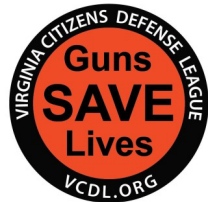




THE DEFENDER



A publication of

Virginia Citizens Defense League

Defending Your Right To Defend Yourself

VCDL.ORG

FALL 2023

Come One, Come All to Lobby Day 2024

What you need to know to plan for the most important VCDL event of the year.

by Patricia Webb, Secretary/Treasurer

Each year, VCDL is in Richmond for Lobby Day. On that day, which always coincides with MLK Day, lobbyists and special interest groups visit with lawmakers to make their views known. This is a uniquely American activity and is accompanied by a rally, typically in Capitol Square. We are hard at work organizing this show of force for gun rights. All we need is you to be there! The more people rally and lobby, the more effective we can be! For full details and up to date information visit VCDL.org/LobbyDay2024.



Since this is the last Defender issue before Lobby Day (January 15, 2024), we are reprinting the most frequently asked questions and answers so you can be prepared. Please come and show your support for the Second Amendment in the Commonwealth!

Q: Will there be a rally this year?

A: Yes, we are planning a rally at the Bell Tower in Capitol Square as usual with special guests and speakers.

Q: Will the General Assembly be in session?

A: Yes. The General Assembly will be starting the new session, and they don't take the day off, even though it's a holiday.

VCDL Public Meeting Dates Planned

Join us for in-person meetings! They are held at 8:00 PM on the third Thursday of every month at XCAL Shooting Sports and Fitness, 44950 Russell Branch Pkwy, Ashburn, VA 20147

VCDL holds **live virtual monthly meetings on the second Sunday of each month**. These meetings are simulcast on Facebook and YouTube at VCDL.TUBE 8:00 PM Eastern Time..

. Watch the Events at vcdl.org/events/event_list.asp and the VA-ALERT for meeting notices. .

Q: Can I carry at the rally?

A: State law still prohibits firearms in Capitol Square and all state government offices. Anti-rights legislators did this to discourage us from showing up for Lobby Day. This shows just how effective our presence is. We can't let not being able to carry at the General Assembly stop us from being heard. We need your help to repeal these

dangerous laws. The first step is showing up for Lobby Day. The next step is watching for the bills to get to committee and sending in the emails and making phone calls!

Q: What bills are we lobbying for?

A: As of this writing, it is too early for bills to be filed. However, as soon as the first piece of legislation has been submitted on November 20, our Legislative Tracking Tool will be updated to the 2024 session. We've created a page where you can find all sorts of useful information, including a link to the tracking tool. Visit VCDL.org/VA-Politics.

Q: Will there be buses?

A: We've created a web form to gauge the interest in buses. With the new statehouse makeup working against us, we will need to be more mindful of our expenses. If there is enough interest to warrant spending the money, we will charter buses. We also have links to a site where people can form carpools, and maps to parking, restaurants and lodging. Visit VCDL.org/Travel to take the bus survey and get other useful information.

Q: Where can I park?

A: Because it is a holiday, you don't have to feed the parking meters if you park on the street. There are several parking lots near Capitol Square, as well as parking garages. Be aware that the law bans firearms in state parking garages. You can find links to parking, restaurants, lodging and more at VCDL.org/Travel.

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The President's Pen

2023's Election Results Underscore the Importance of Lobby Day and the VCDL

From the Editor

We are probably no worse at engagement than other groups, but gun rights advocates have several things working against us: unfriendly news outlets, social media and tech companies who randomly de-platform us, and movies and TV shows that promulgate myths about guns and gun owners.

The days of being left alone are past. The anti-gun zealots have shown they will never stop until they infringe on every last gun right. So it's up to us to communicate, engage, and go to war with the army we have, because one we wish we had disbanded years ago. We are all now activists. Congratulations!

How can you take action? Being a VCDL member is a good start. See Pat's article on page 8 for some other small actions you can take. Come to Lobby Day and make your voice known. And engage with VCDL and other like-minded groups on social media and in the public square **politely, smartly, and focused on the Second Amendment**. Show them we are sober-minded, trustworthy neighbors. And most of all, vote!

If you have other ideas or general comments, drop me a line at defender@vcdl.org. Let's talk and be heard!

Mark Ching
Editor

The Virginia elections on November 7 gave control of both the House and the Senate to the anti-gun Democrats, both with only a one vote majority. But a one vote majority is all that is needed.

The election results unfortunately mean that VCDL's strong agenda for the 2024 General Assembly session is now in jeopardy. There will be a very slim chance that any of our more ambitious bills will make it out of one body, much less both of them. That said, we will still try to get as many of our bills passed as we can. Some of our less controversial bills might well make it into law. We will see.

Our main mission in the General Assembly will now be to make sure that no anti-gun legislation lands on the Governor's desk. Hopefully the Governor would veto any such bill, but it's better that we don't take any chances.

We need a strong Lobby Day to remind both Parties in the General Assembly that we are here, we are watching, and we want our Right to Keep and Bear Arms to be protected, not infringed.

