Do you ever consider, as a member of VCDL, how much stronger our voice could be if we could send Philip Van Cleave to Richmond with 30,000 paid members? We have an amazing track record, and while Philip can report over 27,700 subscribers to the VA-ALERT, we know that some of those subscribers are news outlets, politicians, anit, and residents of other states. Only a fraction of those 27,000 are paid members.

What is it we are currently doing, what could we do, and how might you help?

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS. Of course, the easiest thing you can do is to cut out the membership application that appears on the next-to-last page of The Defender each quarter, and be prepared to convince your friends and acquaintances that the $25/year they spend is an excellent investment in Virginia. As Philip reports on page 2, our efforts have helped convince legislators to kill over 75 anti-gun bills in the current session alone. Discounts are nice, and this newsletter is nice, but the power of a unified pro-gun voice is priceless.

GUN SHOWS. We have an amazing group of people who volunteer to maintain table presentations for gun shows throughout the state. Most of them have a tried-and-true crew of volunteers to man the table. This is a great opportunity to share your membership and to talk to like-minded individuals. If you are able, consider contacting one of the gun show coordinators listed on page 3, and volunteering to work a shift at the VCDL table for your next gun show. And though even saying it seems outlandish, those of you who are young, female, or non-white are particularly needed. Our opponents attempt to paint us as the old fat white guys, and anything we can do to counter that picture is beneficial. We know better. We are proud to count men, women, liberals, conservatives, gay, straight, religious, non-religious and almost any other discriminator you can imagine — the commonality is our belief in our right to defend ourselves.

AD HOC EVENTS. Several of our members have stepped forward in the past to coordinate booths at such events as Steppin’ Out (Blacksburg), Pride in the Park (Roanoke), Louisa County Agricultural Fair, church-sponsored Wild Game Suppers, shooting competitions, store displays, and the like. If you know of an organization holding an appropriate event, consider recruiting a couple of friends and setting up a table. Contact State Gun Show Coordinator Tess Ailshire (gunshowcoord@vcdl.org) or the Fulfillment Center chairman Bruce Jackson (bruce@vcdl.org) to arrange for appropriate materials.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT. The first Tuesday in August is National Night Out—generally at the community level, showing one’s willingness to keep an eye out against crime. This is an ideal venue for talking about one’s right to defend himself; the gatherings tend to be smaller and just right for one-on-one conversations. Consider making a VCDL presence known at these events.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. We have an informed and involved membership. Many of you write letters to the editor, clearly articulating the benefits of gun ownership and our right to defend ourselves. Consider signing off your letters with a statement such as “If you value your right to defend yourself, consider visiting vcdl.org/join”

WORD OF MOUTH. Nothing beats word of mouth. Make sure you have an application form, some carry cards, perhaps, or other literature in your range bag, and anywhere else you might run into sympathetic gun owners.

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VCDL Public Meeting Dates

Wednesday, Mar 21 — Annandale
Thursday, Apr 19 — Annandale
Thursday, May 24 — Annandale
Thursday, Jun 21 — Annandale
Thursday, Jul 19 — Annandale

Additional meetings held throughout the state are announced in VA-ALERT and posted on the calendar at www.vcdl.org/calendar

Annandale meetings are held at the Mason District Governmental Center, 6507 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003
Fellowship 7:30; Meeting 8:00 PM
The General Assembly is still in session, so things could change by the time you read this article.

So far we have managed to kill all but 10 of the 76 gun-control bills that were introduced this year! We expect we can kill all but one of the remaining 10 bills - a "Stop Gun Violence" license plate bill. But even that one was modified so that the money from the plates goes to fight mental-health issues.

However, the pro-gun bills are not doing very well either. The best bills left are Constitutional Carry and Church Carry. Church Carry is on life support and Constitutional Carry is poised to be pocket vetoed. That will leave us with a bill to allow EMS and fire personnel to carry concealed (which might get some changes before final passage), a bill to allow for first time CHP applicants to apply through the mail, and a bill to fix issues with gun-rights restoration for felons.

We are seeing a serious weakness in Republican leadership when it comes to passing strong gun-rights bills. That's not going to invigorate their base. That said, and to their credit, they have demolished all of the serious gun-control bills, leaving nothing for Governor Northam to sign.

And don't get me started on the Democrats.

VCDL is already laying plans for any bills that are killed this year to be reintroduced next year, but perhaps with a few twists.

