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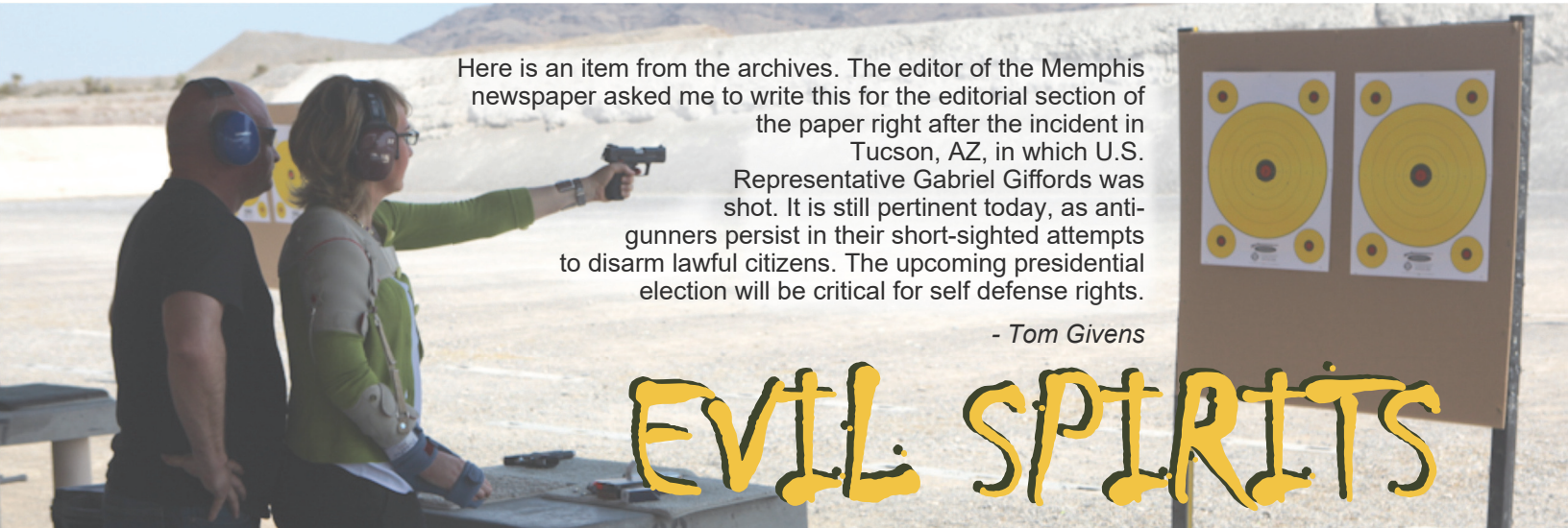
RANGE • MASTER

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# RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS  
FOR THE REAL WORLD

*Firearms Training Services*  
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Here is an item from the archives. The editor of the Memphis newspaper asked me to write this for the editorial section of the paper right after the incident in Tucson, AZ, in which U.S. Representative Gabriel Giffords was shot. It is still pertinent today, as anti-gunners persist in their short-sighted attempts to disarm lawful citizens. The upcoming presidential election will be critical for self defense rights.

- Tom Givens

## EVIL SPIRITS

“I have a Glock 9mm, and I’m a pretty good shot.” No, these are not the words of Jared Loughner, the alleged Tucson mass shooting gunman. They are a quote from one of his victims, U.S. Representative Gabrielle Giffords in an interview in the New York Times in 2009. Unfortunately, she did not have her Glock with her that day. Another of his victims, Judge John Roll, was a frequent customer at the Marksman Pistol Institute, an indoor range in Tucson. In fact, Judge Roll sent his wife and many of his staff to this range for shooting lessons. The owner of the range said that Judge Roll was a good shot, but that he went to the political rally from church, so was not wearing his gun. There was a legally armed private citizen inside the Safeway store

who heard the shots and rushed outside. Seeing that Loughner had been disarmed already, the armed citizen did not draw his own gun, but assisted in physically holding the suspect until police finally arrived. He displayed courage, good judgement and restraint, actually typical traits of those who responsibly and legally go armed.

