



# Tactical Talk

Volume 12, Issue 2

February 2008

*"I'm suffering from déjà vue and amnesia. I've forgotten this stuff before."*

—Jim Darnell

## Inside this issue:

Penetration for Service Ammo	2
Church Shootings	4
Food For Thought	5
Light at the End of the Tunnel	5
Exciting Class Announcement	6
Combative Pistol I	7
How to Contact Us	8

## Gun Safety Tips

by Tom Givens

The Four Universal Rules of Gun Safety:

These apply to ALL guns, whether handgun, rifle or shotgun and they apply ALL the time, everywhere. This means the same rules apply at the range, in your home, in your place of business, or on the street. Make these rules part of your character and you will never have an accidental or negligent shooting.

1. All guns are always loaded.

Always treat every gun as if fully loaded. Before you can clean it or show it to a friend, you must first clear it.

2. Never point your gun at anything you are not willing to destroy.

If you don't want a bullet hole in it, don't point a gun at it.

This applies to people, pets, and objects.

3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.

Your gun won't fire unless you touch the trigger. Keep your trigger finger straight, outside the trigger guard, until you have decided to shoot and aim at your target. Pick it up, put it down, draw it, or holster it with your trigger finger straight.

4. Be certain of your target and what is beyond.

DO NOT shoot at shadows, at noises, or at anything you cannot positively identify. You cannot call bullets back.

Follow these rules religiously and you will never have a mishap with a firearm. Remember that YOU are responsible, legally and morally for every bullet that is launched from your gun. Be responsible.

When not in use, store your weapons correctly. There are several ways to render even a loaded gun perfectly safe. If there are children or untrained adults in your household, you must take precautions to keep them away from your guns.

No one is born knowing how to use a gun any more than anyone is born knowing how to play the piano. You need training and education like that offered at Range-master. Responsible gun owners are trained gun owners.

Training and education are the keys to gun safety, as well as to being able to use a gun effectively in self defense.

# Penetration for Service Ammunition

By Tom Givens

Published penetration information on defensive ammunition is usually based on the depth of penetration in calibrated 10% ordnance gelatin.

This gelatin substance was developed to simulate muscle tissue, and give researchers a consistent, reliable method of comparing the penetration and expansion characteristics of bullets. By following the protocol and using correctly mixed and calibrated gelatin, researchers in different locations and at different times can get an “apples to apples” comparison of ammunition performance.

Most laymen, however, don't know how to properly interpret this information and are often misled by manufacturers' claims of bullet performance based on this gelatin testing. Here are some data points to help you when looking at ammo for defensive use.

First, the test gelatin blocks are a homogeneous block of gelatin. This offers a steady, consistent resistance to the passage of the bullet. Living critters, however, are not made of homogeneous muscle tissue. A shot to the chest of a human, for instance, may encounter clothing, skin, fat, rib or sternum bone, muscle, semi-liquid lung tissue, and elastic veins and arteries, all in the passage of that one bullet. Each of these layers will present a different consistency to the bullet, and a different effect upon it.

One of the most variable effects comes from the bullet striking bone. Larger, heavier bullets generally fare better against bone, with a tendency to break the bone and continue on a fairly straight path much of the time. Lighter bullets may glance off a major bone and careen in most unpredictable paths. Clothing also affects penetration. A light cotton T-shirt won't offer the same resistance as a heavy leather vest or a down-filled parka.

An often overlooked aspect is the absence of skin on the gelatin blocks.

Skin is both tough and elastic. A dull pointed projectile needs to be going at least 300 feet per second just to break the skin, and actually penetrating the skin on exit has often been considered the equivalent of three additional inches of penetration within the body.