For some bills, such as the Church Carry bill, if it dies this year, we will be running campaigns until the next General Assembly session starts in 2019 to soften up legislators from both parties into supporting the bill. The Governor will be hearing from us as well. We will be watching to see if Attorney General Herring reverses a previous ruling by Ken Cuccinelli that self-defense is a "good and sufficient reason." We've heard that he is considering doing so, but I'm wondering if he will follow through now that VCDL has brought the issue front-and-center in the General Assembly and in the press.

We'll see.

Rest assured that VCDL has contingency plans for its contingency plans.
UPCOMING GUN SHOWS AND EVENTS

If you’d like to work a show, email the coordinator and ask to be put on the mailing list used for volunteers. Volunteers get free admission to the show, and some vendors offer discounts to other vendors, including our volunteers. New volunteers will be teamed with an experienced person.

Verify all schedules; this list is correct as of press time.

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<th>City</th>
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<td>Winchester</td>
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<td>Winchester</td>
<td>Body Renew Fitness and Family Sports Center</td>
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THANK YOU

A special thanks to those members who used their time to help spread the VCDL word.

Winchester, Nov 4-5
Joseph Cogelia, Mark Lintz

Chantilly, Nov 17-19
Keith Bailey, Wallid Boonpratisit, Leo Carling, Skip Dobrin, Tom Fuller, Dave Garvie, Max Padin, Danny Paulson, Alexander Rogge, Randy Royston, Jon Saxon, Craig Shelton, Mike Stinnette, David Taitano, Keith Webster, Bill Wood

Hampton, Nov 25-26
Bryan Dunn, Ron Lilly, Clem Morse-Tuttle, Monte Oakes, Doug Peterson, John Pierce, Mark Spruill, Richard Walker, Tim Waters

Dale City, Dec 2-3
Thomas Bunnell, Jack Carwile, Dr Jerry Coffey, Dexter Guptill, Ray Kasey, Richard Kroh, Tom Pietras, Randy Royston, Kenneth R. Van Wyk

Doomsday Tactical, Dec 2 (Outdoors!)
Dennis Graham, Sam Hollingsworth, Philip Honaker, Ken Modica, Ed Noell, Howard Lee Schilling, Al Steed, Jr

Manassas, Dec 2-3
Bruce Bennett, Thomas Bunnell, Dr. Jerry Coffey, Steve Eng, Michael Frachel, Brett Gloss, John Guyer, Dan Helm, Rusty Hoerst, Dave Leader, John Piedmont, Carey Roessel, Bill Shaw, Joe Tuzicka, Gary VanDeMortel, CJ Ward

Doswell, Dec 9-10
Bob Charlton, Dave Eckart, Rowley Molina, Stanley Walker, Janine Woods

Fredericksburg, Dec 16-17
Sue Blevins, Troy Blevins, Sue Burner, Dave Eckart, Sheldon Finkelstein, Dennis Hannick, Sue Hannick, Rowley Molina

Chantilly, Dec 29-31
Keith Bailey, Paul Bolton, Dwin Craig, Robert Eufemia, Karen Field, Alan Gideon, Jim Graf, Andrew Hirsch, Donna Hurlock, Chris Karanski, Margaret Marcus, Michaels Oakes, Max Padon, Alek Paulson, Danny Paulson, Roz Paulson, Brad Richards, Alexander Rogge, Craig Shelton, Mike Stinnette, Keith Webster, Bill Wood

Roanoke, Jan 6-7
Don Beheler, Melanie Charlton, Brien Dyer, Dave Evans, Connie French, Ed French, Philip Honaker, Bill Meegan, Stephen Meikle, Ken Modica, Dave Ninaltowski, John Snidow, Al Steed, Jr., Linda Steed, Shellie Steed, Noah Tickle, Bill Wash

Dale City, Jan 6-7
Tess Ailshire, Jake Carwile, Jerry Coffey, Dexter Guptill, Ray Kasey, Mike Kolodzinski, Richard Kroh, Tom O’Hara, Jon Ortega, Randy Royston, Robert Wilson, Ken Van Wyk

Continued on page 7
Does this sound familiar? You just bought a new handgun — possibly one that you’ve coveted for a long time — and you head to the range full of great expectations, only to have the gun suffer multiple failures. So, in disgust, you head home and that gun is forever tainted. Maybe you sell it on the used market. Maybe you relegate it to your safe and rarely (if ever) bring it back out. It failed. Familiar?

Well, don’t give up so easily, folks. Okay, your first experience was less than perfect, but there’s likely a reason you coveted that gun in the first place. Another factor is that guns aren’t typically like most consumer products: most sales are final. Although reputable manufacturers stand behind their products and will repair or replace defects, you usually can’t just go back to your FFL and return the firearm.

