



# HOME ON THE RANGE

The Shooting Center Newsletter

Third Edition

May 2018



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# Concealed Classy!

*Carry in style with purses from The Pro Shop*

Instructors and personal defense experts debate loud and long whether women should carry on their person or via a purse or handbag. But the truth is that women's clothing (not to mention the shape of their bodies) is different from men's...a tad more form-fitting and a little less "basic" than your standard menswear.

And, for professional women who work in an office environment, baggy clothes or bulky holsters may simply be impractical. So, many ladies opt for purse carry, being careful to keep their handbags nearby or under lock and key when necessary.

Until fairly recently, a purse designed specifically for carry purposes would set you back well over \$100, sometimes in excess of \$200 or more. Early concealed carry purses resembled suitcases more than handbags, but companies today are getting more creative with their designs, in addition to finally setting prices somewhere comparable to what you might pay for a non-concealed carry purse.

The **Pro Shop** at *The American Police Hall of Fame* carries a variety of *reasonably priced* ladies' concealed carry purses, predominantly featuring the time-tested Bulldog brand. Bulldog® has been an industry leader for decades in developing innovative carry and storage solutions for a variety of weapons. The company offers both nylon and leather products, designed to fit your specific needs, with each Bulldog product constructed from the finest hand selected materials.

The company assures its customers that "during the design and manufacturing process quality and price are emphasized to ensure that every item is both affordable and built to last. Our commitment to quality, price and customer service has set us apart from the competition."

In addition to quality construction, Bulldog purses also feature a wire reinforced, slash resistant shoulder strap, thus preventing bad guys from cutting the strap and taking your valuables *and* your means of defending yourself. And, of course, each purse offers a compartment and holster uniquely designed to house the firearm of your choice.

The **Pro Shop** offers a variety of styles and sizes, from handheld clutch bags, suitable for a Glock 42 or comparably sized gun, to full-sized satchel bags suitable for personal items, your firearm and office materials as well. We also carry Bulldog's cross body series, designed to be worn close to the body for maximum ease of access.

Whether you carry a Smith & Wesson Bodyguard or a Glock 19 Gen 5, we have a purse that will meet your needs, with designs ranging from beachy and fun to all-leather and all business. The shop also carries selections from Gun Totin' Mamas. Our purses run from about \$40 up to \$100, with most ranging between \$45 and \$75.

If you would like assistance from a female shooter in selecting your concealed carry purse, call us at 321-264-0911, extension 133 to schedule a time.

# Facing Down A Monster

*Texas hero says any NRA member would have done it*

By Tara Dixon Engel

It was a typical Texas Sunday morning in November 2017 when Stephen Willeford's daughter burst into his room shouting that, across the street from their home in sleepy Sutherland Springs, "a man in black tactical gear is shooting up the Baptist church!"

Without a thought for his own safety, the NRA instructor grabbed his AR and headed outside, barefoot, in pursuit of the shooter. The two exchanged fire in the church parking lot as Willeford flagged down a pickup truck driven by Johnnie Langendorff. Together, they pursued shooter Devin Patrick Kelley until he drove off the road and committed suicide.

Willeford was an honored guest at the 147th Annual NRA convention in Dallas, Texas last week.

A reserved man who seems ill-at-ease with the attention his bravery has brought him, he nonetheless spoke clearly and passionately to the assembled crowd at the Kay Bailey Hutchison convention center, recalling the events of that horrific morning.

"Every one of those shots, to me, represented one of my neighbors, one of my friends," he said quietly as images from his Texas neighborhood flashed across the jumbo screen.

"I ran as fast as I could. Immediately, he came out of the church shooting at me. He hit the truck in front of me, then he hit the car behind me, then he hit the house behind me. And I hit him," continued Willeford. "He had an AR-15, but so did I. *And it's not the gun, it's the heart.* It's all a matter of the heart. I'm not the bravest man in the world, or anything like it, but I was there. I was there, and I had to do something."

