



Arizona Citizens Defense League®

Protecting Your Freedom

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AzCDL's Membership Newsletter

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Winds of Change

The Arizona Citizens Defense League is turning 18 years old this year. During that time the organization has grown from its original 4 founders to over 21,000 members. The activism of our members combined with the effectiveness of our full-time lobbyists at the Capitol each session have allowed us to get 62 pro-freedom bills passed that were signed into law by 3 different governors while stopping many, many hundreds of anti-rights bills. Among our proudest accomplishments have been *Constitutional Carry*, the *Castle Doctrine*, improvements to burden-of-proof laws, legalizing the *defensive display* of firearms, ending gun confiscation during states of emergency, secure storage in public buildings, and state preemption of firearm and knife laws.

By any measure, AzCDL has been wildly successful at protecting the right to keep and bear arms in Arizona but...*there are storm clouds on the horizon and we can already feel the winds of change.*

Friends of the RKBA have only the slimmest majority in the state legislature—only one seat in each house. Despite claiming to want to “work across the aisle,” the governor is openly hostile to our efforts, refusing to even meet with us to discuss important legislation. Her first week in office she took time to meet representatives of *Moms Demand Action* and have a photo session with them which was posted on social media.



As usual, AzCDL and our friends in the legislature sent many great bills to the 9th floor again this year but the governor more than doubled the previous record for bills vetoed at 143 in total—including every last one of ours.

The governor collected millions of dollars for her inauguration but spent only a couple hundred thousand on the event. Along with a half million dollars she had already promised, she has pledged the remaining \$1.5 million for purposes of unseating RKBA-friendly legislators and her other political enemies. Two lost seats is all it would take for enemies of the RKBA to pass all manner of anti-freedom bills on to a governor happy to sign them.

It would be easy for us to pat ourselves on the back, say that we had a good run, and collectively ride off into the sunset, but that is not who we are or what we stand for. Freedom is a journey, not a destination, and AzCDL is in it for the long haul. The officers, directors and, I'm sure, the membership of AzCDL will give up this fight when we are pushing up daisies.

To that end, AzCDL is working to expand our legal arsenal beyond the legislative branch and into the judicial. We will be sharing more details as our plans develop and will provide members a briefing at the AzCDL Annual Meeting in October. I hope to see you there!

—Michael Gibbs
AzCDL President

What is Mightier than Both the Pen and the Sword?

The pen might be mightier than the sword, but apathy defeats them both.

The phrase, “The pen is mightier than the sword” implies that ideas trump action.

Apathy is a complacent and marked lack of interest. The opposite of love, it is said, is not hate but indifference.

In the real-world application of Rochambeau (a.k.a. *Rock, Paper, Scissors*), pen beats sword but apathy smothers both.

Our Founding Fathers and Mothers embodied the idea that individual liberties were worth picking up a sword to fight for and thus secure an inheritance of freedom for all future generations. Men and women fought, bled, starved, and died to have the opportunity to write our U.S. Constitution and our Bill of Rights. The ideas enshrined in those documents, including the Second Amendment, were penned to give every American Citizen a road map for navigating the future.

The sword was, and is, necessary to fight in defense against those who would place the boot of tyranny on the necks of individual citizens. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are incompatible with Big Government control-driven taxes, regulations, and a never-ending conveyor belt of rights-killing laws piling one on top of the other.

Imagine if no one would have bothered to pick up the pen or the sword in our Founders’ era. Our grand experiment in freedom would have never been born, and billions of people would have been robbed of these precious and unique American values. Ideas are only useful when put into action.

The gift of life is worthy of protection. The right to protect life is natural and God-given and codified in the Second Amendment. Keeping and bearing arms, including swords, guns, and knives is precisely protected by our U.S. Bill of Rights. These protections, it is written, “shall not be infringed.” Only, they are infringed. A little more each year. And never more than under the current President and his administration.

