



Exercising the Right

World War II Vet Stops Intruder

The CBS affiliate out of Los Angeles reported on February 1 about an axe-wielding intruder who met his match. The incident happened in San Jacinto, where a 92-year-old burglary victim was home alone when he heard a loud banging noise. Joe Milspa, a World War II veteran, immediately retrieved his handgun and went to investigate. As he approached the door, Milspa saw the glass window surrounding his front door shatter. Milspa then saw a man armed with an axe try to enter the house through a broken window. Sergeant Craig McDonald, of the San Jacinto Police Department, told CBSLA.com, "He [Milspa] suddenly saw an exterior glass window of the home shatter, followed by the suspect attempting to crawl into his home through the window."

Milspa did not let his advanced age slow him down, and he immediately fired his gun at the burglar. "I could have shot him right in the head between the eyes. But I didn't want to do that. I would have been in trouble," Milspa told CBSLA.com. The shot missed, but the burglar was scared off and ran from the scene. Milspa worked for the Los Angeles Police Department for decades and said he regularly goes to the shooting range to keep his shooting skills sharp. Authorities are still searching for the man who broke in to the house.

Bloody Mug Shot

The *New York Daily News* reported on February 17 about what they described as "a Las Vegas man ... giving a whole new meaning to mug 'shot.'" Forty-year-old Alexander Gonzales was allegedly attempting to burglarize a house in Las Vegas and was crawling through a doggie door to enter the house when he was shot in the face by the homeowner.

The homeowner was alerted to the attempted break-in by the loud noises made by Gonzales as he tried to crawl through the tiny entranceway. The homeowner armed himself and ran to his kitchen, where he witnessed the suspect coming through the doggie door. The homeowner saw that Gonzales was armed with a knife and fired at him and hit him in the face and his arm. The resident called 911, and police soon arrived on the scene, where they apprehended the wounded suspect. According to Gonzales' arrest record, authorities found a container of methamphetamine on him. The police booked him for burglary while in possession of a deadly weapon, attempted home invasion, and drug trafficking. The police took a mug shot of the suspect while his facial wound was still fresh, and the image went viral online. The suspect was taken to a nearby medical facility for treatment and is expected to recover.

I Got to Do Something

WSOCTV.com reported on February 16 out of Hickory, North Carolina, that a 71-year-old man was forced to use a gun to defend himself. The senior citizen, who is disabled, explained to WSOCTV.com that he was left with no choice but to react the way he did.

Seventy-one-year-old Tony Pitts was home alone when he heard a knock at the front door. Pitts was suspicious since it was late at night, so he did not answer the door. Then, a few moments later, he heard an intruder trying to break in through his sliding glass door in the back of his house. Pitts quickly retrieved his .22-caliber pistol when he heard the glass door shatter. Pitts told WSOCTV.com that he



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feared for his life. "I'm disabled and somebody kicks the door in, I got to do something.... I seen him coming in the door and standing over there and I shot him," Pitts told WSOCTV.com. Pitts said he held his firearm as steady as he could and fired it three times at the suspect. Two of the shots hit the intruder in the chest, with a third hitting a nearby door frame. The injured suspect began bleeding profusely and fled the scene. The bloody suspect retreated to a nearby club, where he asked for medical help. The suspect was transported to a hospital, underwent surgery, and is in stable condition. Pitt regretted having to fire his gun but felt that the intruder left him no other options. "I didn't want to but had to.... If I hadn't shot him, he might have shot me. I don't know," Pitts told WSOCTV.com.

Neighbors and friends rallied to Pitts' side after the incident. Close friend Leonard Jennings told WSOCTV.com that Pitt "did the right thing. I would have done the same thing.... These people are dangerous you know. Hate to shoot people like that, but these people make you shoot them."

Off-duty Cop Stops Home Invasion

ABC reported on February 9 that an off-duty police officer from Memphis, Tennessee, shot an intruder at a home in the nearby Mississippi city of Southaven. Officer Brian Falatko, who had previously been named Officer of the Year by the Memphis Police Department, was home with his two toddler-aged children when there was an attempted home invasion. Falatko utilized his law-enforcement training and responded quickly when the intruder kicked in the front door. Falatko immediately fired on the suspect, hitting him in the shoulder. The injured assailant attempted to flee but collapsed in the driveway, where he was discovered by responding officers. The injured burglar was taken to a hospital for treatment and is expected to make a full recovery.

NBC affiliate WAVE3.com interviewed neighbors who shared their recollection of the event. Neighbor Todd Rosamond told WAVE3.com, "I saw them carrying a guy on a stretcher.... I could hear moans and groans.... And he was kind of hollering a little bit, so apparently he'd been shot, but I didn't know who shot who." Rosamond supported Falatko's actions though: "I think he got what he deserved for breaking into a home."

Neighbor Dalton O'Neal told WAVE3.com that the suspect picked the wrong house because people in that area are armed for their own personal safety. "People's doors are locked for people outside, their safety, not the people inside.... Especially in Mississippi or anywhere around."



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