

Training: Building skillsets

It has often been said that being involved in the shooting world is all about turning money into once-fired brass. Even more so with machine guns! One can often witness the twisted smile that develops on an NFA shooter's face when somebody laments the cost of burning up a "whole" box of 50 pistol rounds at the range. A box of 50? Many of us are very well acquainted with the gentle pull on the wallet of dropping 5,000 rounds at the range in just a few hours. But what if we could accomplish a bit more? Instead of just making sure that the bullets go "that way," we deliberately and purposefully strive toward building our skillsets.

What I am suggesting is that each of us get out and take a class. It really doesn't matter what the class is all about, as long as you are building on your skills. Pistol work. Carbine use. Long range. Small pistol. Low light. Long distance. Active shooter. Close quarters. Drawing from concealment. And then we move into personal skills. Situational awareness. Space combatives. Team work. There is literally no limit to what can be served up. Please allow me a specific point: I am **not** talking about watching a YouTube video. I am talking about doing a bit of research and finding a qualified expert to help you achieve your goals. It's not for everyone, but everyone can gain something from it.

I recently had several opportunities to take multiple classes at West Orlando Firearms Training (W.O.F.T.) in Orlando, Florida. Okay, it's also known as Tactical DisneyLand... I signed up for a variety of instruction modules that were specifically tailored to my initial skills, something that they call "meet-



ing first gear with first gear." I should probably stress the plural in that module word that I tossed out. I went through red dot pistol, close quarters combat in a blade dojo, carbine, scenario training for shoot/no shoot, small pistol techniques, low light awareness and shoot house scenarios. I was pushed and I got exhausted. And I learned quite a bit!

Yes, I still put lead downrange. But I built a lot of skills on the first set of classes and immediately jumped back into the mix and signed up for even more. More importantly, I learned that the skills that I was learning were far too important to keep to myself. So, I signed my wife and kids up for the exact same classes. Making once-fired brass is fun. But learning how to shoot well, at the right time... Learning the proper techniques for superior marksmanship and situational awareness... Gaining confidence in my ability to make good decisions... That took things to the next level.

You certainly don't have to do the grand weekend extravaganza (though you should consider it!). You absolutely should endeavor to expand your horizons. Feel free to give my friend, Phillip Toppino, a look over at www.woft.com. He takes a lot of pride in the training he provides, as I am sure, many other teachers do. The point is to do more. Today. **SAR**

I have been writing this column to encourage you to expand your opportunities and experiences. The NFATCA has been doing that for nearly 20 years. More NFA opportunities for more people, more often, on a level playing field. We have accomplished quite a bit! If you would like to assist us with this important work, please consider joining or renewing today. www.nfatca.org, info@nfatca.org.

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