



D.S.S.A. NEWS

DELAWARE STATE SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION
A PUBLICATION OF THE DELAWARE STATE SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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General Assembly Back in Session

The Delaware General Assembly returns from its six-week recess on March 18, 2014 to resume its work for this year, leading into the 2014 General Elections. There are a number of bills of interest to gun owners, hunters and sportsmen that may see action during the balance of this Session. Among the bills we will be watching are the following:

SB 18 - This measure pertains to those persons who falsely report the loss or theft of a firearm. Criminals acting as straw purchasers for prohibited persons will sometimes report a firearm used in a crime as being either lost or stolen as a way of disguising the straw purchase. This bill attempts to address that issue. As currently written, this bill does not appear to negatively affect law-abiding gun owners and appears to contain adequate safeguards to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens. This bill has passed the Senate and was released from the House Committee and is now on the House Ready List. We will be watching this bill in an effort to ensure that law-abiding gun owners will not be negatively impacted.

SB 23 - This bill is a total repeal of Delaware's preemption laws and would allow all of Delaware's towns, cities and counties to pass their own hodge-podge of potentially conflicting and confusing gun laws. This bill is currently pending in the Senate. Please tell your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

HB 62 - This bill is a partial repeal of preemption and would allow Wilmington to be exempted from preemption and allow Wilmington to pass the types of ban and confiscation laws proposed by Councilwoman Shabazz in January of 2013. Please tell your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

HB 58 - This bill is a ban on standard capacity magazines, claiming that these magazines are "large capacity". This bill was released from committee and is now on the House Ready List. Please tell your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

HB 67 - This bill creates a new crime of "Possession of a Firearm or Destructive Weapon in a Safe School Zone. This bill was released from committee in 2013 and is now on the House Ready List. Although this bill has been amended, it remains a threat to the rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms for lawful purposes. Please ask your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

HB 72 - This bill amends the current criminal law against carrying a concealed deadly weapon without a license by requiring a minimum mandatory sentence of one (1) year where

the weapon is a firearm. Because this bill specifically targets firearms and treats firearms differently and more harshly than other deadly weapons, this bill should be defeated. Therefore, please ask your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

HB 73 - This bill would increase the penalty for Possession of a Firearm by a Person Prohibited. This bill has passed the House and is now on the Senate Ready List. As currently written, this bill does not appear to negatively impact the rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms for lawful purposes. However, we will be monitoring this bill to ensure that the rights of law-abiding Delawareans are protected.

HB 82 - This bill increases the penalties for Possession of a Deadly Weapon by a Person Prohibited where that person engages in conduct with that weapon which results in injury or death to another. This bill is on the Ready List in the House. This bill does not affect the rights of law-abiding citizens as written but will be monitored to ensure that no amendments are attached which might impinge upon the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

HB 192 - This bill pertains to the creation and use of so-called "false compartments" within a motor vehicle. As originally written, this bill was flawed in many respects and would have negatively impacted law-abiding gun owners, which was never the intent of the sponsor. The original intent of the bill was to deal with violent criminals engaged in drug and gun smuggling crimes and was not aimed at the law-abiding citizen who may have a concealed carry permit or who might be attempting to legally secure their firearms in their vehicles. The sponsor of this bill is re-writing the bill so as to protect the rights of law-abiding citizens. We will be monitoring this bill to ensure that the rights of law-abiding gun owners are protected.

HB 187 - Although this bill is NOT a "gun bill", it does negatively affect the First Amendment Rights of gun owners and Second Amendment organizations such as the NRA and many of our local gun clubs. This is one of those bills that is intended to protect Delaware's citizens from financial scams by unscrupulous fund raisers, but goes way too far in doing so. Called "The Delaware Charitable Solicitations Act of 2013", HB 187 poses clear and present dangers for many of our pro-gun organizations and should be defeated in its current form. Therefore, please ask your senators and representatives to vote "**No**" on this bill at every opportunity.

