeman, armed only with a baton, managed to duel with the assailant for a time – perhaps slowing down the violent rampage. But it took another officer with a firearm aimed at Kato's head to stop him.

People who believe gun control will result in less violence should be forced to live in societies where only criminals have guns – or where, like in Japan, police have broad search-and-seizure latitude to hunt down any illicit weapons.

They should be forced to keep signs on their homes that say: "No firearms kept in this house."

They should be forced to watch hours of newsreel footage of the genocides of the 20th century, all of which were preceded by massive campaigns of government firearms confiscation.

While no one could have prevented Kato from plowing his truck into a crowd of pedestrians anywhere in the world, there is simply no excuse for the kind of slaughter that followed. A community that protected its citizens' safety and respected the natural inalienable right to self-defense by firearms would have limited the carnage.

Imagine Kato trying to kill as many people as he possibly could in Tel Aviv.

Imagine Kato pulling the same bloody stunt in Texas.

Imagine Kato attempting to crash his truck into a gun shop, a police station or a military armory.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to live in a place where the government has a monopoly on firearms.

It's not safer. It's more dangerous – and less free.

There are really only two alternatives to a free society that respects the right of armed self-defense: One is chaos and anarchy and the other is a repressive police state like the people of Japan live under.

Which of those options would we prefer here in the United States – one of the few nations in the world that recognizes the God-given right of every person to defend himself or herself?

It is very unlikely a policeman is going to be around to protect you or your family member when you are attacked.

But in a civil society in which ordinary citizens are free to bear arms, there is an excellent chance either you or some other law-abiding person will be in a position to help.

The gun-control crowd often acts like it is the compassionate and caring side in the debate about crime.

It is not. The gun-control activists would leave the most vulnerable members of society even more helpless. Their

program would result in more death, more mayhem, and more violence.

It's not a matter of speculation. It's a matter of observation. It's a simple matter of analyzing the failed social experiments of the past – honestly and objectively.

We can learn from Japan, all right.

The lesson to be learned is not to repeat the mistakes that country has made on guns – trading freedom for safety and getting neither.

<http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=66593>

08/06/09 FBI: Suspects Had Cache Of Weapons

PITTSBURGH (KDKA) — Federal authorities have four people in custody accused of plotting terrorist attacks. Marvin Hall of Rimersburg, Perry Landis of the Clarion area, Morgan Jones of Lucinda, as well as Melissa Huet are in custody.

Investigators say they were stockpiling a cache of weapons with plans to target local government buildings. The FBI, in raids over the weekend, confiscated hundreds of weapons - including everything from hunting rifles, homemade bombs, rudimentary rockets and cannons. Sources tell KDKA's Marty Griffin the suspects made threats to blow up government buildings and carry out other extreme acts of domestic terrorism.

The four suspects are facing numerous federal firearms charges, including illegal sales, manufacture and transport. Included in the federal indictment is a listing of some of the confiscated weapons, including "exploding blasting caps," a Romanian AK 4 assault rifle and "destructive devises including two exploding golf balls."

Aside from the indictments, federal authorities will release no further information at this time.

Sources tell Griffin the investigation took three years and included taped conversations and FBI undercover agents inside the operation.

Sources also say federal agents conducted extensive raids on what are being called compounds over the last two days in the Clarion area.

<http://kdk.com/local/domestic.terrorism.suspects.2.74432.2.html>

08/06/08 Gun laws punish only the lawful

I'm pleased to see sensible, objective [articles published in the Globe](#) regarding firearms in the Commonwealth and the arbitrary and misguided laws relative to them.

Typical New York Times/Boston Globe articles are decidedly one sided, reporting only one aspect of the issue and disregarding logic and research that argue the opposite point of view. As an educated (retired social worker, two graduate degrees), law-abiding gun owner, I am no threat

to anyone's safety, yet the state continues to create firearm legislation that impacts only the lawful. Criminals don't care how many laws are passed, because they know only the law-abiding comply.

As Thomas Jefferson wrote: "Laws that forbid the carrying of arms disarm only those who are neither inclined nor determined to commit crimes. Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man."

I encourage you to look into the attorney general's "consumer protection" regulations concerning which firearms can be sold in Massachusetts. I can purchase a \$700 Smith & Wesson, but not a \$2,700 Wilson (a far superior, but similar, competition pistol) due to these regulations. Wilson, and hundreds of others, will not do business with dealers in this state due to the vaguely written regulations, fear of legal problems with the attorney general, and the costs of compliance.
http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/06/08/gun_laws_punish_only_the_lawful/?page=full

08/06/08 Effort aims to gun down 'straw' firearm purchases

Many firearms showing up in the Blair County drug world were stolen before they ended up in drug dealers' hands, according to an Altoona drug detective.

Guns that are not stolen most likely have been purchased through what is known as a "straw purchase" — a deal in which a person with a clean criminal record buys the firearm for someone whose criminal record would prohibit the purchase, Sgt. Troy Johannides said.

Short of clairvoyance, it's difficult to detect a straw purchase from a legitimate one, a Blair County gun dealer said.

A nationwide effort called "Don't Lie for the Other Guy" hopes to put a dent in the illegal practice.

"The ATF [Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives] has partnered with the National Shooting Sports Federation to educate federal firearms licensees across the country on what to look for in a straw purchase. The number one thing we tell them is that if they find anything suspicious, they have the right not to make the sale," said Special Agent John Hageman of the ATF.

