

THE Gun Owners

27 YEARS OF NO COMPROMISE – 1975-2002

GOA Members Help Advance Gun Rights in 2002



GOA Executive Director Larry Pratt appears on CNN's *Crossfire* in October and spars with Dennis Hennigan of the Brady Campaign — the organization formerly known as Handgun Control, Inc.

by Erich Pratt

The past year has been remarkable as far as gun rights are concerned.

Virtually every gun control bill that was introduced in Congress failed to see the light of day.

Gun control was repealed. Federal law was changed to allow pilots to carry firearms in airplane cockpits.

And on Election Day, gun rights sup-

porters elected additional pro-gun Congressmen to the House and Senate.

This is truly amazing when one considers that in the early 1990s, the political pundits were declaring that we were in the midst of a sea change. Americans, they said, were getting over “their love affair with guns” and now wanted reasonable restrictions on firearms.

Well, where are all those prophets of

doom now?

They are singing a different tune, to be sure. Consider just some of the headlines that Americans read in national newspapers this year:

- “Democrats tone down gun-control stance,” said the *Christian Science Monitor*;
- “Democrats sing new tune on gun

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Gun Owners See Gains in Elections; Still Face Challenges

by John Velleco

(Washington)— Gun Owners of America - Political Victory Fund supported 23 candidates for the Congress in the recent general election. Eighteen of those candidates were victorious.

GOA generally does not support incumbents (who win over 96% of the time) in elections, making the gains for gun owners all the more remarkable.

In addition, the D.C. area sniper attacks dominated the news in the weeks leading up



Marilyn Musgrave (R-CO) was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in November. As a state senator, she led the fight for Vermont-style carry.

to the elections, giving opportunistic anti-gunners a national platform from which to push their agenda forward.

The message sent by the American people could not be clearer. The people blame the snipers, not the firearm, for those shootings. And they want the police to continue to go after criminals without the government further restricting the rights of law-abiding gun owners.

Election Highlights

Many GOA members are undoubtedly familiar with Colorado State Senator

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- **See what the powerbrokers in Washington, DC are saying about Gun Owners of America (page 3)**
- **GOA is on the front lines defending your rights (pages 4-6)**

GOA Members Help

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control,” cried *USA Today*; and • *The New York Times* reported that in the face of an overpowering gun lobby, the Democrats were trying “to Neutralize the Gun Lobby’s Muscle.”

What most of these writers have never realized is that the real “muscle” behind the gun lobby is the grassroots activists who send postcards, emails and faxes to their Congressmen.

They are the reason that some legislators have been hesitant to attack gun owners’ rights.

GOA members praised

Noted gun author Dave Kopel made this point about GOA members in *National Review’s* online magazine last year.

“The GOA’s e-mail and fax grassroots network has become extremely effective,” Kopel said.

“The GOA’s e-mail and fax grassroots network has become extremely effective.”

— Dave Kopel,
National Review Online

“GOA was the most important organization behind the failure in the last two Congresses of Senator Orrin Hatch’s [gun control] bill to federalize much of the juvenile justice system.”

With your help, GOA has made tremendous gains once again in the fight for our Second Amendment rights. The biggest bright spot for Second Amendment advocates most recently was passage of the armed pilots legislation in both houses of Congress.

In November of last year, GOA successfully lobbied for a change in federal law that now *allows* pilots to carry firearms in their cockpits. While this was a huge legislative victory, the administration has refused to implement the new policy.

That is why GOA pushed this year for legislation — sponsored by Senator Bob Smith (R-NH) and Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) — which would *force* the administration to start arming pilots immediately.

Both measures passed in their respective houses.

Armed pilots just one of many GOA victories

As this legislative session draws to a close, Gun Owners of America members can look back with satisfaction at many major victories.

During the 107th Congress, your support of GOA helped us to:

- Defeat attempts to extend gun owner registration at the federal level from 24 hours to 90 days;
- Kill a provision allowing the government to confiscate military surplus firearms that are currently owned by private civilians;
- Debate gun control organizations on nationwide television and on the radio;
- Place pro-gun editorials in newspapers and magazines across the country;
- Assist Rep. John Hostettler in getting 100 Congressional signatures onto a letter that ultimately helped persuade HUD Secretary Mel Martinez to stop his department from assisting state and local lawsuits aimed at putting gun makers out of business; and
- Provide election voter guides, making them available to hundreds of thousands of gun owners before the November election.

This is no time to rest on our laurels, however. The Beltway sniper shootings this past October showed, again, just how shameless the Brady Bunch can be in promoting its agenda.

