



LSA QUARTERLY



The Louisiana Shooting Association

CONTENTS

- Eyes and Ears.....Page 3
- David Higgins goes Distinguished.....Page 5
- Field Precision Rifle Competition.....Page 8
- XTC and Mid-range prone Regional results...Page 10
- 2011 Legislative Outlook.....Page 14
- Neophyte or Ninja.....Page 15
- Announcements.....Page 18

“Eyes and Ears!”

If I had a nickel for every time I've heard that yelled down a firing line, I'd be able to buy a case or two of ammunition. Since I started shooting at the age of seven, eye and ear protection have been mandatory. There are few constants across all forms of shooting; one of them is a controlled explosion creating pressure to move a projectile out of the barrel. The resulting report is usually well past the level that would cause permanent hearing damage or immediate pain – so we wear hearing protection.

Our daily life is actually filled with such explosions, but they are typically muffled. When you start your car, you probably aren't greeted with the ear shattering noise your engine actually makes. Everyone has heard a car or motorcycle with no muffler. It isn't a pleasant thing, which is one of the reasons why automotive companies spend untold sums perfecting the exhaust note of our vehicles. It makes sense that if you can contain a deafening explosion that you would do so. Even our lawn equipment is equipped with well engineered sound suppression. As a matter of fact, the government regulates our exposure to any noise over certain thresholds in every area except one – firearms.



As long as I can remember, silencers, properly called suppressors, have been portrayed by Hollywood as the dark side of firearms. The “silencer” is typically used by an assassin who requires the utmost stealth for a nefarious objective, emitting a barely audible report to let the audience know a target has been dispatched. This representation has led to an amazing amount misinformation about suppressors. The reality of how suppressors work, who uses them, capabilities, and the legalities involved with ownership and possession have been badly distorted. Being a “gun guy”, I learned a little about them over the years, got to play with one here and there, but I never took a serious look because of the perceived hassle and legal issues surrounding them – but I always wanted one.

Fast forward to the landmark case of McDonald vs Chicago, a case that defined that the Second Amendment. The McDonald case confirms we have an absolute right to firearms ownership as individuals. I decided to celebrate by buying a suppressor, and I'm glad I did. It is actually a painless procedure that takes a little patience and offers plenty of reward.

Some research turned up the actual facts. An individual, a Revocable Living Trust, or a corporation can indeed buy and own a suppressor, if you live in one of the 37 states that hasn't

infringed on the right to own them. In 18 of those states you can even hunt with one. You have to pay the Federal Government \$200 for a transfer tax stamp over and above the cost of the suppressor, but the stamp, a clean record, a few signatures, and a few months wait is all that stands between you and a suppressed firearm. I'm lucky to have a great suppressor dealer, Derek Howard of Big Boy Armament, who makes the process easy to navigate. I personally chose to have my corporation, an LLC, take ownership of the suppressor for a variety of reasons. Direct personal ownership or trusts are also options.

So, what did I get for my troubles? A small cylinder is changing my shooting experience. I bought the Advanced Armament .22 LR Element, a state of the art suppressor barely the size of a marker. Threaded on the end of a S&W M&P 15-22, it eliminates the sound of the report that made up the majority of noise associated with shooting. Unlike in Hollywood, there is still some noise – the sound of the action cycling and the bullet itself impacting the target are still present – but it is GREATLY reduced and certainly hearing safe. This makes it easier to teach new shooters, such as my sons, instead of having to have them wear ear muffs or plugs that make instruction more difficult. It is also easier to teach a proper cheek weld, and generally more pleasant since you can hold normal conversation.



The Element is impressive enough that I decided to see what could be done on some of my louder weapons, namely an AR-15 and 9mm handgun. I again returned to Advanced Armament since they seem to be making the absolute state of the art suppressors right now. After talking to Derek I bought the M4-2000 for my AR-15 and Ti-Rant 9mm for a HK USP. To cut to the chase, I offer fair warning now – once you start shooting with these suppressors, anything else simply seems uncivilized.