When speaking of shooting human adversaries in self defense, we need to be realistic in what we expect the bullet to do. Pistol bullets operate at low velocity compared to rifle bullets. Essentially, the handgun bullet punches a hole into the target. The bigger that hole and the deeper that hole the better. Then it is up to the shooter to put that hole(s) in the right place, anatomically speaking. Many of the structures we need to pierce with handgun bullets to cause rapid incapacitation lie deeply within the trunk. The aorta and superior vena cava, for instance, are the two largest blood bearing vessels in the body. On an average grown man, those are 8"-9" deep in the torso, from the front. We won't always get a full frontal shot, however. From 90 degrees to the side, the heart may be 9"-12" from the outside surface of a man's upper arm. A bullet from that angle would have to penetrate the arm, then enter the

*(Continued on page 3)*

chest, penetrate deeply enough to reach the heart, and still have the juice to penetrate the heart itself. That requires a fair bit of penetrating ability.

Several years ago the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) conducted a number of penetration tests as part of the process of selecting new service ammunition for their officers. They added clothing to the gelatin blocks, and for one part of the test they imbedded pig rib bones one inch from the outer surface of the block. When bullets struck the ribs, the penetration was reduced compared to bullets that did not strike ribs. This is useful information, as a shot to the chest has a really good chance of hitting a rib. Below is some data extracted from the RCMP report.

Load, fired at 3 yds	penetration, cloth	penetration, rib bones
9mm 115gr Silvertip	11.6"	9.6" (-17%)
9mm 147gr Gold Dot	16.8"	15.8" (-5%)
.40 180gr Gold Dot	14.0"	13.4" (-4%)

Comparing the lightweight (115 grain) 9mm Silvertip load to the others, the others averaged 35% more penetration when a rib bone was struck. The heavier bullets were not affected much at all by passage through rib bones, but the 115 grain Silvertip's penetration was reduced by 17%. This is why we generally recommend that you stay with the heavier bullet weights in each caliber, as bone and other obstacles are often hit and our bullets still have to penetrate to vital organs and damage them.

As an illustration of this, Jim Higginbotham and I were hog hunting a couple of years ago. Cor-Bon had just come out with PowerBall, a lighter bullet loading with a polymer ball inserted into the front of the bullet where a hollow cavity would normally be. In .45ACP, the bullet only weighed 165 grains, at a muzzle velocity of around 1,000 fps. This is a very light bullet for a .45. Jim shot a hog broadside, and it took off like a race horse. We had to chase it several hundred yards, then Jim shot it with a 230 grain Ranger .45 bullet, which put the pig down and out.

Upon examination, we found that the very lightweight PowerBall bullet had only penetrated about three inches into the hog's chest, where the heavier 230 grain bullet hit in the same general area but penetrated both lungs and the heart, coming to rest under the skin on the far side of the animal's chest. This is not an indictment of PowerBall ammo. It is simply an illustration of how bullets that are very light for their caliber perform in real, live targets compared to heavier bullets in the same caliber.



# Church Shootings

By Tom Givens

The recent church shooting in Colorado Springs garnered quite a bit of attention, partially because a female member of the congregation with a carry permit used her pistol to stop the deranged gunman before he could kill scores more people than he did. This church shooting was not unique, however. In one minute of internet search, I found all of the following church shootings in the US in the past few years:

August 12, 2007: A lone gunman, Eiken Elam Saimon, opened fire in a Missouri Micronesia church, killing a pastor and two other churchgoers.

May 20, 2007: A standoff between police and a suspect in the shootings of three people in a Moscow, Idaho, Presbyterian Church ended with three dead, including one police officer.

Although not at a church building, the Oct. 2, 2006, attack in Lancaster County, Pa., by a gunman who killed five girls and then himself at an Amish school targeted a religious site.

May 21, 2006: Louisiana. Four were killed by a man at Jesus Christ Church.

Feb. 26, 2006: Michigan. Two people were killed at Zion Hope Missionary Baptist Church by a man who reportedly went to the church looking for his girlfriend. He later killed himself.

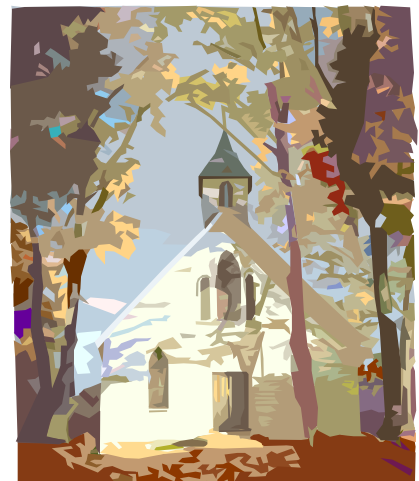
April 9, 2005: A 27-year-old airman died after being shot at a church in College Park, Ga., where he had once worked as a security guard.