Shootings to be followed by calls for more gun control

As soon as the shootings started, Sarah Brady began calling for more “sensible gun laws” to stop future sniper murders.

But that was not all. In an October “E-Action Network Alert,” Brady concludes her appeal by urging her readers to go to a specific Web address “and make a generous donation today to prevent more tragedies like these” — meaning the serial sniper murders.

In other words, give money to Sarah Brady to stop sniper murders from occurring. What chutzpah!

Yes, we can be sure that anytime some thug uses a gun in a crime, the Brady Bunch will stumble over the dead bodies to grab a podium and plead for their gun control agenda to be enacted.

Gun bans and registration on Brady Bunch’s wish list

The Beltway sniper murders were no exception. As a result of those shootings, there will be at least two hot button issues that anti-gun Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Sarah Brady will be pushing:

1. Extending the ban on semi-automatic firearms.

President Bill Clinton enacted a ban on more than 180 semi-automatic firearms in 1994. What many people have not realized, however, is that that ban (which also outlawed certain magazines) contained a sunset provision within it.

That sunset provision is set to kick in within the next two years — specifically, in September of 2004.

Obviously, many gun haters will be working to keep the Clinton ban on semi-automatics in place, and add more guns to the ban list as well.

2. Registration of gun owners.

The Brady Bunch will be actively trying to register gun owners. Of course, gun haters don’t say they are for “registration.” They prefer to use innocent-sounding jargon like “ballistic fin-

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Are Deer Hunters Next on the Chopping Block?



The media elites spent the month of October demonizing .223 ammunition (right), mischaracterizing it as “high-powered.” What will they say when they realize that common elk and deer cartridges such as the .30-06 (left) pack a far greater wallop?



What They're Saying About GOA

"Your membership in Gun Owners makes a difference on Capitol Hill every single day. . . . I know that GOA will continue to be the 'no compromise' leader in defending America's gun rights and personal freedoms."

— **Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX)**

"I commend GOA members for their staunch support for the 2nd Amendment rights of law-abiding citizens."

— **Rep. Virgil Goode (R-VA)**

"Let me reiterate my deep appreciation for the tremendous job being done by Gun Owners of America in the battle to defend America's right to keep and bear arms. There is no question that without GOA, American gun rights would be in even greater peril today."

— **Retiring Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC)**

Gun Owners See Gains

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Marilyn Musgrave (R), a proven champion of the Second Amendment.

As a state senator, Musgrave was the prime sponsor of legislation to allow citizens to carry concealed firearms without onerous government-imposed restrictions.

Sen. Musgrave also exhibited that she had the courage of her convictions to take on her own party leadership in fighting gun control at the state level.

Not surprisingly, Marilyn was attacked for her pro-gun position in general, and in particular the support she garnered from GOA members during the campaign. GOA members nationwide contributed tens of thousands of dollars to the campaign, a vitally important part of any electoral win.

State Senator Steve King, Iowa Republican, is another proven leader from the state level.

Widely viewed as the most conservative newly-elected Representative to Congress, Sen. King was a leader in killing anti-gun bills that came before the committee on which he served.

Expect to see the Congressman continue to exhibit that type of leadership in the defense of our gun rights.

Scott Garrett (R-NJ) won an expen-



Rep.-elect Rick Renzi (R-AZ)

sive and divisive primary in June, and then was tagged as being too extreme [read: pro-gun] to win in the general election.

As a state representative, Garrett held the "extreme" position that the decent citizens of New Jersey have the right to defend themselves in their

homes and elsewhere.

Just weeks before Election Day, Sarah Brady made a trip to the district to hold a rally for Rep. Garrett's anti-gun opponent and to attack Rep. Garrett for being supported by Gun Owners of America.

On election night, 60% of the voters agreed with Scott Garrett that banning guns — not gun ownership — is really the extremist position.

Speaking of extremists, this New Jersey district was formerly held by radically anti-gun Republican Marge Roukema, so gun owners not only gained a true friend, but said goodbye to a sworn enemy as well.

Pro-gun supporter Rick Renzi (R) won a hotly contested primary in Arizona's newly drawn 1st district. This district was about as even as one could get, having given Bush and Gore each

49% of the vote in the 2000 presidential election.

After beating 6 other candidates in the primary, Mr. Renzi went on to win the general with just under 50% of the vote.

While he has not held previous elected office, Rick is a dedicated friend of the Second Amendment and will be a



New Jersey voters elected to send pro-gun Scott Garrett (R) to replace the anti-gun Marge Roukema.

needed voice on the floor of the U.S. House. Anti-gunners in the Congress will bring up issues such as the renewal of the 1994 Clinton ban on many semi-automatic firearms, so-called ballistic fingerprinting and shutting down gun shows.

