



Coalition Against Gun Violence is a non-profit coalition united against gun violence and committed to creating a safer community for Santa Barbara County residents.

COALITION AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE
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Real Guns Kill Real People

ARMAS de FUEGO: La Realidad Que Destrosa Nuestras Vidas

FIREARMS: The Reality That Destroys Our Lives

A Spanish language video regarding the dangers of guns in the home.

The Coalition Against Gun Violence's Latino Education Outreach Project has completed a major phase in its goals: its educational video is now 95% complete. Lupe Luna Martinez, CAGV's Latino consultant, conceived the project and produced the initial footage using City at Peace actors. Karlos Benevides, a local documentary filmmaker, continued working on the video as advisor and editor, set it into a dramatic and effective professional format and filmed important additional footage. Carol Hershey and Toni Wellen of the Coalition Against Gun Violence assisted by writing dialogue for the narration and the interviews.

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CAGV's 10th ANNIVERSARY
Celebrating Ten Years Of
Creating A Safer Community For
Santa Barbara County Residents

The Coalition Against Gun Violence invites you to attend our 10th Anniversary Celebration at the exciting new Andalucia Hotel – an elegant brunch on Sunday, February 27, 2005 at 11:30 a.m. We hope you will join us in this departure from our usual annual evening format as it promises to be both an entertaining and interesting afternoon.

We are thrilled to have as our keynote speaker Assemblyman Paul Koretz, a major leader in California's gun control movement and author of AB 50, an important new gun control bill signed into law by the governor September 14, 2004. AB 50 bans the sale and manufacture of .50 caliber sniper rifles in California.

Koretz led gun control advocates in the legislature and several citizen-based gun control organizations, including the San Francisco-based Trauma Foundation and the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles, in an effective campaign to achieve enactment of the bill into law. The Coalition Against

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Join us for our 10th Anniversary Celebration
The New Andalucia Hotel, 31 W. Carrillo Street
For an elegant brunch on Sunday, February 27, 2005 at 11:30 a.m.
For Reservations call 564-6803.
Participate in our 10th Anniversary Program Book.
Space from \$25 to \$200 – Write your own message! Call 564-6803.



10th Anniversary Keynote Speaker Assemblyman Koretz

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Gun Violence of Santa Barbara County helped in this effort by gaining support of the Santa Barbara City Council for the bill.

On the day the bill was signed into law, Violence Policy Center Tom Diaz stated, "California has once again confirmed its status as a bellwether state in preventing gun violence. Today's action not only protects the police and public, but stops the sale of a confirmed tool of terrorists. We look forward to other states, and eventually the U.S. Congress, following its lead." Under federal law, 50 caliber rifles are as easy to buy as hunting rifles, and less restricted than handguns.

Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) represents the 42nd District, a well-known area of Los Angeles, which includes, among other areas, Beverly Hills, Westwood, Brentwood, Universal City and Encino.

Paul was exposed to politics and social causes at a young age and his political career began while he was a student at UCLA in the 1970s, when he ran for a seat on the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education. In late 1984, he had the unique opportunity to help build the new City of West Hollywood and worked for the City's incorporation. He was elected to the City Council in 1988 and served as Mayor and City Councilman for 12 years before being elected to the State Assembly.

While on the City Council, Koretz played a key role on many high profile issues, foremost among them gun control issues. In 1988, Paul sponsored a ban on military-style assault weapons, which built momentum for a subsequent statewide ban. In 1996, Koretz co-sponsored the City's ban on "Saturday Night Specials." West Hollywood was the first city to enact such a ban, which survived various legal assaults by the NRA. Koretz also sponsored an ordinance limiting handgun purchases to one gun per month, to cut the resale of guns on the black market.

Assemblymember Koretz chairs the Assembly Select Committee on Gun Violence, among other committees on which he serves. In his short tenure in the Assembly (Nov. 2000) Paul has received a number of awards:

- **Leadership Award by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation.**
- **Courageous Leadership Award by Women Against Gun Violence and honored by the Million Mom March for his vigorous and unrelenting leadership in the fight to prevent gun violence.**
- **Environmentalist of the Year by the Hollywood Beautification Team and was a member of the California League of Conservation Voters' "Freshman 100" for his 100% voting record in support of the environment.**
- **Freshman Legislator of the Year by the California Psychiatric Association.**

Assemblyman Koretz has also devoted much of his time to anti-tobacco advocacy. As a City Councilman he authored West

Real Guns Kill Real People

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Mr. Benevides filmed interviews with five prominent local leaders, all important in the Latino community, which are interspersed between the five video vignettes. People who donated their time to do these interviews include: John Romo, President of SBCC; S.B. Police Chief, Cam Sanchez; Eduardo Cue, Project Director of Teen Court; Raquel Lopez, Executive Director of Casa de la Raza; Maria Eva Casillas, from the S.B. Rape Crisis Center and Erika Tomayo from Domestic Violence Solutions of Santa Barbara.