"Don't Lie for the Other Guy" has a simple message: Buy a gun for someone who can't, and you will buy yourself 10 years in jail. The educational effort reaches consumers and the federal firearms licensees, or FFLs.

The decision to not complete a sale to someone suspected of a straw purchase can be triggered by gut instinct or "something just doesn't feel right about this," said Mark McNeely of Allegheny Trade Co. in Duncansville.

A person, for example, may look over a number of handguns quickly and say "I want that one," without asking for assistance.

"I hand it to them and see if they know how to work it," McNeely said, to help determine if it could be a straw purchase.

Other buyers may have a second person with them who picks out the firearm. The person who picks out the weapon will fill out the paperwork because it appears obvious they are going to own the firearm, not the intended buyer, McNeely said.

"There's a moral issue and a legal aspect to this," he said. "For a few hundred bucks [for a sale], it's not worth it."

McNeely and other Pennsylvania FFLs submit applications for sales through the Pennsylvania Instant Check System, which searches state and federal databases, including crime, mental health and wanted persons' records.

A person is disqualified from buying a firearm if they have been convicted of a crime punishable by a prison sentence of more than one year.

Allegheny Trade rejects about one application a month, McNeely said.

From 1998-2006, more than 900 wanted persons were arrested for trying to obtain a firearm illegally through the state system, according to state police firearms reports.

Dealers and sheriffs made about 540,000 background checks in 2006, with 495,877 approved on the first call. Of the 9,535 people who were denied a firearm, more than 4,000 appealed the decision, with 1,599 reversals.

Johannides said he has investigated three gun-related drug cases in which it appeared that the guns were obtained through straw purchases.

"They were never reported stolen, but the last registered owners avoided me at all costs," he said. "Typically, they try to report it stolen so they insulate themselves from criminal responsibility."

It is hard to determine how many straw purchases take place, Hageman said. A straw-purchased weapon used in a crime may be disposed of, never to be found by authorities.

"We know it's a problem, but we just don't know how many [there are]. There are convicted felons and drug dealers who want weapons, but they can't go the legal route [to get them]," he said.

A firearm's licensee can be charged criminally if found complicit in the sale, Hageman said.

The last major "straw purchase" case in Blair County ended with the 2006 federal convictions of Lawrence Hartman, the former owner of Discount Guns of Altoona, and his son Ashley.

Convicted felons were able to obtain firearms from the

business through third parties. The firearms ended up in Pennsylvania and six other states, the ATF said.

Mirror Staff Writer Mark Leberfinger is at 946-7462.

<http://www.altoonamirror.com/page/content.detail/id/508190.html?nav=742>

08/06/07 Packing in public: Gun owners tired of hiding their weapons embrace 'open carry'

PROVO, UTAH -- For years, Kevin Jensen carried a pistol everywhere he went, tucked in a shoulder holster beneath his clothes.

In hot weather the holster was almost unbearable. Pressed against Jensen's skin, the firearm was heavy and uncomfortable. Hiding the weapon made him feel like a criminal.

Then one evening he stumbled across a site that urged gun owners to do something revolutionary: Carry your gun openly for the world to see as you go about your business. In most states there's no law against that.

Jensen thought about it and decided to give it a try. A couple of days later, his gun was visible, hanging from a black holster strapped around his hip as he walked into a Costco. His heart raced as he ordered a Polish dog at the counter. No one called the police. No one stopped him. Now Jensen carries his Glock 23 openly into his bank, restaurants and shopping centers. He wore the gun to a Ron Paul rally. He and his wife, Clachelle, drop off their 5-year-old daughter at elementary school with pistols hanging from their hip holsters, and have never received a complaint or a wary look.

Jensen said he tries not to flaunt his gun. "We don't want to show up and say, 'Hey, we're here, we're armed, get used to it,'" he said.

But he and others who publicly display their guns have a common purpose.

The Jensens are part of a fledgling movement to make a firearm as common an accessory as an iPod. Called "open carry" by its supporters, the movement has attracted grandparents, graduate students and lifelong gun enthusiasts like the Jensens.

"What we're trying to say is, 'Hey, we're normal people who carry guns,'" said Travis Deveraux, 36, of West Valley, a Salt Lake City suburb. Deveraux works for a credit card company and sometimes walks around town wearing a cowboy hat and packing a pistol in plain sight. "We want the public to understand it's not just cops who can carry guns."

Police acknowledge the practice is legal, but some say it makes their lives tougher.

Police Chief John Greiner recalled that last year in Ogden, Utah, a man was openly carrying a shotgun on the street. When officers pulled up to ask him about the gun, he started firing. Police killed the man.

Greiner tells the story as a lesson for gun owners. "We've changed over the last 200 years from the days of the wild, wild West," Greiner said. "Most people don't openly carry. . . . If [people] truly want to open carry, they ought to expect they'll be challenged more until people become comfortable with it."

Jensen and others argue that police shouldn't judge the gun, but rather the actions of the person carrying it. Jensen, 28, isn't opposed to attention, however. It's part of the reason he brought his gun out in the open.

"At first, [open carry] was a little novelty," he said. "Then I realized the chances of me educating someone are bigger than ever using it [the gun] in self-defense. If it's in my pants or under my shirt I'm probably not going to do anything with it."

As Clachelle pushed the shopping cart holding their two young children during a recent trip to Costco, her husband admired the new holster wrapped around her waist. "I like the look of that low-rise gun belt," he said.

