



Quiet Discomfort

If sales at the most recent Knob Creek Machine Gun Shoot are any indication, we're beyond the "bottom" and have started to claw our way out of the pit! And while big ticket items such as rare and collectable machine guns are still a bit depressed, the sales related to other NFA items are starting to accelerate. And that puts suppressors in the *cat bird seat!*

Before 1934, nothing special was required to own a suppressor. For the many decades that suppressors were available before the Gun Control Act, it was considered to be just plain polite to respect the hearing and sensibilities of your neighbors while you were taking care of your own. Queue up the intrigue of "operations" between the Great Wars, spy novels and movies... and the concept that a *silencer* was the preferred choice of assassins and evil doers became entrenched in

the collective consciousness of the public and, more importantly, our legislators. Thus began the onerous state of affairs known as NFA registration of something that is, for all intents and purposes, a muffler.

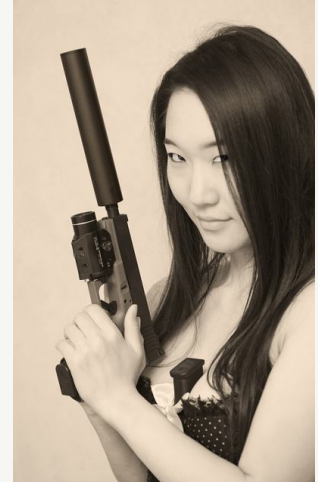
The picture at right is designed to play upon the belief by some that suppressors are for bad guys (and gals). While the concept is glamorous, we know that the reality is much more mundane. Suppressors work through a known set of principles to assist in the moderation of the sound impulse created by gun fire. And while different designs have different and varying rates of effectiveness, the net result is that suppressors allow the use of firearms to be more comfortable to those using the gun and to those nearby. The upswell in sales of suppressors has not unleashed an ungainly horde of would be "hit men" or a torrent of clandestine

operators. While the fictional allure of fantasy remains welded to the collective mind of legislators, the rising tide of new NFA owners have brought the bright light of reality to bear.

The simple fact is that suppressors are NFA items. And with the surge in applications to NFA Branch for these items, discrepancies and inconsistencies in Federal and State laws are being noticed. Suppressors are often thought of as a "gateway" purchase to the world of NFA. One rarely encounters an enthusiast with just one "can"! The rising tide of NFA applications combined with the age of instant communication and research continues to result in unintended consequences.

A Wisconsin enthusiast started off with a modest .22 suppressor, purchased through a trust because his local Chief

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NFATCA UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ◆ **NRA Convention**, April 29th—May 1st, 2011, Pittsburgh, PA
- ◆ **SARCON**, September 15-17, 2011, Las Vegas, NV
- ◆ **Knob Creek Fall Shoot**, October 14-16, 2011, West Point, KY

The New Face of ATF

The NFATCA has been in existence for a little over 6 years. In that time we have sought to assist the NFA community through cooperative efforts with the ATF and its various branches. We are proud to say that we have created and nurtured many significant and productive ongoing relationships with ATF representatives who have truly sought to assist the firearms community.

Through those efforts we have published the *NFA Handbook*, are producing the *FTB Handbook*, are in the process of rolling back the CLEO signature require-

ments on various NFA forms, and have vigorously advocated for the firearms community in halting the expansion of explosives definitions to include ammunition over .50 caliber.



Sadly, it has become apparent that the days of open communication are drawing to a close. Whether it is because of sentiment in the current ad-

ministration, direction from ATF Counsel's Office, a circling of the wagons mentality concerning many dramatic allegations in the news, or just a general distancing as part of policy, things are not nearly as collegiate as they used to be. We are still pressing our cases! Unfortunately, the less formal but more functional mode appears to be shelved. More importantly, even the formal interactions seem to be in jeopardy.