In all, GOA's Political Victory Fund helped 16 pro-gun candidates join the ranks in the U.S. House of Representatives.

GOA-PVF also supported Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) and Jim Talent (R-MO), who won their races for U.S. Senate.

Brady's 'Dangerous Dozen'

Given the tremendous gains made by gun owners, it is not surprising that the folks at the Brady Campaign to Stop Gun Violence, the group formerly

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GOA on the Front Lines



GOA's Erich Pratt (right) appears on MSNBC in October and debates a spokesman representing the anti-gun group, Americans for Gun Safety. The debate centered on the issue of banning semi-automatic firearms.



Gun Rep. Incur spee group With abili men

GOA spokesmen, Erich Pratt and John Velleco, discuss the perils of ballistic registration for ABC viewers this Fall.

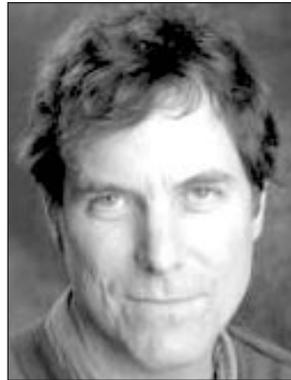


A huge chunk of Bill Clinton's gun control legacy was repealed at the beginning of this Congress when HUD Secretary Mel Martinez (left) announced that his department will "no longer participate" in lawsuits against the gun industry. GOA played a crucial role in this effort by helping Indiana Rep. John Hostettler (pictured on the right) get 99 additional Congressmen to sign his letter asking Secretary Martinez to pull the plug on these dangerous lawsuits which threaten to cripple the gun industry and, thus, endanger the ability of decent Americans to purchase new firearms.

Defending Your Rights!



Gun Owners of America joined together this year with Ron Paul (right) in filing a lawsuit to challenge the Bipartisan Gun Buyback and Protection Act. This law squelches the free speech rights of decent Americans and limits the ability of groups such as GOA to hold legislators accountable. Within 60 days of a general election, the law restricts the ability of GOA to place TV and radio ads if those ads even mention a congressman or other candidate for office.



Gun Owners of America has followed the sordid trail of Professor Michael Bellesiles, whose supposed research found that guns were rare in early America. GOA published more than three dozen articles — all contained on the GOA website — chronicling the factual misrepresentations in Bellesiles' book, *Arming America*. The liberal left in America had hailed his book as “groundbreaking.”

Thankfully, justice was finally served in October, when Bellesiles resigned from his teaching post at Emory University. The resignation came after the university conducted an intense investigation into his research and found that he had “willingly misrepresented the evidence.”



AP-Wide World Photos/Carmen Taylor



GOA fought for the right of Americans to travel in safety after the 9-11 attacks exposed the dangerous failures of gun control. In November of last year, GOA successfully lobbied for a change in federal law that now allows pilots to carry firearms in their cockpits. This year, GOA pushed for legislation — sponsored by Senator Bob Smith (R-NH) and Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) — which would force the administration to start arming pilots immediately. Both measures passed in their respective houses.

In the picture above, GOA lobbyist John Velleco meets with Senator Bob Smith (right) and Ellen Saracini, a widow of September 11.

GOA in the News

Media Appearances in October 2002

Radio

Alex Jones Show - National
American Family Radio - National
Bob Enyart Show - National
Cross Talk Radio - National
Don Kroah Show - National
Heart of the Matter - National
Johnny Rowland Show - National
Ken Hamblin Show - National
National Public Radio - National
Gary Nolan Show - National
Gun Talk - National
Radio America - National
Steel on Steel - National
Talk America Radio - National
KTAR Radio - AR
KXAM Radio - AR
KFAX Radio - CA
KNRY Radio - CA
IRN Network - CO
WGCH Radio - CT
KJSL Radio - DC
WMAL Radio - DC
WFLA - FL
WHO Radio - IA
WMOB Radio - IL
Stan Solomon Show - IN
WVLK Radio - KY
KMCD Straight Talk Radio - MD
WBGZ Radio - MN
KFRU Radio - MO

WCAP Radio - MS
NTV Radio - NJ
Family Life Radio Net - NY
WAMC Northeast Public Radio - NY
WPWT Radio - TN/VA
WOMT, WSTV Radio - PA
WBSM Radio - RI
KTSA (CBS Talk News) - TX
CBS Radio - WA
Wisconsin Public Radio - WI
CBC Radio - Canada
Roy Green Show - Canada
BBC Radio - England

Newspaper *

Orange County Register - California
CNS.NEWS.com - DC
Legal Times - DC
Agape Press.org - DC
Orlando Sentinel - FL
South FL Sun Sentinel - FL
Atlanta Journal Constitution - GA
Boston Globe - MA
Baltimore Sun - MD
Kansas City Star - MO
Shooting Sports Retailer - NJ
WorldNetDaily.com - OR
Daily Progress - VA

* *Most of the periodicals have a national audience*



GOA's Larry Pratt debates Bill Press (right) on MSNBC's *Buchanan & Press* in October.

