



# NRA LAW ENFORCEMENT QUARTERLY

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## The 2008 National Police Shooting Championships

BY GLEN HOYER  
DIRECTOR, NRA LAW  
ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES  
DIVISION

The 2008 National Police Shooting Championships are done. We had an outstanding turnout, with over 500 officers in total competing in the National Police Shooting Championships, the New Mexico Challenge, and the Tactical Police Competition.

Our 46th annual NPSC was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for the third consecutive year. Law enforcement officers from around the world came to compete for 4,000 trophies and prizes valued at more than \$300,000. This makes the NPSC's prize table one of the best in all of law enforcement competitive shooting.

I am grateful for the continued support of our major sponsors including Brownells, ProForce Law Enforcement, FNH-USA, SIG Sauer, Beretta USA, Smith & Wesson, Colt, Springfield Armory, Glock, DPMS Panther Arms, Sturm Ruger, Remington and Heckler & Koch and about 100 other companies.



U.S. Border Patrol Agent Robert Vadasz (second from right) receives his championship ring from NRA President John C. Sigler. Also present are NRA 1st Vice President Ronald L. Schmeits (left) and NRA General Operations Executive Director Kayne Robinson.

This year's event was especially memorable with the arrival of "The Gunny," R. Lee Ermey, at the range on Wednesday. The Gunny was more than happy to talk with competitors, sign autographs, and pose for pictures. He even participated in the shotgun competition, firing a respectable score. The Gunny, who was also our guest speaker at the banquet, had us rolling on the floor with his humor.

The New Mexico Challenge, a competition geared toward new shooters who did not possess an NRA Police Pistol Combat Classification card, was a success with over 100 new shooters firing the stock semiautomatic course of fire. This gave many officers from New Mexico an opportunity to give firearm competition a try, without obtaining special equipment or the stress of being in a championship.

Our Tactical Police Competition was also a hit, with over 80 officers competing in a three-gun event that mirrors modern law enforcement training, requiring the use of duty equipment.

Armorer schools that were held in conjunction with the NPSC – offered by DMPS, Beretta, Glock, and Sig Sauer – were successful, and will be offered again next year.

The value of NRA's National Police Shooting Championships lies in the fact that this competition tests law enforcement shooting skills. In a life and death situation involving deadly force, an officer's ability to shoot accurately is the most important factor. These accuracy skills are put to the test



Los Angeles Police Department Det. Stefanie Diaz (second from right) receives her women's championship ring from NRA President Sigler, along with 1st Vice President Schmeits and NRA General Operations Executive Director Robinson.

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*NRA President and retired Delaware Police Captain John Sigler had a long list of responsibilities at the National Police Shooting Championships.*

*But his biggest goal was to renew old friendships.*



"I've been a PPC shooter since I joined the Dover Delaware Police Department in 1971. I was also a referee here – actually, not here but at NPSC when it was held in Jackson, Mississippi. With that comes the opportunity to talk to the officers and find out what's important to them now."

"The NRA is one big family, and we have to remember NPSC is just one of 180 different programs. I talked to a competitor who is the chair of his community's *Friends of NRA* Committee. I talked to another officer who is an Eddie Eagle officer. This is a grand opportunity to reacquaint myself with men and women in law enforcement here in the United States and throughout the world."

Mr. Sigler walked throughout the Law Enforcement Exposition all week, talking with competitors, vendors, volunteers, and spectators.

"I've been out of the police force since 1991. I think it's important for the NRA to have the ability to get the information we need to better serve the officers out in the field who are helping to keep their hometowns safe. It's crucial."

Mr. Sigler has a long history with the Championships, although he says he can no longer recall his best score.

"I competed at NPSC from 1972 to '80, when it was in Mississippi. I was a line referee and then later the chief referee from '92 until about four years ago. Dwight Van Horn and I shot together at a regional competition in Maryland. We probably met around 1977. I first met Tommy Gaines at the Police Nationals in Jackson probably in '72 or '73. Kayne Robinson, current Executive Director of General Operations, and I probably met on the line in Jackson MI in 1973. So these are long-term friendships."

The rivalry and good-natured ribbing

between departments has been noticed by the NRA's President. He says it's always been a part of law enforcement competitions.

"You'll see a sense of rivalry between federal officers and state officers, and state officers and county officers, detectives versus wheel cops – you'll see that sense of rivalry, as in, 'You're not doing real police work' – but it's all friendly, and everyone understands that the community is really a tight-knit community."