Guns are mechanical devices and, as such, may well require some break-in time. Especially if the metal parts were machined to some pretty tight tolerances, you may well need to spend a bit of extra time and attention to the gun in order to get it running really smoothly, much like the break-in period on a car.

So, with a bit of care, it’s quite possible that you can still end up with what you saw in that gun in the first place. No guarantees, of course, but you might still be victorious if you try a few things. Here are a few tips from my own recent experience.

I had waited months for a brand new Beretta 92A1. I really wanted this gun to round out my selection of pistol actions for the training I do, for one thing. Plus, I’ve long felt Berettas are among the most beautifully designed handguns out there. They’re Italian, after all. And, as a person who carries Glocks, a bit of aesthetic elegance is a welcome change. Just saying...

Finally, it arrived, so I went to my FFL and went through the background check process, and I headed home eager for my first range outing with the new gun. The day came, and I was off to the range. In the first box of 50 rounds, I had 4 failures to feed. My frustration was extreme. Beretta, after all, has a stellar reputation for being reliable. On the other hand, I don’t give up easily.

I brought the gun home and decided I’d give it a good clean and lube. To be fair, I had done a basic cleaning before the first outing, including a good scrubbing of the bore. The 92 series has a strange (but fascinating) series of rails through which the barrel and slide pass, so I used CLP on those and added extra lube with some Hoppes #9 afterwards. I also repeatedly racked the slide back and forth, and it sure seemed smooth to me.

Back to the range. This time, I ran 100 rounds through it. Things were definitely better, but it still had 2 failures to feed. Now, I have nearly 10,000 rounds through my Glock 17 without a single cycle failure, so 2 FTFs in 100 rounds is just not going to cut it. And, as I said, I don’t give up, and I wasn’t going to give up here.

Next, I figured I’d ask the experts. I found a Beretta group on Facebook, and I did my best to diplomatically ask the long-time Beretta owners what they suggested. Like most product owner groups, there are many in this forum who are passionate about their products. No surprise there.

Within a day, I had 25+ responses. Most were not so helpful, but a couple folks said something that really struck a chord for me. They said that Berettas ship with a fairly thick coat of sticky grease on their inner workings, ostensibly to protect the gun during its shelf time. They suggested I scrub the rails with solvent and then properly lube the rails.

So that’s what I did. Solvent through the rails with a used toothbrush and then a good cleanup with a rag. Next, I put some more Hoppes lube in the rails. I also put a small dab of some molybdenum dry lube in each rail. When I reassembled the gun and ran the slide, it seemed palpably smoother to me. Perhaps that’s just in my head, but I felt more confident than ever.

Back to the range, where I ran 100 rounds with zero failures. Now, being a bit of a perfectionist, I’m not willing to declare victory until I’ve gotten 1000 rounds through it with zero failures, but I’m at least off to a good start.

So, for now, I’m happy to cautiously say my Beretta is performing as I’d hoped in the first place. Additionally, in doing this kind of in-depth cleaning and lubing, my understanding of the gun’s functions are greatly improved. (I have no other gun with quite the same kind of barrel rail and lug system.)

So, if you have a new gun that causes you grief, don’t give up. Spend the time and ensure you give the gun every opportunity to succeed. Some guns simply require a break-in period before they really start to perform properly. Some guns ship with sticky grease on their inner workings. Whatever the case, sometimes you can’t just take the gun out of the box and start running with 100% reliability. If you give up, you’re robbing yourself of what attracted you to that gun in the first place. Give it a proper chance.
OPINION
By VCDL Member Baraka Ulrich James

Pro-gun community listen up...

We need to put an end to the infighting amongst ourselves.

You cannot win an argument or discussion with someone who is overwhelmed with emotion and is not listening to reason or facts because that emotional state prevents it. When people are consumed by emotions their conscious mind is disengaged and they become incapable of rational, logical and intelligent discussion.

Debating is cool, arguing is cool, issues should always be discussed whether it be facts or mere opinion supported by facts. All of these things can be achieved in an intelligent and respectful manner. Name-calling and personal attacks do not win arguments or debates. In fact if a person has to resort to either of those things, at that point they have already lost their footing and position in said debate.

Here are some inarguable facts for anyone that thinks that new laws or gun laws will make us safer...

Murder is illegal. Attempting murder is illegal. A felon owning a gun is illegal, unless his rights have been restored. Shooting people indiscriminately is illegal. Using firearms in a criminal manner is illegal. Criminals do not go through background checks when purchasing guns illegally. Explain how criminals will follow new laws. Explain how new laws will make us safer. Explain how restricting law-abiding citizens even more will make us safer.

