

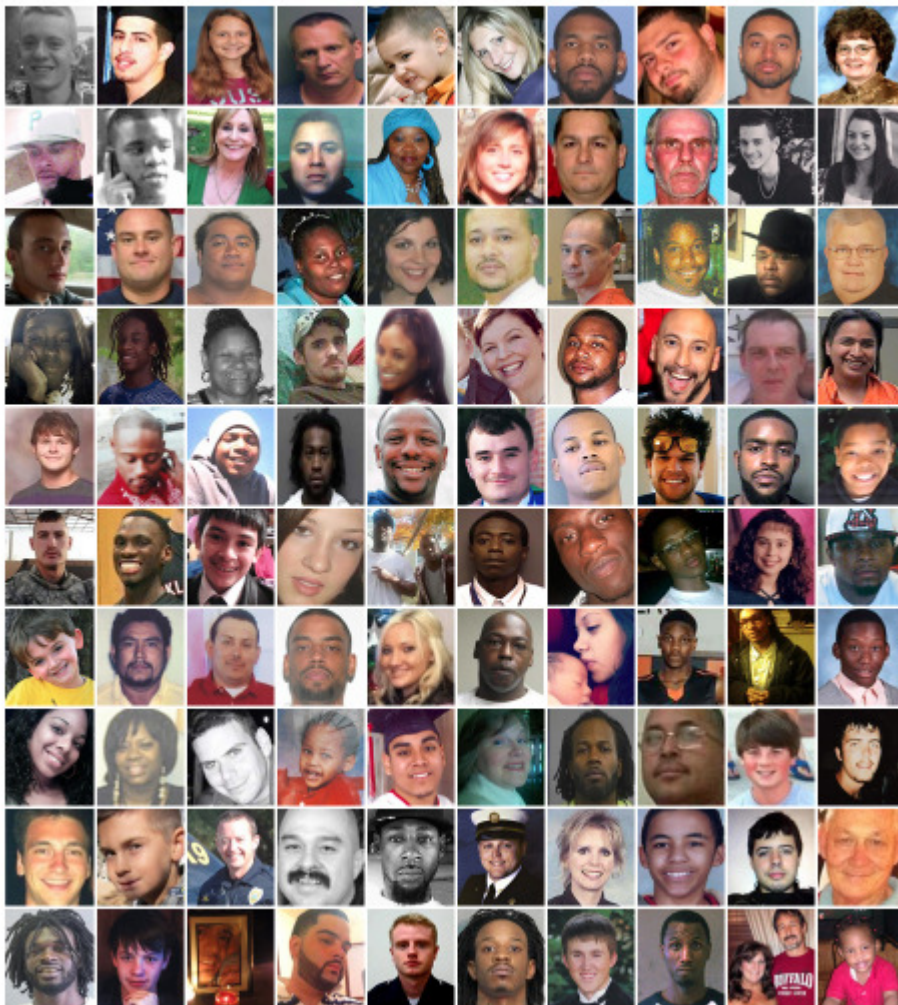


New interactive map shows the number of times guns have saved Americans

By: Becket Adams – February 15, 2013

Proponents of stricter gun control measures regularly call attention to the number of people who have killed in gun-related crimes:

THE PRICE OF 'FREEDOM'