What is the response of American citizens? Is it a full-throated rebuke of those attempting to steal our inheritance and diminish our ability to protect life? Or is it a deafening and apathetic yawn?

I asked the experts.

Pro-Second Amendment organizations exist at both the national and state level, including Citizens Defense Leagues (CDL). These organizations are designed to connect citizens quickly and easily with the core issues, the current legislative concerns, and how citizens can use their voices to stop bad laws and support good laws.

Philip Van Cleave, President of Virginia Citizens Defense League (VCDL) says, “Apathy is a serious and long-standing problem with gun owners unless their rights are under severe and immediate threat. In Virginia, only a small percentage of the millions

of gun owners are actively engaged in the work we do. To them I say, Get involved! Help make a difference! Join both a state AND a federal gun rights group.”

The President of the Arizona Citizens Defense League (AzCDL), Michael Gibbs, tells us, “Since 2005, the Arizona Citizens Defense League has been instrumental in having 62 rights-protecting bills being signed into law by 3 different governors despite having a membership of less than 1% of Arizona firearms owners. While this speaks of the power of individual activism, can you imagine what we could accomplish if even 10% would become involved in advocating for their rights?”

In the state of Connecticut where the political balance is heavily Democrat and anti-gun, the President of the Connecticut Citizens Defense League (CCDL), Holly Sullivan, has this to say, “Too many of us tend to shy away from tough conversations, allowing the anti-gun narrative to gain traction. We need to normalize the discussion of blatant attempts to undermine the Second Amendment both with our legislators as well as in our communities. If we allow the other side to control the narrative, rest assured that they will.”

Alan Gottlieb, Founder of the national organization, Second Amendment Foundation (SAF), offered this, “In the United States while we have over 90 million gun owners, only about 6 million actively work to protect their Second Amendment rights. In fact, way too many do not even show up to vote in protection of these rights. The SAF hosts an annual free event, called Gun Rights Policy Conference (GRPC) designed specifically to encourage the public to become more informed and involved in protecting our rights. We will be in Phoenix, AZ this year—come join the fun!”

Apathy is allowing our rights to be chiseled away with each new freedom-killing law and regulation. Evil prevails when good men and women stand silent.

Joining any of these organizations is an excellent and easy step in reversing that inaction and indifference. None of us can do everything. But all of us can do something. Take the advice of Philip Van Cleave, “Write Letters to the Editor in your local newspaper or digital news outlet. Correct misinformation on guns in online chat groups or wherever you can do so. And engage with your elected officials. Even a handful of people contacting a legislator on a specific topic can make a big difference.”



—Cheryl Todd
AzCDL Vice President

Copper Dome Update

A Busy Fall in Arizona

This fall promises to be eventful for firearms enthusiasts, policymakers, and advocates alike. With a series of gun shows, a significant Second Amendment Foundation-sponsored conference, the annual Arizona Citizens Defense League (AZCDL) meeting, and strategic legislative preparations for 2024, this period is poised to shape the future of firearm rights.

As the leaves begin to change color in Northern Arizona, the firearms community in Arizona will be gearing up for a series of gun shows that are sure to attract enthusiasts and collectors. These events provide an invaluable opportunity to explore a diverse array of firearms, accessories, and related gear. Gun shows foster a sense of camaraderie among attendees, allowing them to connect with like-minded individuals who share their passion for firearms. Don't forget to stop by the AZCDL booth to say hello. Remember, you can always volunteer!

Gun Rights Policy Conference

One of the standout events of the fall calendar is the Second Amendment Foundation's Gun Rights Policy Conference, set to take place in Phoenix this September. This conference is not only a gathering of firearms enthusiasts but also a critical platform for discussing and shaping gun rights policies. It brings together experts, advocates, and legal minds to deliberate on the state of the Right to Keep and Bear Arms and its implications in contemporary society. Attending this conference is a unique opportunity to gain insights into the latest legal and policy developments.