We had best do better in the next statewide election in 2025—if the gun controllers can hold on to the House in that election and win the governorship, they will have a trifecta, just like they did in 2019. We know what that did for our gun rights in 2020 and 2021.

How Universal Background Checks Create Danger for Those Who Need to Give Up Their Guns

by Executive Member Mark Ching

The raft of gun laws passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2019 still represents the most sweeping infringement of our Second Amendment rights in recent memory. Most of these laws are pure political theater, doing nothing to deter crime but doing plenty to make the right to keep and bear arms more difficult. That was always the goal.

Universal background checks (UBCs) are sold as a way to close the "gun show loophole." They prevent people from conducting the person-to-person commerce ordinary Americans conduct every day, from buying and selling goods on Craigslist to funding schools and churches with bake sales. Proponents of UBCs argue guns are different because they're dangerous items. But I was recently involved in a situation where UBCs actually created the danger for a mentally distressed person and her co-workers.

This person brought her pistol into her workplace because she had suicidal ideation and knew she had to dispose of the gun. She had no one to turn to except a co-worker who was a former law enforcement officer. Because of the UBC law, however, neither he nor any of her co-workers or friends could legally take possession of the gun. This person did not want to turn the pistol over to the police, as she could not afford to lose the value of the gun. She also had a significant profile in the community, so she wanted to avoid unwanted publicity and handle the matter privately.

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UPCOMING GUN SHOWS AND EVENTS

If you would like to work a show, email the coordinator and ask to be put on the mailing list used for volunteers. Volunteers get free admission to the show, and some vendors offer discounts to other vendors, including our volunteers. It's an excellent way to easily recruit members. Verify all schedules; this list is correct as of November 13, 2023.

CHANTILLY, Dulles Expo Center

Nov 17–19 | Dec 29–31

CHESAPEAKE, Chesapeake Conference Center

None scheduled at this time

DOSWELL, Farm Bureau Center at Meadow Event Park

Feb 24–25, 2024

FISHERSVILLE, Augusta Expo

Dec 2–3

FREDERICKSBURG, Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Ctr.

Dec 9–10 | Jan 27–28, 2024 | Mar 16–17, 2024

HAMPTON, Hampton Roads Convention Center

Nov 25–26 | Jan 13–14, 2024 | Mar 23–24, 2024

HARRISONBURG, Rockingham County Fairgrounds

None scheduled at this time

LYNCHBURG, Macy's at the River Ridge Mall

None scheduled at this time

RICHMOND, Richmond Raceway Complex

Nov 11–12 | Jan 6–7, 2024 | Mar 1, 2024

ROANOKE, Berglund Center

None scheduled at this time

SALEM, Salem Civic Center

Dec 16–17 | Jan 20–21, 2024 | Mar 9–10, 2024

VIRGINIA BEACH, Convention Center

Feb 10–22, 2024

WEYERS CAVE, Weyers Cave Community Center

None scheduled at this time

WINCHESTER, Winchester Sportsplex

None scheduled at this time

WOODSTOCK, Woodstock Moose Lodge

None scheduled at this time

WYTHEVILLE, Apex Expo Center

None scheduled at this time

COORDINATORS

Chantilly— Sean Kennedy, Gus Spier, Terrell Prude, Dwin McTaggart Craig—gunshows.chantilly@vcdl.org

Chesapeake— Vic Nicholls, Mark Ashley—gunshows.chesapeake@vcdl.org

Doswell—**Main coordinator vacant**, Twyman Andes, Rick Walker—gunshows.doswell3@vcdl.org

Fishersville/Harrisonburg/Weyer's Cave—Jim Kiser (**need assistant coordinator**)—gunshows.vawest@vcdl.org

Fredericksburg —**Main coordinator vacant**, Bob Williams, Stephen Rochkind, Jeni & Gary Shoemaker—gunshows.fredericksburg@vcdl.org

Hampton— Randy Braddock, Bryan Dunn, Michael Mumford Lee Affholter—gunshows.hampton@vcdl.org

Louisa— Brandy Polanowski—events.louisa@vcdl.org

Richmond— John Gosney, Dave Eckart, Dave Troxel, Patrick Schrek—gunshows.centralva@vcdl.org

Roanoke/Salem—Nat Weigle (**need assistant coordinator**)—gunshows.swva@vcdl.org

Virginia Beach—Phil Terrazas, Vic Nicholls—gunshows.vb@vcdl.org

Winchester/Woodstock—Mark Lintz (**need assistant coordinator**)—gunshows.winchester@vcdl.org

State Gun Show Coordinators

Bryan Dunn, Brendan Mooney—gunshowcoord@vcdl.org

PROMOTERS

C&E Gun Shows www.ceggunshows.com

SGK Gun Shows www.sgkshows.com

Showmasters www.showmastersgunshows.com

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

Richmond, August 26–27

Jamie Brannon, Steven Rochkind, Alga Evans, Sam Penn, Dave Eckart, Mr and Mrs Weidman, Brenda Daugherty, Dave Morgerson, Ken Vann, David Crosby, Richard Roberts, Michael Young, Kiefer Clay, Bob Welch, Brian Melde, John Gosney