The Jensens' pistols were snapped into holsters attached to black belts that hug their waists. Guns are a fact of life in their household. Their 5-year-old daughter, Sierra, has a child-sized .22 rifle she handles only in her parents' presence.

Clachelle is the daughter of a Central California police chief and began shooting when she was about Sierra's age. She would take her parents' gun when she went out and hide it in her purse because the firearm made her feel safer. "I love 'em," Clachelle said. "I wouldn't ever be without them."

Kevin Jensen's first encounter with guns came when he was 11: His grandfather died and left him a 16-gauge shotgun. The gun stayed locked away but fascinated Jensen through his teen years. He convinced his older brother to take him shooting in the countryside near their home in a small town south of Salt Lake City.

"I immediately fell in love with it," said Jensen, a lean man with close-cropped hair and a precise gait that is a reminder of his five years in the Army Reserve. "I like things that go boom."

Jensen kept as many as 10 guns in the couple's 1930s-style bungalow in Santaquin, 21 miles southwest of Provo. In January 2005, he decided to get a permit to carry a concealed weapon, mainly for self-defense.

"I'm not going to hide in the corner of a school and mall and wait for the shooting to stop," he said.

When Jensen bought a Glock and the dealer threw in an external hip holster, he began researching the idea of carrying the gun in public and came upon OpenCarry.org.

Its website, run by two Virginia gun enthusiasts, claims 4,000 members nationwide. It summarizes the varying laws in each state that permit or forbid the practice. People everywhere have the right to prohibit weapons from their

property, and firearms are often banned in government buildings such as courthouses.

According to an analysis by Legal Community Against Violence, a gun control group in San Francisco that tracks gun laws, at least eight states largely ban the practice, including Iowa and New Jersey. Those that allow it have different restrictions: In California, people can openly carry only unloaded guns.

Utah has no law prohibiting anyone from carrying a gun in public, as long as it is two steps from firing -- for example, the weapon may have a loaded clip but must be uncocked, with no bullets in the chamber. Those who obtain a concealed-weapons permit in Utah don't have that restriction. Also, youths under 18 can carry a gun openly with parental approval and a supervising adult in close proximity.

Most of the time people don't notice Jensen's gun. That's not uncommon, said John Pierce, a law student and computer consultant in Virginia who is a co-founder of OpenCarry.org.

"People are carrying pagers, BlackBerrys, cellphones," Pierce said. "They see a black lump on your belt and their eyes slide off."

Sometimes the reactions are comical. Bill White, a 24-year-old graduate student in ancient languages at the University of Colorado at Boulder, wears his Colt pistol out in the open when he goes to his local Starbucks.

Earlier this month a tourist from California spotted him and snapped a photo on his cellphone. "He said it would prove he was in the Wild West," White recalled.

But there are times when the response is more severe. Deveraux has been stopped several times by police, most memorably in December when he was walking around his neighborhood.

An officer pulled up and pointed his gun at Deveraux, warning he would shoot to kill. In the end, eight officers arrived, cuffed Deveraux and took his gun before Deveraux convinced them they had no legal reason to detain him.

Deveraux saw the incident as not giving ground on his rights. "I'm proud that happened," he said.

Cases like this are talked about during regular gatherings of those who favor open carry. At a Sweet Tomatoes restaurant in the Salt Lake City suburb of Sandy, more than 40 civilians with guns strapped to their hips took over a corner of the restaurant, eating pasta and boisterously sharing stories.

Hassles with law enforcement were a badge of honor for some. Travis White, 19, who has ear and chin piercings, congratulated Brandon Trask, 21, on carrying openly for the first time that night. "Just wait until you get confronted by a cop," White said. "It'll make you feel brave."

Having pistols strapped around their waists made Shel

Anderson, 67, and his wife, Kaye, 63, feel more secure. Longtime recreational shooters, they began to carry their pistols openly after a spate of home-invasion robberies in their neighborhood. The firearms can serve as a warning to predators, they said.

"I decided I want to have as much of an advantage as I can have in this day and age," said Kaye Anderson, a retired schoolteacher.

Nearby, Scott Thompson picked over the remains of a salad, his Springfield Armory XD-35 sitting snugly in his hip holster.

The gangly graphics designer grew up in a home without guns and didn't think of owning one until he started dating a woman -- now his wife -- who lived in a rough neighborhood. One night last year, a youth had his head beaten in with a pipe outside her bedroom window. The next day, Thompson got a concealed-weapons permit. Thompson found out about open carry last month while reading gun sites. He's become a convert. He likes the statement it makes. Glancing around the restaurant, as armed families like the Jensens dined with men in cowboy hats and professionals like himself, Thompson smiled. "I love this," he said. "I want people to be aware that crazy people are not the only ones with guns. Normal people carry them."

The Jensens' daughter, Sierra, and newborn son, Tyler, began to get restless, so the couple bundled up the children and pulled the manager of the restaurant aside to thank her for hosting them. A patron appeared at Jensen's side and began to berate him. "What you guys are doing here is completely unacceptable," he said. "There are children here." Jensen said that everyone in the restaurant had a legal right to carry. The man didn't back down and the Jensens left.

