

# AMERICAN SURVIVOR

Survival Information For The Prepared Citizen

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**IN THIS ISSUE: Lessons from the Amish, The Self-Reliance Challenge, Hot & Cold, Ammo Can Stove, The Gun Buy Back Conspiracy, Live Free News**

## Learning True Self-Reliance from the Amish

The last time I visited an Amish community was in the late 1980s. Back then; I was primarily focused on outdoors survival and short-term emergency preparedness. The signs of a total economic and infrastructure collapse were not yet obvious so alternative life systems were more academic than practical. On a more recent expedition to the same Amish community I was more focused on observing and learning from people who acutely do what most survivalist only theorize about. Most of these communities operate tourist-oriented facilities where you can take narrated tours of typical self-sufficient homes, farms, and basic industries. Amish groups vary in their use of technology. The group I visited in Northern Indiana does not use electricity or electronic devices in their homes. Interestingly, they do use telephones and power tools at their places of employment away from home. Their acceptance choices of technologies are interesting. They reject electricity, but use steam power. This particular group uses windmills to pump water while another group will not use

windmills. It is not my intention to advocate that we all become Amish or any other particular religion. Their strict and rather regimented life style is not compatible with my libertarian values. Their selective rejection of science and technology works for them, but would certainly limit progress and survivability for most self-reliant families. It is also important to point out that these communities are only partially self-reliant. They go to modern hospitals when they are ill; they ride (but not drive) motorized transportation and buy and sell in the mass economy around them. Basically, they live a 19<sup>th</sup> Century life in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world. Even with these exceptions, the Amish have much to teach us. They are they are closer to where we all are going than most of us. They are tolerated because they are a very small minority and because they have the shield of religious protections. If anywhere near a majority of the population were to achieve this level of self-reliance, the entire tax supported, centralized power structure would collapse. Or inversely as the entire centralized

power structure collapses this is where we are going. One of the first things one notices about an Amish home is the missing, computers, TVs and radios. Yes, of course they have no electricity, but that's not the point. They have no reason to care about what's going on in Washington or Europe or the Middle East. There is also no way for these devices to direct them, manage them or distract them. Most of what the government and the banking systems do is just irrelevant to them. Since a significant part of their life needs are provided within the family or within the community they pay a lot less taxes. While some members work outside the community to earn (taxable) cash to pay necessary bills, many stay home to grow and preserve food, repair equipment, make clothing and provide other goods and services that most of us pay others to do. The modern American family works multiple jobs to earn taxed income to buy food and products made by other taxed workers at taxed prices. The Amish do not. They also do without taxed electrical, water and gas bills. Ah! Self-reliance is the ultimate act of tax resistance. If I raise my own chickens, grow my own food and generate my own power (or at least some of it) I pay no taxes, but if I work to buy them my income is taxed, the production is taxed, the transportation is taxed and the sale is taxed. Awesome. Another lesson is that one does not need to be in a commune like, contiguous colony to have a self-reliant community. The Amish maintain a mutually supportive economic system of semi-self-reliant families spread out

throughout hundreds of square miles. They are able to barter and provide mutual aid to each other and to adjoining groups. This is a model for future post collapse economies and they would probably still be able to use more modern communications and transportation methods. Insurance is another centralized service the Amish do not use. If a member has medical bills they are unable to pay, the community gets together to raise the funds. If a barn burns down, there is the classic barn raising operation. Here again they keep their funds out of the hands of strangers and opportunists.

The pacifism and rejection of technology are anomalies that work for the Amish, only because they are tolerated and protected by the existing system and they benefit from technologies even though they disdain them. Future self-reliant societies would add working non-centralized technological systems to the 19<sup>th</sup> century methods they use. At some point the capacity for self-defense would critical to replace or supplement local law enforcement and discourage organized hostility.



Drying shed, baking house and smokehouse adjoin typical Amish family home.



Laundry is boiled in the wood fired pot and hung in the warmed laundry room in winter. It is solar dried on a clothesline in summer.