Hearing damage is irreversible. When you are exposed to a sound over 140 decibels (db) you experience hearing loss. Anyone who has been around AR-15's knows they are LOUD. They generate about 165 db of sound. To understand how significant that spread is, you have to understand that sound is measured exponentially. Every 10 db represents a tenfold increase in energy. The rough rule of thumb is a 3 db increase is twice as loud. Enter the M4-2000. This suppressor reduces the signature of an AR by 32-34 db depending on the conditions, ammo, etc – well below the 140 db threshold. Furthermore, when you look at what that means in real terms - it

eliminates over 95% of the muzzle report. The shooter will still hear the supersonic “crack” of the bullet, but the vast majority of the sound is captured by the suppressor.

The Ti-Rant 9mm is just plain fun. Using subsonic bullets (bullets that don’t generate a “sonic boom” since they travel under the speed of sound), you get into truly quiet suppression. Shooting the TiRant at an indoor range, you hear little more than the bullet “thud” into the backstop. The TiRant drops the muzzle signature of a 9mm from about 160 db to 126 db, which makes for a very different shooting experience.

I’ve been shooting and collecting guns for almost 30 years now and these suppressors have changed the way I look at shooting. After trying some subsonic rifle rounds like the new 300 BLK, I’m absolutely hooked.

After seeing (hearing?) the reality of shooting with suppressors, I asked myself – Why are they so regulated? It turns out that during the Great Depression in the 1930’s Federal Game Wardens were concerned suppressors would be used to poach game on government land. Approaching 100 years later we are still saddled with needless regulation as a result. I hope that shooter by shooter, we can overcome the misinformation about suppressors and gradually introduce them into the mainstream. I don’t know if we can rid ourselves of the pointless regulations, but we can certainly push to reduce the cost of the transfer tax stamp and the waiting period. For the sake of our hearing, the enjoyment of shooting, and the basic rights involved, I hope it is sooner than later.

For more information, please reference –

www.aaccanu.com – Info about owning a suppressor

www.silencertalk.com – Website dedicated to all things suppression related

Derek@bigboyarmament.com – Suppressor Dealer and LSA member

Paul Angrisano

Louisiana Junior Service Rifle Team Member David Higgins Is Newest Distinguished Rifleman



On Sunday April 17th, David Higgins became the first junior from the state of Louisiana to earn the Distinguished Rifleman badge when he finished 2nd out of 38 non-distinguished competitors in the Excellence-in-Competition Match at the Palo Alto Rifle and Pistol Club range in Donaldsonville, Louisiana. David is now a member of the elite group of civilian service rifle competitors, numbering only about 2000, to earn the badge since competition for the award was opened up to civilians in 1923.

Excellence-in-Competition (EIC) points are earned by finishing in the top 10% of the non-distinguished competitors in an EIC match. The EIC match course of fire is the National Match Course of 10 shots each from the standing and sitting positions at 200 yards, 10 shots from the prone position at 300 yards and 20 shots from the prone position at 600 yards without the benefit of sighting shots using a service rifle such as an M1, M14 or M16 or their civilian counterparts. To earn the Distinguished Rifleman badge, a competitor must earn 30 EIC points including one finish in the top 5% of non-distinguished competitors.

David joined the Louisiana Junior High Power Program three years ago when he was just thirteen years old. He had little shooting experience at the time, but in the past few years he has attained much. David worked his way through the High Power ranks, first as a Marksman, then as an Expert. Along the way he earned High Junior Awards at state and regional competitions and shot on the Louisiana State Junior Service Rifle Team in the National Matches at Camp Perry in Ohio in 2009.

In July of 2010, David earned his Master classification card, and in August he again made the trip to Camp Perry. His first EIC points (4) were earned with a 3rd place finish among the 123 non-distinguished juniors in the USMC Junior Clinic and EIC match. He followed this up with a 9th out of 891 non-distinguished competitors in the National Trophy Individual match earning a gold Daniel Boone medal and 10 EIC points. After returning from Camp Perry, David competed in the EIC matches associated with the Louisiana State High Power Championship and Texas Service Rifle Championship earning an additional 6 EIC points in each. In addition, he was awarded the 1st Annual Henry Couvillon Memorial Trophy for the high score by a junior competitor at the Louisiana State High Power Championship.