Cowboy Action Shooting

by Kathy Watson (aka Wyoming Schoolmarm)

Interested in shooting guns from the late 1800's through the 1920's? Enjoy dressing like a cowboy or wearing costumes from the Civil War or the Victorian era? Wish you had lived in the days of the Wild West? If you answered yes to these questions, then Cowboy Action Shooting is worth looking into.

Single Action Shooting Society (**SASS**) is a worldwide organization that offers Cowboy Action Shooting matches in every state in the USA and in most countries around the world. Most clubs hold a monthly match. Many Northern states close down at the end of November and resume in the beginning of March, while some Southern clubs close down in July and August. Many of these clubs will offer indoor shoots during these times. Some clubs will also hold a three day annual match. Each state holds an annual state match and each region offer a yearly regional match. The top female and male shooter from each state level match are awarded free entry to their regional match and likewise each regional set of winners receives free entry to End of Trail - the "World Series" of cowboy shooting. Check out the website: www.sassnet.com. As you see from the byline, each member of SASS shoots under a registered alias and appropriate attire is required.

SASS offers three types of matches: regular cowboy, mounted cowboy and Wild Bunch. Regular cowboy matches involve shooting four different firearms, on foot, at steel targets. The four period correct firearms consist of two single action revolvers, a lever action or Winchester pump rifle and a '97 pump or '87 lever action, or double barrel shotgun. All period correct firearms must be originals from 1800s or reproductions. Competitors can choose from .32 to .45 Colt caliber ammunition; shotgun shells can be 12- , 16 - or 20-gauge with 7½ or 8 shot. Mounted cowboy matches involve shooting .45 blanks from two single action revolvers while on horseback. These competitors shoot their blanks at balloons while mounted. All ammunition is bought at the competition and pistols are loaded by a designated safety officer to insure only blanks are used. Wild Bunch matches involve three firearms: a single model 1911 .45 caliber pistol (with several loaded magazines), a lever action .45 caliber rifle and a model '97 pump shotgun. These competitors shoot some steel and some paper targets, on foot. This variety of matches offers a choice (or choices) to satisfy every type of cowboy/cowgirl.

Many competitors shoot in more than one type of match. Locally, two cowboy clubs offer the standard cowboy match. In Delaware, one of the oldest cowboy clubs on the East Coast, **Paden's Posse**, shoots on the third Sunday of each Month at Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol range on Rifle Range Road in Bridgeville. Our website is: www.bville-rifle-pistol.org click on cowboys along the top menu.

On the eastern shore of Maryland, the **Eas'dern Shore Renegades** shoot on the first Saturday of each month at William Roe Range in Sudlersville, Maryland. The Renegades also offer a practice matches on the third Thursday of each month called Geezer Guns. Our website is: www.dsarange.com click on Cowboys or Geezer Guns on the left margin.

My husband and I shoot at both of these clubs and enjoy the competition and friendships we have made at each. Cowboy Mounted Shooting takes place in Greenwood, Delaware, at Pat Lever's ranch. They shoot from April through October. Their schedule is posted on their website: www.1ststateshooters.com. My husband and I have enjoyed several matches at Lever's. My husband also was able to shoot in one of their Friday evening practice sessions. He rode one of Pat's horses, did well and really enjoyed himself. Our horses are not "gun" broke, so we've been back, but only to watch. Wild Bunch is a relatively new branch of Cowboy Action Shooting, and to date is not offered locally. The Jackson Hole Gang in Jackson, New Jersey will be offering a Wild Bunch Match on the fourth Saturday of each month starting with March 22nd. Their website is www.jacksonholegang.com.

The Thurmont Rangers in Thurmont Maryland is offering Wild Bunch Matches on the Saturday after the first Sunday of the month, from March through September. Their website is www.thurmontrangers.com.

Cowboy action offers something for everyone, so come out and watch a match or two. I know you'll then consider joining us in our costumed, friendly, fun and safety oriented "trip back in time", plus you get to shoot guns!

Delaware State SASS Match coming soon!

