



## Letter: Education no substitute for action on weapons

By: William Scarbrough - June 20, 2013

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Will the proposed city ordinance for look-alike guns eliminate this danger in our community? It is not an outright ban for these so-called toys. If it were a ban, the ordinance would engender the wrath of the National Rifle Association and some of its local members. Even in its present form this is a possibility.

Did you know that your tax and health insurance dollars are subsidizing the gun policies of the NRA? That's right. The vast majority of gunshot victims are unable to pay for emergency room treatment and subsequent hospital/surgical/rehabilitation care. As a result you pay for it in taxes and increased insurance costs.

Next time you read a letter from Mr. Arnie Krause promoting NRA policies, then disparaging my advocacy for common-sense gun laws, keep your subsidy in mind.

Responding to my letter last month on the local issue of look-alike BB guns, Mr. Krause cited the Cato Institute and NRA claim that there are 100,000 defensive uses of guns per year. Wait. For the last three years there has been an average of 282 people shot per day. This includes murders, assaults, suicides and suicide attempts, accidents and police intervention. Three hundred sixty-five days means that there are 102,930 victims of gunfire in a year.

Tragic, but 100,000 defensive uses of guns is laughable and absurd!

Two other letters addressing the look-alike guns were published. One writer advocating education instead of banning look-alike guns and another reminiscing about life as an expert marksman. Reminiscences of bygone days reminded me when toy handguns only fired caps.

While I disagree with the writer that education is more important than banning look-alike guns, I strongly suggest that education is critically important to understand the direct danger of a look-alike. These are designed to fire BBs at a velocity of 200 feet per second and some at the rate of one per second. At 200fps, BBs can shatter glass and penetrate the skin. At close range they can fracture bone. The result of such a gun being fired while held against a youngster's neck or head during play would be tragic. The danger of these guns is not limited to misunderstanding by law enforcement officers.

The writer might think about education and legislation working together.

Finally, Mr. Krause wrote that my proposal urging the mayor to become a member of Mayors Against Illegal Guns was a bad idea because the organization is for those who don't believe in the Second Amendment.

Believing in the Second Amendment must be like believing in God. It requires faith. Court decisions don't require faith. The Supreme Court decision on the possession of guns includes language granting the right to regulate and ban types of guns in accordance with the Constitution, which prescribes both individual freedom and collective safety.

History, education and effective legislation are important. Faith is not part of this. Restrictive gun legislation will happen.