## ***New Mexico Challenge a "privilege," says challenge champ Sgt. McPherson***

Sergeant Kevin McPherson of the New Mexico State Police earned the title of New Mexico Challenge champion with a score of 470-29x. The New Mexico Challenge debuted at NPSC 2008 as a recruitment tool for new shooters, and McPherson said the Challenge certainly helped attract competitors from the State Police Department. He was joined in the Challenge by eight fellow State Policemen.

"The New Mexico Challenge attracted more than 100 new shooters to NPSC, so we believe it served its purpose," LEAD Director Glen Hoyer said. "Both the participant level and the awards were substantial for a first-time event. Look for it again next year."

"I thought the NRA did a bang-up job with the event, and I was very pleased to come out on top," McPherson said, adding he was hoping to do well but didn't have any idea how well. "I was out there at the range the night before the event frantically trying to improve the situation,"

"We're all in this together. Our challenges and our various communities that we serve may be different but it is one universal challenge. We each take an oath to defend and protect the Constitution of the United States and our state's constitution and to serve the people that pay us. It is a service type of career and you understand, maybe not immediately but eventually you come to understand that their strength is in the strength of the communities they serve."

Mr. Sigler has some valuable advice for competitors – advice one hears time and time again from seasoned competitive shooters. "Keep your sense of humor. Don't take yourself too seriously. Take the job very seriously, but don't take yourself too seriously."

Regarding competitors hoping to improve their scores: "I'll quote Dwight Van Horn. I remember him being asked right after he and his partner won the world title a few years ago, before he was a referee and before he was on the NRA Board of Directors, "How do I get that good?" And Dwight's answer was, "You stand knee-deep in brass."

he said.

The night before the New Mexico Challenge was also the night he decided which firearm to use in the competition. He finally settled on his Smith & Wesson Model 66, which served him well.

"I sort of got an education when the big boys came," McPherson said of the actual National Police Shooting Championships. He describes his revolver performance as "respectable" but says he has work to do when it comes to the semi-automatic portion of the Championships.

"It was a privilege to be on the line with that caliber of shooter, and I'm excited to get better and shoot the NPSC next year," McPherson said.

"We wanted everyone to see that competitive shooting can be fun," Hoyer said. "Probably a third of New Mexico Challenge participants received attendance prizes of some sort, and with all the categories, we had a lot of shooters collecting trophies."

Art Martinez of the Albuquerque Police

# Tactical Police Competition



BY NRA STAFF

The NRA Law Enforcement Division's Tactical Police Competition Program was started in order to augment our Police Pistol Combat (PPC) competition program. These two programs go hand-in-hand as an extension of an officer's training and skill development, to enhance their ability to survive lethal encounters and protect others.

Our Tactical Police Competition (TPC) allows officers to utilize the marksmanship fundamentals practiced and tested in PPC competition, and adds tactical decision making, multiple targets, firing from unusual

positions, and movement from position to position while stressing accuracy. While it is competition, it's also a training program.

We find that officers who compete in TPC events come away with a better assessment of their skill, knowledge of their equipment, and what skill areas they want to work on for improvement.

Because the TPC program was developed as an integral part of the Division's overall competition program, it was only natural to have a Tactical Police Competition as part of the National Police Shooting

Department won 1st Place in the Law Enforcement Academy category; Todd Bowling of the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office won 1st Place in the Deputy Sheriff category; and Andy Baldrige of the New Mexico State Police won 1st Place in the State Police category.

Catherine Garduno, a firearms instructor with the Albuquerque Police Department, shot a score of 442-14x and earned

the title of High Woman for the New Mexico Challenge. "I have no experience whatsoever with competitive shooting," Garduno said. "That was my first exposure."

Garduno and her fellow Albuquerque Police Department competitors were excited to participate in NPSC after years of watching from the sidelines. "We thought we would just give it a try," she said. A firearms instructor, Garduno has attended several Championships, serving as support staff.

"It was fun but it was overwhelming," Garduno said of the Championships. "We were definitely flying by the seat of our pants. Considering we didn't have the high-dollar stuff, I think we did pretty well."

She and her colleagues will be back next year, and she has plans to learn more about the world of law enforcement competitive shooting. "I'll start by shooting the 1500, and I'll definitely practice with the revolver," she said. "I hadn't shot a revolver in about 20 years."

