

Making a Difference



**By Genie Jennings,
Contributing Editor**

What makes us change the course of our lives? I have posed that question here many times in many ways. Each day we make myriad decisions, most of which seem mundane, all of which have an impact on where we are heading. I ask because I am struggling with my own “tapestry of life” and understand that seemingly random threads have proceeded to color enormous sections. It has been possible to follow some, but not all, of them back to their arrival, and understand that relatively minor decisions can have major consequences.

My original concept was to encourage you to take some action, using the women who are “making a difference” as models, if not necessarily guides. Still, the incentive to act is as intriguing as the action itself. It is the personal motivation that will bring about change in each of us.

Sometimes, we can decide be-

Wisconsin Activist Candy Dainty Galvanized By Virginia Tech

forehand what we should/could/must do under certain circumstances. In the article Home Alone, (*Women & Guns*, March/April 2011) the importance of establishing a series of thresholds was broached. Sometimes, we become personally involved through the actions of others. Many of the women who have been subjects of this column have experienced a situation that served as the impetus for changing their lives. Sometimes things happen to others that trip internal triggers of which we were not formerly aware. These events can drive us to demand changes not only of ourselves, but, also, of society.

For Candy Dainty such an event was the 2007 slayings at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. “(T)he massacre...galvanized my support for everyone, anywhere being able to have a gun to use for self-defense.” Most particularly, it was the heroic death of 76-year-old Romanian Holocaust survivor Liviu Librescu that drove Candy to her current passion. The engineering professor barricaded the door to his classroom with his own body while he sent his students out the windows. He was fatally shot through the door, but had managed to save all but one of those under his charge. “If he’d only been allowed, and trained to have a gun,

it could have been a different day,” Candy told Kirby Ferris in an interview for Jews for the Preservation of Firearm Ownership. (See the entire interview at www.jpfo.org)

A rarely acknowledged additional tragedy of Virginia Tech is the fact that it is a military academy. A large portion of the student body is trained in the use of firearms. Mrs. Dainty knew she had to do something, not to prevent another shooting, but to give a chance to those who might be targeted. We cannot prevent the mentally disturbed from creating havoc; but we can stop making victims out of people who are capable and prepared to take care of themselves and others.

She sums up her mission, “...(the Commandment) is actually, ‘Thou shalt not murder.’ Murder and killing are quite different. “While we choose not to end a human life unnaturally, that includes our own. Our Creator gave each of us our own life. We must protect our lives for Him. Should we be in a situation where our lives or those close to us are threatened, we have the obligation to defend them, even if it means killing the one threatening us.”

Although she had been a gunowner since working in a rural police department, her first foray into pro-gun activism be-

gan after a vacation through South Dakota. She and her husband happened to stop into Jack First's shop in Rapid City. Jack told her



Candy Dainty.

about Second Amendment Sisters, an organization he had supported for years. Eventually, Candy became the SAS State Coordinator for Wisconsin.

Almost immediately, she traveled to the nation's capitol for the group's vigil outside the Supreme Court as Alan Gura presented oral arguments in *Washington, D.C. v Heller*. While in the city, she joined in a counter-protest against Code Pink as that group attacked a downtown Army Recruiting office. She returned to Wisconsin with a leather coat ruined by red paint thrown by those purporting to oppose violence, and the thrill of adrenaline flowing through her veins. The fight was on.

She left SAS soon after this trip, and three years ago formed Jewish Women Supporting Gun Ownership. Her goal is "... to show Jews and particularly Women they can and *must* consider a gun in self defense. The Torah expects us to defend ourselves in any way possible."

Her biggest surprise has been "...how many people are 'closet' gun advocates. With all the anti-gun rhetoric I'm amazed how many people from both sides of the political spectrum agree with me." She will need those disparate gun supporters to achieve her goal of "Constitutional Carry" in Wisconsin.

Currently, her state has Open Carry, but Candy finds several problems with this method that could be solved with Concealed Carry. Practically speaking, Wisconsin is a cold state, and having a gun and holster on the outside of heavy winter clothing is problematic

The concept of "Open Carry" was to show everyone who was armed and who was not. Back in the 1800s that information made the general public comfortable.

Today, because of the decades-long concerted effort by those who want to ultimately eliminate the private ownership of firearms, the sight of an openly carried gun is disturbing to many people. What was intended to mitigate fear in the population has the current consequence of deterring many of those who would choose to protect themselves from doing so.

Criminals, of course, are aware of the law. They know that anyone they see without a gun is, truly, unarmed. Everyone is more vulnerable because of this certainty. It is the question of who is and is not capable of returning fire that makes Concealed Carry protect everyone. The criminal is forced to guess who will be more of a victim. With Open Carry he knows.

Candy wants to change that situation and make the world safer for the honest citizen rather than those who would do harm. She is hoping to awaken others, especially women, to the dangers she perceives. More importantly, she hopes to teach the positive steps that can be taken in face of those dangers.

Keep up with Candy's enterprises at www.jwsgo.org.

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