Hampton, Sept 9–10

Bryan Dunn, Billy Taylor, Lee Affholter, Joe Hemphill, Gregg Horne*, Penny Adams*, Frank Figoni, Craig Roberson*, Judy Peters*, Mark Peters*, Randy Braddock, Mike Ferris, Tom Brunton, Annamarie Foyles*, Steve Toth, Dave McCain, Monty Oakes, David Reinhart, Janet Dunn*

Glen Allen, Gilmanor Farm Days, Sept 16

Mike Young, John Gosney

Fishersville, Sept 16–17

Charles Winkler, Gaert Sime, Robert Mortenson, Brian Meyer, Thom Verga, Elijah Walters, Larry Blankenship, Ann Zudekoff, Tom Graves, Walter Anderson, Jim Kiser

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Thank You *(continued from page 3)*

Salem, Trader Jerry's Customer Appreciation, Sept 22

Ken Modica, Al Steed Jr., Nat Weigle

Chantilly, Sept 29–Oct 1

Brionna Harris, Karizmah Smith, Manny Perez, Tim Lynch, Alexander Rogge, Dein Craig, Terrell Prude, Corey Sinay, Rushil Rane, Gordon Passauer, Ian McNeal, Robert Wilson, Robert Eufemia, David Walley, Robert Wilson, Sean Kennedy, Susan Brush

Suffolk, Peanut Festival, Oct 6–9

Judy and Mark Peters

Newport News, Fall-O-Ween, Oct 7–8

Stan Dykstra, Tajiman Old, Annamarie Foyles, Bryan Dunn

Ashland, Green Top Expo, Oct 7–8

Tom Gee, Bob Welch, Dave Troxel, Steve Rochkind, Dave Eckart, Mike Young, Sam Penn, Susan Brush, Michael Pickwood, Selden Denton, Patrick & Kristine Schrek, Rob Hofrichter, Michael Wegner-Diggs, Lee Hurlock, Dan Liberty, Ken Vann, David Crosby, John Gosney, Alga Evans

Virginia Beach, Worship Without Worry, Oct 14

Vic Nicholls

New Castle, Craig County Fall Festival, Oct 14

Nat Weigle, Ken Modica, James O'Steen

Virginia Beach, Oct 14–15

George Stroker, John Miller, Max Lewis, Don Lewis, Mike Ferris, Steve Toth, Phil Terrazas, Mark Ashley, Vic Nicholls

Poquoson, Poquoson Seafood Festival, Oct 20-22

Vic Nicholls, Bryan Dunn

Louisa, Bowling Pin Shoot, Oct 21

Brandy Polanowski

Salem, Oct 21-22

Elly Hoinowski, John Hoinowski, Al Steed, Jr., Jim Olsten, Larry Lewis, Robert Lutjen, Bob Schaller, Neil Motter, Nat Weigle

Fredericksburg, Oct 28–29

Samuel Redwine, Chris Ferro, Christopher Wilcher, Alexander Rogge, Robert Hofrichter, Theron Keller, Brian Gudmundsson

Harrisonburg, Oct 28–29

Charles Winkler, Jim Kiser, Mike Piper, David Khol, Brian Meyer, Robert Mortenson, Elijah Walters

Rocky Mount, Franklin County Militia Veteran's Day Rally, Nov 11

Al Steed Jr., Ken Modica, Robert Lutjen, Nat Weigle

*Indicates a first time volunteer.

Preparing for Lobby Day *(continued from page 1)*

Q: How should I dress?

A: Business casual or nicer. We want to make a good impression to lawmakers and their staff. Be neat and be polite.

Q: Can I bring my kids?

A: Please do! This can be an educational moment for them, especially if they are school age. College-age participants should connect with Al Evans of the VCDL Academy.

Q: I've never lobbied before, how will I know what to say?

A: You will be paired with experienced Lobby Day veterans. You don't have to speak if you don't feel comfortable doing so, but just by being there you are having an impact. If you do choose to speak on a bill that you care passionately about, speak from experience. Make it personal. Showing how something impacts real people carries more weight than anything. Be polite and respectful but let your passion shine through.

Q: Where do I find my team?

A: Teams will be forming in the courtyard between the General Assembly Building and the fountain. They will be wearing yellow vests and Guns Save Lives stickers. They will probably be holding orange clipboards as well. Find up to date information at VCDL.org/LobbyDay2024.

Q: Will I be on a team that is assigned to my Senator and Delegate?

A: Chances are, no. But don't let that stop you from making an appointment with them! In fact, when I've led teams in the past, after we visited our assigned offices, we went as a team to the representatives for each team member.

And don't forget to sign the guest book! They do look at that. Make sure to mark that you are a constituent and a member of VCDL.

Q: I'm coming from far away. Are there places where I can stay Sunday night?

