

POINT BLANK

**STRAIGHT TALK
ABOUT WHAT YOU
CAN DO TO
PRESERVE YOUR
RIGHT TO KEEP AND
BEAR ARMS**

RKBA: A FOCUS AS LEGISLATURES CONVENE



**January
2014**

Volume XXXIV No. 1

IN THIS ISSUE

RKBA Focus	1-2
Guns Save Lives Day	3
Growth in CCW Licenses	3
Some Lawmen Revolt	4
Citizen Action Project	4
More Background Checks	5
Defender of the Month	6
SCOTUS Case Coming Up	6
Quick Shots	7

CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

(a non-profit corporation)

12500 N.E. Tenth Place
Bellevue, Washington 98005

Capitol Hill Office:
1350 Eye St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Second Amendment issues are clearly a focus in several states as legislatures begin convening in January, and the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms is preparing for some serious battles, according to Chairman Alan Gottlieb.

The looming battles are not merely confined to firearms issues, either, he confirmed.

“Our allies at Knife Rights have also introduced bills in Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky and Oklahoma,” Gottlieb said. “This is in addition to the major fights gun owners face in Washington and neighboring Oregon, in Massachusetts where some officials are promising a ‘major overhaul’ of state gun laws this year, and Florida, where there is a proposal to ease the application process for a concealed carry license.

“Across the landscape,” he said, “grassroots activists have their work cut out in 2014.”

According to published reports, Florida State Senators Wilton Simpson (R-Trilby) and James Grant (R-Tampa) were planning to introduce legislation that would allow county tax collectors to accept applications for concealed carry licenses. This would change the current process, which is handled by the Agriculture department’s eight regional offices.

There is also a proposal to expand self-defense law allowing armed citizens to aim guns at attackers without facing prosecution under a different statute dealing with brandishing and assault with a deadly weapon. This could easily be called the “Marissa Alexander bill” because it is a response to the case of a woman who fired a warning shot at her husband three years ago and was convicted of aggravated assault and sentenced to prison. She will receive a new trial, thanks to an appeals court ruling.

In Massachusetts, former State Sen. Warren Tolman, running for attorney general, has created a campaign issue with his proposal to require all newly-manufactured handguns sold there to have so-called “fingerprint technology” that would – in theory at least – make it impossible for anyone other than the owner to use the firearm.

This is another incarnation of the so-called “smart gun” effort that has already been rejected by professionals and firearms experts as unworkable. Tolman insists that such a mandate would make it impossible for children or criminals to access and use someone else’s handgun.

SECOND AMENDMENT ISSUES LOOM LARGE IN 2014

(Continued from page 1)

Maine lawmakers are reportedly also working on an overhaul of that state's concealed carry permit process. Proposed changes will ostensibly provide police with better records, which means there will be a database of all carry permit holders, and uniform statewide permits that only may be issued by state police or local municipalities that have a full-time police agency, according to the Associated Press.

In Virginia, Delegate Mark Cole has already introduced a bill to allow possession of a firearm or other weapon, to include a stun gun or knife, on property belonging to private or religious schools. His legislation, HB 114, would not affect criminal penalties for carrying weapons on public school grounds, however.

According to the *Washington Times*, a member of Virginia's House of Delegates has proposed legislation to stop law enforcement from enforcing federal gun legislation passed after Dec. 1, 2012

The legislation is modeled after similar proposals which have been passed in other states; its chances for passage in Virginia are not clear.

In Oregon, anti-gunners are hoping to revive a push for so-called "universal background checks" on all gun sales, and perhaps a ban on certain semi-automatic firearms. During the 2013 session, they came uncomfortably close to passing a bill, and the future may include a public initiative effort, similar to what is currently happening in neighboring Washington.

Gun rights activists and gun prohibitionists in that state are

squaring off with competing initiatives to the legislature. Lawmakers are expected to duck the issue and put both measures on the November ballot rather than adopt either.

Initiative 591, a CCRKBA-backed measure, would prevent background checks that do not comply with a uniform national standard and also prohibit government gun confiscation without due process. Initiative 594 is a competing measure that spans about 18 pages and would expand background checks to all firearms transactions and transfers with but few exceptions.

Washington and Oregon are two of the states where former New York billionaire Mayor Michael Bloomberg has earmarked for some of his money this year.

The Knife Rights efforts are aimed at protecting knife owners from prosecution for using the most common implements around: pocket knives. A bill in Kentucky would preempt local ordinances, same as state preemption laws about firearms work. A similar preemption effort is being launched in Oklahoma that would add knives to the state's preemption law.