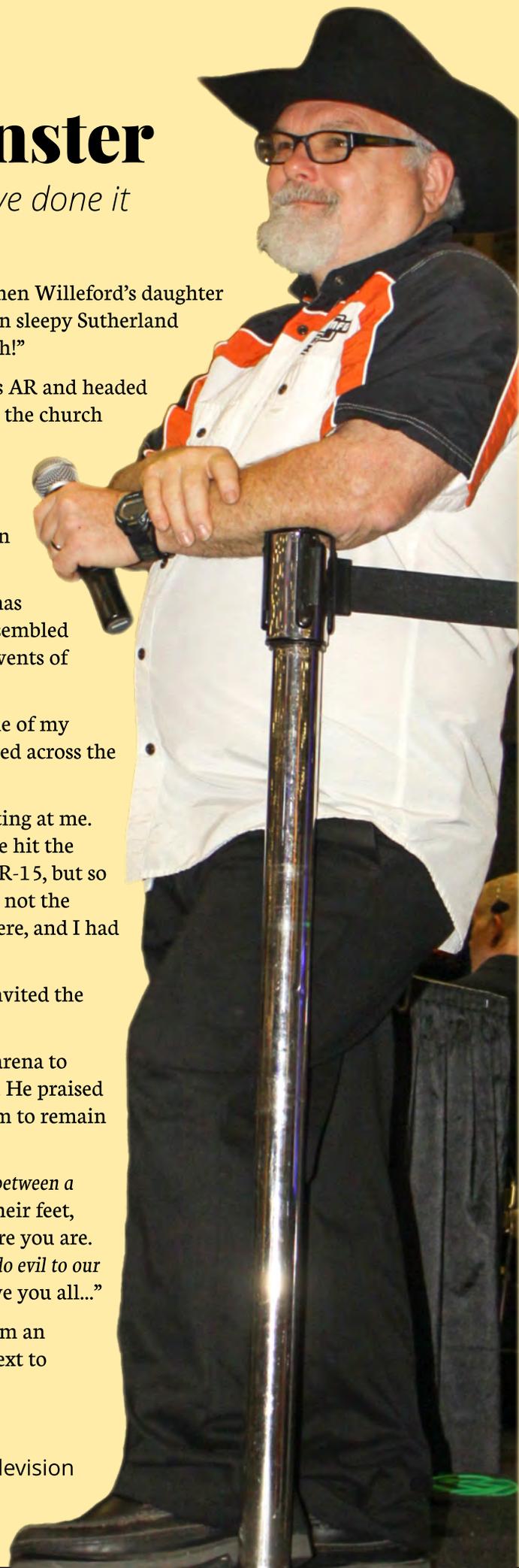
He attributed his courage to the presence of the Holy Spirit, and he invited the audience to bear with him as he introduced some special heroes.

First, Willeford asked all military members, past and current, in the arena to stand and be recognized. Next, he had all first responders do likewise. He praised the two groups for their courage and devotion to duty, and asked them to remain standing.

He then asked everyone to stand *who would "willingly place themselves between a monster and innocent citizens."* Every individual in the hall jumped to their feet, and Willeford, visibly moved by the impassioned response, said "There you are. Look around you. *We are the people who stand between those who would do evil to our neighbors.* EVERY ONE OF YOU WOULD DO WHAT I DID...and I love you all..."

Willeford left the stage to deafening applause as the audience gave him an extended ovation, many wiping away tears and hugging the person next to them.

Stephen Willeford waiting to appear on NRA television





By Eric Roessler

# "Stop gaming the course!"

I look up and smile sheepishly. I'm busted! While pasting targets and scoring, I've also been counting my shots, planning my reloads, identifying no-shoots, pinpointing challenging shots that will require additional mental focus, and mentally marking shooting positions.

"You won't get a walk-through in the real world!"

I nod vaguely. There are all kinds of things I won't get in the real world: I won't have a shot timer hovering over my shoulder; I won't have penalties for engaging threats with more than the prescribed number of shots or reloading in the wrong place, or stowing a partially loaded magazine in the wrong pocket; I probably won't have twenty threats to neutralize; I likely won't have any real cover; and, regardless of how perfectly I negotiate a corner, my antagonist may shoot me through the wall if he hears me and I'll be just as dead as if I jumped in front of his gun!

One thing I will have is the option to back out of the situation, covering my retreat until I make it to safety without firing a shot.

The line that separates action shooting sports from defensive shooting is wide and fuzzy. Action shooting sports were invented by tactical shooters who wanted a way to objectively quantify their performance in order to track their improvement and create a level playing field on which to compete with other shooters. But, like anything created with the best of intentions by humans, action shooting has become an end in itself to many shooters and has grown away from its tactical roots.