Days later, Jensen was still thinking about the reaction and the man's belief that guns are unsafe. "People can feel that way and it doesn't bother me," he said. "If they have irrational fears, that's fine."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-opencarry7-2008jun07,0,849912.story>

08/06/07 BAN ON GUNS CREATES RISE IN KNIFE CRIMES

. . . The Toronto Globe & Mail reports that tight bans on firearms has apparently resulted in a rise in crimes performed by knife-wielding thugs. "Criminals who choose to arm themselves have to find some way to do it," said Staff Inspector Brian Raybould, head of the Toronto police homicide squad. To what are criminals turning? "Knives, sharp-edged weapons," he says.

http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/Page/document/v5/content/subscribe?user_URL=http://www.theglobeandmail.com%2F servlet%2Fstory%2FLAC.20080607.STAB07%2FTPStory%2FTEntertainment%2FOntario&ord=124858018&brand=theglobeandmail&force_login=true

08/06/07 Crime-fighting is his game

Outnumbered by a gang of men armed with bottles, bats, pipes and a foot-long army knife, anti-crime activist Greg Bucceroni was not intimidated. He cautiously pulled out his cell phone and dialed 9-1-1.

The former part-time police officer has been assaulted frequently, saying he has been shot at and attacked with machetes.

Fortunately for Bucceroni, this time, the cops came around the corner as his assailants closed in on him, and he escaped serious injury.

Bucceroni was hospitalized Thursday night after being struck by a brick at about 6:35 p.m. The incident occurred at Mascher and Indiana streets in Kensington.

On his way to talk to a teenager about the kid's anger-management issues, Bucceroni said he passed what he called a known drug corner. Bucceroni was hoping to help the 13-year-old stay out of trouble, but instead ran into what he called a group of "urban terrorists" whose M.O. is violence and intimidation.

"Something must have happened before I got there and the drug dealers were pissed at the cops," said Bucceroni, 44, of Kensington. "I came walking past and they took their aggravation out on me because I support police."

Bucceroni said he called the police as more than a dozen men, many of them armed, approached him and started screaming in English and Spanish.

Police confirmed that one of the men threw a brick at Bucceroni's forehead. Bucceroni suffered a gash in his head and a welt the size of a tennis ball.

A few minutes later, a police car turned the corner a block away. The offenders dispersed in all directions, Bucceroni said.

Bucceroni was taken by Fire Rescue to Temple University Hospital, where he was treated in stable condition for head trauma. He received 10 stitches. After about two hours, Bucceroni went to the East Detective Division to give a statement.

Police said the attacker was described as a Hispanic male in his mid 20s, 5-foot-7, 140 pounds, with reddish-brown hair and beard, dirty jeans and a grayish-green T-shirt. But facing danger is nothing new for Bucceroni.

"I've been stabbed and shot at," he said. "It could have been a lot worse."

Later Thursday night, Bucceroni returned to the crime scene with the East Detective Division. He said it was like a ghost town.

"There was nobody on the corner," Bucceroni said. "They cleaned house."

In 1994, Bucceroni left his officer post to focus on helping kids.

Bucceroni said the attack gives him motivation to go out there again.

"We're not going to quit," he said. "We're going to stay on top of this."

Police said they are patrolling the neighborhood more closely, which they said is known for drug users and dealers. No arrests have been made.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/19626209.html>

08/06/07 Packing in public: Gun owners tired of hiding their weapons embrace 'open carry'

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Then one evening he stumbled across a site that urged gun owners to do something revolutionary: Carry your gun openly for the world to see as you go about your business.

In most states there's no law against that.

Jensen thought about it and decided to give it a try. A couple of days later, his gun was visible, hanging from a black holster strapped around his hip as he walked into a Costco. His heart raced as he ordered a Polish dog at the counter. No one called the police. No one stopped him. Now Jensen carries his Glock 23 openly into his bank, restaurants and shopping centers. He wore the gun to a Ron Paul rally. He and his wife, Clachelle, drop off their 5-year-old daughter at elementary school with pistols hanging from their hip holsters, and have never received a complaint or a wary look.

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But he and others who publicly display their guns have a common purpose.

The Jensens are part of a fledgling movement to make a firearm as common an accessory as an iPod. Called "open carry" by its supporters, the movement has attracted grandparents, graduate students and lifelong gun enthusiasts like the Jensens.

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<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-opencarry7-2008jun07.0,849912.story>

08/06/07 Township targets skeet shooters with gun-ban proposal

The West Manheim Township supervisors are considering an ordinance that would make it illegal to shoot guns in residential areas of the township - something police say they have little control over under the existing rules.

And if such an ordinance is adopted, the supervisors said it also could be expanded to include other things that can be considered nuisances - such as noise from all-terrain vehicles during evening hours.

Brenda and Carl Grubb, of Impounding Dam Road, appeared Thursday night before the township Board of Supervisors to voice concerns about a neighbor they say shoots targets with a high-powered rifle day and night. Brenda Grubb said she often has been awakened in the middle of the night by the shooting, with the most recent time being late in May at 12:04 a.m.

Then on Memorial Day, said Grubb, her husband and another family member were plowing farm fields on their tractors when the same neighbor began to shoot skeet - which is a type of projectile target often called clay pigeons. Pieces of the exploded targets rained down on the tractors and the men.

No one was injured, but the incident frayed a lot of nerves, Grubb said.

"I don't know what to do," Grubb said. "I can't take my children out riding on our horse because I'm afraid they're going to get shot. I'm even afraid to let the horse out in the pasture as it might get shot."

Grubb said the police were called, but she was told that while Pennsylvania laws say that hunting is not allowed within 150 yards of a building, target shooting is a permissible activity.

