

Report from the NRA Annual Meeting and Convention - Pittsburgh 2011

Friends,

Cathy and I spent three days at the NRA meeting and would like to report on some of the events and developments we saw.

My first impression is that the NRA ILA (Institute for Legislative Action) is very strong and if anything getting stronger. Wayne LaPierre is an impressive spokesman for the Second Amendment and fighting the political fight. His speech at the members meeting was focused on the ATF problem with Project Gun Walker. Google "gun walker". You can watch the entire Saturday morning members meeting speech on the web at; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5vAViVDO7A&feature=youtube_gdata.



Also at that meeting, Sheriff Paul Babeu from Pinal County, Arizona, was introduced with a hard hitting video and he had much more to say at the Saturday night Celebration of American Values Freedom Experience. You can watch his Saturday night presentation on the web at the site; http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzFZWVYCuu8&feature=youtube_gdata



The ILA Grassroots Workshop was, naturally, heavily focused on Grassroots political action. Even the Clubs and Associations workshop touched on the political necessity to take action to protect your range from intrusion from the outside. You may not be interested in Politics, but Politics is interested in you.

Saturday afternoon there was a continuation of the ILA-Grassroots efforts in a workshop titled "In their own words". From the description of the event it was bound to focus on political strategy and organization. I wanted to present my views on educating the public at large so I wrote and presented parts of the following.

In My Own Words - Speak out to support Gun Rights

Many gun rights supporters apply their pressure along political lines, supporting elected officials who support gun rights (and working to un-seat those who do not). However, there is a vast layer of folks below those politicians which needs more wide spread motivation to speak out on gun rights, thus supporting the politicians. They are the **General Public**, those influential person who watch and call the media and then call the elected officials.

Here are a few ways we, of the choir, can encourage more folks to spread the word. If you can get out into the public eye and get folks talking and thinking about gun rights, about the positive use of firearms, you will slowly build that general public layer of gun rights supporters. When you are out in public, make it your task to waive the flag and educate others. Here are a few suggestions.

Women On Target - Get involved in your club or any other group that is putting on these educational (and fun) shoots for Ladies Only. Carry some flyers to hand out when you

strike up a conversation. Take some to local shops and stores to be posted. Here is a link to WOT activities at one club. <http://www.monumental.org/wot/mrpc_wot.htm> The ladies have a great time and **They TELL THEIR FRIENDS**. When they complete a WOT clinic make sure they have flags to wave like hats and pins and their targets to take home and to work, to show to friends.

Juniors; Get the kids - and family - involved in recreational and sport shooting. Here is a link to "Juniors" activities at a club. <<http://www.monumental.org/juniors.htm>>
NOTE; The juniors activity includes **FREE PUBLIC INSTRUCTION** every Saturday.

Wave the flag. This is the broad category of using some type of symbol or action to open the conversation to promote gun rights. Examples of ACTIVE Flag Waving are;

Take someone to the range; For example as a charity raffle prize. This is both an active (the raffle) and passive (the raffle flyer) flag.

Lapel pins; Especially a handgun or long gun, member pins, etc. Anything that prompts someone you meet to ask you what the pin is about, allowing you to strike up the conversation.

Money Stamp; Use any rubber stamp to imprint a pro-gun slogan on paper currency to strike up a conversation. If the sales staff where you spend your money even hesitates while reading the imprint, seize the opportunity to begin a conversation - "We taught Women On Target last week..." Any similar opening line works. It is also sure to impress the anti-gun folks who get the bills in change.

Cross over active/passive; This includes taking some gun related magazines, even Shotgun News, along with you on the plane, bus or train to read and have others see it. If anyone shows an interest, talk to them. If you are finished reading, leave it on the magazine rack at the doctors office or barber shop. Take some extra magazines around each week.

Passive flag waving; This includes all those bumper stickers and window decals. NRA Member window decals do the most good as their number driving around town increases. They do NO GOOD just sitting on some shelf at NRA - Get them out there. Get out there and recruit others to wave the flag in the general public. Then the politicians will understand how broad the support is for gun rights. They will have political cover to support us.