Clearly, David was on a roll in 2010; however, he was working under a deadline as his father was reassigned to Camp Pendleton in California beginning June 2011. Once David moved to California, he would be unable to compete in High Power matches and had decided to concentrate his efforts on smallbore and air rifle competition.

In March 2011, David attended the regional match and EIC match at Bayou Rifle Club in Houston, Texas. This was one of the few EIC matches within driving distance being held prior to David's scheduled departure to California. Unfortunately, David's hot streak of finishing in the top 10% and making the cut for EIC points came to an end. David finished 2 places below the cutoff. Now, the Bayou State Regional and EIC match at Palo Alto Rifle and Pistol Club would be his do-or-die match as it was the last one available for him to enter before leaving. This fact certainly ratcheted up the match pressure.

The regional match was fired on Saturday, with David winning the Master class with a strong-for-the-conditions 764-18X. He was the only junior in the class with 18 adults, including a couple of members of the Army Marksmanship Unit and at least 6 Distinguished Riflemen. His margin of victory was 8 points, and he looked good for the next day's EIC match.



David showed up Sunday morning running a fever over 101° and feeling rather poorly. His offhand stage was average, but his performance in the sitting stage was mediocre, especially for him (on Saturday he shot the 2nd highest sitting score with a 200-8X against some excellent shooters, including 9 AMU members). Fortune did smile on him, however. There were some really rough winds all weekend and offhand was particularly challenging. At one point he got blown out as he was executing the shot and the trigger broke. CLICK! The gun didn't fire. Upon disassembly after the match, it was found that he had not charged the round with powder during the handloading process. David moved to the 300 yard line down 18 points.

At the 300 yard line, David committed a classic rookie mistake: he forgot to change his elevation from his 200 yard zero to his 300 yard zero. The result was a nice group in the 9 ring at 6 o'clock costing him 10 more points. To many at the match, it looked like David had given away his last chance for the badge, as most of the competitors in contention were more than 10 points ahead of him (he was in 11th place after the 300 yard stage). In spite of the bleak outlook, David refused to give

up and shot a 196-4X at 600. This was not only the highest 600 yard score of the match; it was the only one in the 190s. The next highest non-distinguished competitor fired a 186-5X. The wind was blowing from 6 o'clock pretty briskly and fishtailing back and forth. In spite of the rapidly changing wind, David only lost 1 point high and three 9s out the left, none wider than mid-ring. His final score of 468-12X was good for 2nd out of 38 non-distinguished competitors earning him 8 EIC points and the Distinguished Rifleman badge. David once again proved that you should never give up in a match until the last round is fired.

Congratulations David!

Dan Zelenka

For information about participating in the Louisiana Junior High Power Program, contact Dan Zelenka at dzelenka@louisianashooting.com

New Field Precision Rifle Competition

When the shot broke, it rattled teeth and the concussion could be felt in your chest, but 600 yards away the target went down all the same and came back up marked as an X. Not half a second later, with dust and grass still in the air kicked up by the muzzle blast from the first shot, a second report rang out from the muzzle brake. Brass flew as the bolt was thrown back and a new round stripped from the magazine and slammed home into the chamber. It too would come back an X. Nearly as fast, a third shot broke and behind him he could hear the encouragement of on-lookers that he had scored a "turkey" with three X's in a row. He mumbled something about "I'm no damn bowler" under his breath, unable to prevent a sly grin from crossing his face, and then cleared his mind, gazed at the mirage and wind flags, and settled in to finish off the rest of the string.

