



THE DEFENDER



A publication of

Virginia Citizens Defense League

Defending Your Right To Defend Yourself

VCDL.ORG

WINTER 2024

Lobby Day and Gun Control Shock

What happened in Richmond in 2024 so far

by Patricia Webb, Secretary/Treasurer



I'm in utter shock with the 2024 legislative session. We knew it would be bad, but not in my wildest dreams did I imagine the blatant, flagrant abuse of rights I'm witnessing in this year's legislative session.

We knew the 2023 elections were going to have a light turnout. We hoped that people would recognize that the right to keep and bear arms is the right that protects all others and vote accordingly. Sadly, that didn't happen.

We went into Lobby Day 2024 with high hopes. We were seeing renewed interest after the election. However, a COVID outbreak and snow dampened the attendance. Still, we had around 500 total participants, with 400 or so attending the rally. Many stayed in the building to continue lobbying while they had the chance.

Our rally was moved to 10:00 due to scheduling conflicts at the Bell Tower.

We had some exceptional speakers this year, as SHOT Show was later in the month than prior years. We took advantage of that fact and were blessed with speakers like Cam Edwards, Dan Wos, Erich Pratt, and Jared Yanis, as well as Del. Nick Freitas and Del. Delores Oates. The day was rounded out with updates from VCDL attorney John Pierce, VCDL President Philip Van Cleave, and yours truly.

Certainly we would have made a greater impression if we had seen crowds even similar to 2020. But here we are, in a session where the anti-rights faction is reveling in their perceived authority. We will remind them of their oaths. We will never give up fighting for our rights. But they are making it very difficult to maintain our decorum as they throw theirs out the window.

Elections have consequences, as do actions. What someone does when presented with the opportunity to either abuse power or act with integrity is a testament to their true character. Or in the words of an old southern gentleman, a snake will always show its true colors in the end. It's our job to reveal these deeds to others so they are aware of the betrayal taking place in our legislature.

We've got a lot of work ahead of us. I know you'll join me in staying ever vigilant. We can't get discouraged. Our children and future generations are depending on us!

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](https://www.vcdl.org/tube) 8:00 PM Eastern Time.

. Watch the Events at [vcdl.org/events/event_list.asp](https://www.vcdl.org/events/event_list.asp) and the VA-ALERT for meeting notices.



The President's Pen

A Youngkin Veto and Your Voice are All That Stand in the Way of Gun Control

From the Editor

"I want it to be over!"

Don't we all? Closure is a very human desire—especially for the citizen who believes in live and let live. Like Cincinnatus and Elton John, I just want to go back to my farm.

But just as the house never stays clean, the *Bruen* decision did not end the matter. Those who would infringe on the Right to Keep and Bear Arms want to keep subjecting us to struggle sessions. Sometimes it makes me angry.

Then I remember I care about an ordered and virtuous society. I care about my family. I care about my neighbors, even the ones who oppose my Right to Keep and Bear Arms. It is because we love these people that we must answer, even as it rankles us and disrupts our peaceful day. The watchmen must never leave the ramparts nor lay down their arms.

I too am disappointed the matter isn't settled. But abortion wasn't settled by *Roe* or *Dobbs*. I do not hate my opponents (many are friends), but I understand that SCOTUS decisions will not stop them. They will persevere, and so we must as well.

Mark Ching
Editor

Democrats in the General Assembly are determined to push as many as 40 gun control bills onto the Governor's desk!

The Democrats are rubber stamping approval on all the gun control bills, no matter how unconstitutional or how much they will negatively affect law-abiding gun owners. Democrats have killed all of the Republican-introduced gun rights bills already. This is what happens when you win a majority.

Cross-over day was on February 14, which is when the House began voting on Senate bills that passed the Senate, and the Senate began voting on House Bills that passed the House. Both chambers are controlled by Democrats.

We expect almost all of those gun control bills will pass the other body. The first gun control bills will begin landing on Governor Youngkin's desk toward the end of February. He will be our only remaining firewall against those horrible bills becoming law.

VCDL will have its members begin to contact the Governor when the first gun control bill hits his desk.

What will Governor Youngkin do with those bills? We don't know. We do know he's not talked about supporting gun control. In his State of the Commonwealth address he said Virginia already has some of the strongest gun laws. What we need, he said, is to do something about criminals.