A: Yes! There are a lot of places to stay, both in Richmond and in the outlying areas. We've linked to a search at VCDL.org/Travel.

Q: Will there be a Lobby Day Dinner this year?

A: We hope to host a dinner the night before (January 14) for those who are coming in from out of town to enjoy some fellowship. We will announce the venue in a future VA-Alert. Check VCDL.org/Travel for updates.

Summary

This is YOUR chance for face time with your Senator and Delegate. With the disappointing election results, **we need people to come out and show up like we did in 2020**. (See the photo on the cover—that's presence!) Don't give up hope. Don't let the ban on carry deter you. The anti-gunners never give up, so we can't, either! So grab your family, friends and neighbors, stuff them in the car, and get yourself to Richmond.

See you on January 15!

The Art of Re-Holstering

by William Moore, with photos by the author

Last issue we dealt with getting the gun from the holster into firing position. Remember the key is driving the elbow forward to lift the gun up to eye level. Now, let's look at getting the gun back in the holster safely. I have to admit that this material should have been included in the previous article. However, there are space limitations.

First things being first, before you put your gun back in the holster, you need to do a global search and make sure there is no longer a threat. Do this even on the practice range to develop a habit pattern. If you drew your gun, you need to be on your cell phone (in your support hand) with the local police and stay on the phone with dispatch until law enforcement is on scene and you're interacting with the officers. You also don't want to be standing there with a gun in your hand when they arrive.

If your holster is on your belt, you need to be able to put the gun back in the holster using only the gun hand. Your holster should be stiff enough that it keeps its shape even with the gun out. If your choice is inside the waistband (IWB), at least the top should be reinforced so you don't need to try to pry the holster open. Picture one an example of the holster you don't want—it can't stay open even from its own tiny weight.

Again, this is something you need to practice with an unloaded gun to get skilled at. There's no speed requirement to getting the gun back into the holster. You need to keep situational awareness and do it without using both hands and looking at the holster. There two exceptions here. Pocket holsters should be removed from the pocket, the gun inserted and then then both returned to the pocket. The other situation is if you're suffering from adrenaline shakes following a violent incident and need both hands to accomplish the task. You might be better off simply laying the gun down on a surface if the situation allows.

A couple of points here: with no threat, your trigger finger should be in register position on the frame/receiver. Before holstering, your finger needs to lift off the frame/receiver about one inch to clear the holster body. This is pretty much the position it's in during the draw. Secondly, the thumb of your gun hand needs to move, as well. On revolvers, it should be pressed against the hammer to make sure the hammer doesn't move while putting the gun in the holster. On semi-automatic handguns, your thumb should press against the back of the slide. If your semi has a hammer, the thumb will also be blocking, or on, the hammer. The purpose here is to keep the slide fully forward/in battery while the pistol is being slid into the holster. **The recoil spring isn't intended to do that!** If your slide moves slightly to the rear while being holstered, it may not fire when you next draw the gun if the slide doesn't return to the full forward (battery) position on its own. Pictures two and three below show how this is done. If the hammer wasn't in the way in picture three, the thumb would be on the rear of the slide.



PICTURE 1. The holster you don't want. The mouth is not reinforced, so one-handed re-holstering is impossible or difficult.



PICTURE 2. Proper finger positioning for re-holstering a revolver with an exposed hammer.



PICTURE 3. Proper finger positioning for re-holstering a semi-automatic pistol.

So You Want to Carry a Gun?

by William Moore

This is going to cover a bunch of stuff that likely never occurred to you about carrying concealed. I've been carrying for something over 50 years, and there are some things you never consider up front. Some you learn the hard way or by seeing someone's bad example.

Your Belt and Pants Initiative

First, let's look at pants. Really what we're concerned about here is the waist band, belt, belt loops, fit and how they're made.

The waist band should sit at your natural waist, at the top of your hip bones, or maybe a tad above. That way your hip bones will help keep your pants up. If you're going to carry with the gun and holster inside the waistband, bump up at least one size. If carrying inside the waist band (IWB), the holster has to be stiff enough for you to put the gun back in the holster using only your gun hand. The holster should not collapse or deform when the gun is removed from it, as this can cause safety issues like unintentional discharges.

You'll likely need a sturdier belt to support the weight of your gun, and you're not going to find these at the big box stores for \$7.95.

You'll likely need a sturdier belt than you may be using. The belt should be 1 ½ to 1 ¾ inch wide and stiff enough to support the weight of the gun. You're not going to find these at the big box stores for \$7.95, but a quality belt is worth the money. Given proper care, it should last you decades. Gun belts are available in leather with adjustment notches at either 1 inch or ¾ inch spacing. If you don't need a dress style belt, there are belts like the Wilderness Tactical nylon webbing belts that are infinitely adjustable. Get the five-stitch versions for added stiffness. Most belt makers have instructions on how to figure out the correct size. Don't buy the bargain basement versions with plastic or metal inserts. They won't conform to your body shape and you'll get chafed.