For the entire results bulletin, visit <http://www.nrahq.org/law/npsc.asp>.

Championships. We believe that officers need to train, practice, and compete in PPC events in order to provide them with the ultimate evaluation of accuracy and handling – and also to train and practice for the tactical application of these skills.

The TPC program provides courses of fire that allow officers and instructors to evaluate their marksmanship and tactical deployment skills in street-realistic scenarios and skill-based exercises. By incorporating a TPC event into Police Nationals, we provide officers a chance to obtain additional training, practice, and evaluative time using both marksmanship and tactical deployment skills.

The NPSC Tactical Police Competition was a great success, with 81 law enforcement competitors. Just over half of the competitors were from municipal law enforcement agencies from across the country, with the balance being federal and private sector officers and members of the U.S. Armed Forces. We even had the German police pistol team shoot the event.



In keeping with the firearms and equipment used by today's law enforcement officers, TPC has two competitor divisions: the Patrol Division and the Tactical Division. The Patrol Division was won by Kevin Cates of the Durham (N.C.) Police Department. Charles Moots of the U.S. Department of Energy won the Tactical Division.

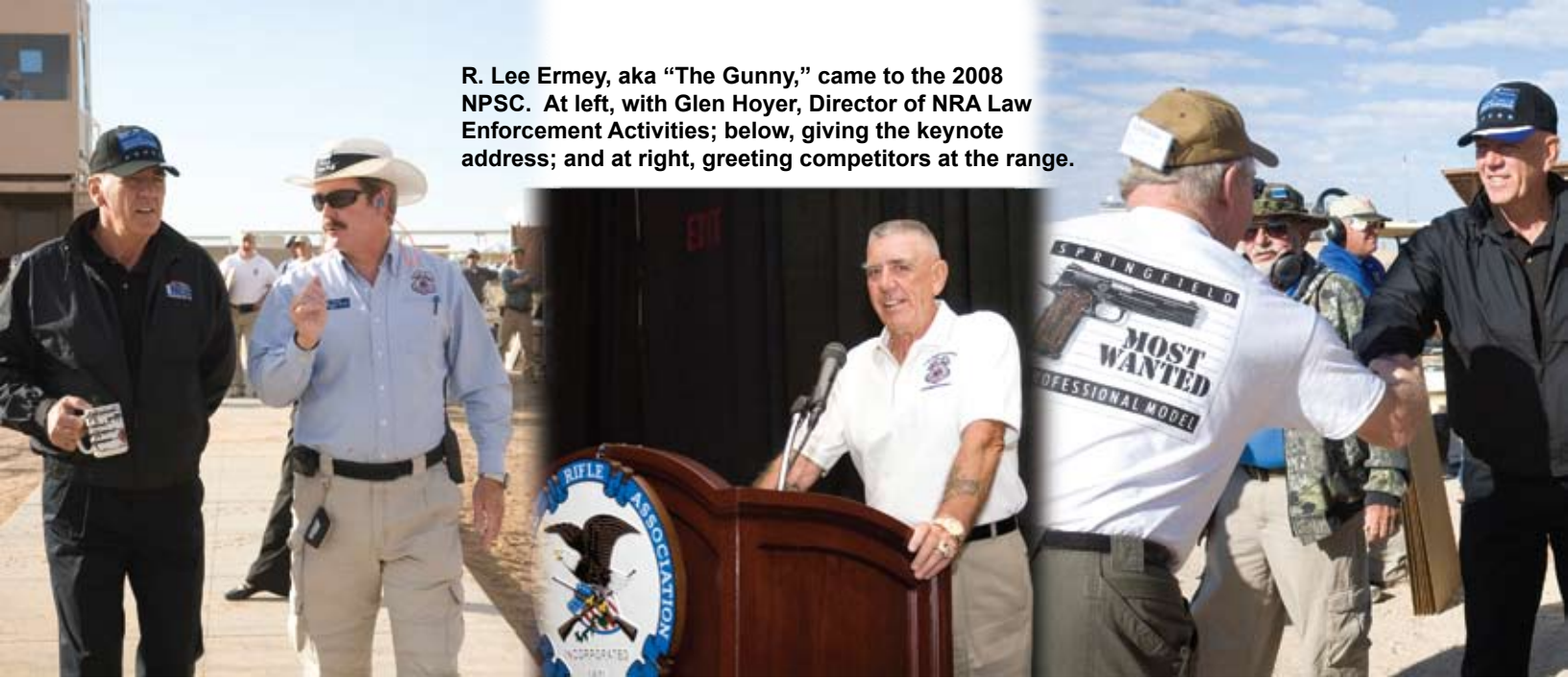
Course design and event planning began months prior to the NPSC TPC event, and was finalized by NRA staff when the nine courses of fire were set up with the help of volunteers from the Rio Grande Practical Shooting Club of Albuquerque on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday prior to the event.

