

The Gottlieb-Tartaro Report

THE INSIDERS GUIDE FOR GUN OWNERS

Issue 182

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Dear Subscriber,

In 2012, a big **United Nations conference** will push for the **Arms Trade Treaty**, which, among other things, **will establish restrictive goals on firearms ownership and worldwide disposal.**

This "New World Order" threatens your gun rights and those of every American.

STEVE SANETTI, president and CEO of the **National Shooting Sports Foundation** says the Arms Trade Treaty, along with attempts to renew the so-called "assault weapons ban," are **the biggest challenges facing the shooting sports industry in the coming years.**

SANETTI thinks **the treaty might pose the greatest danger** because there are **so many unexpected details it might include**, any of which could be disastrous to gun owners.

SANETTI is a former executive of the **Ruger Arms Company**, and knows the subtle ways that **gun control advocates advance their cause**: first, convince the general public that **if all guns are banned, and nobody has them but governments**, then there would be **no more wars and no more crime.**

The likes of HILLARY CLINTON and NANCY PELOSI want *the enlightened to govern the ignorant masses* by applying one set of universal rules for the world, and **it's not the Constitution of the United States.**

The Arms Trade Treaty is a "baby step" in that direction.

"The international community doesn't understand why Americans respect and protect their **Second Amendment rights** because *in most countries no such rights exist*," said SANETTI, who presided over the 2010 annual Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade (SHOT) show.

"Of course, **the Founders added the Second Amendment as one of the safeguards**, and it's not something open for discussion as far as we're concerned.

"The OBAMA administration has gone on record as saying **"it's time for America to rejoin the community of nations and get more in line** with various international goals." **So gun control is moving to the forefront**, though not in the in-your-face, confrontational way we've seen before. **Gun control advocates go in one direction, try and fail, and then go in another direction.** That's been the pattern."

SANETTI noted that the previous administration's UN delegates gave international gun control a **"no-way, Jose"** response. However, **Secretary of State HILLARY CLINTON** has said that **the administration is not opposed, per se, to an Arms Trade Treaty**, but that the U.S. might go along with it if there is a **consensus** among the nations - in other words, **the decision has to be unanimous.**

Predictably, **gun control groups worldwide protested** any requirement that the UN be bound by consensus rules for the treaty.

"Our salvation might be that 2012, which is when the UN will put the Arms Trade Treaty on the front burner, **is an election year**," SANETTI said.

"We feel reasonably confident that **this administration is not going to push the treaty** or even avow any ownership, but *there's no certainty of that*. If the administration **sidesteps the issue** and there is **no unanimity among nations, the treaty is probably dead**, but we're definitely **keeping an eye on developments** there." **Concerned gun owners all over America are watching, too.**

Also in this issue: ● *The Second Amendment and the States* ● *Campaign finance ruling helps gun rights* ● *Firearms Freedom Act spreads to many states* ● *More robbers thwarted by citizens with guns* ● *Expelled teen duck hunter gets back into high school* ● *Humane Society packs heat in our Page 8 "Parting Shot"*

**U.N. ATTACK
ON
GUN RIGHTS**

THE CHICAGO GUN CASE READIED FOR THE SUPREME COURT

Alan Gura has filed his clients' reply brief with the Supreme Court for the upcoming Second Amendment Foundation gun rights case, *McDonald v. Chicago*. This is the final brief to be filed by either side and it's a definitive piece of work.

Reason magazine said, "It makes Chicago's efforts look a little amateurish by comparison," and pointed to one sentence in the brief that makes the point:

"Virginia attorney Gura, who argued the landmark *Heller* case before the U.S. Supreme Court almost two years ago, said, 'Unable to articulate the correct standard for substantive due process incorporation, or interpret the Privileges or Immunities Clause, Respondents [Chicago and Oak Park, Illinois] offer irrelevant political arguments against application of the right to keep and bear arms against the States, failing to accept that the decision to secure the right in our Constitution has already been made.'"

**SUPREME
COURT
UPDATE**

Gura told a press conference at the annual Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade Show in Las Vegas, "The rights of United States citizenship include the right to keep and bear arms, and the current challenge to the handgun ban in the City of Chicago is being fought to establish that this right applies to all citizens, and not just the residents of Washington, D.C., who were the ultimate winners in the *Heller* decision."

The *Heller* ruling essentially applied to citizens living in the District of Columbia, even though it defined the Second Amendment as protecting an individual civil right that extends beyond service in a militia.