The belt loops on both pants and holster should be sized to take the gun belt(s) of your choice. Pay attention to where the belt loops are too. You don't want them where your holster goes. However, if you choose a holster with widely spaced belt loops/slots, this is less of an issue. The loops on the holster should be the same width as your belt. But, with a good belt, a 1 ½ inch



belt can work with a good holster with 1 ¾ inch belt loops. This can allow you to use one holster with many different pairs of pants and different belts. A new Wilderness 1½ inch belt has become my favorite.

Us old folks like to go on about how things aren't like they used to be. This is really true with clothing, especially men's clothing. They used to be made to last and assumed that men carried "stuff" in their pockets and made garments from substantial materials. That's not necessarily the case now, even with jeans and work clothes. Where this gets important is if you decide to pocket carry a gun and/or ammo. While even pocket-carried guns and ammo should be in holsters or cases, carrying them will still increase wear on the pockets. Look at any pockets carefully. If you're doing the suit and tie thing, a discreet word with the tailor can get you better pockets and proper belt loops—and maybe a little extra room where needed. I've still got one suit that'll hide body armor, firearms and ammo along with communications gear.

If you're going to be carrying a gun and spare ammo, spandex isn't going to be your thing.

Don't Have a (Bad) Fit

Finally, let's look at fit. If you're going to be carrying a gun and spare ammo, spandex isn't going to be your thing. The same goes for slim fit clothing—at least for most of us. Relaxed fit is a better choice. If you're looking for a shirt or jacket to cover a gun and ammo, bump up a size to give you some extra room. Avoid shirts or jackets with regular patterns, they'll make it easier to spot where they're not hanging right. If you carry behind the strong side hip, look for jackets that have buttons or snaps so you can leave the lower ones unfastened to give you access. Zippers should be the double type that allow you to leave the bottom unzipped. If you choose to carry a cross draw holster, you'll want to fasten the lower buttons/snaps only or leave the zipper only part way up.

Keep Calm with these Carry Positions

Where do we carry the gun? Pocket carry still needs a holster and can be an issue should you suddenly need your gun while sitting down. Standing up or looking like you're scratching an itch will draw attention. If using a belt holster, most folks do better with a holster behind the strong side hip. It's also harder for someone close to you to block your draw. Cross draw (in front of the support side hip but far enough over so the muzzle is clear of your body when seated) allows better access if seated, but can be an issue to keep hidden and can be much more easily blocked before you get on target. You'll also need to make sure you don't muzzle-sweep your support arm during the draw. Guns carried in an outside the waistband holster forward of the hips block access to a front pocket.



Off-body carry in purses, briefcases and various executive binders can work if the handgun has its own separate compartment and **YOU NEVER LET IT OUT OF YOUR REACH**. You see plenty of purses (and the other things) left unattended in offices, at parties, and in shopping carts. That can't be done if there's a firearm on board. You might get strange looks toting those things to the rest room, but you must keep your firearm under control at all times. Advantage to the ladies.

Since I mentioned rest rooms, guys, the best thing I've found to do with my gun is to remove it from the holster and place it muzzle down in the pants leg by the ankle on the inside of the leg. I know a trainer who suggests placing it in the crotch of your underwear to make sure you don't forget it.



There are carry positions I simply can't endorse: appendix and small of the back are two. Appendix is in front of the strong side hip. You can see an example of this on *Criminal Minds* reruns and some other cop shows. But there are major safety concerns. While seated, the muzzle is pointed where major arteries are. While it may be safe in the holster, if you're drawing or holstering, you're pointing a gun at your own body. You also have concealment issues. Small of the back carry places the handgun over the spine. If you fall wrong, you can be paralyzed. Law enforcement agencies banned placing handcuffs in that area decades ago because of many injuries. Learn from their mistakes.

There's a memorable and true line from the Spenser novels that adjusting a holster looks exactly like adjusting a holster.

You do need to practice getting your firearm out of wherever you carry it and on target smoothly. This takes practice—if you concentrate on smoothness, the speed will come. Don't use a mirror to practice, there won't be one when you need the gun. You want to become skilled at smoothly drawing the gun with only the gun hand. If the holster is behind the hip and you're wearing a jacket or open shirt, the edge of the gun hand should slide between garment and body while the hips sway away from the hand. This gives you more space between gun and garment. When wearing something like a loose T-shirt, if you rotate your gun hand thumb toward your body, you can lift the shirt out of the way as your hand rises toward the gun.

You also are going to need some practice wearing the gun before you go out in public. Wearing your concealed firearm around the house is a good idea. There's a memorable—and true—line in one of the Spenser novels about how adjusting a holster looks exactly like adjusting a holster. That's not something you want to be doing in public. The gun needs to stay in place without you fussing with it. If it won't, you need to change something. Most folks who carry have a box of holsters that didn't do what they thought it would. Once you find the right holster, buy a spare.

I expect there's stuff I've forgotten to mention, but the above should cover much of the basic information on concealed carry.

Leave Me Alone!

