



# Arizona Citizens Defense League

*Protecting Your Freedom*

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Newsletter

December 2006

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## AzCDL Recognized as “Grassroots Organization of the Year (2006)”

The Arizona Citizens Defense League was recognized as the “2006 Grassroots Organization of the Year” during the 21st Gun Policy Conference (GRPC) held in Charlotte, North Carolina, September 23-24, 2006. Charles Heller, Secretary, accepted the award on behalf of AzCDL.



*“In Recognition of the Tireless Hard Work and Dedication to the Preservation of the Individual Right to Keep and Bear Arms By Its Members”*



Award recipients at the 21st annual Gun Rights Policy Conference. Charles Heller, AzCDL Secretary, is on the far left. Photo by Ben Richardson, courtesy of CCRKBA.



by Charles Heller, AzCDL Secretary

My topic is how to do activism without getting hauled off. Having been hauled off a couple times, I suggest that not doing so is a better course of action, although your opinion may vary. I wish to be remembered outside the hall of martyrs, as it were.



For anyone who does not know, I host the Swap Shop Radio Show Sundays on AM 690 in Tucson, AM 930 in Douglas, AM 1240 in Globe, from 10 AM to noon, where you can call in live and buy, sell or trade anything you want that is lawful and moral. It is the almost unregulated free market, governed only by common courtesy and common sense. (Although sense is becoming somewhat less common). From Noon to One PM, Liberty Watch is about making sure government remains the servant, not the master. At One PM is America Armed & Free, the only firearms related program originating in the Southwest. I say firearms related, because if it has a muzzle, a nozzle, or a blade, it gets talked about sooner or later. That part of the show is also on KFNF in Phoenix, AM 1100.



I also teach the Arizona concealed weapons course, for those of you interested in turning your God granted, constitutionally guaranteed right, into a privilege, on pain of lack of privacy, and while paying the government to do so.

I am one of the 4 founders of the Arizona Citizens Defense League, the group which this year succeeded in getting Castle Doctrine passed and signed into law, put the burden of proof in self defense cases back on the state where it belonged, and got the law changed to specify in writing that governments that put up "no guns here" signs install secure lockers for storage of same. It is that which I am going to cover first in terms of success; however I want to cover some basics about activism.

Notice that there is no lack of things about which to be concerned. These are things I try to address on Liberty Watch, but there are more abuses of both power

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and principle than any one or any ten radio shows can cover. Notice that an abuse of principle is just as serious as one of power, parenthetically.

First of all, no matter how much we want to combat all such abuses, we can't. Doing so would require a full time activist. I'm as close as you usually get to such an animal, and I don't have time to activate against all evils.



So I'm going to suggest you select your activism targets very carefully on things you are going to invest the *capital* of your time. Figure out what it is you are most passionate about, and handle those things as your highest priority.



I encourage each of you to pick your own hill, based on what Thomas Jefferson once suggested, "Laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

Think for a moment, if you would, what the most serious abuse is of freedom in your domain, and work on it. You don't have to work on only one thing, but decide what one thing is your highest priority, and do that first, and most.

The nature of my work makes me somewhat multi disciplinary in my approach to the fight against abuses of power, but most of you who know me know what my first passion is in those abuses.

To that end, I come to my second point, after deciding what activism is most important to you: study it. Become a minor expert in your topic. Read books, articles, and web sites which specialize in that area. Join like minded groups. Get to the point where if you are in a debate or have a chance to speak about your topic, that you can confidently quote sources and resources without having to search all over for them. Being confident in your topic carries a lot of weight in convincing people of the efficacy of your point.



There is a saying in lawyering, "if you have the facts, pound them. If you don't

have the facts, pound the table." Well, I'm here to tell you that you don't need to pound the table if you have the facts!



Third, associate with others that are of like mind, but understand that even like minded people will have different ideas on how to do a thing. Don't make it so that everything has to be exactly your way, or you will be a lonely activist.

Let me give you a personal example: the core group of the AzCDL consists of 4 guys, Dave Kopp the president, John Wentling the Vice-President, Fred Dahne the treasurer, and me, the secretary. Four more diverse, deep thinking people you will not find! Our communication styles are different along with our approaches to any issue, but we are each effective at what we do. It does not matter that we come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. It matters that we make the progressive realization of our goals, more important than who gets credit for their achievement.



