



WOMEN
AGAINST
GUN
VIOLENCE

The Activist

16th Annual Courageous Leadership Awards Brunch Set For May 23rd

*When was the last time you honored a store?
When was the last time you thanked a city?
When was the last time you praised a politician?*

We're guessing that it's been a while, but you can check all three off your list of things to do on May 23rd at the Women Against Gun Violence's 16th Annual Courageous Leadership Awards Brunch at the Skirball Cultural Center.

Target (the store), Carson, California (the city) and Los Angeles Councilmember Paul Krekorian (the politician) are this year's honorees, and the brunch is expected to be a fascinating and memorable event.

KCBS co-anchor Laura Diaz, whose touching story on our organization was one of the highlights of last year's brunch, was so moved by our mission that she agreed to emcee this year's brunch. "It's in the news almost every day," the veteran TV reporter and anchorwoman said.

"The cycle of violence and death is almost always traced back to guns. It is every parent's nightmare, but it should be everyone else's nightmare, too. Participating in this luncheon is just a small contribution compared to the work of the good people at WAGV."

Target is being honored on a corporate level for demonstrating its commitment to reducing gun violence by partnering with local law enforcement agencies, providing training opportunities to police officers, funding the installation of video cameras throughout the L.A. area, sponsoring various law enforcement/private security conferences and allowing access to its own high-tech forensics labs.

Chris Homewood, Target's director of assets protection, said his



2010 Courageous Leadership Awards Brunch Honorees, clockwise from top: L.A. City Councilmember Paul Krekorian; Mayor Jim Dear, representing the City of Carson; the Target Corporation and Jackie Gottlieb, WAGV advisory board member receiving special recognition.

company is "deeply committed to supporting law enforcement agencies and criminal justice/public safety organizations, such

Brunch continued on page 2



Page 3



Page 6

Inside This Issue:

- Letter from Our President 3
- Advisory Board Luncheon 3
- Education for Action 4
- Legislative Update 5
- Dodgin' the Bullet 6
- Thank You 7

Brunch, continued from page 1

as Women Against Gun Violence, to help create safer communities. Through its Law Enforcement Grant Program and Safe City Program, Target has supported thousands of communities across the country to support crime prevention, law enforcement training and youth mentorship. By sharing time, talent and other corporate resources, Target serves as a committed partner for healthy, vibrant and safe communities.”

Although it may seem unusual for WAGV to honor a city, it was impossible to ignore the courage of the City of Carson in passing an ammunition ordinance over the objections of the NRA. The ordinance, which requires sellers of ammunition to be licensed, is more inclusive than AB 962, the ammunition ordinance recently signed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“I believe it is important for local governments to take pro-active measures against gun violence by making sure that ammunition does not end up in the wrong hands, such as criminals, gang members or the youth in general,” explained Carson Mayor Jim Dear. “In 2009, the Carson City Council took this pro-active step by passing an ordinance requiring ammunition sellers to obtain a permit for the sale of ammunition, to provide a thumbprint, and for all transactions involving ammunition to be conducted face-to-face. Because all transactions will be documented, we believe that this measure will effectively address the problem of uncontrolled trafficking in ammunition, which often results in shootings and homicides. Aside from this new ordinance, the city also demonstrates its commitment to prevent crimes resulting from guns ending up in the hands of the

youth through the “Hands Without Guns” program, in which we promote awareness on gun violence through various productive activities.”

Carson Councilmember Mike Gipson, who also was instrumental in the passage of the ordinance, added that “In a state where firearms outnumber people, local agencies should really take it upon themselves to see to it that ammunition is properly regulated and doesn’t



From left: Wendy Greuel, L.A. City Controller and honorary event chair; Laura Diaz, KCBS co-anchor and event emcee.

result in uncontrolled trafficking in their respective communities. I know that with this new ordinance, which ultimately restricts the access of criminals, gangsters and young people to ammunition, we are saving lives, and I would do it all over – even in the midst of more opposition – to save lives.”

Finally, Councilmember Paul Krekorian is being saluted as a state lawmaker who has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to ending gun violence.

“As a long-time advisory board member of Women Against Gun Violence, I am deeply honored to accept this award,” he said. “Just as I did as an attorney, member of the State Assembly and now, as a member of the Los Angeles City Council, I continue to stand with WAGV to reduce the tragedy of gun violence in our communities.

Their mission is my mission, and their goals are my goals: To be free from gun violence in our homes, streets, schools, places of work and communities.”

Receiving special recognition is long-time WAGV supporter and advisory board member Jackie Gottlieb. Jackie served on the board of WAGV for several years, bringing her special sensitivity to the gun violence issue because her son was killed by a gun. Over the years, she has helped us shape ideas, make useful contacts and access gift items for our fundraisers – always with the help and support of her husband Stanley.