By Kathy Watson (aka Wyoming Schoolmarm)

The Delaware State SASS Cowboy Match, called the **Eas'dern Shore Round Up**, is being held from May 2 - May 4, 2014 at the William Roe Range in Sudlersville, MD. May 2nd is side match day while the main match is on May 3rd and 4th. Spectators are welcome and encouraged to attend - bring shooting glasses and ear plugs or borrow some from the club.

Friday, May 2nd's schedule includes side matches, RO courses and registration. Side matches (noon to 4 pm) offer each cowboy/cowgirl shooter a chance to compete using just a single type of firearm. Some of these contests include: derringer, pocket pistol, speed pistol, speed rifle, speed shotgun and the challenging long range completions. RO (Range officer) courses review all the regulations and help to certify shooters as range officers and timer operators.

Many participants like to register on Friday, so they can catch up with friends, visit with the vendors at a relaxed pace and check out their "competition" before the main match.

Saturday, May 3rd will start with registration, opening ceremonies and the presentation of the Too Dang Frank Award. After the safety meeting, the competition on the first five stages begins. The day ends with a BBQ for registered shooters. The day's activities begin at 9:30 am and the shooting portion usually concludes about 3 pm. Each posse has a scheduled lunch break, which they use not only to eat and recharge, but to also visit the vendors and talk with friends and spectators.

Sunday, May 4th starts early. At 9 am, the shooters will begin competing on the last five stages. While the final results are being tallied, shooters catch up on lunch and compare notes. This year during the break between shooting and the awards ceremony, we may offer some type of one-on-one challenge,

where two competitors will face off against each other to see who the better shooter is.

The award ceremony is highly anticipated and plaques are given for the top male and female shooters in each category. Also a special award is given to the Top Delaware Male and Female shooters and to the Top Overall Male and Female shooter. For two years in a row, Cody Conagher has been the top overall male shooter - will he continue his winning streak? Will Hazel Pepper (Karen Bell of Lincoln) and Cool Hand Lee (Jerry Martin of Delmar) once again be the Overall Delaware State Champs? Come and find out! For more information, check out our website www.dsarange.com click on cowboys or on the Eas'dern Shore Round Up. The Single Action Shooting Society website is www.sassnet.com.

Delaware Military Academy Marksmanship Team

The weekend of February 22nd and 23rd saw the Delaware Military Academy's Marksmanship team participating in the Camp Perry Regional Championship. Cadet David Tindall was the overall DMA high shooter in the precision class with a score of 1131 out of 1200. He finished 6th overall out of all NJROTC cadets present. Cadet Patrick Parks was the overall DMA high shooter in the sporter class with a score of 1038 out of 1200. This year's Championship included two three-position air rifle competitions. This is an opportunity not available to many regular high schools and is regarded highly as a competitive marksmanship team trip.

The other cadets participating were Patrick Rigor, Jesse Mulligan, Dustin Riley, Nathan Zebrowski, Jordan Matic, and Jon and Chris Howell. They are coached by GYSGT Lemke and Mr. Jon Howell.

Dissenter in Heller & McDonald Argues for Decisions to be Over-ruled by Constitutional Amendment

Former Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens found himself on the wrong side of law and history in both of the Supreme Court's landmark cases on the Second Amendment in the early 21st Century, *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008) and *McDonald v. City of Chicago* (2010). Together, these decisions recognized that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to keep and bear arms for self-defense that is not dependent upon service in an organized militia, and that this right binds the acts of federal, state, and local officials.

Stevens wrote lengthy (and unavailing) dissents in both cases. In his *Heller* dissent, he argued, among other things, that the Second Amendment was intended only to preserve the right of the people to maintain well-regulated state militias; that it did not "enshrine the common-law right of self-defense in the Constitution;" and that it does not curtail legislative power "to regulate nonmilitary use and ownership of weapons." Meanwhile, his dissent in *McDonald* opined that the plaintiffs were asserting a property right, rather than a liberty interest;

that other "advanced democracies" manage just fine without a right corresponding to the Second Amendment; and that the Second Amendment, properly understood, has nothing to say about state and local gun control.