We concur and have our fingers crossed that his veto pen has plenty of ink.

Words Have Meaning by William Moore

In a Supreme Court decision, the late Justice Scalia noted that "words have meaning." The idea is important when related to firearms. Attorneys, the media, the politicians and the gun grabbers are highly aware of this and use it against us in many ways. They will whip out a dictionary or thesaurus at the drop of a word so they can twist the meaning against us. I can't emphasize this enough—they're weaponizing language.

Let's consider an example. According to the law, anything picked up and used as a weapon is a weapon. Each year, more people are killed with household items, hands, and feet than are killed with rifles of any description. So, when someone refers to all guns as "weapons," correct them. Any guns you have around the house are guns, not weapons. Your gun doesn't become a weapon until you pick it up with intent to defend yourself or other innocent persons from death or serious bodily injury.

This can get a bit confusing as virtually every state or territory has a list of items they consider weapons when carried on the person: "knives (with blades longer than three inches in Virginia; other states specify different lengths), dirks, daggers, brass knuckles, nunchuks, ballistic/spring knives, guns," and so on. This is something to keep in mind if you face an assailant with something on this list and you have your licensed gun—

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UPCOMING GUN SHOWS AND EVENTS

If you'd 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 February 15, 2024.

CHANTILLY, Dulles Expo Center
Apr 19–21 | Jun 14–16

CHESAPEAKE, Chesapeake Conference Center
None scheduled at this time

DALE CITY, VA Gun Collectors Assn Spring Show
Apr 6–7

FISHERSVILLE, Augusta Expo
Apr 6–7

FREDERICKSBURG, Fredericksburg Expo & Conference Ctr.
Mar 16–17 | May 4–5

HAMPTON, Hampton Roads Convention Center
Mar 23–24

HARRISONBURG, Rockingham County Fairgrounds
May 4–5

ROANOKE, Safeside Days, Safeside Tactical
Feb 23–24

RICHMOND, Richmond Raceway Complex
Mar 16–17 | May 18–19

SALEM, Salem Civic Center
Mar 9–10

VIRGINIA BEACH, Convention Center
None scheduled at this time

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 —Stephen Rochkind, Bob Williams, 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.cegungunshows.com

SGK Gun Shows www.sgkshows.com

Showmasters www.showmastersgunshows.com

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS

Richmond, Nov 11–12, 2023

David Cooper, Donna Grebas, Tony Grebas, Srinu, Chuck Batteau, Dave Morgerson, Steve Rochkind, Dave Eckart, Sam Penn, Brenda Daugherty, Ken Vann, Srinu Abbaraju, Mike Young, Lee Hurlock, Roger Nixon, David Troxel, Rob Hofrichter, Scott Black, Al Evans, Kiefer Clay, Michael Wagner-Diggs, John Gosney

Chantilly, Nov 17–19, 2023

Timm Lynch, Brian Wrenn, Manny Perez, Alexander Rogge, Charles Ryan, Dwin Craig, Terrell Prude

Hampton Nov 25–26, 2023

Dave McCain, Doug Kelsey, Lee Affholter, Trent Jackson, Billy Taylor, Bryan Dunn, Dennis Endres, Vic Nicholls, Annamarie Foyles, Mike Ferris, Daniel Farnsworth*, Sarah Crumpler*, Monty Oakes, Steve Toth, Randy Braddock, Bryan Dunn

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Thank You *(continued from page 3)*

Fishersville, Dec 2–3, 2023

Larry Blankenship, Dave Schullery, Brian Meyers, Elijah Walters, Jim Kiser

Fredericksburg, Dec 9–10, 2023

Samuel Redwine, John Walt, Alexander Rogge, David Cooper, Steve Geise, Jim Thompson, Matthew Brewer, Stephen Rochkind

Salem, Dec 16–17, 2023

Michael Johnson, Jim Olsten, Michael Dalton, Mary Dalton, Larry Lewis, Robert Lutjen, Sam Hollingsworth, Neil Motter, Richard Pollack, Ken Modica, Maury Sharp, Richard McNamara, Nat Weigle, Robbin Weigle