We are also fortunate to have as our Honorary Chair, Los Angeles City Controller Wendy Greuel. “I have been a long-time supporter of Women Against Gun Violence,” the city controller said, “and I am thrilled to serve as the honorary chair of the Courageous Leadership Awards Brunch. Each year, we lose too many Angelenos – particularly children – to the scourge of gun violence. This is an organization that works each and every day to get the guns off our streets, and to keep our communities safe. As a mother and an elected official, I know that there is nothing more important than that.”

Whether you have attended this premier event before, or this will be your first time, we hope you, your friends and your family will join us on May 23, from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., to show your support for WAGV and these courageous leaders. You can register by returning your invitation, or by going to www.wagv.org. For more information, or to become a brunch sponsor, please call us at (310) 204-2348. Please don’t delay; last year’s event was sold out!



A Letter from Sheri Barnett Board President

With WAGV's annual awards brunch coming up on May 23rd, I would like to not only thank our supporters who plan to attend, but encourage you to talk to someone you know about attending the brunch.

WAGV's work has become more important than ever with the new national law that was passed recently allowing loaded guns to be carried in our national parks. And, over the past few months, gun owners have been gathering at Starbucks with guns strapped to their hips, intimidating fellow patrons. Businesses can legally prohibit guns from being carried in their establishments and, so far, California Pizza Kitchen and Peet's Coffee & Tea have responded to their customer's concerns, and barred the open carrying of guns. But Starbucks has refused to prohibit the open carrying of firearms in

its stores, despite protests from loyal customers.

WAGV applied, and was selected, to participate in the Annenberg Foundation Alchemy Program for non-profit leaders. The program focuses on organizational sustainability. One of the questions we were asked was "If WAGV were gone tomorrow, what would the community be missing?"

When I thought of this question, my thoughts turned to WAGV's young speakers, gun-violence survivors themselves. WAGV has trained them as part of our "Dodgin' the Bullet" program to educate youth to use their social influence with their peers to reverse the acceptance of gun violence as normal behavior. If not for this program and these speakers, these youth might never be exposed to a life in which guns are not glorified as a means of self-protection. Who would be there with this message if WAGV were gone?

Advisory Board Luncheon a Hit

Assemblymember Kevin de León's fascinating and informative behind-the-scenes account of how AB 962, the 2009 ammunition bill, came to pass was the highlight of the November 11 Advisory Board luncheon.

Hosted by advisory board member and former Assemblymember Mike Roos at his beautiful downtown L.A. office, the luncheon provided a wonderful opportunity for members to meet and chat with fellow advisory board members, advise WAGV on how to face a leaner, meaner future, what to expect from the Supreme Court and how to challenge the effectiveness of the NRA.

Sweet Alice Harris attended the luncheon, along with L.A. Councilmember Paul Krekorian; City of West Hollywood Mayor Abbe Land; Chief Jim McDonnell, now of the Long Beach Police Department; Nancy Morgan Ritter; Charlie Parsons, Executive Director Dare America; Chief Cecil Rhambo,

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department; Mike Roos, Mike Roos & Company; and Sayre Weaver, Esq., Educational Fund to Stop Gun Violence.

Greeting members and guests, and letting them know what was happening at WAGV, were board members Sheri Barnett, Fortuna Ippoliti and Ann Reiss Lane, and executive director Patti Koltnow.

The luncheon was so well-received that more will be planned.



Mike Roos of Mike Roos & Company, WAGV advisory board member, former Assemblymember and host of advisory board luncheon.

Education for Action: WAGV and ATF Join Forces to Deter Violence in Schools

WAGV and ATF are not just a string of unrelated letters. In fact, they are related in a most significant way.

The former, of course, refers to Women Against Gun Violence, and the latter represents the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms – two organizations related by a dedication to deal with one of the most serious problems facing our society.

The relationship between WAGV and ATF was never more evident than it was on Feb. 17 at a half-day Education for Action conference called “Deterring Violence in Schools: Policy, Prevention and Police Response.” The conference, presented by WAGV and ATF with funding from The California Wellness Foundation, attracted a standing-room-only audience to ATF headquarters in Glendale, Ca.

Originally intended for school police/resource officers only, word spread among professionals in the field and the audience, was soon filled with law enforcement and probation officers, school administrators, city attorneys, victim service representatives, case managers and school psychologists.

John A. Torres, ATF Special Agent in Charge, Los Angeles Field Division, came up with the idea for the conference during a brainstorming session with WAGV



Top: Mark Kraft, Sr. Special Agent ATF and Deputy Director of the Attorney General's national anti-gang task force, explains how juveniles get guns. Bottom, from left: John A. Torres, Special Agent in Charge, ATF L.A. Field Division; WAGV board members Rhonda Foster, Sheri Barnett and Ann Reiss Lane; Delmaria Cole-Bigelow, Supervisory Special Agent ATF.