Having failed to persuade a majority of his colleagues on the Court of these views, the now-retired Stevens is now taking his arguments to the public in a new book entitled *Six Amendments: How and Why We Should Change the Constitution*. Ironically, his publisher is hyping the book as "an absolutely unprecedented call to arms, detailing six specific ways in which the Constitution should be amended in order to protect our democracy and the safety and wellbeing of American citizens." While we have not surveyed his other five proposals for transforming the American constitutional landscape, his suggestion for the Second Amendment indicates that on that topic, at least, the 93-year-old Stevens remains resolutely out of step with the American public. A Gallup poll released a few months before the *Heller* decision was announced showed that 73% of Americans agreed with what was to become the majority view in that case, while only 20% agreed with the view Stevens later expressed in his dissent.

According to a report in *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Stevens writes in his new book that he would qualify "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms" in the Second Amendment with the phrase, "when serving in the militia." In so doing, he would make the militia-preserving function of the right, which *Heller* recognized as justification for including the preexisting right to arms in the Bill of Rights, the totality of the right itself.

According to Justice Scalia's majority opinion in *Heller*, "The debate with respect to the right to keep and bear arms ... was not over whether it was desirable (all agreed that it was) but over whether it needed to be codified in the Constitution." The opinion goes on to state:

It is therefore entirely sensible that the Second Amendment's prefatory clause announces the purpose for which the right was codified: to prevent elimination of the militia. The prefatory clause does not suggest that preserving the militia was the only reason Americans valued the ancient right; most undoubtedly thought it even more important for self-defense and hunting. But the threat that the new Federal Government would destroy the citizens' militia by taking away their arms was the reason that right--unlike some other English rights--was codified in a written Constitution.

Nevertheless, the *Heller* majority was clear that "self-defense ... was the central component of the right itself." (Emphasis in original.)

Stevens is not unique amongst the *Heller* and *McDonald* dissenters in his dissatisfaction with the United States Constitution. Justice Ginsburg, who joined dissents in both cases, infamously remarked on Egyptian television, "I would not look to the U.S. Constitution, if I were drafting a constitution in the year 2012." Instead, she suggested the Egyptians consider provisions adopted more recently by South Africa or Canada or even the European Convention on Human Rights.

Americans can breathe somewhat easier now that Stevens is no longer empowered as a sitting Supreme Court justice to "fix" what he considers the United States Constitution's shortcomings. His continued musings on the subject in his private capacity, however, are sure to stoke the imaginations of antigun academics, journalists, and activists, who are likely to cite them as if they were more authoritative than what the Supreme Court actually determined was the law.

Make no mistake that the views of Stevens and Ginsburg on the Second Amendment continue to hold currency amongst an entire generation of would-be Supreme Court justices. Whether such persons ever actually ascend to that role and imperil Heller's and McDonald's fragile five-vote majorities depends upon who wields the levers of powers in the White House and Congress. That, in turn, depends on the will of the American people and how they exercise the vote. Without your participation in the upcoming mid-term elections, Stevens's suggestions for the Second Amendment could take on the character of a blueprint, rather than just an academic exercise by an elitist who believes he knows better than the Constitution he once swore to uphold.

New Book Contains Lessons from History on Civilian Disarmament

Author, attorney, and eminent Second Amendment scholar Stephen P. Halbrook has released an acclaimed new book that documents with painstaking detail perhaps the most diabolical gun control effort of the 20th Century. Dr. Halbrook is also a research fellow as the Independent Institute, which published this latest volume in his considerable body of work.

Based on newly-discovered, secret documents from German archives, diaries and newspapers of the time, *Gun Control in the Third Reich* presents the definitive, yet hidden history of how the Nazi regime made use of gun control to disarm and repress its enemies and consolidate power. While voluminous scholarship has documented the Third Reich and the Holocaust, this is the first thorough examination of the laws restricting firearm ownership that rendered Hitler's political opponents, as well as the Jews, defenseless. It also makes a compelling case that the National Socialist regime considered suppression of firearm ownership by disfavored groups a critical element of achieving its objectives.