McDonald v. Chicago will address "Whether the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms is incorporated as against the States by the Fourteenth Amendment's Privileges or Immunities or Due Process Clauses."

An 1873 Supreme Court decision called "*The Slaughterhouse Cases*," virtually gutted the Privileges and Immunities clause, and has never been overturned.

McDonald seeks to overturn that case, meaning precedent has to be broken, and courts usually honor *Stare Decisis*, the doctrine of "Let the decision stand."

In the recent *Citizens United* free speech case, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote that breaking precedent is proper if its underlying reasoning "has become so discredited that the Court cannot keep the precedent alive without jury-rigging new and different justifications to shore up the original mistake."

Alan Gura hopes that overturning *Slaughterhouse* will finally protect gun rights everywhere, along with other vital civil rights that were thwarted in 1873.

Gura was joined by Lawrence Keane, vice president and legal counsel of the National Shooting Sports Foundation. NSSF has filed an amicus brief to the court supporting the SAF lawsuit. *McDonald* is one of two challenges filed against the Chicago handgun ban within 24 hours of the *Heller* ruling.

Gura represents the Bellevue, Washington-based Second Amendment Foundation and Illinois State Rifle Association, and four individual Chicago residents.

The other case was filed by the National Rifle Association, but the Supreme Court only accepted the SAF challenge for review.

The NRA was stunned when the Court refused to accept its case rather than the Second Amendment Foundation's, and asked to be let in. The Supreme Court granted the NRA's last-minute motion for "divided argument" in *McDonald v. Chicago*.

What this means is that Alan Gura's 30 minutes of argument time on behalf of Chicagoland gun owners has become 20, with 10 going to former Solicitor General Paul Clement, whom the NRA hired to get its name into the *McDonald* case.

The Cato Institute's Ilya Shapiro said the NRA was "glory seeking."

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FEDS SEEK TO DISMISS MONTANA FIREARMS FREEDOM ACT CASE

The United States has made its first response to the lawsuit filed in federal district court in Missoula to test the 2009 Montana Firearms Freedom Act (MFFA).

The MFFA declares that any firearms, ammunition or accessories made and kept in Montana are not subject to federal regulation. The lawsuit, *MSSA v. Holder*, was brought by the Montana Shooting Sports Association (MSSA) and Second Amendment

IN THE COURTS

Foundation (SAF). U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder is defendant.

The U.S. filed a Motion to Dismiss, a standard procedural maneuver to avoid the legal merits, claiming the plaintiffs lack standing to sue, that a justiciable controversy does not exist, and prevailing case law is against the plaintiffs.

SAF Founder Alan Gottlieb said, "We are disappointed but not surprised that the government would try to kill this suit on standing, rather than arguing about the merits of the case."

MSSA President Gary Marbut (also a plaintiff) said, "The FFA concept has created a firestorm nationwide. Other states are watching carefully to see how Montana fares in this challenge to overbearing federal authority.

MSSA and SAF have assembled a litigation team consisting of three attorneys from Montana, one from New York, one from Florida and one from Arizona. Other interested parties are preparing amicus curiae briefs (friends of the court).

SUPREME COURT CAMPAIGN FINANCE RULING HELPS GUN RIGHTS

The Supreme Court last month struck down long-standing bans on political advocacy spending. In a 5-4 decision, the court ruled that laws barring corporations from advocating explicitly for candidates and from running issue ads within 60 days of a general election are an encroachment on their freedom of speech.

The McCain-Feingold Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2002 extended restrictions on last-minute ads to non-profit groups such as the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms and other gun rights advocates. Now that the ban has been struck down, non-profit pro-gun groups are free to speak their minds.

COALITION THREATENS TO SUE COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY OVER GUN BAN

A coalition of Second Amendment advocates is threatening to sue Colorado State University because of the university system's proposed ban on carrying concealed weapons on campuses. The ban would extend to people who have concealed weapons permits and are now allowed to carry on CSU's campus.

It would also ban pellet guns and Tasers. Larimer County Sheriff Jim Alderden said he would not jail anyone defying a ban.

ARIZONA APPEALS COURT RULES SELF-DEFENSE LAWS NOT RETROACTIVE

A bid by state legislators to retroactively change self-defense laws is unconstitutional, the Arizona Court of Appeals ruled. Without dissent, the judges said Cesar Montes, convicted of the 2005 shooting death of Benjamin Cota in Pima County, is not entitled to take advantage of changes in self-defense laws enacted after the shootings. The ruling also affects other cases where people convicted of murder have been trying to use the retroactive law to get a new trial.