Chantilly, Dec 29–31, 2023

Alexander Rogge, Chris Karanski, Larry Zabel, Gary O'Brien, Mat Thexton, Kieth Webster, Nick Richard, Andrew Ling, Brian Melde, Sameet Singh, Troy Hayes, Kurt Darr, Robert and Sandy Ellis, Brian Wrenn, Mitch Darling, Terrel Prude, Bruce Jackson, Dwin Craig

Richmond, Jan 6–7

Dave Troxel, Dave Morgerson, Richard Roberts, Rob Hofrichter, David Cooper, Dave Eckart, Sam Penn, Ken Vann, Roger Nixon, David Crosby, Mike Tomillon, Markus Kahn, Kiefer Clay, John Gosney

Hampton, Jan 13–14

Trent Jackson, Daniel Farnsworth, Sarah Crumpler, Kristjan Justesen, Bryan Dunn, Gregg Horne, Penny Adams, Dave McCain, Billy Taylor, Matthew Taylor*, Randy Braddock, Annamarie Foyles, Joseph Hemphill, Michael During, David Reinhart, Tom Brunton, Todd Morgan*

Salem, Jan 20–21

Michael Johnson, Jim Ostein, Michael Dalton, Sr., Mary Dalton, Larry Lewis, Robert Lutjen, Sam Hollingsworth, Neil Motter, Bob Schaller, Rick Martin, Maury Sharp, Kenny Hall, Nat Weigle, Robbin Weigle, Jeff Miller

Fredericksburg, Jan 27–28

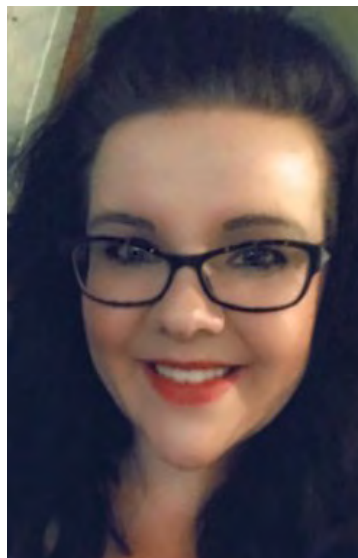
Lloyd Williams, Dave Eckart, Ken Vann, John Schuler, Samuel Redwine, Roley Molina, David Cooper, Steve Giese, Theron Keller, Matthew Brewer, Jen T and Gary Shoemaker, Allen Shoemaker, Stephen Rochkind

Chantilly, Feb 2–4

Chris Karanski, Larry Zabel, Wayne Koka, Matt Schor, Manny Perez, Bob Mahoney, Michael Gross, Robert Seeland, Kenneth Locklear, Kurt Darr, Corey Sinay, Rushil Rane, Robert Wilson, Ethan Darrow, Brian Melde, Jason Kruse, Josh Godaire, Brionna Harris, Sean Kennedy, Terrel Prude, Dwin Craig, Bruce Jackson

*Indicates first-time volunteer

Meet Jill McDaniel *The New Director of the VCDL Academy Program is a seasoned influencer, advocate, trainer, and Mom-at-Arms*



VCDL is excited to announce the appointment of Jill McDaniel as the new Director of the VCDL Academy program.

A lifelong Southern Virginian, Jill grew up in the farming and hunting communities of Pittsylvania County. The eldest daughter of an avid hunter and police captain, Jill grew up with a respect and appreciation for firearms, understanding they are a means to preserve life from all angles.

During the presidential cycle of 2016, Jill became heavily involved in Second Amendment advocacy after learning about the popular astroturf gun control group, Moms Demand Action. Jill embarked on a mission to disprove the falsehoods that groups like Moms Demand Action promoted and went on to form the popular Second Amendment website, Mom-At-Arms. Starting off as a blog on firearms education from a mother's perspective, Jill added in her love of research and history. As a result, Mom-At-Arms became a nationally recognized resource site. In 2018, Jill brought on contributing Second Amendment researchers throughout the country, and together, the Mom-At-Arms team, the "Grassroots Guerilla Sleuths," have notched some notable wins for the 2A Community—such as the exposure of Moms Demand Actions' founder, Shannon Watts, lying about VA Delegate Nick Freitas and his wife to fundraise for votes for Abigail Spanberger. Her work also led to the elimination of Biden's ATF nominee, David Chipman, after the Mom-At-Arms team revealed his biased spendings in prior campaign donations.