Maryland state lawmakers will once again be looking at gun legislation in the upcoming session, but instead of restricting gun rights, they're going to consider going after gun-related crime.

The *Annapolis Capital-Gazette* newspaper reported that Republicans are proposing a bill that would end good behavior credits for those convicted of violent gun crimes, essentially "truth in sentencing." The newspaper said this was proposed as part of last year's gun control

package, but was rejected.

Georgia gun rights supporters are looking to get a significant pro-gun bill passed in the next session.

The *Carroll County Times-Georgian* reported that lawmakers will once again consider legislation that would allow concealed carry in a number of places around the state. Last year's version, according to the newspaper, ran into opposition from colleges, which wanted to see their campuses exempted from the new law.

It is not clear what will be in the new proposal but some sources suggest it may be similar to the 2013 legislation.



POINT BLANK

"Straight talk about what you can do to
preserve your right to keep and bear arms."

Editor J H Versnel
Publisher Alan M. Gottlieb
Managing Editor Dave Workman
Associate Editors Tom Gresham
Herb Stupp
Peggy Tartaro
Joe Waldron
Rhett Workman
Malia Zimmerman

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CCRKBA PARTICIPATES IN 'GUNS SAVE LIVES DAY'

The Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms was one of many supporters and co-sponsors of the Dec. 15 "Guns Save Lives Day," held in conjunction with Bill of Rights Day, and according to CCRKBA Chairman Alan Gottlieb, the event was a huge success.

Preliminary data indicates that more than 20 million people saw or heard the "Guns Save Lives" advertisements on cable television or radio, more than 46,000 people voted in the opinion poll supporting the right of law-abiding citizens to protect themselves from violent crime, and more than 90,000 people signed an on-line Gun Rights petition.

The event unfolded only two days after the incident at Arapahoe High School in Centennial, Colorado. Yet that tragic event did not prevent gun owners across the country from attending some gun shows, or visiting

gun shops or shooting ranges, Gottlieb noted.

CCRKBA joined the Second Amendment Foundation and an array of state firearms organizations in sponsoring the national event. Also on board were the Calguns Foundation, Texas State Rifle Association, Illinois State Rifle Association, Virginia Citizens Defense League, Illinois Carry, Long Island Firearms, Florida Carry, Alabama's Bama Carry, Georgia Carry, Montana Shooting Sports Association, Nebraska Firearms Owners Association, Louisiana Shooting Association, New Jersey Second Amendment Society, the Shooters Committee on Political Education of New York, Arizona Citizens Defense League and many others.

He told *Point Blank* that he would like to see this become an annual event because it reminds people that firearms in the hands of law-abiding

people have many legitimate uses, not the least of which is self-defense and the protection of home and business.

"From all indications," he said, "there was overwhelming support from firearms owners across the landscape. While anti-gunners shamelessly exploited the somber anniversary of the Newtown tragedy on Dec. 14, the day before our event, 'Guns Save Lives Day' activities and weekend attendance at gun shows demonstrated that America is a resilient nation, and that its people understand the difference between extremist, agenda-driven ideology and common sense.

We clearly demonstrated the benefits of widespread firearms ownership, and the importance of protecting and preserving the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms," he concluded.

GROWTH IN CCW IS GOOD NEWS

When Washington State's Department of Licensing reported 449,000 concealed pistol licenses in circulation at the end of 2013, it was good news for the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, and indicative of a continuing national trend.

CCRKBA Chairman Alan M. Gottlieb said, "Citizens are very protective of their civil rights, and especially their right of self-defense and defense of their loved ones. Recent events have demonstrated the futility of so-called 'gun free zones' and it is evident a growing number of citizens are taking responsibility for their own safety.

Over the course of 2013, more than 56,000 new concealed pistol licenses were logged by the Washington State Licensing Department.

"The Illinois State Police estimate they may have as many as 400,000 applications for carry licenses over the next 12 months, which will be the first year that Illinois citizens are allowed by law to obtain such licenses. Look at Florida, Texas and elsewhere, and you will see the same pattern," Gottlieb observed.

Florida has more than 1.1 million active concealed carry licenses in circulation, though some of those have been issued to non-residents because of their acceptability among

other states with reciprocity or recognition statutes.

And the pattern of increasing numbers of concealed carry licenses appears to be continuing. It is estimated that there are more than 8.5 million people in the United States with some form of carry license. With the addition of carry in Illinois, that could jump above 9 million.

Not surprisingly to gun rights activists, there is data suggesting that violent crime declines in areas with high percentages of concealed carry license holders.

