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Exercising the Right

Child Abductors Stopped by Mom With a Gun

The *Des Moines Register* reported on January 12 about a terrifying incident that occurred in the skywalk in Des Moines, Iowa. The skywalk system is located in downtown Des Moines, and consists of an enclosed walkway that is 4.2 miles long connecting 55 buildings and 12 parking ramps. The skywalk passes through the Hubbel Tower Apartments, where a mother was in her office with her five-year-old son.

The mother was getting ready to leave when she noticed a man and a woman repeatedly walking by her office door. She saw the woman waving at her son and thought the people were there looking for employment, so she opened the door to talk to them. That was when things got scary, as the female began yelling that she was the child's real mother, grabbed the boy, and began to leave.

The mother reacted quickly. She pulled out a handgun she was carrying concealed, pointed it at the suspects, and told them to release her son and leave the premises. The woman and man fled, and the mother called the security service that patrols the skywalk to report the incident. Skywalk security and law enforcement coordinated to identify the suspects, who were two homeless people known for past incidents. Both suspects were arrested and charged with felony child stealing.

The security service that patrols the skywalk explained to the *Des Moines Register* that they have a lot of issues with homeless people who loiter in the skywalk, and they try to keep tabs on known troublemakers. Will Hunter, a site supervisor with Per Mar Security Services, explained that, even though it was a harrowing experience for the mother and her son, it ended in "an ideal outcome. At the end of the day, the kid is safe.... [She] used a legal concealed carry as a deterrent and no shots were fired, no mess."

Sergeant Paul Parizek, spokesman for the Des Moines Police Department, told the Des Moines Fox affiliate that it "certainly looks like the big turning point here, the pivotal piece to keeping her child safe was the fact that she was lawfully-armed with a handgun, and she produced it and told them 'let go of my kid!'"

Sergeant Parizek also told the *Des Moines Dispatch* that "this incident, and other recent events involving self-defense with a firearm, should send a strong message to criminals. The risk of being seriously injured or killed while committing a crime is very real."

The Fairer Sex

In a similar story involving the fairer sex taking self-defense seriously, a woman in Billings, Montana, used a handgun to stop two attackers. [KXLH.com](#) reported on January 31 about the 25-year-old woman, who was apparently the target of an attempted robbery.

The woman left her car running outside her residence in the middle of the day as she ran back into her house to retrieve the smartphone she accidentally left behind. As she returned to her car, she witnessed a stranger in the driver's seat. As she walked up to confront the man, another man charged her and grabbed her right arm. As she struggled against her attacker, she feared for her life and grabbed a pistol she was carrying in her coat. She shot the man who was in the car, and then shot her attacker in



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the stomach.

The suspect with the stomach wound fled, while the other injured suspect remained in the car until police arrived. The fast-acting woman called 911, and police arrived to find the injured suspect on the scene. The second suspect was later apprehended at a nearby medical facility. Both men were treated for their injuries. One was charged with attempted robbery, and the other will be charged when he is released from the hospital.

Montana's laws pertaining to armed self-defense are what are referred to as "Stand Your Ground" laws because there is not a duty to retreat before using lethal force. It seems very likely that the Yellowstone County Attorney's Office will find that the shooting was justified under the applicable law.

Bullet Train

CBS reported out of Chicago on January 22 about a robbery attempt that ended in a shootout on a train. According to police reports, a 33-year-old suspect allegedly pulled a gun on a 25-year-old passenger on the CTA Green Line on the city's West Side and demanded his personal belongings. The would-be victim was fortunately armed, which is possible in Chicago if a person obtains a "Firearm Owners Identification Card and Concealed Carry License." The armed victim pulled out his own gun, and both men began shooting at each other.

Thankfully, the robbery victim was not injured in the shootout, but the robber was shot in the leg. Police were called to the scene, and the injured robber was taken to a nearby medical facility for treatment. The suspect was later charged with one felony count of armed robbery and one felony count of "armed habitual criminal," the latter meaning that, at the time of the robbery, the suspect was a felon who was prohibited from even owning a gun in the first place.

The Sunshine State

This column has previously reported about how gun laws popularly referred to as "constitutional carry" have been spreading across the country, and it now appears that Florida might be the 26th state to join in on the freedom.

Fox News reported on January 30 that lawmakers in Florida introduced legislation that will allow state residents to carry concealed firearms without first obtaining a permit from the state. Representative Chuck Brannan, who sponsored the legislation, hosted a press conference announcing the proposed law. "This bill is a big step to help the average law-abiding citizen to keep from having to go through the hoops of getting a permit from the government to carry their weapons," he said. The political dynamics in Florida actually favor the law passing, which means that constitutional carry might soon become the majority law in America.



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