

NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

November is the generally recognized in the U.S. as the month of Thanksgiving. As I've grown older I have come to realize that the great majority of the population of our country has never spent any appreciable amount of time outside its' borders – other than perhaps the occasional foray as a tourist. As such, they really can't put into perspective the things we, as U.S. citizens, have to be thankful for.

Until you have spent time in a country other than the United States, you have no idea the number of things we, as citizens of the greatest country on earth, have to be grateful for every day. A great deal of the world population still deals with a daily struggle for clean drinking water. Health care is non-existent, or only for the wealthy or politically connected. Diseases that are only a memory on our shores still take their toll in thousands. A child or family member disappearing or dying is a daily occurrence; soon forgotten. Dependable electricity, sanitation, reliable communications are just a dream. Certainly within the metropolitan confines of capital cities, appearances are as any modern European city would appear. Drive ten or fifteen minutes in any direction and it is like a trip in a time machine – the dwellings, countryside, and – for all appearances – the people, seem to shed thousands of years in appearance.

Despite all this, every day, without fail, I can turn on the news or pick up a newspaper and hear what an absolutely terrible country this is. I cannot begin to understand or condone this, particularly from our own citizens. My felt response generally is for them to find another country that will tolerate them – because I can't. This appears in your GUN club newsletter. That in itself is something we should be proud of and grateful for. There are far too many supposedly free countries that do not allow their citizens the privilege of privately owned firearms. Try Great Britain, Australia, and Canada just to name a few. As a citizen of the United States, the right to keep and bear arms was guaranteed me by our founding fathers. Not GIVEN, but guaranteed against governmental intrusion.

In that vein, just in case you think the fight to control your guns is won, read on. The last true lead smelter in the U.S. has, or will be, closed by the time you read this. By true smelter, I mean an operation that takes ore and turns it into a finished product. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) checked the company last year for compliance in all areas. This year, they (the Agency) responded with a list of necessary changes in order for the smelter to remain in business. The percentage of allowable toxic emissions, already stringent, was increased tenfold. With no known way to comply, the company folded. Other than recycled material, there is now NO SOURCE OF VIRGIN LEAD within the United States. Exactly what effect do you think this will have on your ammunition and component supply?

Our government and its' entities has grown (and continues to grow) at an unprecedented rate. It is far and away the single largest employer in the country. In and of itself, this fact is not surprising – until you stop and give it some serious thought. If you are the Second Under-Secretary to the Federal Department of the Underwater Basket Weaving Comptroller, are you going to vote for a party that wants to reduce the size and scope of government oversight? Of course not. You might eliminate your own job. But this is where our travels have taken us. There are so many redundant and insignificant little agencies dependent on the taxpayer that the proverbial deck is stacked against anyone or any party that wants to reduce government size or spending.

I am thankful for many things – family, friends, opportunities – but the one thing that stands out at this moment is this: I am thankful that I live in a country where my vote can change the direction I perceive us as a country to be headed. I intend to use that vote at every opportunity and hope each and every one of you will also. Just in case you don't, I'm going to buy a paddle, because it's a messy creek up which we are headed.

As an aside, the lock on the gate at the club has been changed. If you are not current with your dues, you no longer have access. We have changed to a high quality combination lock with a resettable combination. This will allow the club to change the combination annually, limiting both access and liability. If you are not current and would like to regain access, see Woody at The Sure Shot.

As usual, any opinions expressed within this newsletter are mine and mine alone.

**Tim Courtney
Secretary ACSC**