I can attest to the above bowling reference happening at the brand new Field Precision Rifle competition held this past weekend at Palo Alto Rifle and Pistol club because I was the one pulling the trigger. Granted, it's not uncommon to shoot three X's in a row, but to do it in an organized competition with a muzzle brake is. I've shot F-T/R as well as tactical/sniper-matches in Louisiana for the last three years now and have noticed more people looking for a niche that falls somewhere between the two. The market for tactical and field precision rifles has exploded in recent years with the flood of AR type systems and bolt action rifles that utilize detachable magazine systems. Frequently these rifles are fitted with muzzle brakes or suppressors, both of which are currently not allowed for use in F-class competitions. They are fitted with folding bi-pods designed for easy and fast deployment in a variety of shooting conditions. Optics range from low power to 25x magnification which allows for a greater field of view compared to the telescopic capabilities of F-class scopes which often are in excess of 30x magnification.



The author's FPR .308win. fitted with a .30cal suppressor faces the 600yd line at Palo Alto.

Field Precision Rifle allows the use of both muzzle brakes or suppressors. It requires all rounds to be loaded from the magazine in true field shooting style. Although barrel length is restricted to 26" as measured from the crown to the front of the recoil lug, and weight is restricted to 16.5lbs, calibers all the way up to .35 are allowed. This means that the guy with \$800 invested in his .30-06 or .270 hunting system can show up and compete against rifles that are closer to what he is using rather than the 20+lbs, 30"barrel, benchrest behemoths that dominate the F-Open line these days. We also run two different classes; one with a rear bag and one without. In the end, it's about having fun and getting more people interested in shooting. Shooters who have invested a few thousand dollars in a rifle are more likely to want to use it in a competition rather than going out and purchasing a separate rifle with which to compete. FPR opens a few more doors for shooters who are looking for a niche that previously wasn't available.

Ray McClain shooting his .260ai for his first match at Palo Alto while Peter Fischer scores for him



As match directors, both Rick Stewart and I welcome anyone to come out and enjoy this new match style. The rules and regulations surrounding FPR are currently under review by the NRA so it is not a sanctioned match format yet, but for more information you're welcome to contact us. Currently we are holding matches on the second Saturday of each month at the Palo Alto Rifle and Pistol club in Donaldsonville, La. Entry fee is \$15 and registration begins at 7:30am. We hope to see you on the firing line!

Ted Torres

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Rick Stewart

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Palo Alto Mid-Range Spring Regionals

The 2011 Palo Alto Mid-Range Spring Regional Championship is in the record books. It seems like the competition gets more exciting each year, and this year was no exception. We had multiple range records tied, broken and set both days. The weather was perfect, indeed fortunate, as the match was sandwiched between two nasty weather fronts two days prior to and following the match. Blue skies and typical Palo Alto winds were the order of the day on Saturday, while Sunday's winds built all day long with flags standing straight by the afternoon. The three Regional Champions proved their worthiness both days. Congratulations to the 2011 Mid-Range Regional Champions:





Left to Right

Stacey Tamulinas (Tx)	1198-90x	Prone Regional Champion
John Brewer (Ms)	1180-82x	F-Class Open Regional Champion
Dakota Murphy (La)	1162-47x	F-Class TR Regional Champion

All three champions tied, or set range records in the process.

Saturday morning Stacey Tamulinas tied the Prone 20 shot record with 200-18x, as did John Brewer in F-Open with his 200-18x. Later in the day Dakota Murphy shooting his first ever NRA mid-range match, fired a new record 199-9x in F-TR, which gave him a new F-TR 600 point aggregate record of 590-26x. At the same time, Gary Henry set a new Prone 600 point aggregate record of 600-38x. And the match was only half over.

Sundays shooting was even more impressive given the difficult conditions. Stacey Tamulinas took up where he left off Saturday and pounded out a 200-15x, followed by 200-16x, and finished with 200-16x for a 60 shot aggregate of 600-47x, breaking Gary Henry's day old record. Stacey's 1200 point aggregate is a new range record 1198-90x. John Brewer closed out his second day in the F-Open record books again with a 1189-82x record, as did Dakota Murphy with his 1162-47x F-TR aggregate. Terrific shooting indeed! Congratulations!!