NEW YORK COUNTY'S "DECEPTIVELY COLORED" HANDGUN LAW APPEALED

In June 2008, Nassau County passed Local Law #5, criminalizing the possession and sale of "deceptively colored handguns" as a supposed danger to law enforcement. Three New York State pistol licensees have challenged the law in the New York State Appellate Court, based on state pre-emption of local gun control laws.

GUN RIGHTS GROUP SUES OVER NEW JERSEY'S ONE-GUN-A-MONTH LAW

The Gloucester County-based Association of New Jersey Rifle and Pistol Clubs (ANJRPC), together with a Gloucester County sporting-goods shop and a Morris County gun owner joined in a federal lawsuit against the State of New Jersey to challenge its five-month-old one-handgun-per-month law as unconstitutional.

ARIZONA LAWMAKERS ADVANCE FIREARMS FREEDOM ACT

The House Judiciary Committee has voted by a 5-2 margin to let Arizonans make their own guns and bullets - and offer them for sale - without having to comply with federal regulations. The legislation is patterned after an identical measure approved by the Montana Legislature last year (*see Page 3 top story*).

Rep. Nancy McLain, R-Bullhead City, said HB2307 is designed to have Arizona exercise its right of sovereignty that is guaranteed under the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

But McLain said the issue is more than an academic exercise of states' rights. There have been proposals at the federal level that could result in new limits on the rights of Arizonans to purchase guns, whether directly or by making it harder to obtain bullets.

IN THE STATES

GEORGIA BILL WOULD END GOVERNOR'S POWER OVER GUN RIGHTS IN EMERGENCIES

State Sen. Preston Smith (R-Rome) has filed Senate Bill 342 to protect legally carrying citizens' gun rights during a state of emergency. Currently, state law grants extraordinary powers to a Georgia governor to suspend or limit the sale, dispensing or transportation of firearms during an emergency.

Sen. Smith's bill would repeal that existing statute and remove a governor's power to limit gun rights during an emergency. Sen. Smith said, "Just since the 1990's, there have been over 30 occasions where a governor has declared a state of emergency in Georgia. While no governor has yet exercised this extraordinary ability, it is within their power to do so. I don't believe that a governor should ever prohibit citizens from the legal purchase or transportation of firearms."

TWO INDIANA BILLS WOULD SOLVE GUN OWNER PROBLEMS

The Indiana state Senate, in a commanding, 41-9 vote, has decided to protect employees' right to store firearms in their locked vehicles. The bill, SB 25, would prevent employers from prohibiting workers from keeping firearms locked in their vehicles parked on company parking lots.

It would not prevent employers from banning guns inside the workplace.

The bill now moves to the House of Representatives, where the legislation died in 2009 after passing the Senate.

Also, the Indiana House passed a bill on an 85-11 vote to protect the privacy of gun owners who have concealed weapon permits. The bill, written by Rep. Peggy Welch, D-Bloomington, forbids state police from releasing the names, home addresses and other identifying information about permit holders. Current law allows public access to that information. The bill now moves to the state Senate.

NEW HAMPSHIRE LAWMAKERS TO CONSIDER ALLOWING FIREARMS IN STATE HOUSE

The New Hampshire House Rules Committee has allowed Rep. Gene Chandler, R-Bartlett, to file a bill that would repeal the weapons ban now in place at the State House.

The committee had blocked Chandler's bill, which he proposed after House deadlines had passed. At the time, a joint House-Senate committee that controls uses of state buildings was considering a second vote on the ban. Rules members said until that issue was settled, it would be premature to allow the introduction of the bill, but changed their minds and allowed the bill.

NEW JERSEY PASSES WEAK "REFORM" OF ONE-GUN-A-MONTH LAW

The New Jersey Assembly has voted unanimously (73-0-3) to approve S3104/A4361, which were supposed to "reform" the "One-Gun-A-Month" law. While it would, in limited circumstances, allow a law-abiding person to purchase multiple handguns, an individual would only be able to do so after filing a formal application with the State Police. In addition, the individual would need to justify their "need" to purchase these firearms together and why it would not be "feasible or practical" to purchase the firearms separately. S3104/A4361 now head to the desk of Governor Jon Corzine (D) for his consideration.