Aside from her role as a 2A Advocate, Jill is a firearms instructor, certified through the USCCA, specializing in Personal Safety & Awareness, as well as the Virginia director for Women for Gun Rights. Her most favorite role ever? Jill is the wife of Kevin, a USAF Veteran and Safety Professional, and the mother to their silliest and sweetest little boy, Des.

We hope you will join us in welcoming her on board in this new role. Alga Evans will still be involved in outreach and engagement for the Academy Program.

From the Secretary's Desk

Is the Virginia General Assembly Trying to Secede from the Union?

by Patricia Webb, Secretary/Treasurer

I've been around for more than a few years and have never seen such an unprecedented assault on our American values. This year will go down in the record books as the year that the Virginia General Assembly declared war on American values and traditions.

We've seen an unprecedented amount of anti-rights legislation introduced. But what is even more frightening is that even when advised of the unconstitutionality of a bill by their own attorneys, these committees still pass the bill and send it out to the floor.

We're almost to the halfway point in the session. Every single bill repealing prior unconstitutional laws has been killed in committee. And every single anti-gun bill that has been proposed this year is making its way to the other chamber!

We've never seen anything like this before in the history of Virginia. In fact, I don't think we've seen anything like this in the history of this country!

It's obvious that those in control of the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates do NOT want to be a part of the United States of America, as they are flagrantly rejecting the U.S. Constitution (and the Virginia Constitution as well!).

What can we do about it?

Our first line of defense will be Governor Youngkin. We're looking to him to veto all of these unconstitutional pieces of legislation. However, with 47 bad bills still alive as of crossover day, there is a lot to be concerned about!

Fortunately, those who would destroy our Republic and disregard our basic human rights do not hold enough of a majority to override any vetoes. However, we DO need to let Governor Youngkin know that we are watching, and we expect him to uphold his oath of office.

VCDL will be supplying postcards to those who want to send a message to the governor's office showing our opposition to the assault on our freedoms and rights.

What if some of this legislation gets signed into law?

Then VCDL will be poised to challenge whatever passes. The next step is lawsuits. We already have several working through the courts from the 2020 session.

This is the most expensive and time-consuming way to overturn laws, so we really need to muster the masses. If we can put enough pressure on the General Assembly in the second half of the session, we may be able to block most of this legislation. It can't be done with logic and facts but could be accomplished with sheer numbers of people contacting their senators and delegates, especially those who vote against our rights! They need to know that the voter base is awake and paying attention.

Your membership helps us fight.

Your membership is very important to VCDL in several ways. First, when we go to Richmond to fight for your rights, it helps when we say that our membership has doubled or tripled in the past year. Second, your dues and donations help fund these expensive lawsuits. Most importantly, your activism lets even the most rabidly anti-rights representatives know that their reelection could be at risk if they continue down this path. So watch those VA-ALERTs, get your friends, family and coworkers involved, and stay engaged!





Lobby Day 2024 Dinner and Rally



Predators and How They Operate

by William Moore

Taking a break from the focus on firearms and their use, let's spend a bit of time discussing predators. This isn't going to be a deep dive into the psychological makeup of those of our species who prey on others—just a brief discussion on how they operate. The methods used are pretty much the same regardless of whether the predators fly, walk, swim, or slither—they all present threats of varying degrees, so we can cover a lot of ground quickly.

Some time back, there was online video of a herd of antelope at a watering hole somewhere in Africa. As the herd leaves, one of their number lags a bit, its head is moving as it scans its surroundings. Then something catches its attention. It stops, turns, moves in a wee bit for a better look. Then moves in again. What's seen next is a crocodile rushing out of the water to grab the antelope for dinner.

The OODA Loop

Let's look at what the antelope did and apply the stages of the OODA decision loop for threat appraisal and reaction. It was alert and scanning for possible threats, so it was **Observing**. It noted something unusual and stopped for a better look, this is **Orienting**: deciding what has been observed means. Unfortunately, during the **Deciding** phase where one considers possible counter actions, there was an acute failure of the process. The impala moved toward the potential threat. By then it was too late for **Acting**.