The vignettes cover common possible tragic consequences of keeping loaded, unlocked firearms in the home – from domestic violence to children playing with loaded weapons, and suicide. These incidents unfortunately happen daily across our nation. Part of the stated goal of the Coalition Against Gun Violence is to create a safer community by combating gun violence through educational activities. We believe our Spanish language video goes far in accomplishing this goal and we are particularly gratified because from start to finish this has been a community endeavor.

An outgrowth of the project has been Mr. Benevides' creation of a Public Service Announcement (PSA), shown a number of times on Univision, Channel 16, utilizing images from the video.

Our remaining goal for the video project is to create English sub-titles in order that it may be viewed by the widest possible audience. Additional funding will be required to bring this effort to completion, as well as to sponsor events in the community where "Armas de Fuego" will be shown. Please call us at 564-6803 for further information about the video, or to offer help in completing the project.

Similar to our presentation, "A World Full of Guns," adults will be the appropriate audience for viewing and discussing the issues presented in Armas de Fuego. If you would like your organization or group to see this video, please call 564-6803.

Hollywood's ordinance banning smoking in restaurants, and developed the strategy making it a regional ban by having neighboring cities pass the same ban at the same time. Crime prevention is also one of Koretz's top priorities. He is also a passionate advocate for the Jewish community.

The Koretz family history in West Hollywood dates back more than 50 years. Koretz's father escaped Nazi Germany's persecution of Jews in 1939 by emigrating to America. Koretz grew up in West Hollywood and was educated at local schools. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from UCLA in 1979, where he was a founder of the "Bruin Democrats." Koretz's wife Gail serves as Director of Public Affairs for Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Medical Center. They have one daughter, Rachel.

Please join us on February 27th in welcoming Paul Koretz to our community and helping us celebrate our 10th anniversary at this memorable event.



Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (LA Times 1-6-05) will pay 14.5 million to settle a lawsuit filed by the California Attorney General that accuses the nation's largest retailer of multiple gun law violations. The settlement, largest of its

kind since Attorney General's Lockyer's office established a firearms division in 1999, requires Wal-Mart to pay \$5 million in fines and to reform its practices should it ever resume firearm sales in the state.

"They were the largest gun seller in California," said Lockyer, who said the company put the lives of all Californians at risk by placing guns in the hands of criminals. "Their business practices become critical to public safety."

Additionally, Wal-Mart will spend at least \$4.5 million to comply with state and federal laws governing the sale of firearms. An additional \$3 million is earmarked for a public service campaign



promoting firearm safety and for developing a program to encourage all California gun dealers to verify the ages of people buying ammunition.

Wal-Mart spokesman Gus Whitcomb declined to comment on the allegations in the lawsuit. "We're happy the state takes this issue seriously, but we're not going to debate the original concerns," Whitcomb said.

The lawsuit followed an audit in 2004 of five Wal-Mart stores in Simi Valley, Folsom, Turlock, Fresno and Ukiah. The audit uncovered 2,891 alleged violations between 2000 and 2003. The alleged violations included selling firearms to people prohibited from owning them, delivering firearms before completing criminal background checks, failing to verify buyer's identities through thumbprints and driver's licenses, and at least three dozen people made "straw purchases," or bought guns on behalf of people barred from owning them, resulting in the filing of charges against 20 people.

The settlement concludes a two-year enforcement effort against Wal-Mart. Lockyer said, "They cooperated in trying to respond to our demands that they observe our laws so that ex-felons, mentally ill and other prohibited people don't get weapons." Under terms of the settlement, the company will reimburse the state for \$2 million in investigative and monitoring costs.

Wal-Mart hasn't decided whether it will resume firearm sales at its more than 150 California stores, but it has kept its licenses up to date. New Jersey and Hawaii are the only other states where Wal-Mart doesn't sell firearms.

