



NEWSLETTER

Editor: Anne Bernier

IPGV to Iowa State Fair Board: Close Gun Show Loophole

Recently, IPGV asked the Iowa State Fair Board to take action to ensure that all firearm sales at gun shows held at the Iowa State Fairgrounds include a criminal background check of the buyer. The request was made in a March 26 letter to the Board.

In its letter, IPGV urged the Board to require that each gun show promoter seeking to rent the Iowa State Fairgrounds for the purpose of holding a gun show agree to meet one of the following: either (a) require all firearms vendors to be licensed dealers, or (b) provide a licensed firearms dealer on the premises to conduct background checks for unlicensed sellers.

Either of these methods would ensure a criminal background check on every firearms transaction at the gun show.

Under federal law (the Brady Law), licensed firearms dealers are required to conduct criminal background checks on all buyers, regardless of whether the sale occurs at a gun show or at the dealer's store.

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Federal Courts Reject Second Amendment Arguments in Two More Gun Cases

The National Rifle Association (NRA) and gun-rights advocates claim that the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees an "individual right" to own and possess firearms. However, beginning with *United States v Miller* (1939), the U.S. Supreme Court and Federal Appellate Courts have consistently held that the Second Amendment does not protect an individual right to bear arms unrelated to participation in an organized state militia.

Nonetheless, defendants keep appealing their convictions for violating federal and state gun laws on Second Amendment grounds, and losing.

On March 27, the 10th U.S. Court of Appeals upheld the conviction of a Utah man (Dale Parker) for carrying a loaded firearm onto the U.S. Army's Dugway Proving Grounds to perform civilian contract work. The military base had signs posted stating that firearms were prohibited for non-military personnel.

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Staff Changes at IPGV

Kirsten Meredith Beyer, who came to IPGV as a summer intern in 2001 and went on to become IPGV's communication director, has resigned effective May 31, 2004. This summer, Kirsten will be interning at the Iowa Department of Public Health to complete requirements for a Master's Degree in Public Health (MPH) from the University of Iowa. This fall she will begin a PhD program at the University of Iowa in the Department of Geography.

Said John Johnson, IPGV's executive director, "Kirsten's talent, skill, and most of all her passion will be sorely missed." However, they will not be completely missed in that Kirsten has agreed to become a member of the Board of Directors of IPGV.

To partially fill the void left by Kirsten's resignation, IPGV has hired Anne Bernier (pictured above) as a part-time summer intern. Anne is a 2003 graduate of Washington High School in Cedar Rapids and is currently a student at Grinnell College where she is majoring in psychology.

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Iowans for the Prevention of Gun Violence

JOIN IPGV! HELP REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE IN IOWA . . . AND THE NATION.

We Support:

- Renewal of the federal ban on military-style, semiautomatic assault weapons, which is set to expire on Sept. 13, 2004 unless Congress acts.
- Extending Brady background checks to all firearm sales, e.g., at gun shows, in addition to firearms sales by licensed gun dealers.
- Regulating guns as consumer products the way we regulate other consumer products from teddy bears to jumbo jets.

We Oppose:

- Gun industry immunity legislation that would grant the gun industry immunity from civil lawsuits filed not only by cities and municipalities, but also by individuals.
- Right to Carry laws that would allow Iowans to carry concealed weapons in public places such as shopping malls, restaurants, movie theaters, sporting events, amusement parks, hospitals, and churches.

About 30,000 Americans die each year from gunshot wounds (82 deaths a day) and another 90,000 are injured in nonfatal shootings. Help us to stand up to the gun lobby and NRA by making a tax-deductible contribution to IPGV.

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However, unlicensed individuals who sell firearms from a personal collection are not required to conduct background checks. Many of these non-dealer sales occur at gun shows.

The Iowa State Fair Board consists of twelve elected directors who serve two-year terms and three directors based on their office – the Governor, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the President of Iowa State University. Six gun shows are held every year at the Fairgrounds. These gun shows are among the largest in Iowa.

On April 21, IPGV executive director John Johnson made a presentation to the Iowa State Fair Board at their monthly board meeting.

In his presentation, Johnson stated, “The Iowa State Fair Board has a responsibility to the citizens of Iowa to take reasonable precautions to ensure that gun shows at the Iowa State Fairgrounds do not become venues where felons, domestic abusers, minors, and other prohibited purchasers can avoid the background check mandated by the Brady Law on firearms sold by licensed dealers and illegally buy guns.”

Johnson provided the Board with results of a public opinion survey conducted by Frank N. Magid Associates for IPGV in January 2002.

The survey asked Iowans if they supported or were opposed to legislation then pending in the Iowa legislature that would require a criminal background check on gun show sales. The survey found that 87 percent of Iowans, including 8 out of 10 gun owners, supported the proposed legislation. Johnson said, “The people of Iowa have spoken on this issue and they have said, “We want background checks on gun show sales.”

Johnson noted, “The proposals we have made to the Board are both reasonable and practical. We respectfully ask the Board to adopt these proposals at the earliest opportunity. It only makes good public policy.”

Following IPGV’s presentation, the Board voted unanimously to “review its policy on gun shows on the Fairgrounds and consider IPGV’s proposal.” To date, IPGV has not received a response from the Board.

Second Amendment, continued from page 1

Under Utah law, loaded firearms are not permitted in a vehicle, on a public street, or in a posted prohibited area.

In rejecting his appeal, the court said that Parker did not adequately prove that the Colt .38-caliber revolver he uses for self-defense and target practice was related to participation in a well-regulated state militia.