OKLAHOMA "FIREARMS FREEDOM ACT" BILL INTRODUCED

To strengthen the Second Amendment rights of Oklahomans, state Rep. Lewis Moore has filed legislation to deter frivolous lawsuits against gun manufacturers. House Bill 2884, creates the "Oklahoma Firearms Freedom Act," which declares that a "personal firearm, a firearm accessory, or ammunition that is manufactured commercially or privately in Oklahoma and that remains within the borders of Oklahoma is not subject to federal law or federal regulation, including registration, under the authority of Congress to regulate interstate commerce."

IN THE STATES

Moore said, "In recent years gun-control fanatics have used litigation to indirectly put firearms companies out of business, block access to firearms and gut the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution."

TENNESSEE DEMOCRAT INTRODUCES GUN SHOW BAN BILL

Representative G. A. Hardaway has introduced HB 2422, Firearms and Ammunition. As introduced, it creates various gun show offenses: it prohibits any person who is not a licensed firearms dealer from transferring a firearm to another person if any part of the transfer takes place at a gun show or within 1,000 feet of a gun show. HB 2422 amends TCA Title 39, Chapter 17.

This bill, if enacted, would make it a crime for an unlicensed person to enter into a firearms transaction at or near a gun show, which is a transaction that would be legal on a street corner in Memphis or Knoxville. "It should come as no surprise that a Memphis Democrat would introduce an anti-gun bill in the Legislature," said Liston Matthews of the *Knoxville Examiner*. "Nothing in this bill will prevent a crime. HB 2422 is designed to close the so-called Gun show loophole," but it simply infringes on lawful commerce in privately owned firearms."

VIRGINIA NIXES GUN SHOW BILL, MAY REPEAL ONE-GUN-A-MONTH LAW

A House Militia, Police and Public Safety subcommittee has voted 4-1 to kill Democratic Delegate Jennifer McClellan's bill to "close the (so-called) gun-show loophole," where private sellers are not required to perform checks. The House has killed similar bills for several years.

Virginia State Delegate Scott Lingamfelter (R - Prince William & Fauquier Counties), who sits on the Militia, Police, and Public Safety Committee, has filed House Bill 49, which would repeal Virginia's one handgun a month purchase rationing scheme. Only 3 other states ration handgun purchases: California, Maryland, and New Jersey. South Carolina repealed their gun rationing law.

WASHINGTON STATE URBAN DEMOCRATS WANT "ASSAULT WEAPONS" BAN

Four anti-gun Democrat lawmakers representing four Seattle-area districts have filed a bill to ban so-called "assault weapons" in Washington State, using definitions based almost entirely on cosmetics rather than on the actual function of the firearm. Sponsors are State Senators Adam Kline (37th District), Jeanne Kohl-Welles (36th District), Darlene Fairley (32nd District) and Joe McDermott (34th District). Ironically, the bill was filed on the same day that Chelan County Sheriff Mike Harum told the *Wenatchee World* that criminals like the man who gunned down four Lakewood police officers on Nov. 29 will not be deterred by gun control laws. Insiders see little chance the bill will pass.

WYOMING BILL PROPOSES RECIPROCITY FOR ALL PERMITTEES FROM OTHER STATES

Senator Cale Case (R-25) has introduced legislation to fix a conceal-carry blunder from earlier this year. Case's SF 26, "Eligibility concealed weapons permit," will fix Gov. Dave Freudenthal's administrative decision to deny carry rights to permittees from other states.

Wyoming Gun Owners (WYGO) supports legislation that lets anyone with a permit from any state carry in Wyoming. "If an individual has a concealed carry permit from their own state, no matter what Wyoming interprets from their state law, they should be able to carry in Wyoming," WYGO leaders said.

NATIONWIDE SELF-DEFENSE UPDATE

● **Houston, Texas:** Robert and Pam Cole, who own a home on Cloverleaf Street in Houston, were awakened by the sound of breaking glass and their home security system siren. Pam saw an intruder dressed in black, and yelled for her husband Robert to grab his shotgun. Shotgun in hand, he found the man in the living room brandishing a fire extinguisher to hit anyone he saw. Robert fired one shot in self defense, hitting the burglar in the hip and causing him to scream, then flee. Police found the suspect, identified as 17 year old Mark Galvan, laying in a neighbor's yard and suffering from a gunshot wound. Galvan was taken into custody, treated for his wounds, and then charged with burglary.