Gun Control in the Third Reich spans the two decades from the birth of the Weimar Republic in 1918, through Kristallnacht in 1938. The book then presents a panorama of pertinent events during World War II regarding the effects of the disarmament policies. And even though in the occupied countries the Nazis decreed the death penalty for possession of a firearm, there developed instances of heroic armed resistance by Jews, particularly the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

While the United States remains free and prosperous after its pivotal role in defeating Nazi Germany in World War II, it cannot take for granted the safeguards built into its constitutional system to deter the rise of unchecked power. Even if the threats to liberty that contemporary Americans face are different from those posed by the Third Reich, the lessons of

history remain instructive. Not every person who seeks disarmament is a dictator, but without question, dictators abhor an armed populace.

Gun Control in the Third Reich:

Disarming the Jews and "Enemies of the State"

By Stephen P. Halbrook, Ph.D., J.D.

Hardcover o 280 Pages o 8 Pages of Photographs o Index

Published by The Independent Institute

U.S. Firearm Production Sets Record in 2012: AR-15 Production Up Over 100%

The number of firearms manufactured in the U.S. for sale to American customers hit an all-time high in 2012, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (BATFE) new *Firearms Manufacturers and Export Report*. American firearm manufacturers produced roughly 8.3 million firearms for sale in the U.S., a new record, up 33 percent from the 6.2 million produced for American customers in 2011.

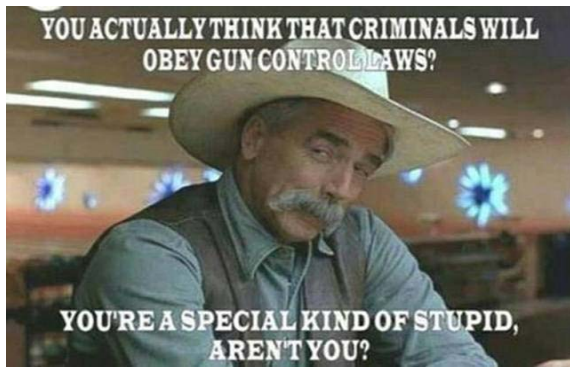
The report shows not only that Americans valued firearms in 2012 more than ever before, but also that they particularly valued the kinds of firearms that gun control supporters have tried the hardest to get banned--handguns and semi-automatic rifles.

Production of handguns rose 32 percent to four million in 2012, as compared to 2011, including a 36 percent increase in pistols and an 18 percent increase in revolvers. Production of the AR-15, the most popular rifle in America, more than doubled in 2012, to over 825,000, not counting the large numbers made by Remington, Bushmaster and Sturm, Ruger. Total rifle production rose 38 percent, to three million, while shotguns rose 18 percent to 900,000.

We've been hearing for some time from those who want to ban guns that Americans aren't interested in them anymore; that firearm ownership is on the decline. Like their fanciful notions that gun crime is somehow "exploding" or that concealed carry licensees are ticking time bombs, the numbers simply don't back up their claims.

The anti-gunners are going to need all the "new math" they can muster, because the 2012 report contains figures for only two months of the surge in firearm purchases that began with President Obama's reelection. Meanwhile, the FBI's NICS figures indicate that Americans bought even more firearms in 2013 than they did in 2012.

For those who support the Second Amendment and American manufacturing, these figures provide cause for celebration. For those still seeking to ban private possession of firearms, they may want to skip the champagne and head straight for the aspirin.



NRA Files Friend of the Court Brief in Appeal of NSA Spying Case

This week, NRA filed a brief in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The brief supports the American Civil Liberties Union's request for reversal of a decision by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York that upheld the National Security Agency's data collection program.