Nothing subverts defensive shooting more than the introduction of the shot timer. With the exception of relatively simple, purpose-driven speed drills like the El Presidente and Mozambique, imposing time constraints on a course of fire will cause corners to be cut, shortcuts taken, and good defensive practices will inevitably be sacrificed in the name of speed. Action shooting discards some of the most important elements of defensive shooting. International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA) match rules require shooters to "cut the pie" around corners, engaging targets as they are seen, while exposing fifty

# UPCOMING CLASSES AT THE SHOOTING CENTER

**May 12:** CCW 3 Advanced Pistol Class offered by RTBA Training Group and taught by Shooting Straight radio host Royce Bartlett. Bring 200 rounds of ammo, eye/ear protection, no open clothing or shoes. If you have a good flashlight, bring it, as some of the shooting will be in the dark. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$100 - to sign up, please go to [customerservice@rtba.us](mailto:customerservice@rtba.us) or go to the RTBA Facebook page, [here](#).

**May 19:** Realistic Self Defense and scenario with specialized force on force training. Emphasizes self defense first, marksmanship second. Course features shooting on the move, single hand shooting, contact shooting, shoot/don't shoot scenarios and so much more - 9 a.m.-4 p.m. \$125 - To sign up, please contact [assaultcountertactics@yahoo.com](mailto:assaultcountertactics@yahoo.com) or click [here](#)

**May 26:** CCW 1 Advanced Pistol Class offered by RTBA and taught by Shooting Straight radio host Royce Bartlett - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$75 - To sign up, please go to

[customerservice@rtba.us](mailto:customerservice@rtba.us) or go to RTBA Facebook page, [here](#).

**June 2:** Florida Concealed Carry Weapons Class - 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. \$40 - sign up at [range@aphf.org](mailto:range@aphf.org)

**June 3:** Handgun Fundamentals & Concealed Carry Course - Perfect for beginners, lapsed shooters, or those wishing to try out several different types of handguns. Taught by author of "The Handgun Guide for Women." 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. \$50 - To sign up, click [here](#).

**To find out more about these classes or to find other classes offered at The Shooting Center, click [here](#).**

**Check us out on [www.Shooting-Center.org](http://www.Shooting-Center.org)**

*The Shooting Center is at:*

*6350 Horizon Drive Titusville, FL 32780*

**Open: Tues-Fri: 12 to 8 p.m. Sat & Sun - 12 to 6 p.m.**

Sign up for our **CLOSED FACEBOOK GROUP** & special offers, etc. at <https://www.facebook.com/APHF911/>

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

-- In response to an earlier walkout by students protesting gun violence and the Majory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting, students at over 400 schools across the country participated in a May 2 pro-Second Amendment walkout.

At 10 a.m. young people left their classrooms for 16 minutes, according to Will Riley, the high school senior who organized the nationwide "Stand for the Second" demonstrations.

Kyle Kashuv, however, the pro-Second Amendment student who survived the Parkland shooting, was not among the student protesters. Prior to the event, Kashuv tweeted that, "I don't believe it is the correct thing to do. Disrupting 1000s of classrooms around the country isn't the answer. There's a time and place for civil disobedience, I just don't believe that time is now. Instead, let's all #WalkUp! #FIXIT."

-- Meanwhile, in Maryland, gun control advocate U.S. Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD.) compared the exercise of a constitutional right to the privilege of driving a car as he introduced the "Handgun Licensing Purchaser Act" that would require licensure before Americans could purchase a handgun.

A House version of the bill was introduced in mid April by Congresswoman Elizabeth Esty (D-Conn.). Van Hollen

noted that the legislation is designed to reduce violent crime, commenting, "Just like you need a license to drive a car you should get a license to purchase a handgun."

Several pro Second Amendment publications subsequently pointed out that driving is a privilege, while gun ownership is a constitutionally guaranteed right. Van Hollen previously introduced this same legislation back in 2015.

-- North of Maryland, in New York State, Gov. Andrew Cuomo has directed financial regulators to urge insurers and bankers to break ties with the NRA and similar organizations.

The regulators then advised insurance and banking agencies in New York to "review any relationships (you) have with the NRA or similar gun promotion organizations, and take prompt actions to (manage) these risks and promote public health and safety."

Reason.com, a libertarian on-line publication, called the Governor's efforts an attempt to "Weaponize regulatory power against the NRA."