"We are investigating the complaint but in the absence of someone getting hurt or shot there is little we can do," said West Manheim Police Chief Tim Hippensteel. "Based on our preliminary findings nothing in the state or township ordinance books addresses it." Hippensteel said he has talked to the Grubbs' neighbor, who has agreed to limit his target shooting times and to stay away from the neighbor's property as much as possible.

"I have met with the individual and he says he wants to stay within the law," said Hippensteel.

However, the supervisors said the issue still needs to be addressed broadly since the township, which at one time primarily was farmland, is quickly becoming mostly a residential area.

"Even if he stops, we need protection for everyone else," said Supervisor Nils Parr. "We need to do something." Solicitor Linus Fenicle told the board the township can adopt an ordinance that would make it illegal to shoot any guns, target or otherwise, in a residential area. Many such ordinances exist in other municipalities, said Fenicle, where such activity is treated as a summary criminal offense.

Supervisor Darrell Raubenstine said that if the township is going to work on such an ordinance, he would like to protect residential neighborhoods from too much noise as well.

"I would like to put in a noise ordinance as part of it because I know there are four-wheelers in that area going out at 12 midnight and 2 a.m.," said Raubenstine. "There is so much noise from them that people can't sleep." The supervisors directed Fenicle to draw up a sample ordinance based on similar ones used in other municipalities.

The ordinance will be discussed at length at the supervisors' next work session and public meeting on Tuesday, June 17, at 6 p.m. at the township building at 2412 Baltimore Pike.

http://www.eveningsun.com/ci_9508814?source=most_vie_wed

08/06/06 Gun, ammo bills go to Senate

Assembly passes measures to put new restrictions on firearms

In the future, you may have to leave a copy of your driver's license if you want to buy .22-caliber rounds from your local big-box store.

The California Assembly further reinforced the state's reputation as having the most stringent gun laws in the nation by passing two bills late last month that would put more restrictions on buying and selling handguns and handgun ammunition. Both bills must now win state Senate approval.

One bill, AB 2235, would require any new handgun sold in the state to have a device installed that prohibits anyone other than the owner from pulling the trigger.

The caveat is that the technology for such devices isn't yet available for sale and the bill wouldn't take effect until after it is, according to the legislation.

The other bill, AB 2062, would require that ammunition sellers copy an ammo-buyer's photo ID before selling them handgun rounds.

The bill also would require that handgun ammunition be stored behind the counter and that retailers have special licenses to sell more than 50 rounds.

Rifle and shotgun rounds are exempt.

However, bullets that work in both rifles and pistols, like the popular .22-caliber round -- small, cheap bullets popular with varmint shooters and target marksmen -- would fall under the regulation, said Dan Reeves, a spokesman for Assemblyman Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles, who wrote the bullet bill.

Reeves acknowledged that such provisions won't be popular in rural Shasta County, which has among the highest gun ownership rates in the state.

"It's a major burden to the people of Redding, but if you have hundreds of people being murdered (by handgun ammunition) every year, it seems like a small sacrifice," Reeves said.

Redding City Councilman Patrick Henry Jones, owner of Jones' Fort gun store in Redding, said the legislation wouldn't do anything to stop gun crimes.

Rather, it merely makes it more difficult to buy and sell firearms and ammunition, he said.

"Through incrementalism, they're taking (gun rights) away a little slice at a time and making it harder for dealers to survive," Jones said.

National anti-gun advocates like Brady Campaign President Paul Helmke say the user-identification systems on pistols in AB 2235 will prevent gun crimes if the technology becomes available.

"'Owner-authorized' handguns will help reduce injuries, homicides, suicides, school shootings and accidental shootings in California," he said in a statement.

That bill would take effect 18 months after California's attorney general releases a report saying the devices are available for sale, according to the legislation.

Assemblyman Doug LaMalfa, R-Richvale, who voted against both bills, said AB 2235 is particularly offensive because the technology isn't even available on the market. He called it "Jetsons" legislation, referring to the futuristic cartoon of the 1960s.

"It's like trying to pass a law for tailpipe emissions for something, a technology which we don't even have yet," he said.

He said he opposed the bullet restrictions because criminals will be able to get bullets regardless of ineffective bureaucratic requirements.

Reeves disagreed, saying the bill also includes provisions that forbid documented gang members from possessing ammo and makes it illegal for someone to buy ammunition and give it to a felon.

He said the proposed ammunition requirements would price criminals and shady gun dealers "out of the market." "Right now, criminals, children and gang members are going to Big 5s, Kmart and gun stores to get ammunition," Reeves said.

State Sen. Sam Aanestad, R-Grass Valley, will vote against the bills in their current form, his spokesman, Bill Bird, said.

<http://www.redding.com/news/2008/jun/06/gun-ammo-bills-go-to-senate/>

08/06/06 'Project Exile' gets tough on gun crime

Federal-local effort deals long sentences served far away
To Mozetta Smith, the mug shot on the orange flier that police handed out looked familiar.

Still, after scouring her memory, Smith could not quite remember where she had seen convicted felon Collin Hawkins - but for sure, she was pleased he was off the street.

Hawkins, 26, is a drug dealer and carjacker who was

acquitted last month in the attempted murder of an off-duty city police officer. But Hawkins was also sentenced recently to 30 years in federal prison for a handgun violation - a conviction local and federal authorities held up as a success story in a two-year-old partnership. Wearing T-shirts bearing the words "Project Exile," city police officers joined representatives from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives at The Alameda shopping center to trumpet the sentencing of a criminal who, they said, had dealt drugs on the neighborhood's streets.