And then there were the toys. Every where you look, lots of toys. We had three days in Pittsburgh but between all the meetings and seminars we could only sample the exhibit floors. We were able to stop and visit some of our friends, the Fifty Caliber Shooters Association, Barrett firearms and talk to Ronnie Barrett, Hornady Ammo (who we will visit in June), and a bunch of others. We encountered Friends and acquaintances from all around and times gone by.



As an example of the interesting things we saw was the Burris Eliminator rifle scope - web information at; <<http://www.burrisoptics.com/laserscope.html>>. This scope is getting close to the ultimate point-and-click interface I described years ago when palm pilots were incorporating

ballistic software. The only additional inputs needed are wind, barometric pressure and temperature.

Sunday, at Noon, was the Ted Nugent Experience. If you have never experienced Uncle Ted at an NRA meeting, you need to get out to one. Sorry, I could not find a U-tube link to his presentation; you will just have to do with this photo.



Uncle Ted made some comments about open carry which I was compelled to reply to. That reply is below.

Sent to <Help@TedNugent.com> Tues 4/3/2011

Thank you Uncle Ted - But... A View from the NRA Meeting and Convention

My wife Cathy and I enjoyed your rousing presentation at the NRA Experience on Sunday. As you say, if you see a problem - Fix It. As an engineer, I usually do that and now I see a problem that needs addressing.

You spoke about Open Carry of firearms and obviously did not support that practice. I do not remember the precise words you used to describe that activity or those who undertook it, but they were sharp words.

Obviously if one open carries and some criminals decide to attack, and if they are going to shoot someone, the first target they might shoot are the open carriers. Let me explain why I am a sometime open carrier.

1) I, and some other folks, can not or do not want to apply for a concealed carry permission slip. It is a point of personal freedom I am sure you might understand. It sometimes revolves around the background check and fingerprinting of the applicant, as if he were the criminal. Many folks have been fingerprinted in the past as part of other activities they have taken part in. They have given up that part of privacy and have nothing to loose. Others have not and decline to surrender this one remaining piece of personal information. Fortunately, Wyoming, our present part time home and soon to be our full time home, has adopted Constitutional Carry, the fourth state to do so. Constitutional Carry is on a trend as was Concealed Carry a decade or two ago.

2) Open Carry is sometimes done for "Educational" purposes and not just self defense. Yesterday I read an essay from a peace officer about folks who open carry to protest. I believe that education is the term that is more correct than protest in most of these cases. Never the less, some folks get confrontational as in a protest. Fortunately that peace officer acknowledged and strongly supported the Constitutional right to protest or demonstrate by legally open carrying. I direct you to an Open Carry activity from last Independence Day, the Walk In The Park, at; <<http://www.mcsm.org/walkinpark.pdf>> and <<http://www.mcsm.org/walkinpark2.pdf>> The first is the educational flyer that was used and the second is a travel log description of the event.

In closing, if you see something wrong, fix it. You can start by pointing out the problem, strongly if necessary, but then offer corrective recommendations. We know that open carry makes us a target. That is something we freely commit ourselves to, without reservation, and plan to counter an attack, if and when needed. We know that there are others around us openly or discretely carrying. It would amaze you how few people

notice an openly carried firearm and how heightened it makes the carrier, more aware of his surroundings. See the second above PDF title about the dinner at Billy's Burgers.

If you care to discuss this at any time, let me know. It could provide a new point of view or even new material for your presentations. BTW, the American Militia essays at; <http://www.mcsm.org/ammilitia01.html> might also be interesting to you.

Your brother in freedom.

Bob Culver

So. If Uncle Ted replies, I will let you know.

That about wraps things up. Fresh from the Ted Experience we hit the floor again and looked at a few toys, watched an action shooting demo and won a prize, and even bought a few things. I was able to find a special design holster I have been looking for; it is made by Fobus. I leave you with just a few more photos.