The publication warned that taking this action against the NRA could lead to similar tactics being used by the right against favorite left-leaning causes, thus creating a danger for anyone who takes a controversial position on public policy issues.

# Seniority & Shooting

*The petite, silver-haired lady stood at the gun counter slowly shaking her head as she eyed the firearms I had placed in front of her.*

*"I just don't know," she mused. "I'm 72, I live alone and suffer from arthritis. Am I crazy to even consider owning a gun?"*

*"Ma'am," I smiled. "With all due respect, if you're 72 and live alone, I think you'd be crazy not to own one."*



It is a conversation taking place at gun counters across America. Depression-era babies are mostly in their 80s, while the oldest Baby Boomer turned 70 in 2016.

A recent Breitbart article reported that the demand for firearms training for seniors has seen a 400% increase since 2010, and the NRA notes that four times as many seniors took the organization's Basic Pistol Class in 2015 as did in the previous five years.

Gun ownership is a learning experience at any age, but senior shooters face unique challenges that instructors and gun salespeople would do well to address.

Assuming that she required an "easy" weapon, a previous salesman had sold my aging customer a .38 Smith & Wesson Airweight. She had explained to him that she did not intend to carry but was looking for a home defense firearm. She added that this was the first gun she'd ever purchased and that she'd fired a revolver only once...many years prior. She even showed him her hands, their joints thick with the tell-tale knots of arthritis. He, in turn, handed her the easy, efficient Smith & Wesson.

She took it home, fired it once at a local range, and realized that she lacked the finger strength to pull the trigger, in addition to being intimidated by the force of the recoil. *Bottom line: she was a victim in the making.*

"Everyone must adapt to a new firearm, but seniors have more factors to consider," explains John Falldorf, retired Sheriff's Deputy of 28 years, law enforcement firearms

instructor, and former gun shop & range manager.

"Revolvers are easy to load but many modern double-action revolvers have a heavy trigger pull. Arthritis and muscle atrophy can make heavy triggers a challenge for seniors. If you're shopping for a firearm and the person behind the gun counter won't let you test the trigger pull, move on to another shop."

He also notes that cycling, or "racking," the slide is an important exercise if you are buying a pistol versus a revolver.

"Many seniors opt for a revolver, believing they are too weak to cycle a semi-automatic," he says. "That's simply not true. There are many guns on the market that cycle easily. You just have to know what's out there."

Smith & Wesson's M&P brand recently released the .380 EZ, which is specifically designed to have a more gentle recoil and a very "rackable" slide. Walther's PK .380 is another model that is known for comfort and ease. The

*(Scroll to next page)*

# Remembering the Fallen

## Police Week honors survivor families, officers' sacrifice

Each year, just before Police Week (May 13-19 this year), the American Police Hall of Fame places over 13,000 American flags on its grounds adjacent to route 405 in Titusville. Each flag represents the survivor of an officer killed in the line of duty. And each year, the facility holds a solemn ceremony honoring our fallen officers and their families.

This year, the ceremony takes place on the evening of May 18. Family members of fallen officers from across the country will be in attendance, as will representatives from local and regional law enforcement agencies.

The public is invited to this event, which begins at 7:30 p.m. and runs until 9 p.m. The service includes: roll call of those lost in 2017, roll call of fallen officers with family in attendance, a wreath laying, a 21 gun salute, the playing of taps and a pipe and drums presentation. In 1962, John Kennedy designated May 15 as Peace Officers' Memorial Day, and the week in which May 15 falls as National Police Week.

The Hall of Fame underwrites most of the cost of accommodations for the hundreds of family survivors who attend, in addition to providing a weekend activity for the families. For additional information, call 321-264-0911 or send an email to [Policeinfo@aphf.org](mailto:Policeinfo@aphf.org).



## Senior Shooters...

(Continued from Page 6)

Sig Sauer P238 (.380) and P938 (9 mm) also cycle easily, but are 1911 style and feature a thumb safety that requires practice to release in a high stress situation. Falldorf noted that slide racking intimidates people of all ages if they don't understand that it is not a matter of strength but of technique.

Seniors also frequently struggle with deteriorating eyesight. "The standard three white dots or the target style sights may not work well for aging eyes. Look for high definition night sights that will be clearly visible in low light. For daylight shooting, look for fiber optic sites that stand out against your target," he explains, adding that, for personal defense scenarios, seniors should familiarize themselves with "point index" shooting (See *Home on the Range, April 2018 edition*). "It's an instinctive shooting style that not only builds confidence but reflects how you will be shooting in a real self-defense scenario."