Water from the roof is all routed to a cistern in the basement then pumped up by hand to sinks in the house.



The steam engine here is used to run a cider press. Steam is also used to process mint oil, but no steam tractors were used.

### Conclusion

A visit to an Amish or Mennonite colony can be highly educational for the individual survivalist or survival/self-reliance group. Observing this self-reliant community is both educational and inspirational. Selectively using their methods together with more modern technology offers a viable model for a survivable, sustainable and more independent future.

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## The Self-Reliance Challenge

*An introduction to the Challenge series of articles exploring alternatives to our failing systems.*

From the moment we get up till the time we go to bed, all of us are dependent on centralized, regulated, monitored and taxed systems. We fix our morning coffee in an electric coffee maker. Prepare breakfast in the toaster and microwave. We drive to our jobs in fossil fueled or electric vehicles. We buy prepackaged foods or stop at fast-

food restaurants because we no longer have the time or facilities to truly cook. We cut the grass with a powered mower and then get exercise on a powered device. We take flushing the toilet and taking a hot shower for granted. We are warm in winter and cool in summer regardless of outside temperatures. All of this has been considered "normal" since the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. This version of normal exists solely because of the very recent availability of coal, petroleum and natural gas. All of which are limited and declining resources. **What happens when the lights don't go on, the water does not run and the toilet doesn't flush!** Even if these system just become prohibitively expensive and unreliable, then what?

The life sustaining methods of an ancient Roman and an America revolutionary of 1776 were not much different, but that early American would not recognize today's civilization. **The homes and communities of the past were constructed and organized for personal independence while today's homes are totally dependent parts of a centralized system.** While this has provide us with a greater level of comfort and safety than any period in history it has lead the world into a trap. The entire civilization is networked and dependent in such a way that failure of anything creates a domino effect. It is so vulnerable and fragile that the cracks and tremors are clear to anyone not in denial. Of course the politicians are denying and the majority is in denial.

**There is no way that the world can sustain this level of living standards for this size population even assuming current resources are maintained and no climate change occurs.** Of course the resources *are* declining, the climate *is* changing and the population *is* growing. So what can we do!

A much smaller world population survived quite well with much less not long ago. They were better off in many ways and were certainly more independent and free than we are today. Warning! They worked harder and had less time for recreation. Doing more for yourself and your family usually required that at least one family member worked at home and the children pitched in too. **That work was not taxed or regulated but was true value/income to the family.** There was less obesity, cancer, diabetes and mental illnesses.

No one is suggesting that we go back to pioneer living or abandon the truly helpful innovations of the past one hundred years. But we can and must reclaim essential independence and self-reliance in order to survive and preserve our values in a changing world. Combining the new knowledge and the old methods to liberate America family-by-family and community-by-community. Those who wait until the emergencies of collapse drive them into desperate measures will probably be among the casualties of change rather than the survivors of it.

**In future articles we will explore each dependency issue (e.g. food, water, waste disposal, sanitation, transportation, etc.) and suggest some practical alternatives and**

how to implement them in the future.

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## Hot and Cold

### Staying Warm In The Winter And Cool In The Summer Under Emergency Condition

*Mark Twain once said "mathematicians would tell you that a man standing with one foot in a fire and the other in a bucket of ice water is on average comfortable".*

Most people are "comfortable" between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Our bodies can adjust to cooler and warmer temperatures, but below 45 and above 85 we usually need help from clothing and devices such as heaters, fans and air-conditioners. At further extremes the issue changes from one of comfort to a matter of survival. Depending on your location, there are at least 6-months each year where it is either too cold or too warm to survive without some help. The easy availability of fuel and electricity has lead to the placement of major populations in areas that would be (will be) untenable without cheap heating or massive power for air-conditioning. Places like Phoenix AZ, Minneapolis/St Paul come to mind. It is highly doubtful that any large urban area could survive long without natural gas for heat and electrical power for A/C. While individual homes may adapt, high-rises and skyscrapers have no alternative means for heating or cooling. In most cases the windows don't even open and they sure aren't set up for thousands of stoves. However urban and suburban

homesteads could adapt if preparations are in place.