Attorney General Lockyer and his office should be commended for their investigation and vigilance to assure the California public that our state is successfully monitoring gun control laws. We can only hope that other states following this excellent example.

EVIDENCE: GUN MAKERS HELP CRIMINALS GET GUNS

Springfield, IL (11-19-04) While affirming dismissal of the City of Chicago's case against the gun industry, five of seven Illinois Supreme Court judges took the extraordinary step of expressing alarm at the prospect that the gun industry may intentionally supply the criminal gun market for profit. The justices called for legislators to take action.

Illinois Supreme Court Justice Charles Freeman wrote, the "plaintiff's allegations, if true, support the conclusion that defendant gun manufacturers are not only aware of the probability that their wares might be used in the commission of crimes, but that they actively seek to exploit that fact to increase their profit margin...it is my sincere hope that our General Assembly will turn its attention to the problems this case brings to light."

Dennis Henigen, Director of the Brady Center's Legal Action Project said, "It's deeply disappointing that the Chicago case has been dismissed, but the judges were on target in their expression of alarm. In lawsuits filed by other cities, we have uncovered compelling evidence of gun industry complicity in supplying the underground market."

Legislative proposals at the Federal level to stop lawsuits against gun sellers would allow the industry to continue to profit from supplying criminals without cost, and would stop additional evidence from being brought to public light.

The gun industry knows it employs corrupt dealers who supply criminals and gun traffickers. Robert Ricker, former head of a major industry trade association, testified under oath that gun companies knew they were arming criminals through their sales and distribution practices. Bill Bridgewater, former head of the major gun dealers association, testified that many licensed gun dealers supplied criminals and kids, some of whom were even gang members. Doug Painter, now head of the gun industry's trade group, wrote in 1993 that the ATF could not adequately oversee corrupt gun dealers.

Armed with this information, comments from the pro-gun groups that gun control laws do not hinder criminals sound hollow. To help keep track of guns in this country, legal gun owners should not object to keeping gun sales for 90 days, and to the licensing and registration of all gun owners, which has proven helpful in reducing crime in other countries.



Crime Rate Drops ...Yet Murders Increase

The number of homicides increased last year by 1.7 percent to 16,503 while other violent crimes dropped by 3 percent according to an FBI report. Property crime like car thefts and arson was essentially unchanged.

Murder victims were most likely, according to the data, to be adult men. Of the women murdered last year in those cases where a relationship between the assailant and the victim could be established, one-third of the victims were killed by husbands or boyfriends.

Guns were involved in 27 percent of all violent crimes and were by far the most common murder weapon. Of those murders in which the type of weapon could be identified, guns accounted for 71 percent, with knives, fists, blunt instruments and other weapons far behind.

Casey Anderson, Executive Director of Americans for Gun Safety, stated "While administration officials correctly point out that total gun crime prosecutions are up, the most important gun crimes – those related to illegal gun sales – continue to go largely unpunished. It's not surprising that we've made little dent in the rate of violent crimes committed with firearms, because criminals continue to get easy access to guns."

Politically this information was perceived differently. As then Attorney General John Ashcroft stated, "All across our country, law-abiding Americans are enjoying unprecedented safety." But John Edwards, then the Democratic vice presidential candidate, had a much different reading of the statistics, saying they "remind us how much more we have to do to fight crime and keep our communities safe in America." Mr. Edwards cited a 6 percent increase in murders since 2000 and a 25 percent rise in gang killings. He said a surge in methamphetamine abuse and a cutback by President Bush in federal money for local police departments were causes for concern.

Some months after the FBI annual Uniform Crime Report was released, a new study, "Firearms and Violence" by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was applauded by public health experts as a ringing endorsement of the public health approach to gun violence and call to action for improving our nation's data and research on firearms. Overall, the report cites studies showing that violence is positively associated with firearm ownership and goes on to point out several areas of further research needed.

The role of guns in U.S. society is a subject of intense policy debate and disagreement. However, current research and data on firearms and violent crime are too weak to support strong conclusions about the effects of various measures to prevent and control gun violence, says a new report from the National Academy's National Research Council. A comprehensive research program on firearms is needed if criminal justice and crime prevention policy is to have a sound basis. Some of today's most pressing policy issues in this area cannot be tackled with existing data and research methods are weak, the report says.