Falldorf also urges seniors to budget for training and

regular range time with their new firearm. "Even if you were an avid shooter 30 or 40 years ago, these are perishable skills. If you're on a fixed income, you'd be better off to buy a less expensive - but still dependable - gun and set aside money for training and practice time," he explains, adding that seniors might look for a trainer who offers one-on-one sessions. "Your own situation may prompt unusual questions and you may need to modify your form slightly to accommodate physical limitations. A good instructor can help address those challenges."

Firearm weight is another issue, the retired deputy says. Older or injured muscles cannot support weight as well, so seniors need to be mindful of what they can and cannot lift...and for how long. "Understand there is a trade-off between weight and recoil. Light guns tend to be more punishing on the hands but heavy guns may be more difficult to lift for regular practice. Rent some guns at a local range and see what works for you."

**For further demonstration of these concepts, click [here](#) for an introductory video.**

# *A Right So Wronged...*

Radio host takes historic stand for liberty, Constitution

**Editor's Note:** This is the second part of a two-part series about WMMB's "Shooting Straight" host Royce Bartlett.

By Tara Dixon Engel

In between his radio show, speaking engagements, and running RTBA Training Group with business partner Norm Weaver, Royce Bartlett has carved out enough time for a new gun-related project: a book about the Second Amendment.

"I'm calling it 'A Right So Wronged,'" Bartlett explains.

"My goal is to trace the roots of arms control back to Biblical times. And the purpose of the book is, quite simply, to expose the evil hearts of those who wish to disarm others."

He explains that the roots of "gun control" are firmly planted in bigotry and racism, adding that the only reason one group would ever have to disarm another is to weaken them -- even as they convince those being disarmed that they are now "safer."

## **Tyrants, Criminals & Politicians**

"The only people who crave gun control are criminals, corrupt politicians, tyrants and intellectually neutered citizens who believe that being unarmed will keep them safe from the first three," Bartlett says, in his typically blunt style.

The shooting instructor is quick to point to America's abundant firearms traditions and how they have been a stabilizing force in society.

"Our firearms traditions have been rich and storied...and positive until the last few decades, during which time the enemies of this country and of our Constitution have waged war against our rights," he says, explaining that our shooting and hunting traditions have passed from

generation to generation.

"And those traditions have always included the proper usage of arms, and training with them. It has really been a cornerstone to the preservation of law and order in society. Respect for the lives of your fellow men, as well as the fear of sure consequences, used to be -- and should still be -- the restraint that governed peoples' use of firearms. Guns can only be a positive in a population that is governed by a moral compass."

To underscore his point, he paraphrases second President John Adams' observation that "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

So, what is the secret for reclaiming our traditions and restoring sanity when it comes to the Second Amendment? Bartlett says it will be an uphill battle, and some of the "weapons-grade stupidity" he sees in government and policy-making causes him to fear for the future of the republic. He cites the legislation and protests taking place in the wake of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL.

## **Students Betrayed by Government**

"None of the measures signed into law by Governor Scott would have prevented the Parkland shooting or any of the mass shootings that have ever taken place," he affirms. "Parkland is yet another tragedy made possible by a gun control law that a mentally-deranged scumbag took advantage of. The students and faculty were betrayed by their government at the local, state and federal level, and left vulnerable to the whims of a predator who should never have been allowed to own a firearm."

*(Scroll to the next page)*



# *A Right So Wronged...*

*(Continued from previous page)*

He adds that the real irony is "they now want that same government that failed them, to now protect them by crafting even more gun control laws."

Bartlett is especially frustrated by the media's refusal to present facts when it comes to gun ownership, the Second Amendment, and right of free citizens to keep and bear arms.

"Winning the information war that is being waged against guns and lawful, responsible gun owners is of the utmost importance," he says. "We are being vilified, slandered, libeled, maligned, and falsely accused on a daily basis, and the willful ignorance displayed by those who hate the Second Amendment is frustrating beyond measure. America's *biggest* challenge is re-settling our nation upon our founding document, the Supreme Law of the Land, our Constitution."

But can such a thing be achieved? Have we gone too far in the opposite direction to ever restore that which has been lost? It is a question that brings out an eloquence in Bartlett worthy of our founding fathers.