● **Gastonia, North Carolina:** Kenneth Watson of Gastonia, was in his home off Bethany Road when he heard glass breaking, and saw Preston Jeter, 17, coming in the door with a hammer. Brandon Cobb, also 17, was with Jeter. Watson told police, "I said to myself, 'this guy came to rob me,' so I grabbed my shotgun." Watson said Jeter waved the hammer at him, but dropped it and fled when Watson raised his shotgun. Watson did not find it necessary to shoot the fleeing intruders, but called police who found and arrested both suspects. The two are also suspected of breaking into and robbing the home of one of Watson's neighbors before coming to his home.

**GUNS SAVE
LIVES**

● **Albuquerque, New Mexico:** Jorge Romero, 44, broke into a house in the 10,000 block of Mountain Road in NE Albuquerque and confronted the homeowner with a drawn gun. Police said that after exchanging gunfire with the homeowner, Romero had been shot in the neck. Witnesses told officers that Romero's friends took him from the scene and then for some reason dropped him off at a store near the intersection of Lomas and Eubank. He was then taken to the University of New Mexico Hospital where he is in satisfactory condition. The homeowner was not hurt. Romero faces several charges once he's released from the hospital.

● **Dayton, Ohio:** William Chinn walked into Hair Gold Beauty Supply, 4011 W. Third St., with a red bandanna on his face and demanded money with a knife in his hand. Store owner Hae J. Kim grabbed a shotgun kept in the store and pointed it at Chinn, who fled. But Kim and his assistant, Lawrence Hahn, chased him up Gettysburg Avenue and flagged down Officer Erica S. Cash about 2 p.m. by yelling, "Robber! Robber!" Cash caught up with Chinn, 19, who said he was "sorry" and wanted to apologize for trying to rob their store. Chinn said he needed money and was tired of being supported by his parents. He was arrested and charged with attempted robbery.

● **Sacramento, California:** Two or three suspects hopped over a back fence on the 7800 block of Ann Arbor Way at about 8:30 p.m. and attempted to break into a family's occupied home, said the Sacramento Police Department. A grandfather inside heard the commotion and grabbed a firearm. He shot one of the suspects, but one or two others fled and are still at large. The injured suspect is expected to survive. None of the home occupants were harmed, thanks to gramps and his gun.

● **New York City:** 21-year-old Shamel McCloud and 22-year-old Bernard Witherspoon were among four men who tried to hold up Kaplan Brothers Blue Flame Corp., a Harlem restaurant supply store, last August. Seventy-two-year-old store owner Charles Augusto Jr. fired at them, wounding McCloud and Witherspoon and killing the two others. The two survivors were sentenced to five years in prison.

● **St. Louis, Missouri:** A man is dead after police say he tried to break into someone's house for the third time. The incident happened around 3:40 a.m. in the 1900 block of East College. The homeowner told police a man and two females entered his home and tried to burglarize it. The resident shot the man and the two females fled. The suspect was shot in the chest and died at the scene. Police say the home had also been burglarized on the two preceding days. Police say charged are not expected against the resident.

● **Wilmington, Delaware:** Three men tried to rob Favor's Liquor Store on N. Walnut Street, brandishing handguns and demanding money. The 55-year-old clerk pulled a gun and fired at the men, who fled. They were captured and charged.

GUN NEWS TICKER - QUICK TAKES ON THE NEWS

● **Sydney, Australia:** Steve Lee never set out to be an Internet hit. He just loves guns - and thought he would write a song about it. He is as shocked as anyone that his YouTube clip *I Like Guns* has been viewed more than 1.26 million times in the six weeks it has been online. It features Lee shooting at everything from watermelons to cars, and with everything from muzzleloaders to a fully automatic M60 and a rocket-propelled grenade. Some of the guns are banned in Australia, meaning Lee had to film some of the clip in Cambodia. He usually performs with his wife and four children, and was inspired to write the song because of negative media coverage of guns. "I wanted to show that they can be used for fun and sport and not violence." He had never posted a song online before and did not know just how popular his song would be.

● **Washington, D.C.:** Javaris Crittenton, the Washington Wizards guard, has pled guilty to a misdemeanor weapons charge of bringing an unloaded handgun into Washington, D.C. - as opposed to the felony weapons charge handed to another Wizards guard, Gilbert Arenas for having a handgun in the Wizards' locker room - and will get one year of probation and a fine. Crittenton has no prior record and didn't actually threaten anyone. Arenas is still awaiting sentencing for his guilty plea for the same incident.

