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WHAT, NO FLOWERS!?!

No flowers on Opening Day this year. As energy prices rise, so do the cost of flowers. Therefore, we decided to redirect our priorities to informing parents about the Ask program.
www.askingsaveskids.org

However, we welcome our Governor and new and returning legislators to the 2008 session.

ASSAULT WEAPONS USED AGAIN!

Where will it end? In December, a shooter killed 8 and wounded 5 people at an Omaha Mall using an assault weapon. So did the shooter who murdered 4 people and left 4 more wounded at a missionary training center and a church in Arvada and Colorado Springs, Colorado.

An assault weapon and high-capacity ammunition clips enabled these troubled young men to kill and injure a large number of people quickly and efficiently.

Bill to Strengthen Background Checks Now Law

On January 8, President Bush signed legislation to strengthen background checks aimed at preventing the severely mentally ill from buying guns, a bill backed by both parties after the bloody Virginia Tech University shooting.

The law authorizes as much as \$1.3 billion in grant money for states to improve their ability to track and report individuals who should not qualify to buy a gun legally, including those involuntarily confined by a mental institution. Much of the money, to be spent over five years, would be used to increase state feeds to a national system used to run background checks on gun purchases.

Child Protection Law Introduced

Senate bill 08-049 to prevent injuries resulting from the unsupervised access to firearms by minors and, in connection, reduce the number of teenage suicides is being offered during this legislative session. Sponsored by Senator Sue Windels, it will stipulate that if a juvenile (under 18) obtains an unsecured firearm and uses it to shoot him/herself or another person, or takes it to a school, the adult who failed to adequately secure the firearm could be charged with a misdemeanor crime.

This legislation would make it a violation if:

- A person keeps a loaded firearm within any premises that are under his or her custody or control; and
- He or she knows or reasonably should know that a minor is able to gain access to the firearm without the permission of the minor's parent or legal guardian; and
- The minor obtains access to the firearm; and
- The minor uses the firearm to cause death or bodily injury to himself, herself, or another person or carries the firearm to a public or private school or to any school-sponsored event.

This legislation would outline exceptions to the crime, including

- When the minor obtains possession while defending his or her residence from unlawful entry, or acting in lawful self-defense or defense of another person;
- When the minor obtains possession of the firearm while under the direct supervision of the minor's parent or guardian while hunting or engaging in an agricultural activity or firearms organized competition.

The bill would require licensed gun dealers to provide a written warning regarding this law's requirements to each person to whom the dealer sells or transfers a firearm and to post the same warning at each purchase counter. It would also require gun show promoters to post the same warning at each entrance of a gun show.

A new association formed in response to the NRA's inaction on protecting environment and wildlife, the American Hunters and Shooters Association supports the passage of laws that penalize irresponsible gun owners that allow children unauthorized access to firearms.
www.huntersandshooters.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=84&Itemid=47

Between 1999 and 2004, the number of suicides by firearm in CO (ages 0-17) was 62 and (ages 14-17) was 57. According to a JAMA article, "The reduction associated with CAP laws was observed for firearm suicides, which was decreased an estimated 10.8% in response to the introduction of CAP laws" (age 14-17).

Question of the Day

Why store your firearm?

According to LOK-IT_UP, <http://depts.washington.edu/lokitup/index.html>, the reasons to store your firearm are:

- Prevent children from being injured or killed,
- Prevent crimes from being committed with your firearm,
- Prevent depressed teens from committing suicide,
- And we'd like to add, protect your investment.

Displayed on BerettaUSA.com, we found "the responsibility that comes with owning any firearm requires that you take care to ensure that it is safely stored. Lock it in a manner that prevents access by young people or by unauthorized users".

Where's Your Head At?

Colorado Representatives, Jim Kerr (R-Littleton) and Andy Kerr (D-Lakewood), have sponsored a measure to make the mere possession of graffiti tools a Class 3 misdemeanor, punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$750 fine.

Oh my goodness, what about a tagger's 1st Amendment rights, ***Congress shall make no law abridging free speech!*** Free speech is the cornerstone of our democracy! Don't citizens have a right to own spray paint? It's a legal product and sold at Wal-Mart. What happens if you're a male art student carrying spray paint in your backpack late at night, and the police stop you? You could be arrested just for having spray paint whether or not you intended to use it for tagging!

Okay, okay, enough fun. We have a problem with elected officials like Mr. Kerr who consistently vote against common sense gun laws sighting the 2nd Amendment. And it seems, Mr. Kerr values property over life. Fences can be repainted but often lives can't be mended after losing a loved one to gun violence or assisting an injured family member through recovery. We know the cost of a can of paint. What is the cost of a daughter whose life is taken while attending school or church, not to mention the financial cost to families and society?

Did You Know?

Former NRA Board Member, Sandy Abrams, entered an Alford plea in response of a single charge of illegally selling a restricted weapon. An Alford plea allowed Abrams to maintain his innocence while conceding that the state had enough evidence to convict him. Mr. Abrams received five year suspended sentence and one year probation. He must get rid of his weapons and cannot sell or own firearms. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/bal-md.abrams15jan15,0,1751085.story> Read *Death Valley* for Mr. Abrams' sad record as a licensed gun dealer at www.bradycenter.org/gunindustrywatch.

Forty-seven United States senators have written to the Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne, asking him to lift the ban on carrying ready-to-fire weapons in national parks and wildlife refuges. Under current law, guns carried into or through a national park or refuge must be unloaded, taken apart, or cased in a way "that will prevent their ready use." According to the senators, this rule infringes on gun owners' rights and is "confusing, burdensome and unnecessary." What's the confusion? Hunting is allowed on federal lands and not in national parks. Are the Senators implying that the typical gun owner is obtuse? What burden is it to unload a rifle and slip it into a case before driving through Rocky Mountain National Park? Oy Yoy Yoy! www.nytimes.com/2008/01/07/opinion

In Miami, assault weapons were used in about 4 percent of all homicides in 2004; last year, the figure was 21 percent. These guns appear to be the weapon of choice among gangs. The surge is currently confined to certain sections of the country: South Florida, Atlanta and areas along the Texas-Mexico border. "They're everywhere," Police Chief Timoney said. "At \$100 or \$200, everyone can afford one of these killing machines." Let's see, the federal assault weapons ban expired when? Why, in 2004! www.miamiherald.com/top_stories/story/378546.html

So long, but not goodbye. Our current editor of *Moms Says* is retiring from her position but will remain active as a volunteer. You may find her looping the Basement Jaxx's recording of *Where's Your Head At?* over and over (video on www.youtube.com/watch?v=8md51JnCNFQ) in reaction to an outrageous legislative action or reading Naomi Wolf's *The End of America: A Letter of Warning to a Young Patriot*. Please note that features and tone of voice may change to reflect the new editor.

The CDC has released its mortality data for 2005. Total firearm deaths are up from 29,569 to 30,694 per year. Total number of kids and teens (0-19) also went up from 2,852 to 3027 per year. webapp.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate10_sy.html