Gun control zealots would have you believe that only criminals and the deranged carry guns. Nothing could be farther from the truth. In the past decade, there have been eleven scholarly studies conducted by very diverse researchers who concluded that thousands of times every day, Americans use guns to defend themselves against criminals. The

lowest number of such incidents in any of these studies was 750,000 incidents per year. That’s almost 2,000 times every day that good people in the US defend themselves and their families from criminals, and again, that is the lowest of the estimates! Here in Memphis, every year several of our students are forced to use legally owned, legally carried handguns to defend themselves or loved ones against armed criminals.

The real question here is how to keep weapons out of the hands of the mentally unstable, not out of the hands of decent, law abiding citizens. Federal law already prohibits, everywhere in the US, the purchase of any type of firearm by someone “adjudicated as a mental defective” or who has been

"The real question here is how to keep weapons out of the hands of the mentally unstable, not out of the hands of decent, law abiding citizens."

- Tom Givens

involuntarily committed to a mental institution. Part of the problem is the movement over the past three decades away from institutionalizing anyone who is not a clear and present danger to themselves or others. This leaves many mentally ill persons on the street, often in dire need of treatment, but with no one to ensure they take their medication. As long as they are not violent at the moment, they are evaluated and sent right back out on the street.

In Arizona, where Loughner lived, any person can go before a judge and detail behavior they have observed in another that leads them to believe that person is mentally ill. The judge can then order a psychiatric evaluation, and if that examination shows a need, can order treatment. Loughner scared the faculty and students at Pima Community College so badly that he was ultimately removed from the school, but no one from the school reported his behavior to a judge. Loughner allegedly had a shrine in his parents' back yard, with such items as skulls, but they did not take the matter to a judge. Friends saw huge changes in his behavior, but none bothered to make this known to authorities. To be "adjudicated mentally defective" one has to appear before a judge. Had he done so, he

would have been entered into the database checked by the FBI during a gun purchase, and he would not have been allowed to purchase his gun. Blaming the gun shop, the clerk, or the gun in this case simply ignores the real issue.

Within hours of the shooting, opportunistic anti-gun activists proposed a ban on "high capacity" magazines. Again, a simplistic, knee-jerk reaction, blaming an inanimate object for mayhem. Such magazines were restricted by federal law for ten years, from 1994-2004. Various research groups, including the Justice Department and the Centers for Disease Control, reported to Congress that they could find no evidence whatever that the "Assault Weapons Ban" had had any effect on crime. Thus, the ban was allowed to sunset. "Assault" is a behavior, not a device. Humans "assault" people, the instrument used is not relevant. Here in Memphis, just a few days ago a woman was brutally murdered with a hammer. That does not make it an "assault hammer," nor does it indicate a need for restrictions on the purchase of hammers. It means that the man who wielded that hammer should be punished for his unlawful actions. Punish him, not people who were not

involved, and don't try to shift blame from him to the hammer.

"But you don't need a high capacity magazine!" You don't need a new tennis racket or a new golf club, but that does not give government a legitimate reason to tell you that you cannot have one. Attacks by gang members often involve two or three assailants, and the fifteen shot magazine in my pistol might be very useful in such a scenario. Having fifteen shots in my magazines won't turn me into a raving madman, and having a magazine limited to ten rounds won't assure good behavior, either. Loughner allegedly shot nineteen people without reloading. He could have done the exact same thing wielding two pistols, each with a ten shot magazine in place. Again, it is the actor, not the instrument, that needs to be controlled.

In backward, primitive Third World countries, poor, ignorant, uneducated people think evil spirits live in rocks and trees. We make fun of them and call them savages. In this country, certain people think evil spirits live in guns or magazines for them. We call them anti-gun activists. A more rational thinker sees very little difference in these two views. ■

LATEST  
RESEARCH  
FROM

# JOHN LOTT

SUMMARY  
OF FINDINGS:

## "CONCEALED CARRY PERMIT HOLDERS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES"

A Report from the Crime Prevention Research Center  
July 16, 2015

John R. Lott, Jr., President  
John E. Whitley, Research Director  
Rebekah C. Riley, Director of Communications

Full article available at  
[ssrn.com/abstract=2629704](http://ssrn.com/abstract=2629704)

"Since President Obama's election the number of concealed handgun permits has soared, growing from 4.6 million in 2007 to over 12.8 million this year...."

