

Interview with Greg Bettis, author of Beyond the Muzzle

SN: We're excited to have published your book "Beyond the Muzzle: The Firearms Instructor & Shooter Development Guide". What is the significance of the title?

GB: Most public information regarding firearms training is focused on how and when to use a gun. But as important, if not more so for decision making, is everything other than the gun itself. Beyond the Muzzle sends the reader to places not often considered by instructors or students of practical defense. The book has a lot of information about the practical use of a firearm but much of it leans on seeing the training world from the view of a seasoned use-of-force instructor. It's like reading the coaches rule book.

SN: What are some of the main themes of the book.

GB: The main objective is to share my experience and the lessons learned from having taught thousands of professional students. This book is a treasure trove for instructors and touches on why someone chooses to teach such a high-liability topic, methods to successfully instruct others, developing "instructor vision" to see what is important, building a shooter from the ground up, understanding how critical documentation is to surviving as an instructor, knowing the difference between range training and street training, and more. Some chapters even contain instructor support material to aid in presentations. Those aren't just topics for instructors. Any person interested in improving their personal skills will benefit. Some of the topics may even be life-changing for instructors and students of practical defense.

SN: Why did you find it important to write Beyond the Muzzle?

GB: There is more information available today on how to shoot a firearm, and more people teaching it than ever before. Simply search YouTube and you'll be overwhelmed by the results. What looks fun and neat may be just that – fun and neat, but it may be counter-productive to winning a life-changing homicidal assault. Most "instructors" shoot very well but many know almost nothing about teaching "the fight" or about adult learning concepts. Beyond the Muzzle will enhance the value of professional or part-time instructors, become a compass to people helping family and friends, and improve the important mind-set and skills of any practitioner.

SN: You've been a firearms instructor a long time. I see that you retired from law enforcement last year. Are you still teaching firearms?

GB: Yes. I've been a use-of-force instructor since 1989 and I teach regularly for the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, specifically the Master Instructor Development Program course and I conduct some private courses as well.

SN: We look forward to working with you and getting "Beyond the Muzzle" in the hands of as many people as possible.

GB: Thanks for your commitment to and taking on this project.