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Exercising the Right

Domestic Dispute Turns Deadly

The Graham County Sheriff's Office issued a news release detailing a tragic shooting in Safford, Arizona, where a man was forced to shoot his stepson, who was violently assaulting him. The stepson had an active order of protection in place prohibiting him from contacting his stepfather, and had violated it at the time of the shooting. The sheriff's press release explained that both the Safford police and county sheriffs arrived on the scene to discover the stepson suffering from a gunshot wound, and the stepfather with serious facial injuries.

The stepson was taken to a nearby medical facility, and was later pronounced dead. The 74-year-old stepfather received medical treatment for his injuries. The criminal investigation later determined that the stepson had forced his way into the residence and begun beating his stepfather. The stepfather was able to retrieve a firearm and shoot the violent attacker. The investigation is ongoing.

Gun Control Struck Down by Judge

National Review reported on March 20 that a California gun-control law — the 2001 Unsafe Handgun Act — was recently struck down by a federal district court judge. Judge Cormac J. Carney, who was appointed by President George W. Bush, blocked enforcement of the law in response to a lawsuit filed by pro-gun plaintiffs, including the California Rifle & Pistol Association, who sought an injunction halting the enforcement of the law.

Judge Carney wrote that the requirements of the Unsafe Handgun Act “are having a devastating impact on Californians’ ability to acquire and use new, state-of-the-art handguns.” He explained how the law’s requirement of mandatory microstamping was so cost-prohibitive that, since its enactment, “not a single new semiautomatic handgun has been approved for sale in California,” and noted that the law’s restrictions were severely limiting the firearm options for gun buyers in California. “When Californians today buy a handgun at a store, they are largely restricted to models from over sixteen years ago,” Carney wrote in his opinion. He concluded that “because enforcing those requirements implicates the plain text of the Second Amendment, and the government fails to point to any well-established historical analogues that are consistent with them, those requirements are unconstitutional, and their enforcement must be preliminarily enjoined.”

This federal court decision is definitely good news for supporters of the Second Amendment, but it remains to be seen how higher courts will rule on the same law. Still, the plaintiffs celebrated the court victory, and the president of the California Rifle & Pistol Association, Chuck Michel, released a statement saying, “if we can hold on to this great Second Amendment win, people will be able to choose from among thousands of the latest, greatest and safest handguns made today.”

Florida Enacts Constitutional Carry

The *Tampa Bay Times* reported on April 3 that Florida joined numerous other states in allowing permitless carry, popularly referred to as “constitutional carry.” Governor Ron DeSantis signed the bill into law, and it will take effect on July 1. The Democrats mostly voted against the law. Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri specifically addressed the concern voiced by Democrats, that the new law would



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make it harder for law enforcement to keep criminals from carrying guns. Gualtieri explained that the new law requires people to carry identification with them while they're carrying firearms, and police can always check that identification to run a background check and determine if the person carrying has a disqualifying offense that might prevent him from carrying a gun. He explained that this approach is very similar to what was done during the permit-application process, which is no longer required.

Houston Residents Fight Back Against Criminals

Fox 26 reported out of Houston on March 28 about multiple incidents in which city residents exercised their right to stop criminals. According to police reports, there was a shooting at the metro station when an 18-year-old tried stealing from a wheelchair-bound military veteran. The veteran shot the would-be robber, who is expected to survive. Houston Police Lieutenant J.P. Horelica explained that "the victim in the wheelchair was able to produce a firearm to defend himself and fired multiple shots striking the suspect."

Another incident involved a burglar kicking in a door to a Houston home, but leaving after an anti-theft alarm went off. The burglar was followed by a retired police officer, who confronted him in a shootout resulting in both men being injured. The homeowner told Fox26, "I think it was God's intention for him to get caught today, because at some point you need to stop.... I'm glad the officer is going to be okay. I can't wait to see him and tell him thank you for what he did for us."

Lastly, there was a shooting involving a food truck. Police say that the robbery suspect initially went up to the truck posing as a customer, but then tried robbing the workers of their cash. The occupants of the food truck closed the window on the would-be robber. The frustrated robber ran to his vehicle and retrieved a firearm, which he brought back to the food truck. He then forced open the window and tried shooting the occupants. Thankfully, the criminal's gun jammed, giving a worker inside the truck enough time to retrieve her own firearm and shoot the suspect. The suspect tried fleeing, but collapsed nearby and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Houston Police Department Lieutenant Bryan Bui had great advice for city residents dealing with violent criminals. "[Crime] can happen at any given time. You never know when it's going to happen. People just need to watch out and be aware of their surroundings," he told Fox26.com.



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