

From the Editor

You may be one of the many people who read magazines from back to front rather than the other way around—studies show about half of readers proceed that way. If so, flip to Page 10 and read Lyn Bates' always excellent "Defense Strategies" column—I'll wait.

Lyn's piece, titled "Priorities for Survival," spurred me to develop an idea for my own column that I kick around every once in a while.

Usually, when it actually comes time for me to write it, some current event takes center stage or I think to myself, "Pul-eez—I just *cannot* write about snow in August!" and the column idea goes further back into the recesses of my already disorderly mind.

If, as Lyn asserts—and I wholeheartedly agree—mental awareness and preparation are the most important components of survival, can we not also say that this type of preparation and mental awareness serves gunowners in a host of other ways, including during weather emergencies?

And, if that's so—what about zombies??

Actually, that's another whole column, or at least a book review, that I've been trying to write for the better part of a year. But bear with me, and with any luck—and possibly mental preparedness—I can stitch the two together.

My friend, Brian Patrick Anse, a communications professor at the University of Toledo, sent me a review copy of his latest, *Zombology*, last spring. It's subtitled "Zombies and the

Decline of the West (and Guns)," and is available from Amazon, or the publisher Artos Media (or enjoy the look on the face of your local bookseller when you order a copy of it).

His premise, as I understood it, is that zombies stand in for a host of anxieties in Western culture—like the faceless, relentless bureaucracy. And the rise (again and again!) of zombies in popular culture, threatening heroes and heroines across media, catches the anxiety of the early 21st century. In every video game, graphic novel, TV series and movie, the viewer/reader is presented with the choice: what would *I* do in the face of zombies?

The book details much of the zombie/gun axis—from "zombie shoots" to targets and loads designed for the critters.

Humans (that is, non-zombies) like narratives and gunowning humans like to hone those skills Lyn was talking about. The marriage of gunowners and zombies, if not made in heaven, was made from the simple idea that while practice makes perfect, practice with a zippy twist tied to the current Zeitgeist is pretty cool.

Both the zombies and the weather give gunowners a chance to practice our skills. In the case of the zombies, it is rather cunningly designed; in the case of the snow, well, it's just a fact of life.

I am getting to be old enough to stand in the street and begin a sentence to my pleasant young neighbor with "...back in '77 we

hand shoveled the entire street..." and because he is pleasant he didn't run away screaming that he'd rather deal with zombies.

But both zombies and snow bring out the "prepper" in all gunowners. (Prepper being the term that supplanted "survivalist" when even people who thought about survival in those terms found it a bit much.)

This winter (which started here at W&G HQ with seven-freaking-feet of snow the week before Thanksgiving) has been a tough one for much of the country.

As old hands at winter weather, we rarely found ourselves outmatched by the snowflakes and the freezing temperatures: we know enough to have extra supplies, of almost every description, on hand.

Watching the major media folks dash about in mere inches of snow—in their cool, logo'd squallwear—while wringing their hands at six inches of snow in Central Park, is rather like watching a zombie movie.

You kind of shake your head and mutter, "Dude, just stay inside!" at the TV screen. (Or at least take the chair closest to the fire and keep your powder dry.)

Being a gunowner trains you to think in terms of survival—whether its zombies or snowflakes that are attacking.

Peggy

*Peggy Tartaro,
Executive Editor*