A reflection on being a freedom loving gun owner

By Patricia Webb, VCDL Secretary/Treasurer/Board Member



Almost 35 years ago my husband and I moved our family out of the rat-race that is Northern Virginia. We “escaped” to a rural town where we could enjoy more of the freedom promised by being an American. People here shoot in their own yards, park their trucks and even heavy equipment wherever they want on their property, and are not (as) beholden to the myriad of restrictions imposed by governments that have forgotten that their main mission is to protect the individuals’ rights, not restrict them.

That was 35 years ago. Today, we’ve come to realize it was all an illusion. Our local government is taking lessons from larger, more invasive ones. And while I haven’t heard of any prosecutions, our Commonwealth Attorney issued an opinion a few years ago saying that Tannerite and other binary targets were explosives and therefore illegal in our county. This despite the fact the federal government says they are legal. We’ve also seen pressure put on the one private shooting range in the county, causing them to undergo massive renovations and limiting their hours of operations. The range has been a good neighbor since the mid-1900s, but then new residents purchased land, cleared the trees that acted as a sound insulator, and decided they didn’t like the noise.

As a gun owner and freedom-loving individual, all I really want is to be left to my own devices. I want to be free to pursue my career choices, raise my family according to my values, and prepare for my golden years. But the more time that passes, the more I realize that keeping to myself and doing those other things are mutually exclusive.

The problem comes when we don’t stay engaged in what the outside world is doing. Governments play a major role in this, but there are other forces to contend with as well. People with a lot of money who want to control other people use that money to influence public opinion and governments. This affects us all.

I was reading an article this morning about a group called 97Percent Advocacy. They say they “give gun owners a voice in the conversation on gun safety.” The group is funded by George Soros, so I’m pretty these “gun owners” are not people like you and me! You can read the article here: ammoland.com/2023/04/petition-a-divide-and-conquer-plot-to-make-it-look-like-gun-owners-support-more-infringements.

We, as gun owners who understand what freedom is, are often reluctant to speak up. There are several reasons why, the top being we value our privacy. Many of us hold positions with security clearances or work for companies that are openly anti-gun. Speaking up could jeopardize our careers. That makes us an easily persecuted group.

In addition to that, public opinion weighs heavily on our actions. How will the other moms at the PTA or Little League react? Will I still be able to coach the soccer team if they know I’m a gun owner and activist? Will people shun my business because I’m vocal about my rights? Will my kids still be invited to their friends’ birthday parties? Will my kids’ friends be allowed to come to our house?

These types of questions must have also presented themselves to the Founding Fathers. They laid everything on the line when they spoke out against the tyranny they felt was insufferable. Had the Brits won, these people would have been executed, their families left with nothing. They made a tough choice based on their principles and what was best for future generations.

So here we are today. As a group, we’ve enjoyed our privacy and kept to ourselves for far too long. Because of that, we’re not engaged in the conversation, and we’re no longer considered as “normal” by the masses. We’ve got a big hill to climb now. We need to show the country, and the world, that gun ownership is not only normal, but essential to freedom.

There’s a reason the Second Amendment was included in the Bill of Rights. It was no accident, and it is as pertinent today as it was when ratified—maybe even more so. We must remember the Bill of Rights doesn’t grant those rights, it tasks the government with protecting them. Rights are innate, they can’t be granted.

Our education system today doesn’t teach this. So it’s up to us to share this knowledge. Each and every one of us have the ability to spread the message. All it takes is planting the seed. When you take someone to the range or hunting, talk to them about the history of our country and why it’s important to protect our right to keep and bear arms.

VCDL is doing its part to pay this forward. The VCDL Academy is a program designed to engage high school and college students in the battle to regain our rights. The Academy will offer many

educational programs to teach what schools are leaving out about our history. This is a major undertaking and will require a good deal of capital and manpower. We don't have Michael Bloomberg or George Soros dumping funds into our coffers, but we're determined to make this a success! You can read more about the program at [VCDL.org/Academy](https://vcdl.org/Academy).

The bottom line here is that if we want to keep our freedom, we can't have the "leave me alone" attitude. We've got to be proactive, not reactive. There will always be someone wanting to infringe on our rights. We must always be working to counter the forces of oppression. This means taking steps like:

- **Staying active in government, especially local and state levels**
- **Speaking out when someone makes false statements**
- **Educating our family and friends**
- **Getting involved with programs like VCDL Academy**
- **Being an ambassador for the firearm community, setting an example**
- **Visit [VCDL.org/Volunteer](https://vcdl.org/Volunteer) for other opportunities**

These things are not always easy and will come with a cost. Just ask yourself, what is freedom worth? What is the cost if we lose it?