The Second Amendment is our God given right and shall not be infringed.

Remember the main reason for the existence of the Second Amendment, and that is to ensure that our government continues to be “for the people” and by run by the people. If not, should the government become tyrannical, that the people should be able to protect themselves from said tyrannical government.

To conquer a divided people is easy... like ants eating an elephant, little bits by little bits.

Now more than ever we must stand united and in solidarity, because if we continue to fight, bicker, and backstab one another, we will surely fall.

I ask you to please focus your time, effort, energy and attention on supporting one another and all things that are pro-2nd amendment, firearms safety, education, training and mindset. Without the Second Amendment all of the other amendments cannot be enforced and will be eventually restricted or taken away completely. Think about it...

Please stay safe and remain vigilant. Godspeed good people

Baraka Ulrich James is a 2nd Amendment Advocate, and Host and Owner of Civilian Carry Radio Podcast  http://bit.ly/2DS75Lm

OPINION
By Executive Member Tess Ailshire

We in the gun-rights community frequently speak of our pride in ourselves for the ability to argue gun-rights issues using logic and facts rather than emotion. We often follow this up with huge logical fallacies.

Scan through almost any gun-rights document, forum, blog, or public argument, and you’ll see both assertions and implications that everyone who is anti-gun must be “liberal” and that all “conservatives” must be pro-gun. That’s followed by the assumption that all “liberals” must be pro-abortion, pro-gay-marriage, godless, and evil.

Now, we’ve allowed assumptions to color our arguments, and we start arguing with those who agree on gun rights, no matter their stance on any other issue.

First, it would behoove us to recognize that the spectrum of opinions on any one issue is not bipolar. There is no issue on which the American population will fall only on one of the ends of the spectrum, with no one in the middle.

Then, we can look at the fallacy of composition: assuming that something true of part of a whole must be true of the whole. So all “liberals” are anti-gun. It’s simply not true.

If strength is in numbers, is it just possible that we’re driving away Democrats and the various flavors of Independents because we insist that if they disagree with us on another issue, they are evil and can’t be a part of the “cool kids” club? Must we insult the LGBTQ advocate who believes gun rights belong to all? Must we offend the gun owner who wears a hijab or a dastaar? Why tell a member of the Liberal Patriot Gun Club to stay away? This is what we do when we sprinkle our arguments with ANY issue other than the gun issue, they are evil and can’t be a part of the “cool kids” club? Do we not prefer someone with integrity, who stands up for his beliefs—including his belief in our 2nd Amendment rights—than someone whose position one could never fathom? Do we really want to alienate those who might help us integrate an appreciation for all our rights into actions and conversations on “the other” side? Isn’t it just possible that “the other” side isn’t “other” on guns?

It really is not difficult to remain friends, or even just a civil relationship, with someone who disagrees with us. Would we not prefer someone with integrity, who stands up for his beliefs—including his belief in our 2nd Amendment rights—than someone whose position one could never fathom? Do we really want to alienate those who might help us integrate an appreciation for all our rights into actions and conversations on “the other” side? Isn’t it just possible that “the other” side isn’t “other” on guns?

When we allow ourselves to feel superior, as if we have a better understanding of America or the Constitution than anyone else because of one issue, we drive away people—living, breathing, human beings—who can stand with us, and vote with us, on this issue.
2018 LOBBY DAY WRAPUP

Lobby Day proved a challenge that the members of VCDL met admirably. As most of you know, the General Assembly Building in which legislators had their offices was closed after the 2017 legislative session for a massive renovation that will take a few years. As a result, all the legislators now have offices in the Pocohantas Building, but in early January, few knew where anyone was. Navigating our way around the building was daunting, but our outstanding Lobby Day Team Leaders ensured all legislators got a visit.

Some legislators were not willing to talk to our groups unless there was one of their constituents present. This behavior is shameful; our members represent the entire state, and on Lobby Day we speak for our members. It does illustrate the importance of making an appointment with your own representatives, and letting them know that on gun issues, VCDL speaks for you.

For three years, VCDL has provided buses to aid our members in attending Lobby Day without the hassle of driving and parking in downtown Richmond. For the second year, the bus company has caused headaches; this year they lost the date for our reservation, so no buses as our members arrived in the very early morning hours. We will be finding another company for any future buses.

The traditional Lobby Day rally was truly impressive this year. In addition to the usual array of politicians, we were honored to be addressed by two very informative speakers.