Just four days later on March 31, U.S. District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan dismissed a CATO Institute-backed lawsuit challenging the constitutionality on Second Amendment grounds of Washington, DC’s ban on the sale and possession of handguns. Sullivan’s ruling upheld the ban, which was adopted by the City Council in 1976.

In his decision, Sullivan wrote, “This court would be in error to overlook sixty-five years of unchanged Supreme Court precedent and the deluge of circuit case law rejecting an individual right to bear arms not in conjunction with service in the Militia.”

These rulings add to the overwhelming evidence that the Second Amendment is not a barrier to federal, state, or local gun control laws.

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Youth Suicide Behavior Changed

A report recently released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that suicide rates among young Americans aged 10-19 fell dramatically in the last decade, while hanging and other forms of suffocation have replaced self-inflicted shootings as the most common method of suicide among 10- to 14- year olds.

Among those aged 10-14, the rate of firearm suicide decreased from 0.9 per 100,000 population in 1992 to 0.4 in 2001, whereas the rate of suffocation suicide increased from 0.5 in 1992 to 0.8 in 2001.

Among those aged 15-19, the rate of firearm suicide decreased from 7.3 per 100,000 population in 1992 to 4.1 in 2001, whereas the rate of suffocation suicide increased from 1.9 to 2.7.

Overall, suicide rates for both age groups have decreased from approximately 12.2 per 100,000 population in 1992 to 9.3 in 2001,

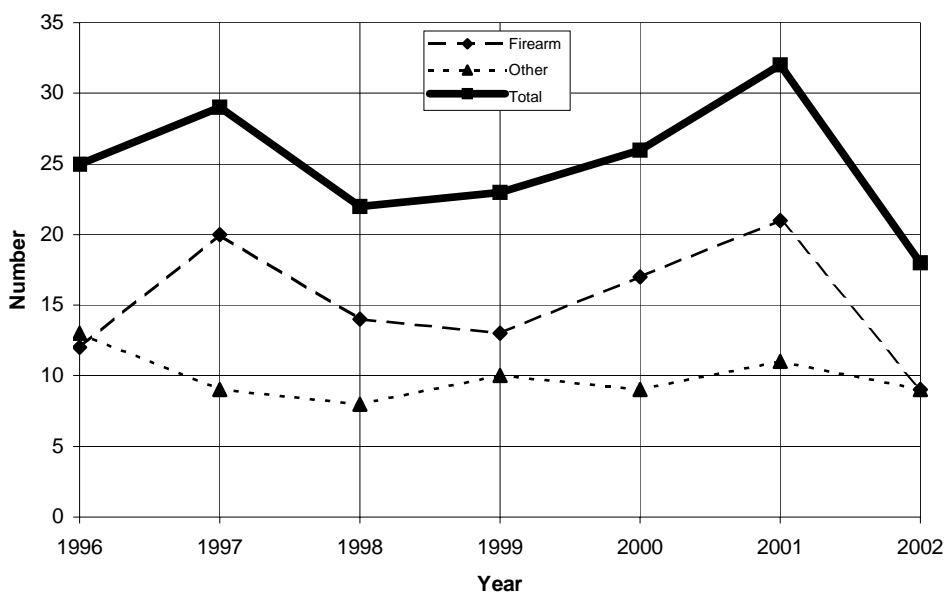
with most of the decrease occurring in firearm suicides. These figures indicate that restricting access to highly lethal methods of suicide, such as firearms, is an effective way to decrease suicide rates.

Youth Suicide in Iowa

For the seven-year period 1996-2002, 18 Iowa children age 10-14 committed suicide – 6 by firearms and 12 by other means. However, the number of suicides in this age group is too small to draw any meaningful conclusions on trends.

During this same period, 175 Iowa teenagers age 15-19 committed suicide, an average of 25 per year. One hundred six of these suicides were by firearms and 69 by other means. The number of firearm suicides ranged from a low of 9 in 2002 to a high of 21 in 2001. Non-firearm suicides varied over a fairly narrow range from 9 to 13 (see chart below). We do not see a comparable downward trend in Iowa firearm suicides in the 15-19 age group that we see in national data, although the number of firearm suicides in 2002 was dramatically lower than in 2001 as shown in the chart below.

Iowa Suicides Among Persons Age 15-19 Years by Year - 1996-2002



Join our email list!

IPGV maintains a weekly email list called *First Monday and Every Monday*. Every Monday, we distribute an Action Alert, Editorial, News Item or Update to keep IPGV members and friends actively involved in the gun violence prevention movement. Just email ipgv@qwest.net to have your name added to our list. We won't give email addresses to other organizations, and you can remove yourself from the list at any time. It's a great way to stay connected to the movement and find out what you can do to help.

Indianapolis Star Latest Newspaper to Close Newspaper Loophole

The *Indianapolis Star* is the latest newspaper to change its firearms advertising policy as a direct result of the National Campaign to Close the Newspaper Loophole. Under its new policy, which went into effect on Feb. 20, 2004, the newspaper will restrict firearms advertisements to licensed firearms dealers only, and will not accept classified ads for guns from unlicensed sellers.

The *Indianapolis Star* adopted its new policy after receiving a letter from the Indiana Partnership to Prevent Firearm Violence and Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence. Since the campaign was launched by IPGV in 2001, at least 18 newspapers with a combined daily circulation of 4.51 million have changed their firearms advertising policies. For more information on the campaign, go to www.gunloophole.com.

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Mission: To reduce the number of deaths and injuries from firearms in Iowa, and to make Iowa a role model for other states in the area of gun violence prevention. We view gun violence as a public health issue. We are concerned with all forms of gun violence—homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings.

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