

The Fayetteville Observer

Covering Guns: An experience of intensive training

By: Caitlin Dineen – April 5, 2013

I traveled to Chicago Monday to be part of the three-day “Covering Guns” seminar offered by Poynter and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation. The trip was a wicked busy three days of meeting with some of the foremost authorities on the Second Amendment, firearm experts, fellow journalists and a myriad number of officials who know what they’re talking about when it comes to guns in this country.

First, let me say, I cannot be more grateful I was selected to be part of this conference. I had never held a gun until Tuesday. I’ve come back with, what feels like, a million ideas on how to better approach and report on guns in the Cape Fear region.

At times I felt completely inundated with information. Like the fact that the last time gun violence and violent crime in this country was this low gas cost 29 cents a gallon, said Joyce Lee Malcolm, the Patrick Henry Professor of Constitutional Law and the Second Amendment from the George Mason School of Law. There was so much knowledge flowing that I almost couldn’t think straight. But I’m confident the intense training will be worth it when I get cracking on stories and the big things I want to do at this paper and, hopefully, our web site.

Some of the speakers I listened to were Robert Levy, chairman of the board of directors for the Cato Institute; David Fallis, investigative reporter for The Washington Post; and Roseanna Ander, founding executive of the University of Chicago Crime Lab.

We could not have had a better set of experts to listen to and interact with.

I look forward to spending the next week, month, year, whatever, getting down to it and thoroughly reporting firearms in our region and the hidden details that haven’t been shared to our readers before.

I hope you’re as excited as I am.

Stay safe,

Caitlin