Television

ABC Nightline - National
CNN Crossfire - National
MSNBC (*Buchanan & Press*) - National
MSNBC (*Abrams Report*) - National
MSNBC (*The Great Debate*) - National
ABC News - DC
Fox News - DC
UMTV News Line - MD
RNN TV - NY, NJ, CT
NBC Fred Hamberger - PA
ABC News - TX
CBC National TV - Canada
BBC TV - England
German Television - Germany
TVE Public TV - Spain

Gun Owners See Gains

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known as Handgun Control, Inc., had a long election night.

Each election year, the group comes out with its 'Dangerous Dozen,' those candidates it pledges to work hard to defeat.

Of the 12 candidates listed, eight won their elections, including the top of their list, Scott Garrett.

The candidate the group unquestioningly worked the hardest to beat was Rep. Bob Ehrlich, who was running for governor in the state of Maryland against Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, niece of Senator Ted Kennedy.

As a state with some of the most draconian gun control laws in the country, this was viewed as a good bet for the Bradys.

The attacks against Ehrlich, who is

moderately pro-gun, were relentless. Daily anti-Ehrlich radio and television blanketed the state on his gun control record. There were even airplane banners in some parts of the state that read: "Ehrlich Supports Assault Weapons."

The final count in Maryland? Ehrlich 51.3%, Townsend 47.9%.

Where do we go from here?

The result of the election was encouraging, but there will still be efforts made to pass gun control.

The misnamed assault weapons ban will certainly be debated in the next two years, as well as renewed efforts to register gun owners through ballistic fingerprinting.

While it would appear that the new 108th Congress should reject any gun control measures, it is interesting to note that the very last piece of gun control to pass the U.S. House was sup-

ported by most of the Republican leadership.

The so-called 'Our Lady of Peace Act' passed the House unanimously and is dangerously close to getting fast-tracked to the President's desk.

This bill would massively expand the types of information provided by the states, potentially on virtually all Americans, to the FBI's Instantcheck system in West Virginia. The bill would require states to turn over vast numbers of sometimes personal records to the FBI for use in connection with the Instantcheck.

Gun Owners of America will be vigilant in guarding against 'gun control creep,' those seemingly harmless measures passed in the name of fighting crime that, in the end, have the same net results as the more aggressive gun control pushed by the anti-gun zealots. ■

HIT THE RIGHT TARGET! Give to Gun Owners Foundation

In many federal offices there are subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) pressures to give to the Combined Federal Campaign. Your boss may think his prestige depends upon getting everyone to kick in. The same thing happens in all too many corporations during the United Way fundraising drive.

You may have wanted to give but couldn't find a group that wasn't attacking your rights, let alone defending them, on the list of participating organizations. But that has all changed!

Federal employees now are able to designate **Gun Owners Foundation (GOF)** as the recipient of their gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign. Use **Agency Number 1054** for **Gun Owners Foundation** when you make your Combined Federal Campaign pledge or donation. Your gifts will go toward helping our legal assistance program protect the Second Amendment rights of Americans across the nation.

Also, if you work for a company that participates in the United Way, you too, may be able to designate that your gift be to **Gun Owners Foundation**. Many local United Way Campaigns allow **Gun Owners Foundation** to participate through their Donor Choice Programs. Some, however, do not. Check with your local United Way Agency. You will not only be helping people and protecting your rights, but you will also get a tax deduction.

Of course, anyone can always make a tax-deductible donation at any time to **Gun Owners Foundation** by sending the contribution directly to 8001 Forbes Place, Suite 102, Springfield, VA 22151.

One additional note. If you are employed by a corporation or organization which has a Matching Gift Program, please keep **GOF** in mind when making your donation. Thank you very much.



GOA Members Help

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gerprinting.”

Proponents want to use this (flawed) technology to register the supposedly unique “ballistic fingerprint” that many firearms leave on bullets or cartridge cases after they are fired. This, they claim, will help police trace it back to the original buyer of the gun.