Top: Conference steering committee members (from left), Sgt. Glenn Besunder, L.A. School Police Department; Sgt. Linh Dinh, Montebello USD Police Department; Patti Koltnow, Executive Director WAGV; Ann Reiss Lane, Chair WAGV; and Peter Shutan Assistant Supervising Attorney, L.A. City Attorney's Office. Bottom: Edward Velasquez, Superintendent Montebello Unified School District and Chief of Police Montebello School Police Dept., welcomes conference participants.

in 2009. WAGV had suggested the session with the hope that the two groups could create a partnership to deal with the growing problem of guns in schools.

The topics, speakers and format of the conference were determined by steering committee members: Sgt. Glenn Besunder Officer in Charge, Training Unit Los Angeles School Police Department; Delmaria Cole-Bigelow, Supervisory Special Agent Department of Justice - Bureau of ATF, Southern California Regional Crime Gun Center, Los Angeles Field Division; Sgt. Linh Dinh, Montebello USD Police Department; Patti Koltnow, Executive Director, WAGV; Ann Reiss Lane,

Conference continued on page 7

Does the Second Amendment right to own a gun trump the First Amendment right of free speech?

By Ann Reiss Lane

When the guy at the rally is carrying an AK47 slung over his shoulder, what is he trying to convey? Is his mission to suppress our ideas through fear and intimidation?

The message of the NRA and their companion organizations is that unfettered access to firearms keeps us free from government. As Wayne L.A. Pierre from the NRA has stated, "...the guys with the guns make the rules." And, it can be assumed, limit through intimidation the free expression of other opinions. Our response: they don't get a veto over the democratic process because they carry a gun! No matter how the Second Amendment is interpreted, the Constitution guarantees the right of free speech without fear of being shot for our ideas.

Josh Horwitz and Casey Anderson, in their 2009 book "Guns, Democracy and the Insurrectionist Idea," challenge the idea posited by the National Rifle Association that unlimited gun ownership protects individual rights from an overreaching government. The NRA, in its campaign, defines "freedom" in ways that sound more like insurrectionism.

The authors suggest that the policy agenda of gun rights groups goes well beyond protecting the right of self-defense against violent crimes. The Insurrectionist slant on history predicts that the government, unchecked by well-armed citizens, will eventually murder its citizens, enslave them, or allow others to do so. Mistrusting even the strongest democratic institutions, Insurrectionists argue that the only safeguard that will prevent totalitarianism over the long run is a well-armed populace.

It seems the Insurrectionists and other groups believe that even talking about issues from a variety

of viewpoints is the larger threat.

The most disturbing phenomenon now apparent is the broadening of this fringe group to include conservative voters angry with Obama's election and worried over what they assume might become a threat to gun ownership, as well as displeasure with the philosophy and social agenda of the Democratic Party.

Insurrectionists argue that the only safeguard that will prevent totalitarianism over the long run is a well-armed populace.

What should a gun violence prevention movement's response be? For a decade we have focused on a "public health" approach. We've talked about "vectors" (the guns) and gun accidents. Meanwhile, the NRA has usurped the word "freedom," and claims that any firearm regulations infringe on that freedom. They assert that guns and political violence should be part of our democratic process.

What should groups like WAGV do? Horwitz and Anderson suggest we try a campaign asserting that "real freedom depends on each citizen having an equal voice through the ballot box, not the cartridge box." They add that we should be in favor of tough gun laws because those laws support America's first real need: to prevent anarchy and domestic terrorism. Tough gun laws should also prohibit the open carrying of weapons at public events because the purpose of those gun-carrying individuals is to intimidate and suppress the diversity of opinions and ideas.

Perhaps it is time for us to reframe the issue and assert in a positive way what values we espouse, rather than always needing to defend ourselves against the assertion we are trying to take people's guns away. We believe in freedom for all, not through intimidation, but through the rule of law and the protection of the First Amendment.

OUR RESPONSE: *DODGIN' THE BULLET*

An 11-year-old Pennsylvania boy recently was accused of killing his father's pregnant girlfriend by shooting her in the back of the head while she was lying in bed. His weapon of choice? His own youth model 20-gauge shotgun, a smaller-size gun designed specifically for children.

Each year, the National Rifle Association invites high school juniors and seniors to a seven-day, all-expenses-paid trip to our nation's capital to learn about government, politics and leadership. In addition, the students receive instruction from NRA-certified instructors on the safe handling and use of firearms at the NRA range by shooting an AR-15, Ruger .357 revolver and

Glock 9mm semi-auto pistol. The NRA also has its own young shooters magazine called "InSights". One issue had a picture of a 14-year-old girl sitting on a Montana mule buck she has just killed using a pink rifle with a purple titanium-colored barrel. She calls it her "Princess Rifle."