In the classes, shooting was close among the leaders with the lead changing hands with each match, and each day. In the end it was Gary Henry taking first in Prone HM with 1197-61x, followed by Jon Rhynard's 1192-76. Both scores would have broken the old record. Gary Crayne won the Prone Master class with 1167-43x. Mark Altazin won the Expert class with his 1164-32x. Mark was shooting his new tube gun. I think he is happy with it. The combined Sharpshooter-Marksman class was won by Bob Bose with 1119-20x.

The F-Open High Master class was led by Whitney Simoneaux's 1181-47x. In the Master/Expert class, Jim Speaks led the way with 1168-33x. David Decareaux took top honors in F-Open Marksman class with his 1180-55x. Methinks David will not be a Marksman for long. Nice shooting!

In F-TR, Chris Coburn took first place with his 1148-24x, and Chris Kliebert won the Expert class with 1159-38x. Rick Stewart won the Sharpshooter/Marksman class in TR with his 1147-26x. Keep an eye on these young men, they are moving up.

Special thanks to the officers of Palo Alto R&P club for the support and great facility, to the Estopinals for the tasty jambalaya, to Jim Street for the chili, (I think it was chili, it was long gone when I got to it, must have been good!) and to Ms. Simoneaux for the delicious cake.

Once again, congratulations to all the winners for their great shooting, (see attached photos) and to all the competitors a big Thank You for attending our little rifle range on the bayou. We hope to see you again later in the year, perhaps for the Louisiana State Mid-Range Championship in October.

Lanny Russel & Gary Henry

BAYOU STATE REGIONAL HIGH POWER RIFLE CHAMPIONSHIP

15-17 April 2011

Donaldsonville, Louisiana

An NRA-Registered High Power Rifle Tournament

The range at the Palo Alto Rifle & Pistol Club did not let us down, as the Bayou State Regional High Power Rifle Championship was dominated by windy conditions, ensuring the range's reputation for challenging shooting. The winds continued to support the range's nickname, "Camp Perry on the Bayou."

Sixty-two competitors fired on at least one day of the match, with six 4-man teams shooting on Friday, 49 in the regional on Saturday, and 38 non-distinguished and 6 distinguished shooters in the EIC match on Sunday. We were again proud to host members of the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit (USAMU). As has become tradition, the post-match meal was held at the Palo Alto Plantation, which served another one of its excellent local meals for everyone involved in the match.

Friday's 4-man team match saw 24 competitors firing on 6 teams in mostly cloudy, humid weather. A strong full-value wind from the south dominated all day, with rapid light changes caused by the blowing clouds. It was truly a difficult day. USAMU Heuman took the top honors. The team was composed of Firing Members: **SSG Armando Ayala, SSG Brandon Green, SPC Augustus Dunfey, and SPC Kevin Trickett** and Captain/Coach: **Don Heuman** who fired a combined 1948-57X. Second place honors went to USAMU Verbickas, with a 1916-48X. The team comprised firing members: **SSG Scott Grant, SFC Lester Case, SSG Joel Micholick, and SGT Nathan Verbickas** and Captain/Coach: **SGT Nathan Verbickas**. Third place went to local Team Helen Keller, which fired 1870-34X. Firing team members comprised: **Bob Jenkins, John Laws, Mark Altazin, and Buck Kliebert**, Captain **Mark Altazin**, Coach **Dan Zelenka**.

A powerful series of dangerous thunderstorms passed during Friday night and early Saturday morning, which left in its wake much cooler temperatures, very low humidity, and strange winds. The winds in the morning were light for the first couple of relays, but increased during the day to become strong, and switching from full-value out of the north to no-value out of the west. There was not a cloud in the sky, but the winds were strange and difficult to read. The 2011 Bayou State Regional Champion and NRA Gold Medalist was **SGT Nathan Verbickas** of Fort Benning, GA, who used his

service rifle to fire a 783-27X. The NRA Silver Medal and Match Rifle Champion was **SSG Armando Ayala** of Phenix City, AL, who fired a strong 781-29X. The NRA Bronze Medal and the Service Rifle Champion was **SPC Augustus Dunfey** of Ft. Benning, GA, who turned in a 781-25X. High Civilian for 2011 was **Jon Rhynard** of Haughton, LA, who was also High Senior. Jon fired a 770-25X with a very impressive 198-9X at 600 yards, demonstrating that Jon can still beat the best on windy days at the 600 yard line. High Junior honors went to **David Allen Higgins** of Mandeville, LA with a 764-18X.