- 1.7 million new permits the past year (15.4% increase)
- 5.2% of U.S. adult population has a permit (in five states, it's over 10%)
- Ten states no longer require permits
- Since 2007, permits increased by 270% for women and 156% for men
- Permits among minorities are increasing more than twice as fast as among whites
- Murder rate fell roughly 25% from 2007 to 2014 (from 5.6 to 4.2 per 100,000)
- States with largest increase in permits also saw largest drops in murder rate
- Law Abiding Citizens: In FL and TX, permit holders are convicted of crimes at one-sixth the rate of police officers ■



# THE SNUB-NOSE SHOTGUN

BY TOM GIVENS

During the “War on Crime” at the height of the Gangster/Prohibition period, Congress passed the first sweeping federal gun control law: The National Firearms Act of 1934. This law categorized certain firearms as being “more dangerous” and set up a national registry and a transfer tax on these weapons. Known henceforth as “NFA Weapons,” these included machine guns, submachine guns, short barreled rifles, short barreled shotguns, and silencers (suppressors). No, it is not illegal to own any of these weapons. In fact, if you can lawfully purchase a handgun, you can lawfully purchase an NFA weapon. The difference is, the NFA weapon must be properly registered with the ATF; you must apply to purchase it and wait 5-6 months for your government background check to complete; and you must pay a \$200.00 transfer tax, in addition to the cost of the weapon. Once you receive your “tax stamp” from the ATF, you can take delivery of the NFA weapon.

My personal SBS is a purpose built Remington 870 Police 12-gauge pump gun that left the factory with a 14”-barrel. This is a compact, fast handling powerhouse that serves as my home defense weapon and travels with me occasionally. Before we get into the specifications and modifications on this shotgun, let’s look at what makes it such a useful defensive tool.

## SBS BENEFITS

First, as I have written about previously, the pump 12-gauge shotgun would NOT be a first choice as a military weapon. Its limited range, limited ammunition capacity, and heavy, bulky ammunition make it unsuitable as a general purpose infantry primary weapon. No big deal to me, I’m not in the military. None of those perceived shortcomings have anything to do with my world and the SBS’s anticipated use.

If I reach for a firearm in a home invasion or similar emergency, I want real power, the ability to drop an aggressive grown man who may be hopped up on drugs or



For normal guns (not NFA weapons), this law mandates a minimum legal barrel length of 16 inches for rifles and 18 inches for shotguns. Guns with a barrel shorter than this fall under the NFA regulations and must be registered and tax stamp purchased. Possession of an unregistered firearm with a barrel shorter than specified is a felony, with serious federal prison time and huge fines imposed. It is also a felony under state law in most states.

Over the years, I have resisted the temptation to buy a submachine gun or short barreled rifle, as I simply do not have a real world need for one. They are great fun to play with but serve no real tactical niche for me. A short barreled shotgun (SBS) on the other hand, does offer some real advantages in a home defense or business hold-up scenario.

alcohol, and who poses an immediate deadly threat, and drop him NOW! Nothing beats a 12-gauge shotgun in this role. At close range, against un-armored opponents, a charge of 00 Buckshot is devastatingly effective. I’ve been investigating shootings for over four decades. I have very rarely seen a shotgun shooting that took more than one round. In those rare cases, it was because the first hit was peripheral. I have never seen a close range shotgun shooting incident that required more than two hits to do the job. Eight or nine 00 Buck pellets striking virtually simultaneously overload the nervous system of the person struck, and each pellet creates its own wound channel. Since the shotgun is usually a one-serving per customer weapon, its limited ammo capacity does not bother me.

*Continued Next Page...*



Another advantage of the shotgun in an urban environment is a compressed downrange danger zone. At maximum, buckshot pellets will only travel 750-800 yards. Contrast that to as much as two-and-a-half miles for rifle bullets and a mile for handgun bullets.

So, a shotgun is my first choice for close range interpersonal conflict management. Why an SBS? The shorter gun has a couple of real advantages. First, when working doorways and corners it is far easier to maneuver than a standard length shotgun. In fact, with the SBS, my muzzle does not project any further ahead of me than does a handgun muzzle, if both weapons are held at low ready (as shown on



the previous page). Second, there is very little forward of my hands for an adversary to grab in close quarters. Disarming me would be much more difficult with the SBS than with a full length shoulder gun. Finally, the shorter gun is handier and swings quicker, making for fast handling.



