

Making a Difference



*By Genie Jennings,
Contributing Editor*

On the day of the Supreme Court decision in Washington, *Heller v. DC*, I was removed from my position of National Spokeswoman for the Second Amendment Sisters. Consequently, I resigned my positions on their Board of Directors and Maine State Coordinator. On that monumental day when our Constitutional right to keep and bear arms was upheld, instead of sharing my joy with women I had bonded with for several years I found myself abruptly alone. It was devastating.

When originally asked to be Spokeswoman, I had hesitated because public speaking seemed terrifying. However, a large part of the job was writing the SAS column for *Women & Guns Magazine*, which was something I had asked to do. For quite some time I insisted I was the National Writeswoman, because I produced not only that column but frequent press releases, while never speaking. Then I was offered a space on a panel at the Gun Rights Policy

What Can One Woman Do?

Conference and learned I love a microphone.

Being part of the group had opened doors. Doors that now were shut. Mostly, I felt helpless. What can one woman do? One wealthy or famous woman can finance and influence change, but what can an ordinary woman do by herself?

The first thing I did was go after the part I wanted most. I contacted the editor of W&G and asked if I could continue to write for the magazine. When she accepted my proposal, the biggest disappointment lifted. In fact things were better than before. My column now is all mine; it no longer has to be approved by a board, only my editor.

Although I no longer have an outlet for press releases, I do have social media where I can—and do—comment on multiple subjects, possibly with a wider audience than ever read the PR I produced.

My local rod and gun club had been allowing me to put on events introducing women to shooting, and also to speak at the monthly meetings about gun rights issues. When I told the president that I was no longer affiliated with the women's group, we decided that I should continue to bring Second Amendment issues to the membership's attention. My reports now come from the News and Government Committee, NAG. The club sponsors the women's

training each year. I have taken on the responsibility for our biggest fund raiser each year. We have also seen a growing influx of female members.

There had been constraints on my participation in many activities as the representative of SAS. Those prohibitions make sense. Activities of officers in one venue can affect the impression of an organization. For instance because we would need to work with elected officials our rule was we could not endorse or work for particular candidates or parties. Other causes also were something we did not want associated with the organization.

Not being associated any longer meant I could work for any political entity I chose. And I did. I was now free to campaign for local candidates, and became an elected officer of my town, county and eventually state Republican committees. Through those political activities I have gained access to people who write and sign legislation. This session I have a bill in my state legislature to remove anti-Second Amendment language from the application for a pardon.

I am no longer restricted to working for a single issue, although Second Amendment rights are still my prime interest. One of the most valuable lessons I learned from my association was to work with anyone who is interested in the same subject and to put any other disagreements aside

in order to promote our mutual cause.

Not everything has been successful. Yet. Some things must be postponed, some things might not work out in the first configuration. Sometimes life just gets in the way of really good projects.

Frankly, I am afraid to count the number of ‘I’s’ in the previous paragraphs. As narcissistic as this seems, though, it is really all about you. Because, each of us is one woman, and sometimes it feels as if we cannot matter at all. It is easy to think that there is no reason to even try to accomplish anything.

To paraphrase Mother Theresa, do not try to do anything big. Just do one small thing with all your heart. None of us has to fix the world, but we can each make our own little sphere a tiny bit better.

Some of my columns have described how I have accomplished one task or another. The most important factor has been that if you have an idea and are willing to work, there is usually a place and people who will help you bring it to fruition. Ideas are cheap, though. There is an enormous difference between saying, “Someone should do....” and saying, “I would like to do...” Whatever the idea, whether or not you have any clue as to where to start, if you begin with the premise that you are willing to put in the labor, there is a good chance that others will follow. And, they might be following in front of you because they have the expertise you need.

One woman can do a lot. Especially if she is willing to risk asking for help.

W&G

Canada Slayings Show Why Gun Control Can’t Work

The murders of eight people, including some children, on Dec. 29, 2014, by a handgun-wielding killer who subsequently took his own life in Edmonton, Alberta, was cited by gun rights activists as more proof that strict gun laws do not prevent such crimes.

Canada has far stricter gun laws than the United States, with the possible exception of states including California, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Illinois. Yet a man identified as Phu Lam by the *Edmonton Journal* murdered his eight victims at two different locations, before committing suicide at a restaurant with which he was associated.

In its exceptionally detailed reporting, the *Journal* touched on Canadian gun laws and the history of the 9mm handgun that Lam used in all of the killings. The newspaper reported that the gun had been “legally registered in British Columbia in 1997. Nine years later, in 2006, the gun was stolen in Surrey, BC. It is not known if the gun changed hands since 2006.”

Surrey, a Vancouver suburb, is hundreds of miles away from Edmonton, and in a separate province.

But since the gun had once been stolen, and it may have changed hands more than once illegally under Canadian law, the kinds of laws proposed to stop gun-related crime in the US would not have prevented the Edmonton slayings, had they been in effect north of the border.

That goes not only for background check laws, but magazine capacity limits. The newspaper noted in an interview with a gun shop operator that, “In Canada, such handguns are legally limited to 10 rounds. In the United States, such weapons can hold 13 to 16 rounds in many states. They could be illegally modified to hold more, though.”

W&G

NY Appeals Court

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Though acquitted of the criminal charges, Burns brought a hearing in his capacity as Otsego County’s handgun licensing authority and rescinded the license DeAngelo had held since 2009. The Third Department noted that DeAngelo acknowledged during the hearing before Burns that he’d wished he had “[kept his] mouth shut” and not argued with his neighbors.

Burns held that DeAngelo’s handling of the handgun showed poor judgment and was “sufficient ground for revocation of a pistol permit.”

The Law Journal reported that Justices John Lahtinen, William McCarthy, Robert Rose and Christine Clark joined in the ruling. Ryan Miosek, a member at Gozigian, Washburn & Clinton in Cooperstown, NY, represented DeAngelo, and State Assistant Attorney General William Storrs defended Judge Burns.

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