"The Second Amendment is words on paper; the right itself comes from God alone, a fact recognized in the Constitution. Erasing the Second Amendment would no more eradicate our right to self-preservation than erasing the First Amendment would remove our tongues!"

## **Stand in the Face of Incredible Odds**

"The time is now to cultivate in your hearts a willingness to defend your rights to the death, literally. Because that fire burns in the bosom of free men *and can never be extinguished*, not even by death itself. And such a spirit is feared by those who wish to disarm and control us," he says. "We must be ever-willing to stand in the face of certain death to defend life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. A people with such fervency can *never* be conquered or enslaved. So stand...plant your feet and refuse to be moved, even in the face of incredible odds, just as those before us did when they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, to preserve liberty for their descendants."

Bartlett explains that America's founding fathers suffered setback, defeat, misery, insufferable humiliation, the plundering of their wealth, loss of life and limb -- all for the sake of future generations of Americans.

"Shall we not do the same for our posterity," he asks. "Or do we acquiesce and accept defeat, thus wasting the sacrifices of those who gave so much to the cause of freedom? *As for me, I will stand, though I be the only one*; I refuse to die knowing I didn't do all I could to preserve the Constitution, this country, and the principles upon which it was founded."

It is a powerful statement that echoes through Bartlett's radio show, his public appearances, his firearms classes, his casual conversations and, now, the manuscript that he hopes to complete by 2019. But it is more than a personal manifesto; it challenges every law-abiding gun owner to refuse to be defined or disarmed by those who would corrupt our governing documents for their own ends. Bartlett urges people to educate themselves and to understand that freedom is not preserved by the media or by politicians but by everyday citizens making their voices heard at the ballot box and in the public arena.

Then and only then, he maintains, can we successfully live up to the ideals put forth in the preamble to our Constitution: "*We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*"

*"...Do we acquiesce and accept defeat, thus wasting the sacrifices of those who gave so much to the cause of freedom? As for me, I will stand, though I be the only one; I refuse to die knowing I didn't do all I could to preserve the Constitution, this country, and the principles upon which it was founded."*

# Serious Business: Choosing Your Holster

Just because you have a concealed carry license doesn't mean you have a holster...or that you even carry your firearm regularly. If you own a gun, part of the responsibility of ownership is to carry it on your person, safely and effectively. In so doing, we must be competent, confident, and comfortable, able to take the gun out of its holster for possible engagement and return it safely to the holster under stress.

The first element of a holster is a good quality belt that will keep your gun, and the other accessories you carry, securely on your body. I recommend leather belts for concealed carry. Other belts made out of various webbing materials (rigger belts are usually made out of type 10 nylon) just don't hold up over the long haul.

The leather belts I personally recommend come from:

A). Andrews Leather -- Sam Andrews is one of the very best custom leather holster makers in the business and was contracted to make all the custom western holsters for the remake of the Magnificent Seven movie. I've known Sam for almost 40 years and use his belts and holsters for real world applications. [www.andrewsleather.com](http://www.andrewsleather.com)

B). Cross Breed Holsters -- Although they only recently got into the belt-making business I have been using several varieties of their belts for a couple of years now. They look great and hold up well. [www.crossbreedholsters.com](http://www.crossbreedholsters.com)

C). Bigfoot Belts -- Are as sturdy as they come and are reinforced with a steel lining that will pretty much secure everything. [www.bigfootgunbelts.com](http://www.bigfootgunbelts.com)

D). Hanks Belts -- Are serious belts that many well-known firearms trainers are starting to utilize. [www.hanksbelts.com](http://www.hanksbelts.com)

Now that you have a sturdy foundation for your holster, let's discuss what works...and what doesn't. Modern holsters are typically made from three types of materials: nylon, leather and kydex.

I eliminate nylon holsters because the material stretches too easily and does not secure the gun well. Also, the cloth around the top edge of the holster can bind and fold inward toward the trigger guard, increasing the likelihood that the gun will discharge. This has caused many documented injuries.

So, this leaves Leather or Kydex for carry purposes.

My rule of thumb if you're carrying for one-four hours is to go with an inside-the-waistband holster in either leather or kydex. If carrying four or more hours, I recommend an outside the waistband holster.

