

From the Editor

If you don't stay up late on Dec. 31 you miss the official start of the New Year and its attendant hoopla. But whenever you go to bed on the last day of December, a new year awaits you when you awake.

Sometimes, too, what awaits you is a hastily made "Resolutions" list and the remains of the year before, whether in the form of your holiday decorations or a half of tin of anchovies in the refrigerator.

It takes a lot of resolve to hew to the "fast away the old year passes" line and be ready for action on the morning of Jan. 1. On the other hand, if you rush to throw out the old year, you sometimes lose key pieces of it. My brother and sister and I still speak sadly of a Captain Hook puppet which disappeared 40+ years ago in a frenzy of holiday cleanup, before any of us got a chance to put him into action.

In that spirit, I think it's worth reviewing a few items from 2014 before we move on to 2015.

My last business trip of the year occurs at the end of September, when I head to the Gun Rights Policy Conference (GRPC), sponsored by the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms and the Second Amendment Foundation, parent of W&G.

We were back in Chicago, home to the landmark Supreme Court's McDonald decision and its cadre of fiercely dedicated Illinois activists. It was great to see so many familiar faces, including Colleen Lawson, Rhonda Ezell and Valinda Rowe, all of whom have played significant roles in Illinois' long march to concealed carry licensing and to some measure of parity for its Chicago-land residents.

Colleen's happy idea of presenting W&G's publisher, Julianne Ver-

nel Gottlieb, with an award in appreciation of her efforts on behalf of women—and really, all—gunowners—at Saturday's reception. At Friday night's get together, she took folks aside and filmed their tributes to Julianne. By Saturday's event she had it all edited into a few minutes worth of accolades, which deeply touched our publisher.

I doubt if many people know how much work she has put into the cause of gunowners, first nationally, and, now, increasingly, internationally. The story on Page 6 of this issue details her testimony last fall to the UN, and she has been working—and travelling, travelling, travelling—for at least the last half dozen years to help expand the notion of self-defense as a basic human right for literally everyone in the world.

If you think a room full of local activists strategizing about a single proposed law is tough—imagine that same room full of people from different countries, speaking different languages and with different agendas.

The 2014 GRPC also took a look at the then-upcoming mid-term elections, from a national, state and even local perspective.

The news from November was mostly very good for gunowners, but a couple of key losses—mostly expected, still sting.

The dueling initiatives in Washington State ended with gunowners there in a big hole. It was a hole dug not by grassroots activists, but by billionaires with an agenda, notably former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Not all states have a ballot initiative process, but many do, and increasingly, the anti-gunners have taken their wallets and the media attention they can

buy to focus on that course, rather than fighting in the legislative trenches or in courtrooms.

The good news is that this allows gun rights activists to continue their victories—notably in the courts, but also in state legislatures, where their activism really does make a difference.

That brings us to the "resolutions" portion of the new year.

While 2015 won't have federal elections, it will have the start of the next election cycle. For members of the House of Representatives, the next race starts days, even hours, after the last one has been won or lost. For senators, the time to "get right" with constituents and to raise money is longer, but ever present.

And, of course, the 2016 presidential race started a few minutes after the 2014 polls closed in Iowa. I had a bet with a friend as to what time that race would be mentioned on the evening of the 2014 elections, and I believe my 9:30 P.M. was the winner.

Now is the time to pay attention to what presidential hopefuls, senate aspirants and congressional contenders are saying, and more importantly, doing.

It's also a good time to look at gubernatorial jobseekers, county legislature wanna-bes and the like.

And, as always, when thinking about resolutions, to remember one made at the very first GRPC. Proposed by Georgia activist Linda Farmer, and adopted at every GRPC since 1986, it states that the participants will recognize an attack on one class of gunowner as an attack on all gunowners.

Over the years it has changed a little in wording, but the steadfastness of it has never waived.



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