AZCDL Annual Meeting

Come October, the AzCDL annual meeting is set to captivate attendees. This meeting provides a crucial platform for members



and supporters to convene, exchange ideas, and deliberate on strategies to protect and advance firearm freedoms. For anyone invested in safeguarding their rights in Arizona, this event is a must-attend. Not only does it enable participants to stay informed about the latest advocacy efforts, but it also empowers them to actively contribute to the cause.

Preparations for 2024 Legislation

Looking ahead to the legislative landscape in 2024, your advocates are already engaged in thorough preparations. The mission remains clear: to staunchly defend the right to keep and bear arms, without compromise. This proactive approach is rooted in the understanding that vigilance is essential to prevent any encroachment on these fundamental rights. By working strategically to anticipate challenges and formulate effective countermeasures, your advocates are positioning themselves to influence the trajectory of firearm-related legislation.

AZCDL's Strategic Forward Momentum

The Arizona Citizens Defense League (AZCDL) has demonstrated a commitment to leading the charge in preserving firearm freedoms for decades. Through strategic planning and advocacy, the organization is determined to keep Arizona at the forefront of states championing Second Amendment rights. By coordinating efforts, building alliances, and staying vigilant, AZCDL is instrumental in shaping the discourse and policy landscape surrounding firearms in the state.

Keep an eye out and join the cause. Keep training.

Keep practicing your freedom!

*-Michael Infanzon, EPIC Policy Group
AzCDL Chief Lobbyist*

FASTER Saves Lives

The AzCDL Foundation is working hard to keep our children and safe by bringing proven emergency response training to our schools and churches. It is called *FASTER Saves Lives* and, if you are a teacher or church security, contact us now to learn how to attend on a full scholarship!

FASTER has been quietly saving lives across the nation for a decade and has trained over 3000 people in 300 Districts across 22 States. FASTER training includes emergency medical techniques as well as both armed and unarmed response. FASTER uses proven, state-of-the-art training that works! Our children deserve the very best training and tools to protect them.

FASTER was developed by professionals in education, emergency medicine, and disaster management. Dick Caster, Ed.D. is one of the founders of FASTER, holds a doctorate in School Administration and has served as an Instructor and Director of the National Association of School Resource Officers. Dr. Mel Otten is an UC Emergency Medicine Lifetime Achievement Award

winning pioneer of emergency medicine, served in Vietnam, and is a member of the Wilderness Medical Society and the Disaster Medical Assistance Team. Locally, the AzCDL Foundation board includes a professional firearms trainer, a medical doctor, and a professional educator who have all taken this training. It is a rigorous program—to become certified you must qualify with your firearm to a higher level than a police officer.

There are nearly 1,600 public schools in Arizona employing over 49,000 educators. Thanks to our very kind donors, the Foundation can train 4,000 attendees this year. Please visit AZCDLFoundation.org to learn more about FASTER, sign up for our next class, and consider becoming a donor.

Help us get this information into the hands of every school and church! FASTER has the answer to protecting our schools, churches, and precious children.

*—Kim Bishop
AzCDL Foundation Secretary/Treasurer*

Get Up, Load Up, Shoot 'em Up



Let's face it – anyone who knows me knows I'm a 1911 guy. As for Gaston's unending (and unsuccessful) chase for 'perfection'... fine, you shoot yours, I'll stick to mine.

Once a year in early November, though, when the GLOCK Sport Shooting Foundation (GSSF) event comes to Tucson, even I will pick up a Glock and compete. As a matter of fact, for the last four years, we've put together a scratch 3-man AzCDL team that's taken a third place, two seconds, and—last year—Team AZCDL took FIRST PLACE. And we were competing against professional military and law enforcement participants!

Every year, the event pulls more shooters, mostly Glock owners but plenty who borrow or rent their *Tactical Tupperware*® on site. Morning Training and Tactical even has a practice range available if you need a little familiarization firing, either with an new-to-you pistol or after a layoff.