The latest data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that 3,184 children and teens died from gunfire in the United States in 2006—a 6 percent increase from 2005. This means one young life is lost every two hours and 45 minutes, almost nine every day, 61 every week.

Do we need to say more about why WAGV recognizes that violence prevention programs that focus on and engage young people provide the best leverage to developing generations of safer communities?

That's why WAGV was so excited to deliver its interactive gun violence prevention workshop "Dodgin' the Bullet" to 19 Hispanic youth – 11 girls and 8 boys – at the Salesian Boys and Girls Clubs in Boyle Heights.

Using the "Dodgin' the Bullet" deck of 16 flashcards in a game show format, Gabby Torres, WAGV outreach coordinator, educated the youth on the issue of gun violence, and its relation to gang violence, suicide, bullying and relationship violence. The boys and girls were given the cards, which also contain phone numbers and websites for help with these issues. Dexter McDaniel, a young gun-violence survivor, shared his personal account with gun violence in an effort to put a face on the crisis.

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to complete a survey that includes the question, "What



Dodgin the Bullet, continued on page 7

Clockwise from top: David Walker, Director, Boys and Girls Clubs, L.A. County Alliance and Patti Koltnow, WAGV Executive Director; Gabby Torres, WAGV outreach coordinator, next to the "Dodgin the Bullet" game board answers a question about gang violence; Dexter McDaniel, gun violence survivor, addresses youth as part of WAGV's "Dodgin' the Bullet" program; Gabby asks a question of the 19 boys and girls; The Salesian Boys and Girls Club in Boyle Heights.

Conference, continued from page 4

Founder and Chair, WAGV; Denis Quinonez, Salesian Boys & Girls Club, Director Boyle Heights Coalition for a Safe and Drug Free Community; and Assistant Supervising Attorney Peter Shutan, Los Angeles City Attorney's Office, Gang Prosecution and Prevention Division.

After Torres and Edward Velasquez, Superintendent of Schools, Montebello Unified School District and Chief of Police, Montebello School Police Department, welcomed participants, the conference got off to a powerful

and emotional start. Senior Special Agent Mark Kraft, a federal law enforcement officer for more than 25 years, spoke movingly about his son, a student at Virginia Tech, who was on campus when the massacre took place on April 16, 2007. His son lost two friends in the massacre, and his presentation "How Do Juveniles Get Guns?" stressed that school police know the importance of tracing guns found on campus, and the role of straw purchasers, so that gun stores selling to prohibited persons (e.g. juveniles) can be shut down.

Richard Chrystie, retired Deputy

District Attorney, Los Angeles County and publisher and writer of "The Law Enforcement Legal," provided effectively instructed participants on "Recent Case Law for School Police" and "Crimes of Violence and Weapons," and reviewed current case law on what is permissible for school police on school campuses.

Because the conference was considered such a success by participants, there has been talk of future conferences. WAGV and ATF – this could be the beginning a beautiful relationship.

Dodgin' the Bullet, continued from page 6

was most helpful for you in today's presentation?" Written comments included:

- "The most helpful thing was learning the statistics of gun usage."
- "To make smart choices."
- "Knowing how to help a person with problems of either gang violence or bullying."
- "The speaker and the cards."
- "What happened to Dexter was sad and it helped me too."

- "Dexter's presentation – I had an experience with gun violence but not as drastic."

We are also pleased to report that we have developed a new version of "Dodgin' the Bullet" for girls only. WAGV staff and volunteers realized that some girls were coming up to the speakers and participating more fully after the workshop was over. The girls talked more openly about their fear of breaking up with boyfriends who had guns, and were more comfortable in general about

discussing personal issues and asking questions after the boys had left the classroom.

WAGV is currently seeking funding so we can deliver "Dodgin' the Bullet" to Boys and Girls Clubs Los Angeles Alliance, made up of 27 Boys & Girls Club organizations serving over 105,000 youth ages 6-18 throughout Los Angeles County, and to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Sheriff's Youth Foundation, which serves youth at 14 sites throughout Los Angeles County.

We would like to thank our 2009 donors**\$7,500+**

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Women Against Gun Violence

Mission Statement

To prevent gun violence by educating individuals and policymakers about the human, public health and financial consequences of this epidemic and by mobilizing our communities to take decisive action against the dangers of firearms.

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May 23, 2010

**Courageous Leadership
Awards Brunch**

HONORING:

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SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Jackie Gottlieb

**STOP
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