Ballistic registration threatens gun owners' privacy

This may sound good in theory, but there are a couple of problems. First, this gives officials a registration list of gun owners — a very dangerous idea since registration lists have been used in many places (including New York City and California) to help police confiscate guns from law-abiding citizens.

Second, ballistic “fingerprints” can be easily altered by making modifications to a firearm.

Not surprisingly, ballistic registration has failed to help police catch crooks in states like Maryland and New York.

Even though these two states have registered almost 50,000 ballistic fingerprints, they have yet to catch one bad guy using the technology!

President George Bush came under extreme pressure during the sniper shootings, as opponents urged him to support a ballistic registration system throughout the country. While the President has been cool towards the idea, the administration has, nevertheless, agreed to “study” the issue.

A truly objective study of the issue would conclude that ballistic registration will NOT efficiently help police track down criminals, and will only jeopardize the privacy of gun owners.

Even the Fraternal Order of Police and the California Department of Justice have come out against wasting law enforcement funds in pursuing a ballistic database.

GOA remains “no compromise”

Despite the evidence showing that gun control has failed to keep criminals from getting guns, the battle for your

gun rights will continue to rage.

Your right to own a gun, free from government infringements, will come under attack next year. Proposals to ban certain private sales of firearms or to ban certain rifles and handguns are always on the gun haters' wish list.

No matter who is in control of the Congress, the Brady Bunch will always keep plugging for more regulations, more infringements and more restrictions.

But our rights are not negotiable, and we will continue to put pressure on legislators who disregard their oaths to uphold the Constitution.

So there will be a lot of work to do. We want to pass the Citizen's Self-Defense Act. We want to enact concealed carry reciprocity throughout the country and stop the frivolous, anti-gun lawsuits that are designed to put the gun industry out of business.

We will be very busy this upcoming year. We hope you will support Gun Owners of America and work with us in 2003.■



The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
ajc.com

New tool for gun opponents

By Larry Pratt
October 11, 2002

The latest weapon in the gun haters' arsenal is the registration of firearms. Specifically, they want to register the unique "ballistic fingerprint" that

[many] firearms leave on a bullet or cartridge case after they are fired, and trace them back to the original buyer of the gun.

Ballistic fingerprinting will hardly ever solve a crime, but it will accomplish something else — a gun registry tied to the owners of the guns.

Ballistic fingerprinting will not work for a number of reasons. Probably foremost is that crooks do not use valid identification to buy guns in stores. That means the evidence chain will rarely connect back to the crook.

Second, the signature changes with successive firings of the gun. The changes are most pronounced when the gun is new. Moreover, it is not difficult to intentionally disfigure the lands and grooves in the barrel to change the signature.

Third, barrels and firing pins can be replaced, creating a new signature that does not exist in anybody's database.

Gun owners oppose registration because governments have a habit of changing the rules at some future date and using the database of gun owners to demand surrender of the newly banned guns. This is what happened in New York City.

For 25 years, all rifles and shotguns were registered. The city's politicians insisted that crime fighting, not confiscation, was the goal. Then the law was changed, and many of the previously legal guns were on the prohibited list. Those that were not surrendered were confiscated during raids on

owners' homes using registration lists.

Opposition to registration is hardly the paranoia that gun control supporters want people to believe. Often these same gun control advocates are (rightly) suspicious of the government when Fourth Amendment rights, rather than Second Amendment rights, are involved.

Many supporters of gun control (rightly) opposed the

"Gun owners oppose registration because governments have a habit of . . . using the database of gun owners to demand surrender of [their] guns. This is what happened in New York City."

Patriot Act and Attorney General John Ashcroft's inability to limit his actions within constitutional boundaries. They do not call themselves paranoid when opposing the Patriot Act, which authorizes massive invasions of personal privacy. However, they call gun owners paranoid for opposing registration.

Some proponents of keeping a registry of bullet signatures insist that this is not gun control, just a crime tool. If you study the debates over every piece of gun control legislation in the past, you will find the same argument being made.

Gun control has always been advanced as just crime control. But gun control costs lives, it does not save them. ■

Larry Pratt is executive director of Gun Owners of America, a nonprofit lobbying organization based in Virginia. This article ran in the October 11, 2002 edition of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

**Please Renew
Your Membership
for the Year 2003!**

THE Gun Owners

Sen. H.L. Richardson (Ret.)
Founder and Chairman

Larry Pratt
Executive Director

Erich Pratt
Director of Communications

John Velleco
Director of Federal Affairs

Sheriff Richard Mack
Director of Public Affairs

GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA
8001 Forbes Place
Suite 102
Springfield, Virginia 22151
703-321-8585

Web Site
<http://www.gunowners.org>

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