Fourth, decide how far you are willing to go with your activism. Let us say that you have picked out the target of your activism, and you are informed about the laws surrounding it and the rules that government is supposed to be following. Decide in advance how far you are willing to go with an individual gesture of activism. Some of you know that in April of 2003, I had a peaceful confrontation in Reid Park with the Tucson Police Department about openly carrying a gun in said park. As a result of that meeting, they now have a new policy that they will NOT arrest anyone found carrying a gun openly in the park, as was their previous policy. Furthermore, there is now a 6 minute in service training film that all TPD officers must watch on dealing with lawfully armed persons in the parks, which came out of one Sergeant's efforts.

The reason he was able to do that is because I took my activism with the police sergeant to the limit of civility, but not beyond it. I gave him room to obey the law without threatening his person

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or challenging his authority. I simply questioned his application of the law, and pointed out nicely the consequences of violating my civil rights under color of law. Suddenly the topic of the day changed from the silly little Glock 27 on my left side, to, "Sergeant, I can't protect your certification to be a peace officer if you don't obey the law." Suddenly the basis of the conversation was irrevocably shifted.

Fifth - watch your words.

Everyone has a territory, and people can get pretty territorial in their perceived "domain." Let's use my example in the park with TPD. Here we have a situation where I am facing 4 police officers while I am openly carrying a sidearm. They are asserting that I may not do so. I am politely explaining to them that I am certified to teach the law they are attempting to enforce, and they are not doing so lawfully. No tension there, right????



I am here to tell you that as a CCW instructor, more people get in trouble for what they SAY, than what they DO. Remember the Miranda warning.



Know what you are going to say before you meet the nice public servant or the petty tyrant, as the case may be. Your goal should be to inform them of the proper procedure or conduct, not, to be right. If your goal is to be right, go join a debate society. Our rights and

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precious freedom are too important to be sacrificed on the altar of our egos. Fold up your ego and put it in your holster underneath your sidearm, please.

In dealing with government agents and people in control of premises or areas we frequent, being civil goes a long way. I am NOT talking here about rendering lip service to the derriere of petty bureaucrats! You can be *plenty* harsh without being either coarse or truculent. People today are not as used to civility as they once were, and a polite, "with all due respect, that is not what the law says, sir," will get you a lot further than crude anatomical references, like, "no it's NOT, you elbow!"

Sixth, If you are going to commit an act of civil obedience (after all, if *they* are not following the law, they are the ones committing the civil *dis*obedience) get the circumstance right before you do it. Record the event on video, or at least audio. Have witnesses. If possible, have a copy of the law with you that shows that what you are doing is what is within the law. Be smart, have a copy with you that you can afford to part with. Keep an extra copy of that law in your Palm or PDA.



Speaking of gadgets, I come to my seventh and last point of activism: have the tools of activism handy. That means carry a digital camera to your activism, and have a way of recording any encounter with governmental employees or law enforcement officials. And don't drive away from your activism with ex-

pired plates – you don't want to give them a handle on you!

So to recap:

- ✓ First, decide what abuses of power or principle are most important to you.
- ✓ Next, get informed about them.
- ✓ Third, associate with those of like mind.
- ✓ Fourth, decide how far you are willing to go.
- ✓ Fifth, watch your words.
- ✓ Sixth, set the circumstances for your activism so that the results fall to your favor.
- ✓ And seventh, carry the tools of successful activism.

Oh and an addendum, try not to get into pitched battles with your own side. The only results you get out of internecine warring is a lot of damaged Nissans.



The reason that AzCDL won the organization of the year award from the Second Amendment Foundation at the Gun Rights Policy Conference

this year in Charlotte, is because we have figured out how to influence the legislature and get the governor to sign our bills. I would like each of you here to consider joining AzCDL. Imagine what we could do if we sent out an alert and 1000 people picked up the phone and called their legislator. That could shake the foundations of the statist infrastructure, no? If the people lead then the leaders will follow.