2024 General Assembly Agenda

Restore firearm preemption to where it was in 2019
Remove ban on carry in state government buildings
Remove ban on carry at the Capitol and General Assembly Buildings
Repeal red flag law
Repeal day care and pre-school gun bans
Repeal universal background checks
Constitutional Carry
Repeal one-handgun-a-month law
Repeal "in person" requirement for CHP training
Repeal authority for School Board property ban
Improve knife laws
Guns secured in vehicles cannot be prohibited on property open to the public
Allow CHP holders to carry on school property a la Utah
Repeal carry ban in non-sterile areas of airports
Repeal polling place gun ban
Allow gun organizations to have standing in firearms law challenges

Repeal requirement that a person getting a new VA DL wait 30 days for gun purchase

Change CHP to CWP

Repeal prohibition on carry of loaded semi-automatic centerfire rifle or pistol that has a magazine that holds more than 20 rounds, a folding stock, and/or a threaded barrel in certain localities (18.2-287.4)

Allow most state employees to store firearms in their vehicles on state property while at work

Repeal last sentence of 18.2-308.012 (B) allowing LEOs to drink and carry concealed. Everyone carrying concealed should be on a level playing field. An exception for police undercover work would be acceptable.

Gun-Free Zone liability

Set maximum time limit for issuing a non-resident CHP to 45 days

Remove church gun ban based on "good and sufficient reason"

CHP fees waved completely. Since getting a permit is supposedly required for public safety, then the public should pay for it

Make tax credit on gun safes apply to safes bought from non-FFLs also

State/local government not to assist Feds in enforcing federal gun control

FFLs and shooting ranges that otherwise qualify for zoning cannot be denied

Drop CHP age down to 18, as other states have done

Remove machine gun ammunition proximity ban

Remove machine gun state-registration law

Firearms training tax credit up to \$500

State funded shooting ranges in parks and WMAs

Require arms training for the Virginia Defense Force so they can fulfill their job as a state militia

Repeal Trigger Activator ban

Remove five-year CHP wait penalty for those who VOLUNTARILY seek help in a residential setting for addiction and can show the issue is resolved to the Court's satisfaction

18.2-308.2:2(b)(4) update to fix issue with an unneeded FFL paperwork requirement

Give FFLs and LEOs ability to scan a person's ID solely for purposes of firearm background checks

Protection of manufacturers, distributors, and dealers from frivolous lawsuits

For more information, visit [VCDL.org/2024-agenda](https://vcdl.org/2024-agenda) and [VCDL.org/VA-Politics](https://vcdl.org/VA-Politics).

The Danger of UBCs *(continued from page 2)*

Some anti-gun advocates and even some gun rights supporters would point to this incident as a case for Red Flag Laws. But most Red Flag Laws, including Virginia's, only allow for the removal of someone's firearm. That's it. If someone is in a true mental health crisis, they need more than just the police to show up and confiscate their guns. The person in question needed comprehensive treatment, not just to have her gun removed. In addition, this person knew that having an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) filed against her carried potential consequences for her down the road.

UBCs prevent the friends and family of a person in crisis from legally taking possession of the person's gun without going to the courts or police. That takes time.

One of this woman's co-workers contacted me, and I connected them with an FFL outside the area. This FFL agreed to discreetly buy the gun. Until we could arrange the trip to another part of the state, there was a weeks-long period where the gun existed in a gray legal area—not in this worker's possession, but in the company's safe so she could not use it against herself, her co-workers, or customers. Several employees expressed grave discomfort with this situation. They were glad their co-worker was safe, but waiting to get the gun off their property caused the business owner much anxiety. Without the need for an FFL transfer, I or the former LEO would have gladly transferred the gun and held on to it until it could be sold. We would have had options. The new laws closed off those options.

Let me hasten to say that if anyone thought she would commit violence in the workplace, we would have filed an ERPO or taken other action. Most 2A supporters recognize a person with suicidal ideation needs to be separated from guns and other means of self-harm. This is why gun rights groups work hand-in-hand with suicide prevention organizations. This person was in distress, but began treatment soon after this incident. One could argue she should have put aside her concerns about bad publicity and gone straight to the police. I and groups like the VCDL argue that those of us who care about our friends, family, and co-workers know what they need better than a bureaucrat or an elected representative. The United States of America has always been a nation where no one needed permission to travel, buy, or sell. For some reason, this angers some people—the very people who think an eight-year-old needs a health certificate to sell lemonade. Before 2019, I bought and sold dozens of guns in private sales—including one to a gun-collecting ATF agent! I always checked ID and asked the buyer or seller to sign a bill of sale. None of those guns found their way to an evidence locker.

We would be wrong to deny some privately sold guns end up in the hands of evildoers. But just as a handgun can be used either to commit a crime or to defend against crime, UBCs can cause as much or more mischief than they are intended to prevent.

From the Secretary's Desk

By the time you all read this, the 2023 elections will be over. Now it's time to look toward the legislative session.

Several things will be different this year. We'll be back in the newly remodeled General Assembly Building, and there will be many new faces among the Senators and Delegates. Redistricting changed many things, and time will tell if it was for the better, or if it created new challenges. Or, maybe a little of both!

Regardless of the outcome, we've got a lot of work to do. We must repeal the ban on carry in government buildings, reinstate state-wide preemption, and get rid of the one-handgun-a-month law, private sale background checks, and red flag laws. Constitutional carry is another big item on our list and will remain a focus until it is passed.