Competitor feedback was fantastic, and many commented that they wanted to take courses of fire back to their agencies. Shooters also discussed how beneficial both PPC and TPC were when integrated together, and how they saw the training values in both while being able to have fun on the range.



NRA President John Sigler (at right) presents Sergeant Kevin McPherson, champion of the New Mexico Challenge, with a trophy.

R. Lee Erme, aka "The Gunny," came to the 2008 NPSC. At left, with Glen Hoyer, Director of NRA Law Enforcement Activities; below, giving the keynote address; and at right, greeting competitors at the range.



**continued from front cover**

at our Championships. This competition, as well as all shooting competitions, are an extension of training, and a honing of skills.

Speculation leading up to the championship as to who might leave Albuquerque with the title of 2008 NPSC Champion was high. The retirement of nine-time NPSC Champion Captain Philip Hemphill of the Mississippi State Patrol left the field wide open.

When the smoke cleared a new National Champion was named. An agent with the U.S. Border Patrol took the gold: Robert Vadasz of Tampa, Florida. Vadasz outshot his fellow competitors with a cumulative score of 2980-195x. "It felt good," Robert said of his win. "Shooting the NRA Bianchi Cup helped me ... [and]

has taught me a lot about the mental state of firearms competition." Vadasz took the title of Metallic Sight Champion at the 2008 NRA Bianchi Cup, held annually in May in Columbia, Missouri.

Current NRA President and retired Police Captain John Sigler was on hand to distribute awards. Many administrators of the National Rifle Association are former law enforcement officers. Past NRA President and current Executive Director Kayne Robinson is a retired Assistant Chief of Police. I'm a retired Sheriff's Captain, and many of the employees in the Law Enforcement Activities Division are retired law enforcement or have extensive law enforcement histories.

Throughout the competition, these law enforcement veterans and countless

volunteers are taking the time to listen to competitors' stories and feedback.

"I've been out of the police force since 1991," Sigler said. "It's important for the NRA to have the ability to get the information we need to better serve the officers out in the field who are helping to keep their hometowns safe."

For more information about NRA's National Police Shooting Championships or to register for these matches, visit [www.nrahq.org/law/npsc.asp](http://www.nrahq.org/law/npsc.asp) on the Internet, call (703) 267-1632, or send e-mail to [lead@nrahq.org](mailto:lead@nrahq.org). The 2009 NPSC is scheduled for September 20-24, 2009.

Results, photos, and information from this year's championships are available at [NRABlog.com](http://NRABlog.com).



Competitors come together to match shooting skills with others from around the world.



Clockwise from upper left: Robert Vadasz receives his trophy for Match 21 (NRA Special Aggregate Winner); Air Force security officer makes ready; 50-yard prone, a challenging stage; a spent shell flies at the shotgun match; the best prize table in law enforcement competition; perpetual trophies on display at the Awards Banquet.



# The Ladies of Law Enforcement Competition

Many people think of competitive shooting as a man's sport. But what about the women competitors?

This year's National Police Shooting Championship's High Woman, Stefanie Diaz of the Los Angeles Police Department, shot a comprehensive score of 2939-153x. "We congratulate Stefanie on an impressive win and encourage her to return to NPSC 2009," said NRA Law Enforcement Activities Division Director Glen Hoyer. "Women consistently do well at our law enforcement competitions, and this year was no exception. Stefanie shot like a champion."

2007 NPSC High Woman Anna Bailey wasn't able to make this year's Championship because she and her husband are in Iraq as government contractors. From a few thousand miles away, she answered a few questions about the challenges of competing on a range full of men sometimes hesitant to accept women as equals.

"Men just seem to have a fascination with the combination of women and guns, so their interests are automatically piqued when a female shows up on the range," Bailey said. "Curious eyes will definitely be watching."