The patterning ability of the shotgun is not determined by barrel length. The shorter barrel will pattern just as well as a longer gun, and just as with the full size gun, you need to check various loads and find the one your gun likes. My 14-inch barrels (I have two) both came from the factory with modified chokes, which handle most buckshot loads well and shoot slugs with acceptable accuracy. With my preferred buckshot load, my shorty shotgun has no trouble keeping all the pellets of buckshot inside the chest area of a Rangemaster-Q target at 15 yards, which is what I need and expect from a home defense shotgun (see photo on previous page). Cutting back from an 18-inch barrel to a 14-inch barrel only drops muzzle velocity by about 85 feet per second with modern buckshot loads. This is negligible — the target won't be able to tell the difference!

My personal gun has some modifications to suit me specifically. Of course, every shooter has different requirements and preferences, but the next section explains my reasoning behind some of the modifications I've made to my own shotguns.

## SBS MODIFICATIONS

First, the factory butt stock was replaced with the Mag-Pul synthetic butt stock. With all the spacers removed, this gives me a perfect length of pull. The Mag-Pul stock, shortened by the removal of the spacers, fits me perfectly, which makes the gun faster handling but also minimizes felt recoil. In a recent practice session, I fired over 100 rounds of buckshot and slugs with no discomfort or bruising.

My SBS has a Wilson Combat one-shot magazine extension. This makes the magazine capacity five rounds, giving me six rounds in a fully loaded gun. That's a lot of buckshot! The one-shot extension does not protrude past the shorty's muzzle and does not make the gun muzzle heavy.

On the outer side of the Mag-Pul butt stock, I glued on a strip of heavy duty Velcro, to which I attach a five round cartridge card for reloading. If the cartridge loops get worn or loose, I can just peel off that card and slap on another. I normally keep the gun at home with four rounds in the magazine tube, to prevent over-compressing the magazine spring. With four rounds in the gun and another five on it, I feel I have enough ammo to handle any reasonably foreseeable emergency.

In the magazine tube is a high visibility follower. This helps me see at a glance whether there are rounds in the magazine. It is also more sturdy than the flimsy followers that come in many shotguns today.

Finally, both of my barrels have sights, similar to regular pistol sights. Since most of my training and practice is done with handguns, I want a similar sighting system on my shotgun. This simplifies training and prevents confusion under stress.

The complete package, starting with a new gun, cost just a tad over \$1,000.00. That's a lot cheaper than a reliable AR-type rifle, and to me the shotgun is actually a far better choice in my circumstances. If my need for the gun included engagements at 200 meters or the ability to carry 300 rounds of ammo on me, the AR would be a better choice. Neither issue applies to me. The old saying, "Mission drives the gear train" is 100% true. Look at what you actually need to accomplish and choose your weaponry accordingly. ■



# Rangemaster Instructor Development

We have had several excellent Three-Day Firearms Instructor Development Courses so far this year in Florence, SC; Athens, GA; and Culpeper, VA. Training new firearms instructors has become a specialty of ours, and this course will make just about anyone a better shooter and a better coach/instructor. Over the course of three days of intensive, immersion training we fire about 900 rounds per student. An extensive, 200+ page manual is provided. Standards are high and results are gratifying. Listed below are some instructor courses we have still to come in 2016. Click the dates or the Eventbrite logo for more information or to register.

Eventbrite

**July 8-10**  
Ottawa, KS

**Sept. 13-15**  
Austin, TX

**Oct. 28-30**  
Phoenix, AZ



## A Student's Perspective

by Mike Staley  
(May 2016 Instructor Course Graduate)

**F**or those of you who provide firearm training and have not yet trained under Tom Givens, I highly recommend you check out Rangemaster. Tom is a true legend in the firearm and training community and has a background of teaching for almost 40 years. He is a member of the American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers, the National Law Enforcement Trainers Association, and the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, as well as holding IDPA #A00008. Yep he was there at the beginning. The names of those he has trained with and considers friends read like a who's who of modern day firearm instructors and legends alike.

The classroom portion was held at the Oconee County Sheriff's Office in their EOC, and hosted by Chief J. Lee Weems. The Chief and other OCSO officers (I

think there were four in the class as well as others serving as assistant instructors) are immensely talented, highly professional, and a genuinely great bunch of guys. Their hospitality was quite simply over the top. This is obviously one well-run organization and the emphasis they place on marksmanship and knowing their way around firearms goes way beyond that of many departments. One of their team won the overall Top Gun honors for the weekend with a 297 total score out of a possible 300. Clark Sparrow is an amazing shooter/instructor and also runs Sparrow Defense in Watkinsville.