March 12, 2005: A man walked into the services of the Living Church of God in Milwaukee and open fired immediately, killing seven people.

Oct. 5, 2003: A woman opened fire in Turner Monumental AME church in Kirkwood, east of Atlanta, killing the pastor and two others.

Sept. 16, 1999: Seven young people were killed when a man opened fire during a prayer service for teenagers at the Wedgewood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

You need to accept, internalize, and come to grips with the fact that *no place is immune to violence. Sudden, senseless violence can erupt anywhere there are people, at any time.* Discretely carry your gear. Be alert. When violence occurs, don't stand there wishing someone would come save you.



## Food for Thought

*The following quotes are from training texts dealing with business principles, but they are just as pertinent to personal survival in a crisis.*

*Jeff Cooper once wrote that there are two kinds of people in the world, "copers" and "non-copers". Obviously, we need to be people who can cope with whatever crisis comes along.*

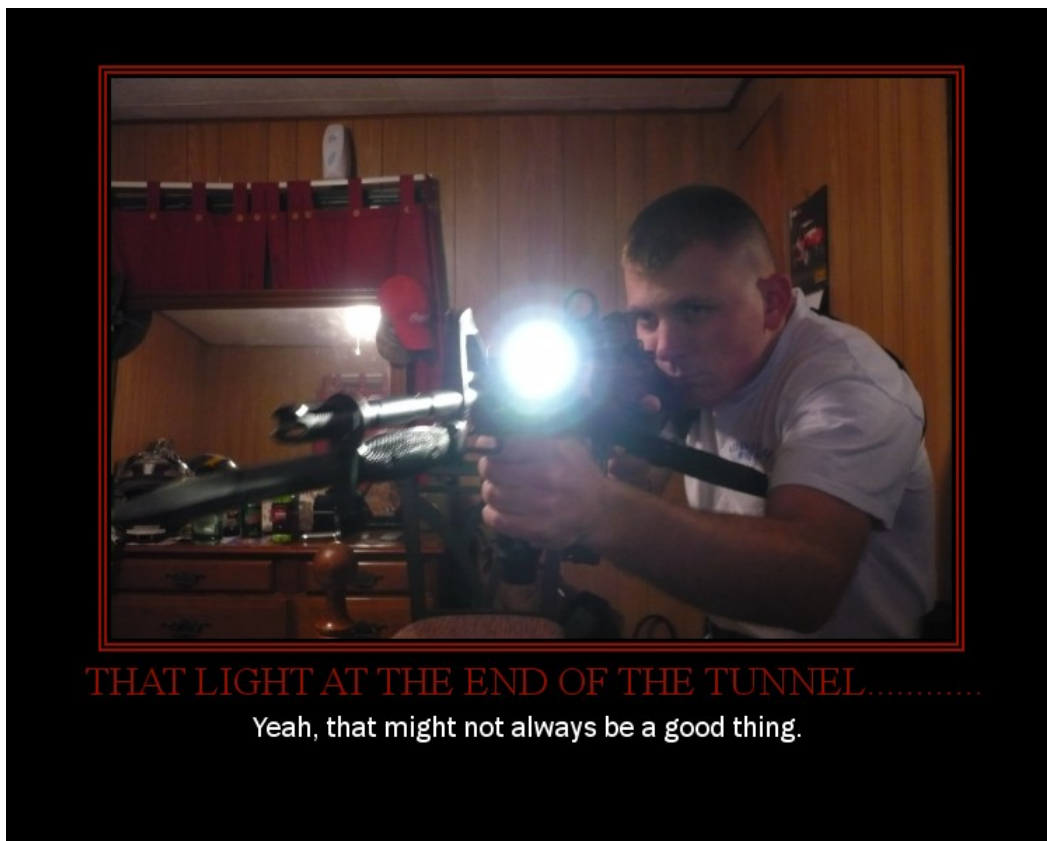
"The ability to deal with a crisis situation is largely dependent on the structures that have been developed before chaos arrives. The event can in some ways be considered as an abrupt and brutal audit: at a moment's notice, everything that was left unprepared becomes a complex problem and every weakness comes rushing to the forefront"