Eyes were watching when Bailey shot a 2957-186X at last year's Championship, earning her the title of High Woman Champion.

Across the spectrum, women are gradually entering the world of shooting, from competitive shooting and target shooting to hunting and clay shooting. The NRA's Women On Target® program, which introduces women to firearm instruction, has seen a 21 percent increase in participants from 2007 to 2008 alone.

Hoyer is encouraged by this trend. "We hope to be recruiting competitors from across the pool of law enforcement officers," he said. "Competitive shooting is not sex-specific. The sport does not rely on the same strengths other sports do, and some argue that women actually make better competitive shooters."

Bailey agrees. "The playing field is relatively equal in this sport," she said. "The strongest, tallest, and fastest does not factor in as much as it does in traditional sports. Look at every competitor as an equal opponent, regardless of whether they are male or female."

But the biggest piece of advice Bailey would give to a competitor of either gender? "If you are not having fun, then it's just not worth it!" she said.

Unlike Bailey, U.S. Border Patrol Agent



"We all get along really well," said Gina Hernandez, shown here in the scoring pen at the 2008 NPSC.

Gina Hernandez was on hand to shoot the 2008 Championship in Albuquerque. She serves as captain of one of the U.S. Border Patrol's four-person teams and supervises the firearms department at the U.S. Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, New Mexico.

A veteran of NPSC, Hernandez doesn't hesitate to answer the question of whether her team respects her position as captain. "They better!" she said, glancing around the range. "I think it's just a matter of sticking with it." Her teammates view her as a fellow agent, a strong competitive shooter, and then a woman, she said.

Serving as captain of a group of competitive shooters is never easy, Hernandez continues. But one piece of advice comes to her mind: "I would say, know your team. Know their personalities and how they work," Hernandez said, noting that it takes time to transition into a smoothly functioning team.

"For somebody who wants to shoot, just get in there and do it. Practice. Go to matches, and don't give up," Hernandez said. She said the community of women shooters is a small one, but a tightknit community nonetheless. "We all get along really well," she said.

Two-time NPSC High Woman and recently retired FBI agent Cathy Schroeder agrees. "There's a sense of camaraderie because we all know each other. We want to make everyone feel welcome because we want to have more women competing," she said. "The social aspect is a component of any match."

Not that the warmth extends to any sort of compassion on the range. "I love them like sisters, but I still want to win!"

Schroeder added.

Like Hernandez, Schroeder competed in this year's Championship. She said she was impressed by the overall performance of female competitors.

"I came in third, but if you look at the grand aggregate, which is over 6000 points, three of us were only like 5 points apart, which is outrageously good for that competition," she said. "I think it's fabulous that it's that close."

Schroeder had a logical point about the male-dominated environment of law enforcement competitive shooting: "Most females I know that shoot are used to being in a male environment. Law Enforcement is not overrun by females, so we are used to operating in the environment."

She said a new shooter might feel intimidated, but that experienced competitors don't usually notice such trivialities. "I want to beat 'em all! It doesn't matter who they are," Schroeder said.

Patricia Fant, a retired Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff, has been in the world of competitive shooting since 1972. "The changes I have seen are good," she said. "There aren't many women competitors, but the ones that do compete have been doing it for a long period of time."

"I have never regretted the 35 years of shooting," Fant said. "I have met so many other shooters, male and female, and they have become good friends."

After a sergeant took some time showing her how to shoot, said Fant, she couldn't get enough. "I have been shooting since 1972; you would think I would have it figured out by now. But it's just like golf, you have good days and bad days," she said.

# Beretta: "NPSC would not be the same without their support"



Len Lucas of Beretta USA (at right) presents NRA Law Enforcement Activities Director Glen Hoyer (at left) with the rings to be presented to the 2008 NPSC Champions.

Beretta USA is more than a vendor at the National Police Shooting Championship. Beretta has a long and distinguished history of its support to not only the Championships, but the NRA as a whole. Law Enforcement Activities Division Director Glen Hoyer says the value of their contributions is immeasurable. "The NPSC would not be the same without their support," Hoyer said. "Year after year, Beretta USA is on the frontline with us, working to enhance the world of law enforcement competitive shooting."

Beretta's partnership with the National Police Shooting Championships goes back 15 years. "We can always depend upon their product donations, that we, in turn, use as prizes for the competitors," mentioned Hoyer. "The competitors appreciate their generosity and support."