"I don't know him," said Smith, who had just finished buying groceries at a store when police approached her. "But I recognize him. And I'm glad he's captured."

The local-federal partnership uses strict federal gun laws to lock up criminals who might have skated through the state criminal justice system. Law enforcement officials have praised the program, highlighting several cases over the past two years in which criminals have received long sentences for gun violations.

Yesterday, a U.S. district judge sentenced Jake Antonio Keels, 41, to nearly 12 years in prison for illegally possessing a firearm and ammunition after a previous felony conviction, federal prosecutors said.

According to the guilty plea, city police detectives executed a search warrant at Keels' residence in February 2007 and recovered a semiautomatic pistol loaded with six rounds of ammunition in the living room he used as a makeshift bedroom.

From January through June this year, federal prosecutors have won similar convictions of 20 Baltimore defendants, with sentences ranging from seven years to 30 years, according to city police spokesman Donny Moses.

Lt. Col Rick Hite, of the city department's Community Mediation Program, said one of the program's goals is to deter crime through stiff federal penalties that offer no chance of parole. Hite said many of the convicts are sent to faraway places, including Indiana, making visitation difficult.

"We're hoping that we'll send a message to those who have been convicted, to send a message to their friends inside the institutions, who will send a message to those in the street that we're serious about this," Hite said.

While many of the shoppers police spoke with yesterday praised the program, Anitra Jones of West Baltimore had her reservations. Jones was one of the first to receive a flier, which she glanced at before firing questions at police.

Jones said she has a son who has been in jail for 11 years. She wonders about rehabilitation for defendants serving such lengthy sentences far from home.

"They're talking about just throwing them behind bars without giving them a second chance in life," she said.

"They need a better solution besides shipping them from their hometown and away from their families."

Cedric Hammond of East Baltimore said a 30-year sentence is harsh for a gun violation, but added, "You got to know the risk you take. It doesn't matter if it's fair or not."

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/baltimore_city/bal-md.ci.exile06jun06,0,3991124.story

08/06/05 Actor Farina Faces Misdemeanor Gun Charges

LOS ANGELES -- Los Angeles County prosecutors won't file felony charges against actor Dennis Farina for having a gun in his luggage at an airport.

The district attorney's office said Friday it reviewed the case and declined to file charges on May 23.

Spokeswoman Jane Robison said that there wasn't enough evidence to charge Farina with a felony

Instead, the case was referred to the Los Angeles city attorney's office, which will decide whether to file misdemeanor charges that carry a lighter sentence.

Farina was arrested for investigation of carrying a concealed weapon two weeks ago when a gun was found in his carry-on luggage at Los Angeles International Airport.

LOS ANGELES -- "Law & Order" actor Dennis Farina has been charged with illegally having a gun in his luggage at Los Angeles International Airport.

The city attorney's office on Wednesday charged the actor with three misdemeanor counts involving the alleged possession of a concealed and loaded weapon. The charges carry a combined maximum sentence of 2 and a-half years in jail and \$3,000 in fines.

Farina was arrested three weeks ago when a .22-caliber handgun was allegedly found in his carry-on luggage at the airport. The actor publicly apologized and told police he forgot the weapon was there.

with felonies and referred the case to city prosecutors

<http://www.ksat.com/entertainment/16506404/detail.html>

08/06/05 Police officer wounded while loading service pistol

An East Taylor, Cambria County, police officer shot herself in the leg yesterday.

Cathy Jo Foust, 42, of Johnstown, was loading her service pistol in the East Taylor police station a little before 5 p.m. when it accidentally discharged, wounding her in the left leg.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08157/887546-56.stm>

08/06/05 Wis. Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen Issues First Permit to Carry Concealed Weapon

MADISON, Wis. (AP) -- He's retired, but he can still pack heat.

Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen has issued the first permit to carry a concealed weapon to a retired Justice Department investigator.

It's illegal for citizens carry a concealed weapon in Wisconsin. But Van Hollen says the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act of 2004 sets out guidelines under which qualified retired law enforcement officers can carry concealed weapons.

The former investigator, Tom Steingraeber, retired from the Justice Department in 1993. He served as director of the White Collar Crimes Bureau.

Van Hollen says a number of local law enforcement agencies have similar programs that allow retired officers to carry concealed weapons.

<http://www.wsaw.com/home/headlines/19559094.html>

08/06/04 Unarmed victims beaten, burned to death Firearms Control Act forbids gun ownership, results in cold-blooded murder

An outbreak of xenophobic violence has resulted in the murders of 56 people and forced thousands more to take shelter in camps, community halls and churches across South Africa – the victims are foreigners who are strictly forbidden from owning guns.

Foreigners in Gauteng Province are suffering from gunshot and stab wounds, while many others have been raped, fatally beaten and burned alive.

Thomas Eastes, national chairman of Gun Owners of South Africa, said foreigners are unable to defend themselves from such atrocities because they are not allowed to be armed in South Africa. He believes the rise in crime and chaos is chiefly a result of the Firearms Control Act passed by the South African Parliament.

"Arming foreigners and as many citizens in South Africa will surely provide an equal opportunity of survival for all," Eastes said. "The weak, the marginalised, the oppressed and frail have a chance of survival if they are armed. I believe that firearm ownership places great responsibility on people but also enables foreigners and legal citizens not to live in fear."