That breed of antelope can run about 60 miles per hour, which the croc can't. But it was now too close and the croc was now inside the decision envelope. The impala got turned away and started to run (the Decide and Act parts of the OODA loop) but got caught and eaten, demonstrating the fact that an action can beat a reaction. **It takes longer to react to an unexpected action than it does to react to an expected action.** This is something you want to avoid. When something catches your attention as unusual, that's a hint that it might be time to leave.

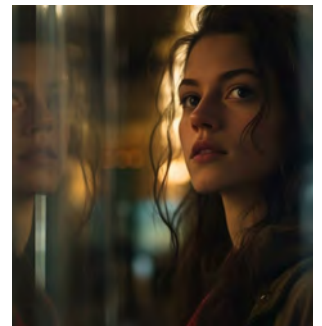
If you watch any of the nature shows it doesn't take long to realize that predators don't go looking for prey that will provide a fair fight. They're looking for what we'd call the less able—the old, the young, the impaired/injured, and the less alert. Human predators operate pretty much like any other predator, with one slight difference: they can talk. Nearly 100 years ago a reporter asked a famous bank robber of the time why he robbed banks. The reply was: "Because that's where the money is." Predators like to "shop" in locations where the prey is going to naturally come. ATMs, housing for the elderly, and parking lots are good examples, as is right at your driveway or front door. Predation can take place anywhere the predator feels they have an advantage. Decades ago, a couple of apparently middle school-age truants set up at a pedestrian choke point between a federal courthouse, a large office building, and a parking structure. They had a great escape route on foot. They were predators and behaved accordingly. Don't be fooled by apparent age.

Predators like to "shop" in locations where the prey is going to naturally come. ATMs, housing for the elderly, and parking lots are good examples, as is right at your driveway or front door. Predation can take place anywhere the predator feels they have an advantage.

Avoid Becoming Prey

So, how does one avoid predators? The first part of that is pretty easy. Quoting famed instructor John Farnam: "Don't go to stupid places where stupid people do stupid things." Beyond that, it gets a bit harder—you **have to start paying attention to what's going on around you**. If you've got your head up and looking around, you can pick up on cues that you need to be elsewhere and do so. There are many reflective surfaces around that can show you what's behind you. Shop windows and car mirrors are two.

I can give a personal example. While living in another state, I realized one night that I'd been the intended victim of an armed robbery three times in about three months. This was unusual, so I sat down to figure out what was going on. This was during the Carter administration and the local unemployment rate was somewhere in the 30% range. I realized that while I'd managed to pick up on the threats in plenty of time to take control of the situation, the fact was my own unemployment had affected me and I was behaving differently. With self-esteem lower than whale droppings in Challenger Deep, I looked like wounded prey to the predators, whose numbers had obviously increased. I made a decision to change my attitude, and had no more issues with the local predators. I can't swear to it at this time, but I think one of the





things I did was to pay more attention to my posture and have a more positive attitude. Being more upright presents an image less attractive to predators than a bent over/hunched posture. Combine this with obvious attention to surroundings, and you will be uniquely unattractive to predators.

Less Than Lethal and Improvised Weapons

Those of us who actually are old, infirm or are otherwise impaired have additional issues. We need to become more alert to our surroundings. There's a lot of advice out there on improvised defensive tools like canes, various types of sprays (I laugh at the lemon juice suggestions), stun guns, and empty hand martial arts. While having a less than lethal response to threats is a good idea, remember this: your local law enforcement agency uses less than lethal force *with armed backup in case it's needed*. Additionally, a lot of those techniques are for the able-bodied young. If you're a lifelong student of martial arts or melee weapons, things may be different. But that assumes what you've been training at is reality-based, not dojo ballet.



This does make a case for those of us who are less able to practice with our defensive tools on a regular basis. You can do a lot of this with dryfire, but you also need to occasionally do it with live ammo. Range rules permitting, drawing from the holster while moving sideways. Make those steps BIG steps, not baby steps if you can. You lose 20% of a skill every month you don't practice.