We previously reported on the lower court case in an article available here. That article contains a more detailed description of NRA's arguments, but they generally make two major points. First, that the NSA's mass data collection violates the First Amendment's freedom of association protection because individuals will be chilled from joining certain groups – like NRA – that have been the target of hostility by others, including certain public officials, and identify their members' private social, political, or religious beliefs to the government. The second line of argument focuses on how the data collection programs could undermine privacy protections in federal law that prohibit creating a registry of firearms or firearm owners.

Much of the government's arguments have focused on the fact that the surveillance program only collects metadata and that the content of communications still remain private. However, a recent study by two graduate students at Stanford University shows how much private information can be gleaned about an individual from even a small amount of metadata. The study collected telephone metadata on volunteers over a period of just a few months. The authors hypothesized that they would not be able to identify any specific information about the participants because of the small amount of data collected, but as they put it: "We were wrong. We found that phone metadata is unambiguously sensitive, even in a small population and over a short time window. We were able to infer medical conditions, firearm ownership, and more, using solely phone metadata."

On the specific issue of firearm ownership, the authors of the study determined that one of the volunteers likely was interested in firearms and specifically in AR-15 pattern rifles. This information was then confirmed to be true by the study participant. This type of information is particularly sensitive at a time when some government officials at both the state and federal levels are showing increasing hostility towards individual gun ownership and when interest in a particular type of firearm may bring an individual under close governmental scrutiny because of that firearm's disfavored status.

NRA will continue to support this case and others that serve to protect the privacy interests of gun owners and will keep you informed of further developments on this issue.

Senator Robert L. Venables, Sr. of Laurel Receives The Delaware Defender of Freedom Award

On Tuesday evening, February 25, 2014, the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association (DSSA) held its popular Second Amendment Freedom Banquet at Dover's Modern Maturity Center where approximately 450 people witnessed the presentation of the John J. Thompson Memorial Delaware Defender of Freedom Award to its first recipient, Delaware State Senator Robert L. Venables, Sr. (D- Laurel).

This prestigious award is presented in memory of John J. Thompson who served as the President of the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association for over 30 years prior to his untimely death in 2013 after a long and heroic fight against cancer. Mr. Thompson, a lawyer and respected constitutional scholar, devoted his life to the preservation of our constitutional heritage and the protection and defense of the rights of law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms for lawful purposes.

Mr. Thompson's widow, Peggy, and his two sons, Matthew and Mark, assisted former NRA President and DSSA's current President, John C. Sigler, in making the presentation of this inaugural award to Senator Venables. Also assisting in the presentation was the evening's key note speaker, Fox News personality and NRA Board Member, Lt. Col. Oliver L. North, USMC (Ret.).

In presenting the award to Senator Venables, Mr. Sigler noted that the John J. Thompson Memorial Defender of Freedom Award is a lifetime achievement award which represents and recognizes Senator Venables' steadfast dedication to the preservation and defense of constitutional principles as originally envisioned by our Founding Fathers throughout his tenure in Delaware's Senate, representing the people of Delaware's 21st Senatorial District since 1988.

Senator Venables is well known within Delaware's General Assembly and within his 21st Senatorial District as a staunch supporter of the right of Delaware's law-abiding citizens to keep and bear arms for lawful purposes. He is also well known for his defense of First Amendment Principles and for ensuring that all of the rights contained within our nation's Bill of Rights and Delaware's own Bill of Rights are respected by Delaware's law makers.

The Delaware State Sportsmen's Association has served as the Official State Affiliate of the National Rifle Association of America here in Delaware since 1968 and is charged with responsibility for delivering NRA's Second Amendment message and its education and training programs throughout the state of Delaware through its constituent clubs and associations and through the efforts of its individual members.



Senator Robert L. Venables accepts the John J. Thompson Memorial Delaware Defender of Freedom Award from DSSA President John Sigler as Mrs. Peggy Thompson looks on.



Lt. Col. Oliver L. North, USMC (Ret) congratulates Senator Robert L. Venables on being the first recipient of the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association's John J. Thompson Memorial Delaware Defender of Freedom Award.