-Pat Lagadec

"Resilience is based of the assumption that unexpected trouble is ubiquitous and unpredictable; and thus accurate advance information on how to get out of it is in short supply. To learn from error (as opposed to avoiding error altogether) and to implement that learning through fast negative feedback, which dampens oscillations, are at the forefront of operating resiliently. Resilient people think mitigation rather than anticipation. They are attentive to expanding general knowledge, technical facility, and command over resources that relieve, lighten, moderate, reduce and decrease surprises."

-Aaron Wildavsky

Both quotes from Managing the Unexpected, by Karl Weick.



THAT LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.....

Yeah, that might not always be a good thing.

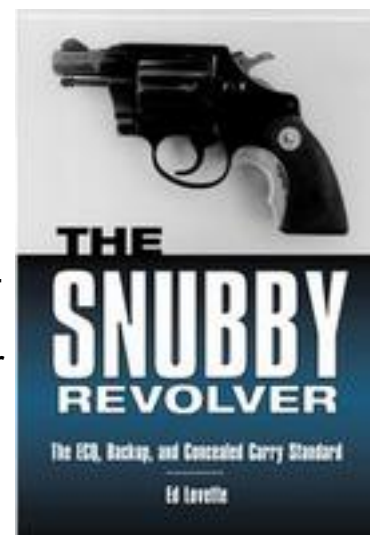
# Exciting Class Announcement



On April 12-13, 2008 (Saturday-Sunday) Rangemaster will host a unique training opportunity in Memphis for those serious about personal security. Southnarc, Ed Lovette, and Tom Givens will each teach segments involving their personal specialties, and students will rotate among these trainers, getting an incredible amount of information and skill in one weekend.

Southnarc served in the US Army Rangers before entering law enforcement. He is currently the commander of an inter-agency drug enforcement task force and a SWAT Team leader on the Gulf Coast. For a number of years he did undercover drug work, resulting in a number of serious physical assaults on him. These assaults included “rip-off” robberies, much like the robberies private citizens fall victim to every day. Southnarc is one of the most analytical trainers I have ever met, and as a result of these incidents he made a thorough study of such things as Pre-Assault Indicators, Weapon Access During an In-Progress Fight, Empty Hands Skills to escape from a grappling attack or multiple assailants, and more. He will be teaching these skills in two phases. “Managing Unknown Contacts” deals with the critical pre-fight processes involved in observing and assessing potential attackers; positioning to shift the advantage to you; verbal interaction; and decision making skills. These “pre-fight” activities often actually determine the outcome of the real fight, when it comes. More importantly, they often deter an assailant from carrying out a planned attack, as he realizes you are a harder target. The next phase will be Practical Unarmed Combat, which deals with proven, simple realistic techniques which can be learned and maintained without a lifetime in the martial arts. Southnarc’s skills are simple and straight-forward and work well.

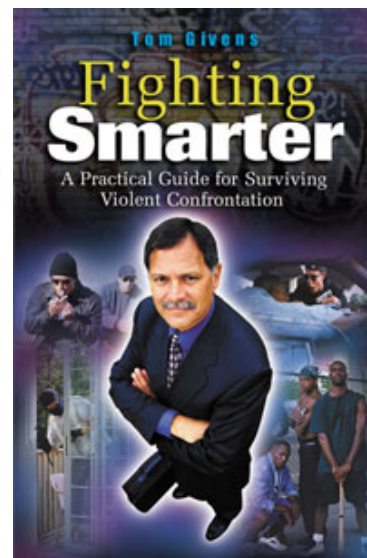
Ed Lovette worked as a police officer for a number of years, including a period as a firearms instructor at the New Mexico State Police academy. He then joined the CIA as a paramilitary officer, retiring from that position recently after serving in hot spots all over the world. In the CIA, Ed often had to move through areas of great danger while keeping a very low profile. He developed two things in that arena- one, the ability to observe his surroundings and look for things that might tip him to com-



*(Continued from page 6)*

ing troubles, and second, a fondness for a deeply concealed small frame revolver, often called a “snubby”. Ed will teach the observational and mental skills needed to spot threats ranging from stalkers to robbers and carjackers, based on his vast experience in counter-surveillance and stealth. He will also teach live-fire skills with the snubby revolver. Ed literally wrote the book on this subject. The Snubby Revolver, The ECQ, Backup, and Concealed Carry Standard, from Paladin Press is recognized as the authoritative text on the subject.