Ms. Elizabeth Baran is a Maryland resident who survived a brutal domestic violence attack which included rape and beating, spoke first hand of the importance of being able to defend yourself. Since her attack, which left her physically limited, and with some brain damage, she has shared her story in the interest of ensuring others don’t face the circumstances she did. Ms. Baran is certified as a victim services professional and an NRA pistol instructor.

She is no longer able to work as an emergency room nurse, and has described herself as a reluctant gun owner who even had to bring suit in Maryland to own a stun gun.

Doctor John R. Lott, Jr., an economist and political commentator whose research has shown that more guns equate to less crime, provided some eye-opening information on what data shows — that gun control disproportionately harms the disaffected, including women and minorities. Dr. Lott’s books “More Guns, Less Crime” and “The War on Guns” are practically required reading for gun-rights advocates, providing scholarly research rather than emotions and hopes.

Delegate Ben Cline spoke on his new position as Chairman of the powerful House Militia, Police, and Public Safety Committee, where 98% of gun bills have to pass through.

Other speakers included Congressman Dave Brat, Senator Dick Black, Delegate Dave LaRock, Delegate Brenda Pogge, Delegate John McGuire, and Delegate Nick Frietas. Frietas is one of five Republicans who, as of this writing, has filed to challenge Senator Tim Kaine in November.
VCDL Membership Application

_____ New _____ Renewal (Member # ____________)

Name ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City _____________________________________________

State _______ ZIP ___________

Phone (_____) ______________________

Email ____________________________________________

_____ 1 VCDL membership: $ 25.00

_____ Donation to VCDL: $ ______

_____ Donation to PAC: $ ______

VCDL-PAC donations of over $100 per year require additional information needed by the State Board of Elections. If you are in this category, VCDL’s PayPal system is better for donations; it compiles the required information.

Total Enclosed: $ ______

(Note: Membership processing can take 4-6 weeks)

Method of payment

_____ Cash (Do not send cash through the mail.)

_____ Check (Make checks payable to VCDL)

_____ Charge: _____ American Express

_____ MasterCard _____ Visa

Credit Card Number: ____________________________

Expiration Date: _____________________________

Name as it appears on the card ____________________________________________

Signature of Card Holder ____________________________________________

Mail to:
VCDL Membership Processing Center
P.O. Box 5752
Fredericksburg VA 22403

Or save postage and use credit card or PayPal at vcdl.org/join

Contributions, gifts, or membership dues are not deductible for Federal income tax purposes.

(Continued from page 3)

Hampton, Jan 13-14
Lee Affholter, Paul Burgener, Bryan Dunn, John Fenter, Jeff Hewlett, Pamela Lilly, Clem Morse-Tuttle, Monte Oakes, Mark Spruill, Scott Traner, Rick Walker

Wild Game Supper, Jan 13, Woodbridge
Bruce Jackson

Salem, Jan 20-21
Don Beheler, Ben Bower, Dennis Brooks, Brien Dyer, Dave Evans, Sam Hollingsworth, Philip Honaker, Ken Modica, Kathy Smith, Al Steed, Jr, Noah Tickle, Bruce Whittmeier

Fredericksburg, Jan 26-27
Jake Biller, Mike Clark, John Dittamo, Rowley Molina, Stanley Walker, Terrell Prudé

Wild Game Supper, Jan 27, Madison
Chris McFadden, Bruce Jackson

Virginia Beach, Feb 3-4
Brendan Mooney, Ed Broyles, Robert Caldow, Mark Davis, Patrick Dyer, Brent Hodgins, Dana Larkin, Steele McGonegal, Gary Moeller, Rob Neel, Bill Rearick, Lisa Rearick, George Reynolds

Chantilly, Feb 9-10
Vaughn Allex, Paul Bolan, Dwin Craig, Ski Dobrin, Jim Ellett, Troy Hayes, Margaret Marcus, Alexander Rogge, Gary VanDeMortel, Bill Wood

Doswell, Feb 24-25
Tess Ailshire, Lynn Cole, Robert Charlton, John Dittamo, Dave Eckart, Mike Kolodzinski, Alan Penn, Stanley Walker, Janine Woods

Doswell, Virginia February 25,
Photo by VCDL Member and volunteer Janine Woods
Virginia Citizens Defense League

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The Premier Firearms- Rights
and
Pro-Liberty Organization
in Virginia

CHP RENEWALS
Virginia law provides that you can get the full five years of your Concealed Handgun Permit if you apply for renewal at least 90, but no more than 180, days prior to expiration of your current permit. (Section 18.2-308.010)

EXPIRES RENEW IN
January August-October
February September-November
March October-December
April November-January
May December-February
June January-March
July February-April
August March-May
September April-June
October May-July
November June-August
December July-September