Same Shirt, Different Day: NRA Logo Apparel Lands High Schooler in Suspension

The latest chapter in a seemingly never-ending string of illogical anti-gun interpretations of school dress-code and zero-tolerance policies comes to us courtesy of the administrators of Grand Island High School in Grand Island, N.Y. This time, however, it's personal for those of us who proudly display the NRA logo on our clothing, vehicles, and gear.

The incident unfolded when a school official took exception to 16-year-old NRA member and sportsman Shane Kinney's NRA t-shirt. The shirt in question features a small NRA logo on the front left chest, and a larger NRA logo on the back superimposed over a muzzleloader crossed with a more modern hunting rifle. Surrounding the NRA logo are the words "2nd Amendment" and "Shall not be Infringed" in large print, and "Live Free Or Die" in small print. Kinney told Fox News that the official ordered that he "had to either turn the shirt inside out or put duct tape over the words." Kinney refused, and was relegated to in-school suspension until his father could bring him a new shirt.

In a letter sent to Kinney's parents (who are also NRA members), school officials cited the rifles on the back of Kinney's t-shirt as the clothing's offending characteristic, and claimed the student's refusal to remove his shirt was "insubordinate and in violation of the GICSD Code of Conduct." The letter also asserted that Kinney had been warned on previous occasions not to wear clothing with firearm imagery.

The somewhat different accounts given by Kinney and school administrators raise an interesting question. Was Kinney targeted for the images of firearms on the shirt, or for the views his clothing expressed?

Even if the school officials' contention is that the firearms images were the reason Kinney was cited, the school district's own dress code

(not to mention any rational concern for order or safety) does not offer a compelling reason for their actions. The code says nothing about firearms and only states that student clothing shall not, "promote... and/or encourage illegal or violent activities," and shall "not disrupt or interfere with the educational process." The manner in which the firearms were depicted on Kinney's shirt cannot reasonably be said to encourage illegal or violent behavior; after all, one of the guns depicted on the shirt does not even meet the federal definition of a firearm. And in the portion of their statements made available to the public, school officials offered no evidence that Kinney's clothing caused a disruption or interfered with the educational process.

Further, this type of intolerance of nonviolent gun imagery in the context of a logo is even more absurd given that depictions of firearms are commonplace in our nation's emblems and heraldry. The first sketch of what would become the Great Seal of the United States - ordered by Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson - featured an American carrying a rifle. The flags of five states - Delaware, Michigan, Minnesota, West Virginia, and Wyoming - feature firearms. The emblem of some of our most lauded military personnel, the U.S. Navy Seals, features a pistol. And the National Guard logo features a minuteman with his rifle. Further, with a military recruiting schedule that has recruiters at Grand Island High School six times a month, it's highly likely that students are already exposed to materials featuring images of firearms in the school. Do all of these items have some sort of inherently offensive, violent, or disruptive characteristics?

Suggesting a more sinister motive on the part of school officials is Kinney's contention that the first administrator he dealt with ordered him to cover the words on the shirt. Kinney also told a reporter, "I've worn shirts before with guns on them... I was never asked to cover up. I think this happened because it was an NRA shirt." If indeed the administrator targeted Kinney's shirt for the values or point of view it expressed, it would be an especially egregious example of the suppression of free expression. And as a practical matter, the shirt's words are commonplace. We certainly hope the Grand Island High School has copies of the United States Constitution available to pupils.

However, regardless of whether it was the firearm images or the content of the speech on the shirt that prompted the school officials to act, the record in the federal courts would indicate that Kinney's choice of clothing is protected by First Amendment.

If Kinney's story sounds familiar, it's because other similarly regrettable episodes have occurred over and over, especially within the last year. Together, these incidents illustrate the importance of ongoing state legislative efforts to re-insert some common sense into school dress code and zero-tolerance policies. Most notable is Florida's HB 7029, which would protect "wearing clothing... that depict[s] a firearm or weapon or express[es] an opinion regarding a right guaranteed by the Second Amendment."