(Scroll to next page)

A quality holster should do the following:

- 1) Fit comfortably on the body (although one famous gun guru suggests guns aren't supposed to be comfortable; they should be *comforting*.) Nonsense.
- 2) The holster must secure the gun in every scenario, from running, dodging, ducking and weaving to utilizing bathroom facilities.
- 3) The holster must be able to release the gun quickly with ease of operation and go back in the holster the same way, one-handed, without looking.



From left, holsters of choice: an Alessi ankle holster; an L.A.G. tactical holster; an HBC Kydex concealment holster; a holster with belt straps.



More tools  
of choice:  
Crossbreed belts  
& holsters,  
Bravo holsters,  
Andrews custom  
leather holsters.

*(Continued from page 10)*

Next, you may be pondering how the holster will stay put and how it will function, considering such elements as belt loops, clips, slots or paddles, thumb straps, retention devices, holster positioning and numerous related factors.

I prefer the holster to have loops that attach it to the belt. I find this is the most secure of carry, although built-in slots on leather holsters are extremely sturdy, as well. If carrying for a short time, a clip-on device is fine for easy-on, easy-off access, however, once again, *belt loops are more secure.*

Holsters to stay away from: paddle holsters of any kind. They are bulky, often flimsy and brittle, and they tend to break rather easily. I do not recommend holsters with thumb straps or retention devices, either. I have seen too many instances when people under stress are unable to release the retention device in order to draw the weapon.

With regard to holster positioning, small of the back is a no-go. Way too many problems can be created with this position which can cause spinal injuries if you fall on your back and the gun smacks against your spine.

Many top gun instructors "appendix carry" now days. While some believe this method of carry is a new technique, history says otherwise. William H. Bonney, aka Billy the Kid, killed his first man -- Frank "Windy" Cahill -- in 1877. Cahill and the Kid were playing cards when violence erupted, with Cahill beating on the Kid, pinning him to the ground and punching him senseless. The soon-to-be-famous outlaw was much smaller than Cahill and was able to maneuver his revolver from its appendix carry location, allowing him to shoot and kill Cahill.

Billy the Kid notwithstanding, I generally oppose appendix carry, although I understand it is a fast way to draw the gun, but it is just as easy to have an Accidental Discharge (AD). And, with appendix carry, the gun is likely to discharge into your lower abdomen or groin, not a pleasant thought for either gender.

The very best gunfighters of yesteryear -- when people carried guns as if their very lives depended on it (which they often did) -- men like James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok, Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson, Charlie Bassett, Ben Thompson, John Wesley Harden, William Bonney, Jesse James and many others -- usually carried their guns in holsters high on the waist, inside or outside the trousers, along the seam of the pant leg, gun butts canted forward or toward the rear.

More than a century later, the preferred method of carry is just as yesterday's gunfighters carried. The modern concealed carrier would be wise to carry the gun in what many call "kidney carry," positioning, the holster slightly high behind the trouser seam, inside or outside the waistband.

The specific brands that I prefer include the following: Andrews Custom Leather -- [www.andrewscustomleather.com](http://www.andrewscustomleather.com) ; Alessi Gun Holsters -- [www.alessigunholsters.com](http://www.alessigunholsters.com); Bravo Concealment -- [www.bravoconcealment.com](http://www.bravoconcealment.com); HBC Concealment -- [www.hbconcealment.com](http://www.hbconcealment.com); L.A.G. Tactical -- [www.lagtactical.com](http://www.lagtactical.com); TRIFECTA Holsters LLC. -- [www.trifectaholsters.com](http://www.trifectaholsters.com); Crossbreed holsters & belts -- [www.crossbreedholsters.com](http://www.crossbreedholsters.com).

**Next month:** *Drawing from concealment*

*For a video demonstration of holster styles and carry techniques, click [HERE](#).*

# NRA 2018

*The 147th NRA convention in Dallas, Texas was awash in patriotism, innovation and a commitment to the constitution and rule of law. The Shooting Center was there to visit, engage and familiarize folks with the Hall of Fame's compassionate programs for law enforcement families. Along the way we ran into old friends and made some new! Clockwise, from right: Kris "Tanto" Paronto was signing books and hamming it up with his friends; Kel-Tec was representing Brevard well, as always; there was no Yeti to be seen, but Orca was out in force! And you may recognize this gentleman...who whipped the crowd into a frenzy. Walther caught the attention of many passers-by; and, another local company, Frontier Tactical showed off its innovative designs.*