● **New York City:** Howard Wolfson, a national Democratic political strategist and the chief architect of Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential bid, is quitting his job as a campaign consultant to join the administration of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg as a senior adviser. Wolfson will play "a key role in developing policies and lead in selling them," said a Bloomberg spokesman. He is likely to focus on promoting national issues like gun control, a priority for Mr. Bloomberg. A strategist close to the mayor said, "He can shape the agenda and get the message across in a way that possibly nobody else in the country can."

● **Willows, California:** The Glenn County Board of Education has reversed a decision to expel a Willows High School student for having two shotguns and ammunition in his pickup truck that he parked off campus after duck hunting before classes. In a unanimous vote, board members rescinded the expulsion of Gary Tudesko, 17. He was expelled by the Willows Joint Union School District in November for the Oct. 26 incident, and appealed with the help of two attorneys hired by a consortium of gun rights groups.

● **Austin, Texas:** Governor Rick Perry has accepted the endorsement of the National Rifle Association and the Texas State Rifle Association. Alice Tripp, TSRA PAC legislative director, said, "Texas gun owners, hunters and concealed handgun licensees are all in Gov. Perry's debt for his steadfast support and commitment to our invaluable Second Amendment rights." The organization noted that Perry has signed several pieces of legislation that strengthen Second Amendment rights, including the Castle Doctrine, which allows a homeowner to use deadly force in self defense of life and property.

● **Baltimore, Maryland:** Mayor Sheila Dixon (D) has accepted a plea deal for perjury charges stemming from accusations that she did not report gifts she received from a local developer. In a teary announcement, she resigned her post as the Mayor of Baltimore as part of the plea. As some may recall, Dixon, a vocal member of New York Mayor Bloomberg's "Mayors Against Illegal Guns," was convicted last month of pocketing gift cards intended for Baltimore's needy families. Dixon now joins the ranks of disgraced anti-gun politicians like former Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich (D) and Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick (D) of Detroit.

● **Larimer County, Colorado:** Emphatic Larimer County Sheriff Jim Alderden is the latest to join the fight to prevent a gun ban at Colorado State University, which previously allowed concealed weapons on campus for those with permits. The sheriff says he won't jail those who break the school's ban. The CSU Board of Governors is expected to adopt a ban, but not with the support of many students and now, The Rocky Mountain Gun Owners Club (see Page 5 story).

Parting Shot

WE'RE FROM THE HUMANE SOCIETY AND WE'RE ARMED BECAUSE YOU'RE DANGEROUS

At first it sounds as bizarre as the animal rights novelty song from the 1980s, "Cows With Guns," that wondered what would happen if our food animals had human civil rights like self-defense.

That's just a provocative song for rabidly anti-gun animal rights activists.

But in Lawrence, Kansas, better known for violent weather (tornadoes) than violent people, workers at the Humane Society - some with animal rights beliefs themselves - are packing heat under the state's concealed carry laws.

To protect themselves from vicious dogs and cats or horses and hamsters?

No, from violent pet owners.

Violent pet owners? That's not something you think of every day.

The Lawrence Animal Shelter isn't just an animal rescue and adoption center.

It's also responsible for investigating claims of animal cruelty, and that can get pretty ugly.

Since the economic downturn, Humane Society workers have been attacked during or after pet confiscations resulting from investigations showing that people can't take care of their animals anymore.

People in dire straits are still attached to their animals - even when they can't feed them properly, or can't even provide someplace warm and dry with a roof over their heads.

Investigator Kayse Aschenbrenner said, "We're dealing with people that might not be in the best position in their lives and we might have to take their animals, or we might have to ask them questions that would make them uncomfortable and we just want to make sure that we're protected."

"Uncomfortable" is a diplomatic way to say "mad as hell."

The director of the clinic said that recent incidents included threats with guns and baseball bats as subjects of the complaints attempt to defend or recover their animals - and the owners' angry reaction is not hard to understand at all.

But the law is the law. Midge Grinstead, the shelter's director, has been threatened at her home for enforcing animal protection laws.

"Just for safety's sake, it's nice to be there and have a concealed weapon," said Mark Grinstead, the director's husband who also works at the shelter. "It's never visible; it's just there, just in case."

Welcome, animal rights folks. Most armed citizens feel the same peace of mind you get from knowing that if you were to be attacked you'd have the tools to defend yourself. Now maybe you appreciate Second Amendment rights a little better.

Alan M. Gottlieb

Joseph D. Tartaro

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