As for Kinney's and his parents' future plans, they noted to local media that they intend to put this situation behind them, with Kinney's father stating, "We decided that it was best to let the whole thing drop since Shane already took his suspension." His mother, an employee of the school, said Shane would "move on ... graduate ... probably serve our country, and wear lots of shirts like this."

We certainly hope so. The family has not at this point contacted the NRA since the incident, and we respect the wishes they've expressed to the media to move on from the incident. Given that, we encourage our members to respect the family's privacy.

Rest assured, however, NRA as an organization does not take these incidents lightly, and we will continue to push for redress (no pun intended) in the legislatures and to expose these incidents of persecution and hysteria wherever they occur. The NRA's members are among the best of Americans, and their display of our logos does us proud.

SAVE THE DATE, FRIENDS OF NRA DINNER

The next Friends of NRA Dinner will be held on Friday, May 9, 2014. As usual, the Spring event will be held at Modern Maturity Center, 1121 Forrest Avenue, Dover, DE. 19904. There will be games to play, and lots of prizes to win. A delicious roast beef dinner will be served. A silent auction will be held as well as a great live auction with lots of guns and other great merchandise to buy. We expect a sell out crowd, so please buy your tickets early. Tickets are \$50.00 each and should go on sale mid-January.

Also, check out our pre-dinner raffle this year. Tickets will be available early January and the drawing will be held on the night of our dinner. The raffle is for a Heritage 11 gun safe with 3 guns already in it, including a Stoger o/u 12ga Shotgun, a Ruger 10-22 Takedown Rifle and a Kimber Custom.45 ACP. Tickets are \$10.00 each or 3 tickets for \$20.00. Yes, you read that correctly. This is a great price to possibly win all three guns and the safe. Please contact one of our Friends of NRA volunteers or you can call Carolyn at 302-697-6769.

Delaware State Sportsmen's Association, Inc. Membership Application

Send to: Membership Secretary

Delaware State Sportsmen's Association

P.O. Box 94 Lincoln, DE 19960

Individual Membership (check one)

A. Life \$400 ___ B. Annual \$25 ___ C. Family \$ 40 ___ D. Junior \$ 10 ___ E. Email \$20___

Name: _____ NRA Member? _____

Street Address: _____ New DSSA member? _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ DSSA Renewal? _____

Phone Number: (_____) _____ Occupation: _____

Email: _____ (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Family Memberships (Must be part of life or annual member's household.)

_____, _____
_____, _____

I certify that I am not now and never have been a member of any organization which has as any part of its program the attempt to overthrow the government of the United States by force or violence; that I have never been convicted of a crime of violence; that if admitted to membership in the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association, I will fulfill the obligations of good sportsmanship and uphold the Right to Keep and Bear Arms found in the Constitution of my State of Residence and of the United States of America.

**MEMBERSHIP FEES AND DONATIONS,
PLEASE TAKE NOTE:**

Our Organization exists and is sustained by the membership fees and donations we receive annually. Please note that we appreciate and need your support more than ever. Our membership has virtually doubled in the past few months and with this infusion of support DSSA can and plans to move forward in areas and ways we have not been able to do before. We ask that when making donations to DSSA or DFLA that you use a separate check for each organization. This will ensure that the monies will be used as you the member/donator would have us use it. To help in this area, DSSA has set out to allow online payments and registration for membership. As you read this, provisions are being made to facilitate credit card usage in a secure manner to make payments and to donate. THANK YOU

DSSA NEWS

The DSSA NEWS is a bi-monthly publication of the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association. It is distributed to each member as a benefit of membership. Additional copies are provided to elected officials and other NRA state associations. If you would like to contribute to the DSSA NEWS please submit your material to jeff.hague@dssa.us. Questions or concerns may be sent to the same address.

Mail Delivery Option

If you have paid dues at the full rate of \$25.00 per year you may elect to receive your newsletter through the USPS. To make a change please contact DSSA Membership Secretary, William D. Bell at: dabll@comcast.net or 302-245-4822.

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