*From top, clockwise: iScope offers an innovative way to use your cell phone for capturing better shots! Devil Dog Arms and Ruger kept the crowds interested and intrigued. Meanwhile, Black Guns Matter caught everyone's attention. The organization specializes in teaching inner city kids firearms safety and responsibility. Their cause and t-shirts were a hit. Beretta was another of the heavy hitters in attendance. At times, the crowd was shoulder-to-shoulder but no one seemed to mind. Attendees came from all walks of life and all ethnicities, and everyone was courteous, engaged and quick to make friends with those around them.*



# Action Shooting: Stop Gaming the Course...

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percent or less of the upper body. In matches, corners are pieced in order to minimize distance to the next shooting position and shave seconds from your score without breaking the cover rules. In actual practice, corners should be pieced from as far away as practically possible with no regard to time taken. The targets in IDPA and IPSC matches are roughly humanoid silhouettes with parallel sides that are easy to line up to the vertical lines of the standard Patridge sights on most handguns. The non-threat targets are either color-coded white or have clearly visible open hands stenciled on and are easily identifiable. Real-world threats, in contrast, move unpredictably, change in outline and constantly present a shifting vital area. Weapons are seldom plainly visible, and attackers are likely to sneak up behind you.

Scanning one's surroundings, a crucial, potential life-saving action in defensive shooting, is useless in an action shooting match where all targets have been revealed and memorized during the walk-through, and "checking your six" only wastes time. The only scanning done is to find the next shooting position. In the real world, seemingly benign targets or "no-shoots" can become threats by accessing a hidden weapon as soon as your back is turned.

Verbal engagement of targets would appear insane in an action shooting match, but is another indispensable tactical action. Hostile targets can become non-hostile if authoritatively ordered from cover to drop their weapons. Non-hostile targets can be ordered to clear the field of fire or at least to drop and find cover.

In action shooting, for safety reasons, shooting from certain disadvantaged positions must be disallowed due to the danger of sweeping one's own body with the gun muzzle. Similarly, in order to prevent skewing the competition in favor of the younger, more athletic shooters, requiring shooters to assume physically challenging positions during timed shooting strings is generally avoided. In the real world, awkward or disadvantaged shooting positions should be expected.

Most important, in action shooting sports, the shooter has foreknowledge. The location of the threats and non-threats is known. There is no reaction to spontaneous stimulus. Moving targets are activated by

conscious actions of the shooter. Target prioritization and engagement is determined during a walkthrough. Defensive shooting requires the shooter to constantly process a dynamic stream of incoming data, and adjust accordingly, under brain-melting fear and stress.

What then is the value of action shooting sports? Why spend time in such activity? Action shooting teaches shooters the fundamental building blocks of shooting: how to draw, acquire a good grip, acquire targets, acquire sight picture, shoot, move from position to position, reload, and clear malfunctions, all with maximum speed, efficiency, safety and consistency, at varying distances and under time pressure. Nothing will teach you how to "run your gun" better than action shooting competition.

Certainly, one could do drills that would build each of these skills separately. One could even do them under a timer to gauge improvement. However, performing these actions under a timer, under varying circumstances in a competitive situation offers great feedback on how one may perform under pressure, revealing flaws to be eliminated and improvements to be made. It also helps defensive shooters develop better strategies, based on clear benchmarks of the shooter's current skill and performance level.

An armed encounter is chaotic with nearly infinite variables. An action shooting match, on the other hand, is structured and the variables are known and predictable. This gives the shooter a chance to concentrate on identifying and improving specific skills essential to survivability in an armed encounter.

The skills you develop through action shooting will greatly enhance your defensive shooting...but action shooting is *not* defensive training! The best return of skill on your investment of time and effort in action shooting will be obtained through shooting the game. Shooting a match "tactically" will limit your speed while providing little to no feedback on your tactics, since the range officer will be timing and scoring your hits, not observing your techniques with an eye toward critique.

So game away! Action shooting sports are indispensable to the serious defensive shooter. IDPA, USPSA, Action Steel, 3-gun Tactical/Practical and other competitive outlets are available locally. A well-trained and well-rounded defensive shooter will know where the game stops and reality begins.

*The Shooting Center in Titusville  
features a "Tactical Practical" each  
Friday starting at 2 p.m.  
Come on out and test your skill!  
Call us at 321-264-0911 for details.*