The CMP Excellence-in-Competition Match on Sunday found 38 non-distinguished and 6 distinguished shooters competing on a beautiful cloudless day. Unfortunately, the winds had switched to mostly easterly, and the fishtailing wind switched rapidly to cause plenty of consternation at the 600 yard line. **James Knerr** of Pensacola, FL won the match for the Gold Medal with a 473-8X. The Silver Medal and 10-point leg was awarded to **Warren Ginn** of Pace, FL, who also turned in a 473-8X. Warren earned enough points to earn his Distinguished Rifleman badge with this 10-point leg. **Congratulations Warren!** The Bronze Medal went to Distinguished Rifleman **Bob Jenkins** of Covington, LA with a 471-11X. **David Allen Higgins** of Mandeville, LA earned an 8-point leg with a 468-5X, despite running a fever for most of the day. David only needed 4 points to go Distinguished. **Congratulations David!** The two 6-point legs went to **Bill Jenkins** of Covington, LA with a 466-10X and **John Laws** of Port Allen, LA (his first leg points!) with a 465-8X. Finally, **Bruce Record** of Gonzales, LA came up just short this year with a 458-12X, taking first leather. First Leather is a term that is used for the person who has the highest score short of having leg points awarded at an EIC match. It is generally an honorary title that leaves the recipient wondering how he could have scored just a few more points. At this year's match, however, **Doug Giraud** decided that the shooter ending up First Leather shouldn't go home empty handed and donated one of his renowned case trimmers as a consolation prize. But, as the saying goes, you have to be present to win, and Bruce left the range before the awards ceremony. The trimmer was won by **Mario Fajardo** of Crestview, FL. Doug was not even able to make it to this year's match, but sent a trimmer anyway. **Thank you Doug!** Tell Doug thank you by going to <http://www.giraudtool.com/> and checking out all of his high quality high power shooting tools and equipment. You won't be disappointed!

A match this large takes hard work from a dedicated group of people. The range looked great, we had new targets, and match day went off with not a hitch. We wish to thank the following for taking the time to make this year's match a success: **Barbara Zelenka** for "volunteering" to be Chief Statistical Officer, **Lee Shall** for calling the line during the EIC Match, **Mike Clark** for donating the trophies for the Regional Championships, and **Doug Giraud** for donating the trimmer for the EIC Match. The range looked great and the targets were in great shape thanks to all of those shooters who repaired the targets. Thanks to all of those who helped with target repair. **Thank you, for making our match a success, and see you next year!**

Name	Score	Awards
SGT Nathan Verbickas	783-27	Regional Champion NRA Gold Medal
SSG Armando Ayala	781-29	Match Rifle Champion NRA Silver Medal
SPC Augustus Dunfey	781-25	Service Rifle Champion NRA Bronze Medal
SSG Brandon Green	773-26	1st High Master
Jon Rhynard	770-25	Regional Civilian Champion 2nd High Master High Senior

SPC Kevin Trickett	768-27	3rd High Master
David A. Higgins	764-18	1st Master High Junior
James Knerr	756-14	2nd Master
SFC Lester Case	751-15	3rd Master
Mario Fajardo	747-15	4th Master
Richard Fuller	742-17	1st Expert
Sean Creel	734-9	2nd Expert
Samuel Beane	727-11	3rd Expert
Paul (Rudy) Kalman, Jr.	711-8	1st Sharpshooter

2011 Legislative Session Firearms Summary

HB 8 – LaFonta. While appearing on the surface to “only” require an ammunition retailer to compare the serial number of a customer’s firearm against an unknown database to confirm that the ammunition being sold will be used in a firearm which has its serial number removed or modified, the bill in effect will prohibit the sale of ammunition. No retailer can ensure the ammo sold will only be used in “clear” firearms unless they retain custody of all of the customer’s firearms. The bill provides for criminal prosecution of retailers who are unable to guarantee this exclusive use of the ammo sold, consequently no retailer will risk such a sale to any party. Opposed by LSA and NRA.