In addition to manning the Beretta USA booth at the Law Enforcement Exposition during the National Police Shooting Championships, Beretta USA's Len Lucas was re-connecting with friends old and new.

Len Lucas, Beretta USA's Manager of

Law Enforcement Training and Services, seemed to know everyone. "A lot of guys here I've known through the years just from the greater law enforcement community," Lucas said. "Some through the firearms training community, and others I know from the trade show community."

Aside from the firearm donations Beretta is also the sponsor of the Championship rings. The Beretta champion rings attract attention each year. The rings, which feature a NRA and a Beretta logo, go to the male and female National Champion. "Blue is Beretta's color, and blue is for law enforcement," Lucas said, adding that the tradition has been in place for the past four years.

Beretta USA's partnership with the training side of law enforcement is part of what draws it to the National Rifle Association, Lucas said.

"The partnership has always been there," he said. "Mr. Beretta has donated lots to the NRA, and we have a lot of folks who are members and lifetime members. It's a good partnership."

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Range fee, if any, is payable to some hosting agencies; amount varies.

**NRA Tuition = \$525 per person**

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Feb 9-13	Stapleton, AL
Feb 16-20	Azusa, CA
March 2-6	Shreveport, LA
March 9-13	Ford City, PA (west)
March 16-20	Panama City, FL
March 23-27	Florence, AL
April 6-10	Grand Junction, CO
April 6-10	Tucson, AZ
April 13-17	Reno, NV
April 20-24	Pearl, MS
May 4-8	Pittsburgh, PA (west)
May 11-15	Tupelo, MS
June 8-12	Allentown, PA (east)
June 15-19	Allentown, PA (east)
Aug 10-14	Canon City, CO
Aug 10-14	Florence, AL
Sep 28 - Oct 2	Las Vegas, NV* (public LE only)
Oct 12-16	Charleston, SC
Oct 12-16	Pearl, MS
Oct 19-23	Defiance, MO
Dec 7-11	Florence, AL
Dec 7-11	Panama City, FL

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March 2-6	Ontario, Calif.
May 11-15	Castle Rock, CO (public LE only)
Aug 10-14	Castle Rock, CO (public LE only)

### PRECISION RIFLE INSTRUCTOR

Dec 1-5	Florence, AL
Dec 1-5	Las Vegas, NV* (public LE only)

Dec 15-19	Fort Pierce, FL
May 4-8	Pearl, MS
Sept 28 - Oct 2	Bethlehem, PA (east)
Oct 19-23	Buckeye, AZ
Oct 19-23	Florence, AL
Nov 2-6	Las Vegas, NV* (public LE only)

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Sept 14-18	Bethlehem, PA (east)
Sept 21-25	Florence, AL

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Jan 26-30	Buckeye, AZ
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Feb 23-27	Florence, AL
April 6-10	Baton Rouge, LA
April 6-10	Bethlehem, PA (east)
April 6-10	Ford City, PA (west)
April 13-17	Lubbock, TX (public LE only)
April 20-24	Covington, TN
Apr 27 - May 1	Jordan, MN
May 18-22	Canon City, CO

June 15-19	Charleston, SC
June 22-26	Pittsburgh, PA (west)
July 13-17	Amarillo, TX
July 20-24	Florence, AL
Aug 17-21	Castle Rock, CO (public LE only)
Sept 7-11	Bethlehem, PA (east)
Oct 5-9	Ford City, PA (west)
Nov 2-6	Panama City, FL
Nov 2-6	Pearl, MS
Nov 16-20	Las Vegas, NV* (public LE only)

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Jan 12-16	Victoria, TX
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Apr 20-24	Florence, AL
May 4-8	Plano, TX
May 11-15	Stapleton, AL
May 25-29	Tupelo, MS
July 6-10	Allentown, PA (east)
July 13-17	Panama City, FL
Sept 14-18	Castle Rock, CO (public LE only)
Sept 21-25	Bethlehem, PA (east)
Oct 5-9	Ontario, Calif.
Oct 19-23	Las Vegas, NV* (public LE only)
Oct 26-30	Charleston, SC
Nov 2-6	Pittsburgh, PA (west)

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**NRA**



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Law Enforcement Division  
National Rifle Association  
11250 Waples Mill Road  
Fairfax, VA 22030