Situational Awareness Matters

I tend to make fun of the entertainment media, but there was a really good bit in the movie *Chinatown*. Jack Nicholson's character is focused on following up a clue and isn't paying attention to his surroundings. By the time Jake Gittes notices, his attackers are too close for him to evade, and he finds himself

backed against a chain link fence with a switchblade up his nose. Your options are really limited in that case. This is something you want to avoid. Pay attention to your surroundings and heed the little voice that suggests something isn't right. I convinced myself (for a number of reasons) I was being exceptionally paranoid about the two middle schoolers mentioned above and almost paid dearly for it. I hope they learned something from their encounter with me. I sure did.

Pay attention to your surroundings and heed the little voice that suggests something isn't right.

Changing Habits Reduces Your Exposure

There's one long term habit you'll want to change if you're carrying some type of defensive device. Most of us use one hand for many of our common tasks, like opening doors, getting your keys/wallet out, and so on. You want to start using your other hand for those tasks so the hand that will operate the defensive device remains free to do so.



Some habits you want to have are making sure your money is inside your wallet and your wallet put away before you step out of any store or bank. You don't want to get up to your car

or house door and then start searching for your key. Have it in your hand—your support hand. Don't unlock your car until you're right beside it and have checked to make sure no one is lurking about. Don't forget to look behind you (check your six!). The potential threat is like Obi Wan Kenobi's description of the force: it surrounds us. Also, check inside your car before you get in to make sure you don't have unwanted passengers. Push-in robberies, where someone rushes up to you just as you get your house door unlocked, are common in many areas.

Finally, you need to do some mental work in your daily life. In addition to paying attention to what's going on around you, you need to do some pre-planning. You might call this "what if" mental games or building a decision tree for what to do in case of possible threats in a particular situation. While this sounds tiresome and/or paranoid, it doesn't really take much effort once you get used to it. First off, forget the Hollywood responses. There are many possible results in any violent encounter. Only one leaves you unharmed and not facing charges and/or a civil suit—avoidance. Look to see where the exits are. Are you close enough to them? Do you have a good view of the area? Can anyone approach unseen? Simply put, you want to place yourself in the best possible location to avoid a threat and/or to neutralize it without endangering others. The duty to retreat can be used to find the best spot to defend yourself. Please remember the best defense is not being there when trouble breaks out.

Rights or Safety?

by Dennis J. O'Connor, Former VCDL Board Member

In discussions, responses, and debates, our focus is frequently on rights: right to bear arms, right to self-defense, Bill of Rights, constitutional rights, civil rights, second amendment rights. Our anti-freedom adversaries, however, always frame the argument in terms of public safety.

To the non-gun owning, middle of the road, undecided masses who both sides are trying to sway, this verbalizing of opposing viewpoints makes us appear callous, uncaring, and selfish in demanding “our” rights supposedly at the expense of innocent people’s lives.

In the January 18th VA-ALERT “VCDL Lobby Day 2024 Wrap-up,” Philip Van Cleave noted that the sign about school shootings carried by the brutish, anti-gun loudmouth attempting to disrupt our rally actually makes our point about the danger of gun free zones. THIS is the message we need to convey. WE need to re-capture the safety argument which the anti-freedom mob has made their own. Leave the scholastic and legalistic lecture on rights to the courts, whose purview it is to rule on such things. People who have never carried, believe they will never carry, or don’t want to carry guns see no benefit to “our” rights as a stand-alone argument, and in fact will be offended by it if presented as an alternative to their safety.

If rights enter into public discourse with regard to bearing arms, address it quickly and succinctly and revert immediately to converse about public safety and the lives safeguarded and saved by an armed society. Hammer these points again and again; cite the failure of gun control and how it endangers us, and the murder and mayhem invited by gun free zones. Make the debate ONLY about public safety: Safety vs. Safety instead of Rights vs. Safety. This leaves the anti-freedom activists with nothing but emotional soundbites against logic, reason, and facts. Few care about rights they themselves don’t avail themselves of, but everyone is concerned about their own safety, and the safety of their friends and loved ones. We’re trying to win hearts and minds, so make it matter to everyone, and not just to fellow gun owners.