"The right of all citizens to bear arms is a cornerstone of our liberty as a free people," he said.

LAWMEN REVOLT, OPPOSE NEW GUN LAWS

Top lawmen have been raising alarms over new gun laws, and in Colorado, some county sheriffs are promising to not enforce the new laws banning large capacity magazines, or requiring so-called “universal background checks.”

In California, a group of sheriffs met with Gov. Jerry Brown and succeeded in getting him to veto the law banning so-called “assault rifles.”

Two sheriffs in upstate New York have already announced they will not enforce its new gun law. In reaction, Gov. Cuomo said their action sets “a dangerous and frightening precedent.”

Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper has already declared that the anti-

gun measures he signed into law in 2013 will not be repealed, though they might be “tweaked” here and there.

It is that kind of attitude that puts Hickenlooper and Cuomo on the opposite side of the debate from sheriffs like Colorado’s John Cooke, who has served Weld County for more than 11 years. Recently profiled in Human Events, Cooke unabashedly stated that, “I never thought I would see Colorado make marijuana legal and try to make guns illegal.”

Gov. Brown seems to be teetering on a political fence with his veto choices in 2013, and one might expect sheriffs in the Golden State’s northern environs to be wary. The New York Times quoted Siskiyou County Sheriff Jon E. Lopey late last year, observing,

“Our way of life means nothing to these politicians, and our interests are not being promoted in the legislative halls of Sacramento or Washington, D.C.” His county borders Oregon, and the lifestyle there is a far cry from urban areas where anti-gunners seem to hold sway.

At least one top cop – Florida’s Liberty County Sheriff Nick Finch – has already been in trouble for releasing a man from jail for having carried a loaded gun without a state license. But Sheriff Finch was acquitted of charges and quickly reinstated by Gov. Rick Scott.

Sheriff Finch’s defense was that he had a constitutional duty to uphold the Second Amendment.

CITIZEN ACTION PROJECT

Most state legislatures will be going into session this month.

Typically, state legislatures are part-time bodies, meeting for anywhere from 60 to 120 days. Only a few states have full time legislatures. Because of their short session, things move faster at the state level.

In the 12 months following the Newtown, Connecticut school shooting, more pro-gun rights bills were passed at the state level than anti-gun ones. In 2013 when Illinois became the 50th state to pass a shall issue concealed carry law, although that was driven by a court order, with the Democrat legislature complying.

This is the time to contact your state legislators, introduce yourselves, and share with them the issues that are important to you. Ask them to keep you informed of movement on these issue(s).

Legislative office telephone numbers are available in the blue “Government” pages in your telephone directory, or on the internet at the state legislature web sites. E-mail addresses are usually available on the web site as well. State legislature web site links can be found at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/state-legislatures.html>

Even legislators who support the Second Amendment and your state RKBA provision may not have a full understanding of the issues. Communications with them should be courteous and polite, and where they lack knowledge of the issues, this is your opportunity to educate them. If you become a good, reliable and consistent source of knowledge, these lawmakers or at least members of their staff might eventually get to know you on a “first name basis” and you can become something of a sounding board when firearms-related issues come up for discussion.

CCRKBA SAYS BACKGROUND CHECK SURVEY BY NSSF AN EYE-OPENER

A new national survey conducted for the National Shooting Sports Foundation on gun control issues should "open some eyes," the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms said.

The survey, conducted in early November and released just before the holidays, revealed that only four out of ten Americans support so-called "universal background checks" at gun shows, and that a majority of respondents did not realize that background checks are already conducted at gun shows involving transactions between buyers and federally-licensed firearms dealers.

Another startling discovery was that 54 percent of the respondents do not think that requiring background checks between friends and family members would be effective at reducing violent crime. CCRKBA pressed for a background check measure that would have exempted such transactions in 2013 and restored funding for relief-from-disability investigations to help restore gun rights to people convicted of certain non-violent crimes, but anti-gunners determined to keep as many people as possible from owning firearms and regaining their rights scotched that effort.

In Washington State, CCRKBA pushed a similar measure with family exemptions that also would have abolished the state's out-of-date pistol registry, but again anti-gunners were able to derail the effort.

One of the more humorous findings of the NSSF survey found that 59 percent of Americans are less likely to trust the government with an expanded background check, considering how the Obama administration has handled health care reform and

spying on U.S. citizens.