Charles Heller,  
AzCDL Secretary



## AzCDL Rifle Raffle

AzCDL is raffling off a Cavalry Arms CAV-15 Scout Rifle in .223 Remington, with a 16", 1 in 9 twist barrel with compensator, A3 flat-top upper, polymer lower, and two 30 round, standard capacity magazines. The lower is serialized "AZCDL1", and will be engraved with our logo at the winner's request. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 tickets for \$20.



The drawing will be held on February 17, 2007, and the winner need not be present at the drawing to win.

However, the winner must comply with all federal, state, and local laws, and must pick up the firearm from the dealer.

Ticket sales are limited to 1,000.

For further information on how to purchase tickets, visit our website, email [info@azcdl.org](mailto:info@azcdl.org) or call 623-594-8521.



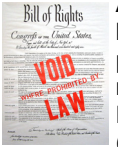


# Impact of the Mid Term Elections?



What are the lessons from the recent mid term elections? The answers:

- All politics are local.
- Seize the day (carpe diem).



At the national level, controlling power shifted to a different political majority. Certain rights such as the individual Right to Keep and Bear Arms (RKBA) may be in jeopardy of further attacks. Does this mean that we should abandon our efforts to build on our successes here in Arizona? That would be foolish.

All politics are local. Here in Arizona, we have a legislature that still leans in the same political direction—friendly to preserving your individual rights. Local law-

makers are accessible and a number of them have not only supported AzCDL, they have joined as members.



Our recently reelected governor, despite party affiliation, has signed pro RKBA legislation that AzCDL has helped author and/or supported. Will she continue to do so after being reelected by a large majority? We intend on finding out.

We cannot afford to enter a state of “analysis paralysis” trying to forecast the mood and movement of our national leaders. However, we can and will continue to capitalize on the relationships we have been building at the state level to further our progress in preserving and restoring inalienable rights in Arizona.



The question is—what will YOU do? Successful activism requires action. The fact that you are reading this means you want to get involved. If you are not already a member we urge you join AzCDL. If you are already a member, congratulations! Don't forget to renew. When it comes to dealing with elected officials, our membership correlates into your clout.



Seize the day! When opportunities present themselves to make your voice heard by attending a hearing or writing a letter—get involved and make a difference.

Fred Dahnke,  
AzCDL Treasurer

## The Arizona Citizens Defense League

AzCDL was founded by a group of local activists who recognized that a sustained, coordinated, statewide effort was critical to protecting and expanding the rights of law-abiding gun owners. AzCDL has been instrumental in the successful passage of the first major improvements to Arizona's CCW (concealed carry) laws since they were instituted in 1994, and has been at the forefront of the fight to restore justice to our self-defense laws.

AzCDL is a non-profit, all volunteer, non-partisan grassroots organization dedicated to the principles contained in Article II, Section 2 of the Arizona Constitution that:

*“All political power is inherent in the people, and the governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, and are established to protect and maintain individual rights.”*

AzCDL believes that the rights of self-defense and bearing arms are the

foundation for all other rights. Our freedom of speech, our freedom from unreasonable searches, our right against self-incrimination, our right to bear arms, all of our fundamental rights only exist because we stand firmly resolved to preserve them. The AzCDL exists to strengthen that resolve.

AzCDL believes that the emphasis of gun laws should be on criminal misuse and that law-abiding citizens should be able to own and carry firearms unaffected by unnecessary laws or regulations. Towards that end, we are pursuing the following legislative improvements:

- ✓ “Constitutional Carry” – The right of law-abiding citizens to carry a firearm openly or concealed.
- ✓ Continued strengthening and preservation of the right of presumed innocence in self-defense situations.
- ✓ Stronger State Preemption –

Firearms laws should be consistent throughout the State.

- ✓ Fewer restrictions on the lawful carrying of firearms on Public property (buildings, parks, etc.).
- ✓ Explicit 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Storage Requirements when entering a posted “No Guns” facility.
- ✓ Liability responsibility for property owners who ban firearms.
- ✓ Improvements to CCW laws.
- ✓ “Restaurant Carry” – The ability of law-abiding citizens to dine out while carrying a firearm.

Our volunteer lobbyists are at the capitol regularly, fighting for your rights!

Join or Renew today!