Nearly 30,000 Americans are killed and 75,000 injured by firearms each year. "Firearm violence remains a significant public health problem in America," said George Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association. A public health approach is essential. It should be comprehensive and driven by sound science.

The NAS report calls for a major national effort to improve knowledge about firearms, including:

- Giving researchers access to trace date, registration data, and manufacturing and sales date from firearm manufacturers.
- Collecting information on gun ownership and use – citing the inadequacy of this data as a critical barrier to understanding gun violence.
- Maintaining basic data collection systems on crime and violent death, such as the National Violent Death Reporting System and the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

When will the deaths due to firearms of 30,000 Americans annually become a national priority?

In the year 2000, 52 percent of homicides were committed with handguns and 19 percent with other guns (14% with knives, 5% with blunt objects and 10% with other weapons).



Ban Lead Ammunition

Biologists captured the last fully wild California condor in 1987 for an ambitious captive-breed program that offered the only hope for North America's largest bird. The population had dropped to just 15 in 1984, but due to a \$35 million effort to save them their numbers are beginning to increase.

Separate studies for the state and federal wildlife agencies last year found condor lead poisoning increased during the fall hunting season. A problem has been hunters who use lead ammunition and leave an estimated 30,000 unburied carcasses or entrails across the condor's range, which are eaten by the by the condors, who are scavengers.

No one has taken steps to clean the environment of the toxic substance that brought condors to the brink of extinction in the first place. A group of wildlife biologists, environmentalists and hunters has asked the state Fish and Game Commission to ban lead bullets, beginning with the areas frequented by the condors. The commission will take up the issue Feb. 4; however hunting regulations aren't up for routine review until 2007.

Eight condors that would have died from lead poisoning were put through a system-cleansing therapy. Now the birds are regularly trapped and brought in for blood tests. Human caretakers leave untainted carrion around for them to eat. "Wild," when it comes to condors, is a relative thing.

Non-lead shotgun ammunition is already required nationwide for hunting waterfowl. In the last few years, ammunition makers have crafted workable bullets made of nontoxic metals. They are still about twice as expensive as the lead kind, but as their use grows, the price may drop and the technology improve. Wildlife agencies in Arizona, Utah and California hope a voluntary program will work without requiring an outright ban on lead bullets. However, with only 57 condors in the California wilderness, the state should move swiftly to save its signature endangered species. The public is welcome to send opinions to the state Fish and Game Commission at: fgc@dfb.ca.gov.

A Must Read Topical Book

"Balance of Power" by Richard North Patterson is a historical fiction novel about the tragedy of gun death in America and the incredible power the gun lobby wields over members of Congress. Patterson has written a real page-turner that almost mirrors the political climate surrounding the battle between gun control and the gun manufacturers over that past few years.

I found the book interesting and valuable, and thought I'd pass the suggestion on to our supporters. Toni Wellen, Editor

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Gun Gifts For Children

"...Children vital to future gun culture in America... as future customers and as political foot soldiers."

The November 2004 issue of the NRA's *Women's Outlook* magazine has an ad promoting guns as a holiday gift for children. The gun in the ad even comes with a free NRA Junior membership. In this issue, the national sales manager for Rossi (a Brazilian firearm manufacturer) calmly explains: **"I realized that the gun industry was losing hunters and shooters every year, and unless something was done to change that trend we'd be out of business before too very long."**

In December 2001, the Violence Policy Center released "A .22 for Christmas – How the Firearms Industry Designs and Markets Firearms for Children and Youth." In that study, the VPC warned that due to the fact of declining gun ownership: "The gun industry – working hand-in-hand with the NRA – has targeted children as vital to the future of the gun culture in America, both as future customers and as political foot soldiers for the gun control battles that lie ahead."

Rossi's marketing to children is just the latest entry in an industry-wide effort, and despite the certain danger of mixing kids and guns, this gun lobby and gun industry marketing effort to children has only escalated.



PSA To Be Aired

The Santa Barbara Channels has completed a Public Service Announcement incorporating CAGV's educational message in English and Spanish, funded by The Hutton Foundation. The PSAs may be viewed at our Feb. 27th Anniversary Brunch, on channel 17 and 21 and soon will be streaming on our website.

CAGV's Newsletters On Website

CAGV's newsletters may be seen on our website: www.sbcoalition.org after print publication, along with other issues and features. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter via electronic mail, please contact CAGV at sbcoalitionagv@hotmail.com

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