ATF has regularly either hosted or assisted with both the Importers and

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NFATCA Auctions

The NFATCA regularly auctions off items of interest, donated by our loyal supporters. Look for the auctions at various shows and on Gunbroker.com



Associate Memberships

The NFATCA now has \$50 Associate Memberships available to provide an opportunity for even more folks to help keep NFA weapons available to all. Join now!

www.nfatca.org



The NFATCA proudly supports Allen Cors for the NRA Board of Directors

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The Love Letter

As many in the NFA community are aware, there are three basic types of machine guns available in the USA: transferable weapons that have no restrictions on transfer at the federal level, "pre-May" weapons that are considered "dealer samples" that can be retained by the SOT dealer upon license surrender, and "post-May" weapons that can only



be owned by active SOT's or Mil/LE entities. ATF requires a specific request letter from the head of a Mil/LE agency in order for an SOT to receive permission to acquire a

postie for dealer sample. And you can rest assured that there is a great deal of confusion as to the requirements of that letter.

NFATCA is working with a leading industry consultant to develop a "best practices" guide to this process. Historically, the requirements for obtaining these weapons has been rather fluid. Needed language, descriptions, quantities of weapons requested and purposes seemed to change with each month and what worked last year falls flat today. Combine that with changing requirements of foreign governments and more exacting controls within the NFA and Imports Branches and you are faced with a seemingly impenetrable fog. The Guide in development will seek to address all of these concerns.

Rather than attempting to "push the envelope", the Guide will present a

comprehensive set of templates that seeks to comply with current ATF procedures and guidelines with the requirements of foreign governments. The templates will include the actual agency request letter, a multiple sample request letter, the dealer request letter, sample purchase order, and end-user certificate samples. While not guaranteed to succeed every time, the templates will certainly help to prevent you from making many common errors that regularly cause ATF rejection.

The working group responsible for producing this Guide has also enlisted help from domestic and foreign manufacturers of machine guns to add additional perspective and guidance. Look for this joint publication in the coming months. Complimentary copies will be available to all current NFATCA members.

Quiet Discomfort (continued)

Law Enforcement Official (CLEO) refused to sign off on the required Form 4. A trust was one of the few legal alternatives left to the collector and was utilized. Later, when the collector's "needs" grew, he purchased a transferable machine gun through the same trust. And although NFA Branch had regularly approved such transfers in the past, a new problem arose. Volume means scrutiny. In this case, scrutiny revealed a Wisconsin statute that requires "the sale, possession, modification, use or transportation of any weapons... Under sub. (1) or

(1m)" (machine guns) be "... authorized by the chief of police of any city or the sheriff of any county."

Uh oh. The collector used the trust because the Sheriff wouldn't sign, NFA allows trusts, but the strict reading of the statute means that the collector still needs the CLEO sign off! And on the last Form 4 submission, the NFA Branch declined the transfer. At this point, it is unclear as to how far-reaching this issue is or will become. Even more troubling is that the statute appears to mandate the CLEO signature requirement for all situations with very few excep-

tions. Even FFL/SOT's must get the official John Hancock for every machine gun they buy, sell or possess. Other aspects remain hazy, but what is known is that there is a lot of discomfort and rancor.

It is safe to say that the current system of intertwined State and Federal statutes, combined with the jumbled, random regulations of various municipalities, is not fully understood by any one person. It is also safe to say that we will continue to "discover" more issues as we go along. Buy more, learn more!

The New Face of ATF (continued)

Manufacturers conferences held throughout the years. That will no longer happen. Various trade associations (including NFATCA and FAIR) are attempting to produce



these events in a solo capacity and it remains to be seen what level of engagement ATF will shoulder. ATF has been eager, in the past, to assist with Handbooks that assist our community in understanding regulations and processes related to firearms. Today we find it impossible to even obtain a memorandum of understanding to continue working on a project that was once considered an ATF priority. Even the venerated Knob Creek shoot, which has always drawn key ATF presenters from the various headquarter branches, was recently

bereft of all but the most minimal of local ATF presence. And we are not alone.

Other organizations have struggled with this administration's offers of "open dialogue" combined with it's posture of stilted silence. Reactionary groups would say that it is a call to battle. However, those of us who have achieved success know that all is cyclical, especially in government. Future success is dependent upon our abilities to persevere and adapt to the ever-changing landscapes presented to us. We will certainly do so!