The best way to accomplish these goals is to keep the pressure on the legislators. Lobby Day is the first step, and a very important one. Some people may be tempted to "sit it out" until we can again carry in the building. But we can't do this, as it shows the anti-rights people that they've found a way to shut us up. Instead, we must show up in even greater numbers, and insist that they repeal this unconstitutional law. Turn the tables on the haters, and let them know we won't quietly disappear!

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Lobby Day is not the end of the story. We've got to remain active throughout the legislative session, showing up at committee meetings, writing our representatives, and educating our friends and families on the importance of fighting for our rights.

Imagine where we'd be today if Rosa Parks had given up her seat, or if Dr. King had not shared his dream. Imagine if Susan B. Anthony had not insisted that women had the right to vote. We all have a right to self-preservation and the defense of our freedom. It is no different than the other rights we were born with.

But freedom, our rights, must be protected. We do that by being a part of the process. So mark your calendars for January 15. Watch the VA-ALERTS for Action Items. Plan to be a part of the solution! Your children, and their children, will appreciate your efforts.

Find out more about Lobby day by visiting VCDL.org/LobbyDay2024.

Patricia Webb
Secretary/Treasurer

VCDL Membership Application

Recruiter last name/member # _____

____ **New** ____ **Renewal** (Member # _____)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone (____) _____

Email _____

____ 1 **VCDL** membership: \$ **25.00**

____ Family members @\$15/each: \$ _____

____ Donation to **VCDL**: \$ _____

____ Donation to **VCDL-PAC**: \$ _____

VCDL-PAC donations also require the following information:

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Employer's principle city/state: _____

This information is not made public unless your annual contributions total more than \$100.00.

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

(Note: Membership processing can take 4-6 weeks)

Method of payment

____ Cash (Do not send cash through the mail.)

____ Check (Make checks payable to **VCDL**)

____ Charge

Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ CVV _____

Name as it appears on the card

Signature of Card Holder

Billing Zip Code

Mail to:

VCDL Membership Processing Center

P.O. Box 77

Willis, VA 24380

Save time and postage by using a credit card or eCheck at vcdl.org/join

NOTE: For family memberships list primary member on application and family members on separate sheet. We need the full info for all family members. Full details on VCDL.org.

VCDL and VCDL-PAC contributions, gifts, or membership dues are not deductible for Federal income tax purposes.

VCDL-PAC endorsed over 260 state and local candidates for the 2023 Election.

We targeted key races in the State Senate and House of Delegates with significant financial contributions. We pushed early voting. I'm writing to you before we know the results of the election. We will know if we've held the House and taken the Senate with pro-2A candidates and there will be time for reflection and analysis, but our job never ends. Thank you to all of the candidates that filled out the VCDL survey and engaged with 2A voters, and proudly ran with our endorsement. We have faith you will protect our Second Amendment rights!

The grotesque murder and slaughter of babies, mothers, fathers, the elderly in Israel by the Hamas terrorists reminds us that when you restrict gun rights, you put your citizens at risk. I recently read that that only 2-3% of Israeli citizens own private firearms. In the US it is close to 30%. I can't tell you how much this statistic hit me after the October 7th massacre. It is why we do what we do.

As we move into 2024, with an unknown Legislature, and right into Session in the General Assembly, please keep VCDL-PAC in mind for donations. You can donate online at vcdl.org/donations/donate. We must hold the candidates we endorsed accountable. And while 2024 promises to be a wild political environment with a U.S. Senate seat up for election as well as a Presidential election, we must remind our 2A community what a disappointment Tim Kaine has been when it comes to our rights. We can't endorse or spend money next year, but we can talk to candidates, raise money, mobilize, plan, and get ready for what is going to be a dynamic 2025 Statewide election cycle.



Yours in Liberty,
Cathy McNickle, VCDL-PAC Chair



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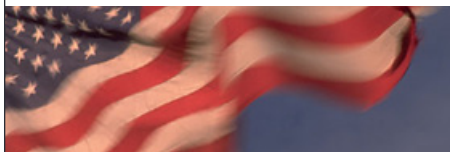
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Find us on social media

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Our moderators keep that
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**Virginia Citizens Defense League
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As of June 2022**

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Philip Van Cleave	Philip@vcdl.org
Patricia Webb	Pat.Webb@vcdl.org

All Directors and Officers leadership@vcdl.org

Please feel free to contact any of the Officers or
Directors should you have any questions or if you
would like to volunteer your services in VCDL.

CHP RENEWALS

Virginia law provides that you can get the full five years of your Concealed Handgun Permit if you apply for renewal at least 90, but no more than 180, days prior to expiration of your current permit (Section 18.2-308.010). Members can add their permit expiration date to their member profile for email reminders during the 90–180 day window.

EXPIRES

RENEW IN

January	August–October
February	September–November
March	October–December
April	November–January
May	December–February
June	January–March
July	February–April
August	March–May
September	April–June
October	May–July
November	June–August
December	July–September