HB 11 – McVea. Would remove the requirement that concealed carry permit holders complete one-half day renewal training course once every five years. Currently the renewal course exposes permit holders to changes in the law since their last training and requires them to demonstrate minimal competency with a handgun.

HB 64 – Badon. Would allow additional “nuisance” animals to be taken without permits around wildlife and crawfish ponds by the landowner. Supported by LSA and NRA.

HB 169 – Henry. Would allow those eligible to possess sound suppressors to use them while taking nongame nuisance quadrupeds. Supported by LSA and NRA.

HB 294 – Thibaut. Removes the caliber restriction when taking outlaw quadrupeds including feral hogs and retains the use of night vision devices. The bill was amended in committee to require notice be given to the sheriff within 24 hours of the proposed taking. The bill is supported by LSA and the NRA though both oppose the committee amendment. The bill is opposed by the LA Sheriff’s Association.

HB 413 – Wooton. Would allow for permitted concealed carry at vocational schools, colleges and universities. Would require permit holders to notify school officials of their intent to carry while on campus.

HB 489 – Seabaugh. Would allow a person who moving to LA and who currently holds a concealed handgun permit issued by another state to continue to carry concealed for up to 45 days provided have applied for a Louisiana permit and have a date-stamped copy of their pending application. Supported by LSA and NRA.

SB 39 – LaFleur. Repeals an outdated section of Louisiana law and brings state law into conformity with federal law allowing the resident of any state to purchase a long-gun in person while in Louisiana. Louisiana sales of handguns would remain limited to Louisiana residents. Supported by LSA and NRA.

The Louisiana Shooting Association maintains a website that provides the latest information on what is happening at the legislature. <http://www.bayoushooter.com/legislation/> Please check it frequently during the session. Don't forget to write your legislators to express your opinions on the various bills.

Neophyte, Ninja... or somewhere in between? The line between gun guy and simply responsibly armed.

By: Brannon LeBouef

If you are reading this, there is a high probability that you are a self-described “gun guy” or “gun gal.” A gun person is one who has a personal interest in guns as a hobby, and that interest takes them past the utilitarian interest of guns as simple survival tools. It is a personal investment of time and energy in guns beyond their simple use as a mean to an end.

Replace the word gun with almost any other noun, and we know a friend or neighbor who is the same way. There is the “lawn guy” down the block who treats his riding mower like a gold-plated space shuttle. He meticulously changes the oil every 2.75 cuttings, keeps it in the garage and not only washes, but also waxes his prized tool of lawn maintenance after each clipping.

One step up the evolutionary ladder of privately coveted machinery would be the “car guy.” At least once per weekend, his prized visual representation of his manhood is rolled onto the carport for a thorough washing, waxing, vacuuming, and general Q-tip detailing that is more evasive a search for dust than the average Joe receives from TSA for having a Glock keychain.

For these people, and the gun guy, the use, maintenance, collecting, showing off, discussing, and overall immersion in their chosen hobby has a personal and sometimes emotional investment...along with most of their expendable income. However, for many, albeit MOST people, a firearm is sometimes regarded as a necessary evil in the same manner as a fire extinguisher, smoke detector, spare tire, flood insurance, or seatbelts— something that is a life requirement for the prudent.

Because they do not have a personal interest outside of the utilitarian use of the device, they seldom take their level of involvement (training) in its application beyond that which is the bare necessity to meet the most basic function—immediate self defense.