Words Have Meaning *(continued from page 3)*

the assailant is armed with a “weapon!” Note: simply having the item isn’t enough; they have to be in a position to use the item and make an “overt act meaning present peril. A demonstration of the will to carry out an attack or a furtive movement that signals imminent attack.” [Stoneman vs Commonwealth, 66 Va (25 Gratt) 887, 1874]

One of those who have attempted an armed robbery on me displayed an impressive switchblade and stated words to the effect that if I gave him my money, there wouldn’t be trouble. Intent seemed pretty clear to me, but it never went to trial. Gun trumps knife in the street version of paper, scissors, rock, and this fellow wisely left the scene. This incident happened long before cell phones and Ring cameras, and it would have been my word against his if he’d ever been found from my description. If something similar happens to you, report it immediately! Maybe try to get a quick snapshot? Bad persons carry cell phones too, and if they call the law first, *you’re* the wild man with a gun.

We see this concept being used to justify the banning of “assault weapons.” I don’t recall who noted that assault is a behavior, not an object, but they’re right. All the world’s armies use actual assault rifles, but the term “assault weapon” is designed to frighten and be flexible enough to cover any device people want banned. “Military Grade Weapon” (another fictional “weapon”) is another made-up term. This is similar to labeling the family car a “race car” because a much-modified version is used in some form of racing. There are many differences between the modern sporting rifle (MSR) and

an actual assault rifle, from the parts and manufacturing process to the manual of arms to the rate of fire.

Let’s move on to other words that can come back to bite you. Please recall that self-defense is a three-part problem. You have to: 1. successfully overcome the felonious assault, 2. do so in a manner that complies with the law, resulting in no charges or a favorable verdict; and 3. prevail in the probable civil suit by the aggressor or his family. I’m purposely using the word “prevail.” A defense attorney was asked after successfully defending a man who shot an attacker how he felt about “the win.” He said, “In a case like this, there really aren’t any winners.” He’s correct, his client missed part of his final year in law school and had a substantial legal bill. Actually, there’s a fourth part: survive the psychological/social stress of the incident.

Another fraught word is “intent.” Should you be ever be involved in a self-defense shooting, at some point you’ll be asked your intent for firing. It should be “to stop the felonious assault.” You also should continue to fire until the threat is resolved. There may also be questions about the intent of the aggressor. You should have an attorney present to help you articulate this.

Attorneys will warn against the use of other words, like “sorry” as it expresses regret. It’s OK to pity the family of someone you were forced to shoot. Make sure you have an attorney skilled in use-of-force law when making a statement following any incident. You should report the basics of what happened and state that you will testify. Massad Ayoob’s “5 Points after a Self-Defense Shooting” video encapsulates these points. It’s worth watching. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIJ4wLP_0UM

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.

The Legislature is now in session. VCDL members and gun owners across the Commonwealth are seeing the disastrous results of the election. Please make sure you are reading the VA-Alerts to be up to date on gun bills that have been filed and how the gun grabbers are doing exactly what they said they were going to do.

This year is the Federal Trifecta—each of us will be voting for President, a US Senator, and a Congressional representative. While the PAC cannot contribute to or endorse in a federal election, there will be a survey for federal office candidates. Gun owners can use it as tool to find out where candidates in the general election and primaries stand on gun rights issues.

We have learned the hard lesson of what happens when the grassroots are not engaged. Much as in 2019, the elections in 2023 did not produce what we needed to stop the assault on our gun rights. To be honest, it hurts with such slim margins in both chambers more than it does with a blowout. I speak from experience when I say the close races are the worst to lose.

2024 is the year for the PAC to rebuild its war chest and for everyone to buckle up for another year of statewide races in 2025. Virginia will be in the spotlight nationally. Let's all remember that while federal elections are important, local elections and the Virginia State Legislature have far more impact on our 2A rights for Virginians.

Please remember VCDL-PAC in your annual giving. Visit vcdl.org/donations and click on the VCDL-PAC fund. Every donation—big and small—is appreciated. We could not do what we do without you.

Yours in Liberty,
Cathy McNickle
VCDL-PAC Chair





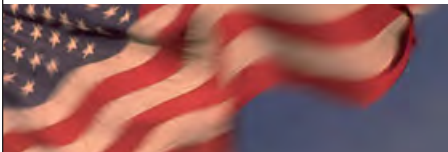
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Our moderators keep that
document updated to show
changing circumstances.

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Vice President	Jim Snyder vp@vcdl.org
Secretary	Pat Webb secretary@vcdl.org
Treasurer	Pat Webb treasurer@vcdl.org

**Virginia Citizens Defense League
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As of January 2023**

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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