What may have tilted public opinion on so-called "universal checks" at gun shows was that in asking the question, pollsters advised survey participants that the vast majority of gun show sales are transacted by licensed retailers who already conduct checks through the National Instant Check System (NICS). Perhaps not surprisingly, a majority of respondents did not realize that when purchasing a firearm from a licensed retailer at a gun show, federal law requires an in-person FBI background check on that transaction. This suggests that anti-gunners have been successful in their efforts to mislead the public into believing that there are no background checks at gun shows.

"When properly informed of relevant details," noted Larry Keane, NSSF senior vice president and general counsel, "it turns out that only four out of ten, not nine out of ten Americans support so-called 'universal background checks' at gun shows or for firearms transfers. The poll also found that Americans want a National Instant Criminal Background Check System with a dependable and accurate database, which supports the goal of the FixNICS initiative we launched in 2013 and will continue in 2014."

The telephone survey was conducted by McKeon & Associates, a respected polling firm, from among 1,200 citizens. It has a margin error of +/- 4.1 percent.

The survey results were particularly interesting to CCRKBA because earlier in 2013, a survey by PoliceOne, an organization claiming a registered membership of 400,000 law enforce-

ment professions, either active or retired, surveyed its members. That poll drew more than 15,000 responses and showed that 79 percent did not think a federal law prohibiting private, non-dealer firearms transfers between individuals would reduce violent crime. Seventy percent did not support "the concept of a national database tracking all legal gun sales."

Perhaps most encouraging was the revelation that 91.3 percent of the members who responded said they support concealed carry by law-abiding private citizens who qualify for licenses and permits.

Slightly over 81 percent of the respondents did not believe that gun buybacks or turn-ins have been effective in reducing so-called "gun violence."

In that poll, conducted last spring, 71 percent of the respondents thought that a ban on the manufacture and sale of so-called "assault weapons" would have no effect on reducing violent crime. Slightly more than 60 percent thought passage of the White House's proposed legislation last year would have had no effect in improving officer safety.

For more firearms rights news:

www.ccrkba.org

www.thegunmag.com

www.keepandbeararms.com

www.saf.org

www.womenandguns.com

LOUISIANA'S JEFF THOMPSON: DEFENDER OF THE MONTH

Freshman Louisiana State Rep. Jeff Thompson founded the "Defend Louisiana" campaign and he held an "open conference" with almost 10,000 participants, along with U.S. Senators David Vitter (R-LA) and Ted Cruz (R-TX).

That's a success by anyone's standard, and gun rights activists in other states ought to push their representatives to follow Thompson's example. Earlier this year, he worked with other lawmakers in Baton Rouge to push through legislation that included lifetime concealed carry permits and penalizing the publication of concealed carry permit information and unlawfully sharing personal information about armed citizens. Jeff Thompson attended Northeast Louisiana University, earning a Bachelor of Business Administration degree. He worked in the private sector and was a reserve police officer with the Monroe Police Department before graduating with honors from Tulane University. He has served as president of the

Bossier Parish Bar Association, and is a member of the Shreveport and Louisiana State Bar Associations.

With all of those accomplishments, he is now facing the new challenge of defending Second Amendment rights in Louisiana with the "Defend Louisiana" project. For his work, he is CCRKBA's January 2014 Defender of the Month.

When he announced the effort, he issued a statement noting, "We fully intend to give residents a united and strong voice in the defense of their rights and the protection of their families. We're showing our commitment to reform by doing more than just talking, we're presenting bold solutions that increase safety while maintaining our fundamental rights. In the coming weeks and months there will be a lot of discussion regarding guns. We need to make certain our children realize guns can be dangerous and that we educate people about responsible ownership and use of firearms."

"Defend Louisiana" was quickly a bipartisan effort, with support from



Rep. Thompson

member of both parties, in both the House and Senate.

Thompson reported that the 2014 legislative session will consider a measure that will allow citizens with concealed carry permits to enter restaurants, and he will work to attract embattled firearms manufacturers to set up shop in Louisiana.

He is an avid hunter and angler, and belongs to several outdoor advocacy organizations.

ARGUMENTS IN ABRAMSKI CASE JAN. 22

Oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court are scheduled on Jan. 22 in a case that will determine whether it is legal for a law-abiding citizen to purchase a firearm from a licensed dealer for the purpose of re-selling the gun to another law-abiding citizen.

Led by West Virginia Attorney General, Patrick Morrisey and joined by 26 other states filed an amicus brief to the high court "opposing the attempt by the federal government

to expand federal law" to allow prosecution of those legal gun owners was filed. Amici are the States of West Virginia, Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming; the Commonwealths of Kentucky and Virginia; and Guam

The case is Abramski v. United States.

The Justice Department contends that the process amounts to a straw purchase. The states' position is that there was never a law passed that forbids such a transaction.