The reality is that our current culture is not a “gun culture” in the same respect it was 40--60 years ago. This is mainly due to the industrialization of society and a movement from the rural farms to the cities where guns are seen most often as a danger rather than a safety item. Add to that the lack of men whom have served in the military and you have a society that has not had firearms as a daily and integral part of their life. Granted, with the current wars going on, the pendulum is starting to swing, but we are not quite there yet.

That leaves us with a large body of society who have never seen, much less fired an actual firearm ever in their life. Now faced with increasing violent crime, many are seeing the firearm as a necessary tool for their survival much like colonial times. All that is missing at this point is the NEED to hunt for food.

Herein lies the problem. For those of us who are gun guys, training to use that gun to our and its top level is something we hold very dear and we take very seriously. However, the reality is that the average person has no desire or need to reach that level of competence. While we all should strive to achieve our own level of “best”, when it comes to self-defense for the average person, they simply need to get the job done. It would be comparable to expecting every person who owned a car to be able to drive to the performance level of Dale Earnhardt... it's not necessary.

WHAT? I know that flies in the face of much of training doctrine, especially since I am a trainer myself, but put law enforcement, special forces operators, training junkies, and mall ninjas aside, the average person I encounter as a concealed handgun instructor I know for a fact will take the class, go home and load the gun, and then throw it in a night stand until four years later when they get a notice saying they need to renew their CHP—if they even have that. Otherwise, that firearm may never see the light of day until it is pulled from that drawer in the predawn hours to investigate a bump in the night, perhaps 10 years later.

The reality is that as long as they know how to pick it up, put it in a firing condition, and pull the trigger inside of a 10---15 foot envelope and get hits on target, that is all that matters from a functionality standpoint. They do not need to know how to field strip it in 30 seconds blindfolded while being punched in the gut. The person who will make the commitment to actually conceal carry will almost always get additional training by definition of their personal commitment. However, MANY people will never carry a firearm. They simply want one in the house for the FEELING of security and in the case of that infamous bump in the night.

Should everyone who owns a firearm be able to hit a bumble bee in flight at fifty yards? Probably not. The reality is most people who “have a gun in the house” simply require the guidance to maintain that firearm safely, load and unload it, and the most rudimentary aspects of marksmanship. More importantly to the total equation, they should know the current legal components they must meet for those

actions to be considered legal in their jurisdiction. Just because you are scared, does not mean you are in a position where deadly force is legally or morally justified. This level of training can be achieved in a QUALITY concealed carry class. That said additional training is HIGHLY recommended and wise.

If you are a gun person and find yourself appalled at the lack of commitment and responsibility that someone would have to not train more, remember this, there is probably something equally important to that person that you do not put enough time into—working out, politics, religion, financial investments, etc. You place a high importance on firearms training because you have a personal interest in them in the same way a body builder places a high importance on fitness but probably does not know which end of the gun to hold.

Our job is to not dismiss these people because they are “*clueless sheeple*”, but rather to welcome them with open arms in whatever capacity they are willing to commit, be a resource when they have questions, and allow their interest to bloom. Otherwise, we risk completely alienating them to the sport, utility, and enjoyment that the shooting sports and self-defense with a firearm offer, and slamming the door in their face of them ever seeking additional training.



Remember, just because someone doesn't know the latest gun on the market and consider Hoppes #9 as a viable cologne option, does not mean they are any less entitled to their right to keep and bear arms, nor does it mean they necessarily lack the basic skills for self--defense. It simply means to them a lawn mower cuts grass and a gun shoots bad guys. If they happen to call a do-hickey a thing-a-ma-bob, don't blow your top or necessarily point it out....we all had to start learning somewhere.

Now, if they should dare to call a magazine a clip, then you do what you have to do! LOL!

Brannon LeBouef is the owner of Nolatac Firearms Training in New Orleans, LA. He is an 11 year veteran of the United States Marine Corps, and 15 year veteran of law enforcement. While in the USMC, Brannon was a member of the Reserve Rifle and Pistol team which competed in matches and instructed other USMC instructors. Brannon teaches concealed handgun classes and marksmanship in the New Orleans area. Go to www.NOLATAC.com for more information.

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