Where I'm going with this is that an event like this brings people from all over the state, and a few out-of-staters, who don't yet know about AzCDL, but need to. What could be a bigger attraction than an organization that not only espouses your right to keep and bear arms, not only fights to enact laws that protect that right, but turns out dozens of 'active shooters' who not only epitomize the camaraderie of the shooting fraternity, but show up and sweep the field?

Show up at the Tucson Rifle Club, 18300 W Ajo Hwy, on Friday, 3-November, qualify as a Rangemaster. You'll shoot your match free Saturday or Sunday, win cash and prizes (including Glock pistols), and join with two friends to put together an AzCDL team that sweeps all categories. The first place plaque definitely highlights a wall!

—Duke Schechter
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What Does the 2nd Amendment Say?

two
TRUTHS
and a **LIE** 
can you spot the lie?

Much has been said, debated, pontificated, blustered, and raged about the Second Amendment. Major news media, political talking points, and even official speeches delivered by the President of the United States are filled with confusing and contradictory rhetoric posing as factual information. Quiz yourself and your friends with this "Two Truths and a Lie." Can you spot what is true and what is not?

A. *The Second Amendment refers specifically to the right to keep and bear guns.*

B. *The Second Amendment is the only place in the U.S. Bill of Rights that includes the clause "shall not be infringed."*

C. *The Second Amendment refers to the "right of the people."*

A. LIE! The Second Amendment refers to "arms" which can be guns—rifles or handguns, knives, swords, bows and arrows, spears, axes, cannons, explosives, etc. As explained by The 2nd Amendment Center, "Today the word 'arms' refers collectively to offensive or defensive weapons. The word's meaning has changed little since it was first used seven hundred years ago. Its definition has never restricted civilian use of military weapons, including when the Second Amendment was approved."

B. TRUTH! The original text of the amendment is a mere 27 words in length and ends with the clause "shall not be infringed." This phrase is not found in any other amendment or in any other part of our Founding Documents. This speaks volumes to the vital importance of this amendment.

C. TRUTH! The text of the amendment reads, "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." While proponents of anti-gun ideology hyper-focus on the first four words ("A well regulated Militia") and ignore the following words that define and clarify ("the right of the people"), the United States Supreme Court (SCOTUS) has ruled on this issue multiple times. In *Heller v. District of Columbia* in 2008, in *McDonald v. Chicago* in 2010, and most recently in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association, Inc. v. Bruen*, "[T]he Court points out, the primary purpose of the Second Amendment is to preserve the right of the people to keep and bear arms for self-defense."

In summaries from these historic

SCOTUS cases, the Justices have stated that "The Second Amendment protects the rights of law-abiding, adult citizens ('the People') to keep and bear arms, particularly weapons in common use. Therefore, any law restricting that right needs to be consistent with the Nation's 'historical tradition of firearm regulation.'" And, "The Second Amendment protects the right of law-abiding citizens to both possess and carry weapons for self-defense, particularly weapons that are in common use among the populace."

Bottom Line:

The brilliance and foresight of our Founders have stood for centuries as a firewall preventing people in positions of power from whittling away at the freedoms of the average citizen. Since the ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791, our Founders have been proven prophetic. Through regulations, legal maneuvers, politically-based compromises, propaganda, or tricky wordplay infringements have been ever-eroding our right to own and use tools of self-defense. The US Constitution and Bill of Rights are inspired documents, and so far the Supreme Court has upheld the power and significance of these documents, but it is the responsibility of each generation to reassert the principles that our Founders fought, bled, starved, and died to secure for our nation. Read the documents for yourself. Do not rely on others to interpret them for you. They are part of your precious and unique inheritance of Freedom and heritage of American values.

—Cheryl Todd
AzCDL Vice President

Cheryl writes extensively on the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, the Second Amendment, and other firearms-related topics. Most recently, she has done a series of articles for the Independent Women's Forum, spreading the gospel of independence and self-defense to audiences that usually hear only negative stories about firearms.

Read more of Cheryl's articles at <https://www.iwf.org/people/cheryl-todd/>

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