This course is intended for the Firearm Trainer/Instructor, and so the focus is on training the trainer. It's not a novice level class, and I think 90%+ of the students were established trainers/instructors, with a good mix of both civilian and Law

Enforcement. The caliber of the "students" was something not seen in most training classes, and it was comforting and hugely beneficial having some pretty seasoned professionals alongside me and coaching me on the line. Though there was a heavy LE presence, the course is oriented primarily toward teaching you how to teach the concealed carry civilian on how to prevail in a real-world violent encounter.

The class consists of three full days split approximately evenly between range and classroom time. To receive a certificate, students on day three must shoot a 90% or better on both the new FBI Instructor qual AND the harder Rangemaster Instructor qual, (both timed) along with a rather extensive 85-question written test that is



mostly fill in the blank. The written test comes from both the classroom lectures as well as the 200-page manual provided to each student at the beginning of class. Students can fail to receive a cert, (I believe we had two) and Tom makes it clear at the outset that the intent is to objectively test one's knowledge and proficiency as an SME/Instructor. No participation trophies here; you have to earn it.

Though Tom did constantly reinforce and go over fundamentals, it was mostly done from the perspective of how to teach them. Obviously students were expected to already have the fundamentals down pat or they probably should not have attended this class to begin with. We spent a good deal of time on this one day one, but even though it was information all of us had, Tom presented us a number of new and well thought out ways to better teach them to our students. I learned a ton of new teaching methods that I plan to incorporate into our courses right away.

Tom is a virtual encyclopedia (remember those?) of information on gun handling techniques, history and real-world data about how and why they work or don't. He constantly emphasizes the need to be able to explain the technique or tactic as well as how and why it works. He has an amazing ability to boil things down to their simplest parts to make teaching various complex concepts and techniques, well, simple!

As a proponent of "carry everywhere, all the time," Tom draws from an extensive list of his own student-involved shootings along with many other resources. His talk on mindset and being situationally aware are brought to life when he interjects detailed stories from his own student-involved

encounters, which now stand at 63 wins, 0 losses, and 3 forfeits. The 3 "forfeits" all chose not to carry a gun and subsequently died that day. (\*As a side note, we were fortunate enough to meet #63 as the encounter was both recent and local and were able to get an up close and personal perspective on the encounter.)

Safety is naturally stressed, and Tom goes to great lengths to explain the absolute necessity of handgun safety and how to instill that into the student, describing it as many of us know it: a lifestyle, and something that must become part of one's character. Tom also reiterates throughout the class the need to convey to students that a license to carry comes with a tremendous responsibility and accountability. Misses have to go somewhere, and as civilians, they simply can't be thought of as acceptable.

The information and statistics he presented on typical LE as well as civilian violent encounters from various sources (BJI, FBI, DEA, and of course Rangemaster students) was eye opening and showed the statistical differences in those encounters by LE versus civilians and the reasoning behind some of the differences in those stats. He clearly backed up with facts and stats for example, the need to change our vocabulary from "street crimes" to "parking lot crimes." Another example was his ability to clearly and concisely show why the 3-3-3 rule of thumb for violent

civilian encounters (typically 3 steps distance, 3 rounds fired, 3 seconds) is worth taking note of in how we plan range time training for our students....

On the range, the class was broken into two relays, with one relay on the firing line while the other was looking over their shoulder acting as a shooting coach (coaches were paired with "students" the entire time we were on the range). Some of the drills we shot - all done from concealment and/or duty gear - included:

- Drawstroke
- Trigger prep/reset
- Cadence/time needed to get an acceptable site picture from various distances
- Working with the wobble zone - i.e. "acceptable" hits
- Snap cap drills, Strong/weak hand
- Clearing Malfunctions
- Proper way to demonstrate trigger control/sight alignment with Instructor/coach working the trigger for the student

... and many others. Much of it was at 3-7 yards, but some drills were back out at 15 and 25 to prepare for the qual shoots on the final day. My favorite was the Casino drill. If you haven't tried this, it's a great drill that makes you THINK and process information while engaging the correct target, quickly! Most were shot on the

timer to keep the pulse up a bit and to simulate the real-world time frames in which most encounters take place....

Again, I highly recommend this class if you are a firearm trainer as it's quite possibly the best of its type in the country. Tom also has an advanced Instructor class which I hope to attend next year. ■

*(Edited for space)*