Tom Givens, chief instructor at Rangemaster, spent 25 years in law enforcement and specialized security work before becoming a full time trainer in 1996. Since then, Tom has trained thousands of students in armed self defense, and every year several Rangemaster students successfully defend themselves against armed attackers. Tom is an FBI and NRA certified law enforcement firearms instructor, a champion competitor in both IDPA and IPSC competition, a nationally recognized court expert on firearms training, and the author of several books, including Fighting Smarter. Tom will focus on handgun skills designed to work well under stress. Training will include effective gunhandling and marksmanship techniques, stress inoculation, fast but precise shooting skills in both daylight and low light conditions, and mental conditioning. Regardless of skill level, your shooting will improve as a result of this course.



Students will need a sidearm, quality holster and belt, at least three magazines for the primary gun, and 600 rounds of ammunition for the primary gun. A snubby or other backup gun is recommended, along with 250 rounds of ammo for it, and a suitable carry method. You will also need a good flashlight, like a Surefire 6P, 6Z, 8X or similar and street clothes, including a concealment garment. You will also need work-out clothes, soft shoes, a cup and a mouthpiece. We will supply work-books and guns that fire marking cartridges. A detailed equipment list will be sent out prior to class. Ammo is available here or bring your own.

The cost of this course is \$499.00. This is quite a bargain considering you're getting three courses, from three well respected trainers, in one location. There are several hotels within blocks of Rangemaster, ranging from basic Extended Stay or Holiday Inn to a very nice Marriott. Call 901-370-5600 to register. Class size is limited.

RANGEMASTER  
2611 S. Mendenhall Rd.  
Memphis, TN 38115-1503



Phone: 901-370-5600  
Fax: 901-370-5699  
Email: [rangemaster.tom@gmail](mailto:rangemaster.tom@gmail.com)  
Please note new e-mail address!



*[www.rangemaster.com](http://www.rangemaster.com)*

## Combative Pistol I at Rangemaster

Combative Pistol is our signature two-day class our staff teaches all over the United States. In 2008 we'll be conducting these courses in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Nevada, Texas, Oklahoma and other locations.

On Feb 9-10, 2008, we'll be conducting a Combative Pistol I course here at Rangemaster in Memphis. This is a rare opportunity to take this course on a heated indoor range with a modern classroom and all the audio-visual aids that make the tactical instruction more beneficial. This class runs from 9:00 am to 6:00pm on both Saturday and Sunday, and each student will fire approximately 1,000 rounds of ammunition. This amount of time and ammo allows us to actually ingrain proper responses, and your gunhandling and marksmanship skills are guaranteed to improve.

For those of you who live elsewhere, Rangemaster is only 15 minutes from Memphis International Airport, and several hotels are located within a short drive. There is even free shuttle service available to from the hotel, the airport and Rangemaster.

Topics covered in this course will include:

- ◆ Rapid presentation from concealed carry
- ◆ Effective gunhandling techniques, designed to work under stress
- ◆ Rapid reloading techniques
- ◆ Movement skills, including effectively engaging targets on the move
- ◆ Disability drills, including drawing and reloading with one hand
- ◆ Precision shooting at mid-ranges
- ◆ Effective scanning techniques for locating additional threats
- ◆ Low light firing techniques, both with and without a flashlight
- ◆ Proper defensive mindset and more

Tuition is \$325.00 A deposit of \$100 will hold your space, balance due 15 days before class. Call 901-370-5600 to register. See [www.rangemaster.com](http://www.rangemaster.com) for more details.