The arguments in the case, including all briefs, can be found on the U.S. Supreme Court's website at www.supremecourt.gov and searching for the case. Abramski v. United States or <http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/abramski-v-united-states/>



QUICK SHOTS

Maryland state lawmakers will once again be looking at gun legislation in the upcoming session, but instead of restricting gun rights, they're going to consider going after gun crime.

The Annapolis Capital-Gazette reported that legislative Republicans are proposing a bill that would end good behavior credits for those convicted of violent gun crimes, essentially "truth in sentencing."

The newspaper reported this was proposed as part of last year's gun control package, but was rejected; it has been debated for around a decade now.



One Alabama city's interpretation of a new pro-gun law may have exposed a possible loophole in it.

The *Decatur Daily* reported that officials in that community proposed regulations that would ban city employees – with the exception of law enforcement and prosecutors – from carrying their guns while on the job or on city property. The proposal was scheduled to be voted on by the Decatur city council Dec. 16, but was removed at the last minute.

According to the newspaper, the proposed rules came about because the new state law allowed for employers to regulate or ban the carrying of guns by employees while on the job, and a state senator told the *Daily* that he might look at amending the state law if the city followed through on its new policy, suggesting that other cities might follow suit if Decatur goes ahead with their new rules.



One Florida city could be getting into the business of providing gun safety training.

The Gainesville Sun reported that city officials are exploring offering a new self-defense course which would include instruction on firearms safety. City commissioners on the Gainesville city commission's public safety committee are the ones looking into it, according to the paper, after one commissioner suggested studying it. The Sun reported that the commissioner had wanted it to be aimed at women, but concerns about possible discrimination have resulted in a broader focus for the potential course.

Further discussion on this is expected into the new year, according to the paper.



Minnesota gun owners have a new local voice representing them in the fight to preserve their Second Amendment rights.

A new organization, the Minnesota Gun Owners PAC, was formed in December and it will help raise money and endorse candidates in upcoming elections who are friendly to gun rights on the state level.

MnGOPAC will be headed up by two individuals – one a gun safety instructor in the state and the other being an executive at Minneapolis-based retail chain Target Corporation.

They have also launched a new website, www.mngopac.org, for

those who want more information about this new group.



In Oregon, one county government is showing support for Second Amendment rights.

The Wallowa County Chieftain reported that that county's board of commissioners passed a so-called "Second Amendment Preservation" ordinance modeled after others which have passed at both the local and state levels across the country reinforcing the rights of private citizens to own firearms. The paper reports the ordinance passed after a lengthy process which started in November, and resulted in changes to the original proposal.

Wallowa County is located in the far northeastern corner of the Beaver State.



Christmas season has come and gone, and in Florida, firearms were a popular gift it seems.

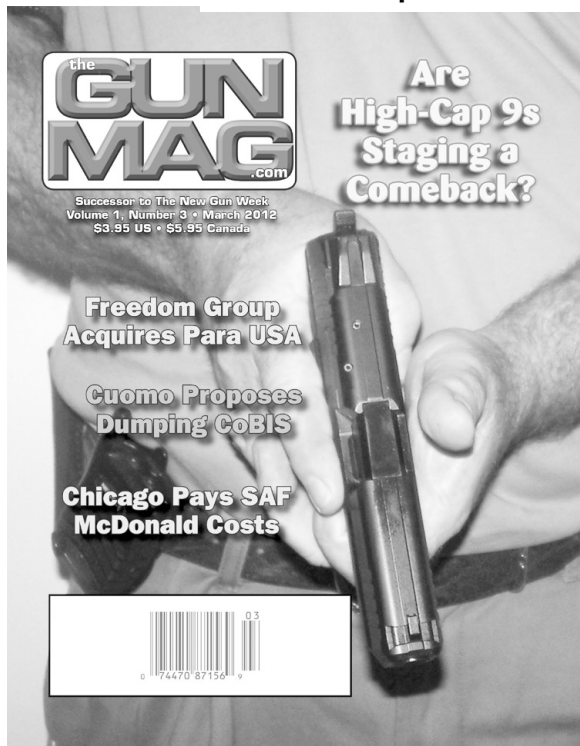
That was the assumption made in a news story on WKMG-TV in Orlando, which said state had reported a record number of background checks requested during the Black Friday weekend following Thanksgiving. Florida officials were expecting to perform almost a million checks on prospective purchasers of weapons for the entire year of 2013.

WKMG reported that the state had done over 800,000 checks prior to Dec. 15, of which nearly 40,000 were from the first two weeks of December alone.

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