Approximately 22,000 people are murdered annually in the country for being of another race, Eastes said. Some are killed because they own cars or \$5 cell phones.

"Five-year-old babies are raped and sodomised as a perceived traditional remedy for curing AIDS," he said.

"Women are objects of abuse, and our children are badly neglected every day. People are tortured and murdered to set examples and create fear. This is what communism thrives on."

Foreigners from Zimbabwe escape to South Africa to avoid state bloodshed, terror, persecution, kidnapping and starvation. More than 15,000 refugees have been displaced by state violence since the end of March. Zimbabwean Collen Makumbirofa of the Foundation of Reason and Justice said the situation is shocking as the foreigners flee President Robert Mugabe's atrocities.

"Millions of Zimbabweans are being starved into submission by Mugabe's government," he said. "Mugabe has lost support of the majority of Zimbabweans, therefore is clinging onto power by terrorism. Tens of thousands of Zimbabweans have been tortured by Mugabe's secret police, militias, soldiers and war veterans."

The South African government is refusing to offer Zimbabwe refugees adequate protection. It stopped processing asylum permits in Johannesburg and shut down Home Affairs Offices. Corrupt officials seize goods belonging to foreigners, demand sex from immigrant women and refuse to apprehend criminals who murder unarmed victims.

"Xenophobic South Africans see the police arresting and abusing foreigners on a daily basis therefore by doing violence they are also helping the African Nation Congress' efforts to eliminate foreigners," he said. "The police don't do anything or they release the criminal on a bribe. Police are also biased against foreigners who report crimes against South Africans; therefore, there is no justice and respect of human rights."

Makumbirofa places blame on South African President Thabo Mbeki for being a strong supporter of Mugabe's dictatorship.

"Many South Africans hate foreigners, especially Zimbabweans," he said. "President Mbeki supports President Mugabe in Zimbabwe, who is murdering, starving and torturing people who did not vote for him in the March 29 presidential election. South Africans' hatred of foreigners, envy and covetousness is causing them to loot, burn, beat and rape foreigners."

Mbeki disarms law-abiding refugees and citizens while widespread crime is rampant in South Africa, Makumbirofa said. Thieves and outlaws are free to do whatever they wish with their victims.

"Guns will help innocent people to protect themselves from criminals, robbers, murderers, rapist and car hijackers," he said. "Criminals will become afraid of armed citizens because tyrants do not want armed citizens. Genocide is preceded by tight gun-control laws."

Eastes asserts responsible firearm ownership is the answer and would help shield a defenseless populace from rape, torture and slaughter.

"Without the means to protect yourself and your family, you are not a citizen but a mere subject," he said. "This is well explained by the brilliant Founding Fathers who

wrote the USA's Constitution and firmly entrenched rights to firearm ownership in their Second Amendment."

<http://worldnetdaily.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=66081>

08/06/04 Michigan wildlife officials may allow hunting of albino deer

INDIAN RIVER, Mich. - Michigan wildlife officials may drop a rule that forbids killing albino deer, partly because of a legal squabble with a Michigan man who shot a mostly white deer four years ago.

Reversing the moratorium on taking albinos is among several changes in hunting regulations the state Natural Resources Commission is scheduled to consider during a meeting Thursday in Lansing.

A law protecting all-white deer was enacted during the 1980s at the request of an Upper Peninsula legislator and later became part of the state's wildlife conservation code.

In 2004, Indian River resident John Ingersoll shot a buck in Emmet County that was predominantly white but had patches of brown fur. That made it a piebald deer, not an albino.

It always has been legal to take piebald deer in Michigan, the Cheboygan Daily Tribune reported.

But some critics wrote letters to local newspapers accusing Ingersoll of shooting an albino. He filed a defamation lawsuit against seven area residents, which was thrown out of court.

In lawsuit depositions, two DNR officers testified the deer was an albino at some point but stained parts of its fur by rubbing against trees and urinating on its legs. That qualified the deer as a piebald and made it fair game for a hunter, DNR Sgt. Greg Drogowski said.

In a March letter, DNR Director Rebecca Humphries told Ingersoll the agency's investigation "determined that it was a legally killed deer" and noted he had not been charged with a crime or ticketed.

Humphries said she would ask the commission to reverse the moratorium on killing albinos, saying it was "burdensome" for hunters to determine whether a particular deer meets the criteria.

"Moreover, there is no compelling scientific reason to protect these deer as albinism represents a mutation that is not desirable in a deer herd," Humphries said.

The regulation also may be inadvertently protecting fallow, non-native deer released from game ranches, DNR spokeswoman Mary Detloff said.

Ingersoll told the Traverse City Record-Eagle he is appealing the dismissal of his lawsuit and wants the DNR officers charged with perjury, obstruction of justice and violating his constitutional rights. He said he had spent thousands of dollars trying to clear his name.

He said he believed the department was changing the regulation "to throw me a bone and hope that I'll go away."

Humphries said in her letter the DNR officers handled the case properly.

The commission Thursday also will consider a proposal to disallow hunters with a combination license from taking a buck with fewer than three antler points on one side with the regular tag, and with fewer than four antler points on one side with the restricted tag.

"Our survey results indicate that deer hunters are interested in increasing the number of mature bucks in the deer herd," said Rod Clute, a DNR deer specialist.

The restriction for the regular tag would not apply to hunters in the Lower Peninsula.