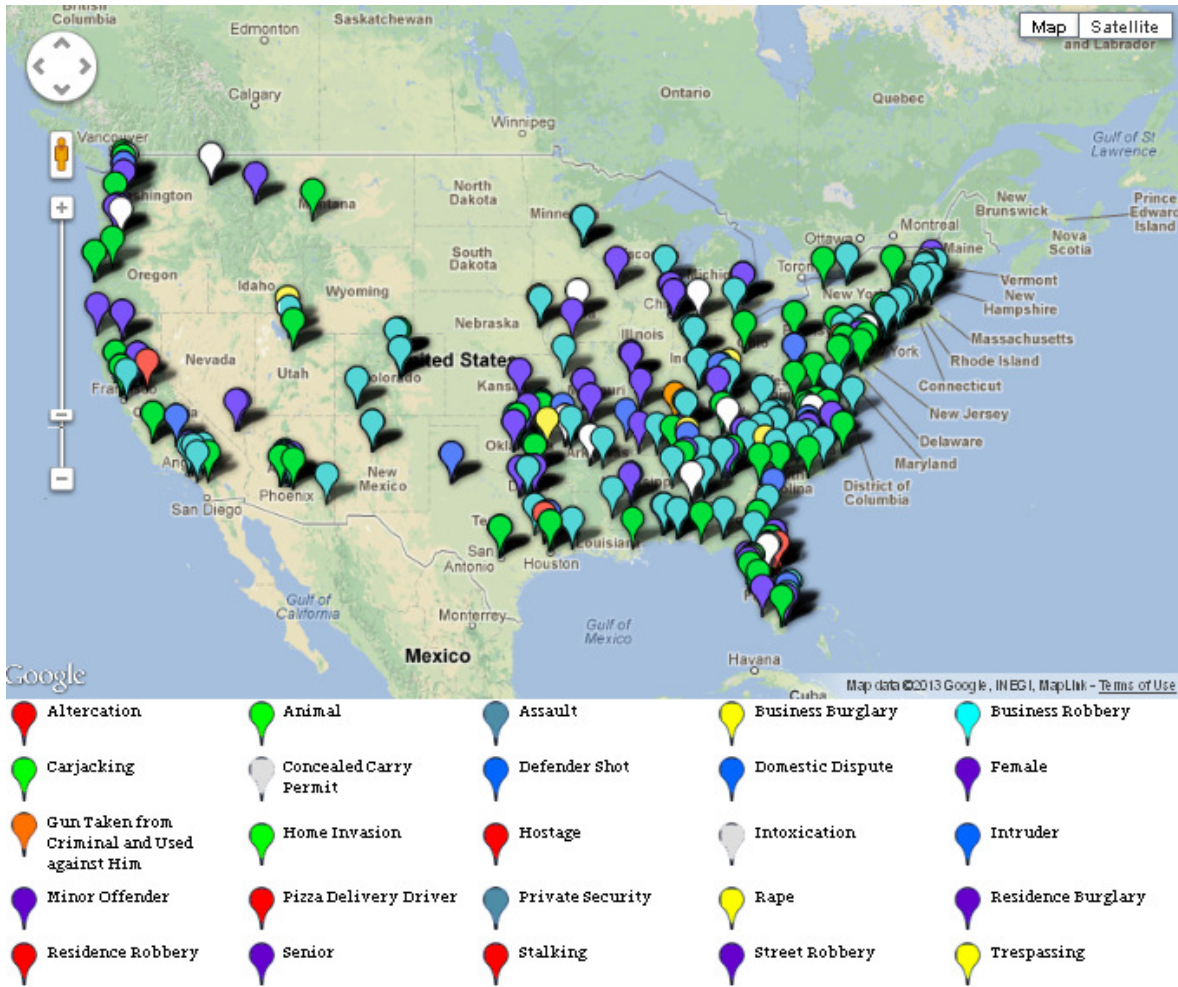
However, what these people often neglect to mention is the number of people who have been *saved* by firearms. That is, gun control advocates rarely — if ever — acknowledge the possible benefits of owning a gun.

But *is* there an upside to owning a gun, as defenders of the Second Amendment claim? Of course there is. Indeed, it shouldn't come as a surprise when we say numerous would-be murderers, burglars, and rapists have been thwarted by guns.

But let's try to visualize this.

In the spirit of the *Journal News*, the New York newspaper that published a map featuring the names and addresses of legal gun owners in three counties, the Cato Institute has put together a map documenting the instances where a gun has helped innocent Americans protect themselves from criminals.

“Gun control proponents cannot deny that people use guns successfully against criminals, but they tend to play down how often such events take place,” Cato notes. “The purpose of this map is to draw more attention to this aspect of the firearms policy debate.”



Now two points need to be made about this map:

First, the map is not comprehensive. Criminals will often flee the scene when they discover that their intended target has a gun. With no shots fired, no injuries, and no suspect in custody, news organizations may report nothing at all. Thus, it is important to remember that news reports can only provide us with an imperfect picture of defensive gun use in America.

Second, when a citizen is able to shoot an attacker or hold a rapist or robber until the police arrive, it is very likely that more than one crime has been prevented because if the culprit had not been stopped, he could have targeted other citizens as well. The bottom line is that gun owners stop a lot of criminal mayhem every year.

Final Thought: As the above map clearly illustrates, firearms *have* been used to save lives. Washington should keep this in mind when it considers passing legislation that would make it more difficult for Americans to have access to guns.

After all, if it can save just one life ...

[Click here to see Cato's fully interactive gun map.](#)