Also, the commission will decide which deer management units will be open to hunting of antlerless deer.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/chi-ap-mi-albinodeer,0,7135401.story>

08/06/01 Military rounds often cross over for hunters

The other day we were discussing rifles and cartridges that are useful in the varmint field. When the ranges are long, the .22-caliber rounds that stand out are the .220 Swift, and the 22-250. For medium-range shooting, the old reliable .222, and the exact copy of the military round, the .223, work fine.

While all four are .22s utilizing bullets of .224 diameter, the difference is in the speed each attains. Both the Swift, and the .22-250 have a greater powder capacity than the .222 and .223, resulting in a much higher velocity with more punch and greater ranging ability. There is no magic in cartridges, and when pressure is equal and barrel length the same, the larger casing will always result in higher velocity.

That brings us to a feature article appearing in the May 27th Observer-Reporter, with headlines saying, "Military's bullets come under fire."

Aside from mistakenly calling a cartridge a bullet, the article covers what many of us who shoot a variety of rifles have said for years. The 5.56, or .223 in its Sporter version is hardly more than a varmint cartridge, useful for animals that weigh less than 40 pounds. And one must remember that even with the expanding bullet used in the Sporter version, the .223 is not a big game cartridge.

The military is, in fact, trying to use it on animals that weigh from 140 to 200 pounds. Of course, they are depending heavily on multiple hits.

The 5.56 came out originally around 1960, loaded with a 55-grain bullet, moving just short of 3,300 feet per second (fps). Early rifles had problems with stabilization, so rifling twist was changed to a faster rate.

Since that time, experiments have been done with even quicker rates of twist, to stabilize heavier bullets.

Regardless of what is said, the 5.56 is still a small-cased .22-caliber round, and hardly one that is designed to stop 200-pound animals with a single shot.

There are some instances, which were mentioned in article, of barrels being shortened to 18 inches. Just last month, the NRA magazine, The American Rifleman, did a test with 18-inch barreled .223s and came up with the velocity of .2700 fps, cutting further into stopping power. This highlights a lesson I learned long ago with all rifle cartridge combos. Shorten the barrel and you lower the performance noticeably.

It is only natural that all military rounds catch on with a different name, as a Sporting round. Right after the turn of the 20th Century, the .30 Govt. became the ever popular .30-06. It remained the military round through two world wars, giving way to the 7.62 Nato, which is the .308 Winchester, and is the cartridge chambered in the M-14. Here we find a .30-caliber, 165-grain bullet, moving at almost 2,800 fps. This represents ballistics that place it in the good big game cartridge category. Is it any wonder that it is preferred by knowledgeable soldiers?

Of course, today we find the 5.56 chambered in the M16, and its look alikes. It's a fine varmint round, but hardly big enough for deer-sized animals.

This is not to say there are not advantages to using such a round. For one thing, today's young men are less and less familiar with firearms, therefore, more difficult to train with a rifle that recoils. Also, one can carry more rounds when using the smaller cartridge.

Of course, one also needs more rounds because it takes multiple hits to stop what needs stopped.

<http://www.observer-reporter.com/OR/Story/Block-Column2008-06-01T00-34-00>

08/05/27 Military's bullets come under fire

WASHINGTON - As Sgt. Joe Higgins patrolled the streets of Saba al-Bor, a tough town north of Baghdad, he was armed with bullets that had a lot more firepower than those of his 4th Infantry Division buddies.

As an Army sniper, Higgins was one of the select few toting an M14. The long-barreled rifle, an imposing weapon built for wars long past, spits out bullets larger and more deadly than the rounds that fit into the M4 carbines and M16 rifles that most soldiers carry.

"Having a heavy cartridge in an urban environment like that was definitely a good choice," says Higgins, who did two tours in Iraq and left the service last year. "It just has more stopping power."

<http://www.observer-reporter.com/OR/StoryAP/05-27-BATTLE-OVER-BULLETS>

08/05/27 30 months in jail for broken gun

A federal judge has ordered a 30-month prison sentence for a man whose rifle misfired, letting loose three shots at a firing range, prompting 2nd Amendment supporters to warn their constituents how easily they, too, can become a "gun felon."

"It didn't matter the rifle in question had not been intentionally modified for select fire, or that it did not have an M16 bolt carrier or sear, that it did not show any signs of machining or drilling, or that that model had even been recalled a few years back," said [a commentary in Guns Magazine](#) on the case against David R. Olofson, of Berlin, Wis.

"It didn't matter the government had repeatedly failed to replicate automatic fire until they replaced the ammunition with a softer primer type. It didn't even matter that the prosecution admitted it was not important to prove the gun would do it again if the test were conducted today," the magazine said. "What mattered was the government's position that none of the above was relevant because '[T]here's no indication it makes any difference under the statute. If you pull the trigger once and it fires more than one round, no matter what the cause it's a machine gun.'

"No matter what the cause.

"Think about if your semiauto ever malfunctions. Because that's how close you could be to becoming a convicted 'gun felon,'" the commentary said.

[WND reported earlier](#) when Olofson, a drill instructor in the National Guard, was convicted in a federal court for illegally transferring a machine gun.

The verdict came in [the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin](#).

An expert witness told WND the conviction means anyone whose weapon malfunctions is subject to charges of having or handling a banned gun.

<http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=65455>

Founding Fathers Intent:

"A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy. While the people are virtuous they cannot be subdued; but when once they lose their virtue then will be ready to surrender their liberties to the first external or internal invader." -- *Samuel Adams (letter to James Warren, 12 February 1779)*