## A Brief History of Heating and Cooling

Prior to World War Two homes were built smaller and thus easier to heat. Larger homes simply closed off unused rooms in the winter and only heated the ones they used. Older (pre 1920) homes still had gas grates or stoves to heat individual rooms. Sweaters were worn in the home and comforters were often used as well. The temperatures were allowed to get down into the 50s at night so beds had heavy quilts and even tent like bed curtains to ward off drafts. Country houses still used true shutters to close off windows against north winds. Of course coal furnaces were the main source of central heating and these could burn wood and other solid fuels as well. Of course you did want to keep your milk, eggs and other perishables warm so you had a window converted and shelved as a storage place for these. Hot nightly showers didn't happen. You heated the place up one or two night a week and everyone took a bath then.

To keep cool in summer, windows were double hung so you could open the top and bottom to create circulation. Screen porches provided a safe, insect free location to catch a breeze. Most folks had beds on these porches to sleep in summer. Electric fans provide some comfort, as did cold drinks. Before refrigeration ice could be purchased by the block. This was ice cut from local rivers and lakes and stored in insulated icehouses. Hay was often used to insulate the ice. Ice cut in

winter would often last into August if properly stored. Hard work was done in the early morning and the late afternoon. Most importantly, the body adapted to the heat.

After World War Two homes were built bigger and with large rooms that were more costly to heat. Fireplaces were not included in most designs. Smoky coal furnaces were replaced by oil and then natural gas. These were cleaner and better, but less adaptable. In many cases windows were no longer adaptable for ventilation and screen-porches disappeared. More recently, better insulation, double-pane windows and the return of the fireplace has provided some potential for heat conservation.

The point is that we got along without as much heating and almost no Air-conditioning until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century. With some adaptation and less comfort we can again. Buy the way, this author suffered through several winters as a child by collecting coal along the railroad track and scrap wood on my sled to heat our home when we couldn't afford coal. I also lived in an apartment with a 15-amp power supply that could scarcely power window fans so I got along for over 40-years with no A/C at all.

### **Heating Without Fuel or Electricity**

For short-term interruption portable room heaters and blanket may be adequate. Be sure that heaters are designed for indoor use and that your carbon monoxide detectors are working. Having a generator that is sufficient (usually 2000 watts or bigger) to run your furnace fan and controls will be a big help if you still have natural gas supplied.

Fireplaces are inefficient. Invest in a wood-burning stove that can quickly be hooked up to the existing fireplace flue. Install doors and/or set up curtains to close off rooms that do not need to be heated. Seal windows with plastic. Obviously, you are going to need good sleeping bags and wool blankets. You may want to consider putting up a small sleeping tent in one room. This will be much easier to heat and will retain body heat on cold nights just like the old bed curtains did. As long as you stay well fed, well-clothed and active winters will be "cozy" or at least survivable.

### **Staying Cool Without A/C**

In the short term a generator running a fan or two will be great. You can just find a shady spot and catch a breeze and wait for the power to return. You can usually run your freezer and refrigerator intermittently to save food and provide some ice. You do have a generator? If the fuel runs out and the power just is not going to come back on you have a few more options. If you cannot build a screen porch, get screen house that they sell for campers. You can stay cooler in there and sleep in it at night. You can dig a hole in the yard and line it with hay or build a well-insulated shed to store ice you manufacture in winter by freezing water in containers. Beyond that you will just have to adapt. Heat will not kill you unless you help it, whereas cold will kill you unless you fight it.

### **Conclusion**

We have become accustomed to being perpetually comfortable regardless of the climate, but this

may not be the case in the near future. A look at how people in the recent past kept warm and cool offers some hints as to how we may need to adapt again. Acquiring the necessary equipment to alter our homes and lifestyles now will be essential to survival in future situations. The combination of climate changes and the diminution of fuel supplies over the next few decades make the need for adaptation and alternatives to current methods of heating and cooling highly probable.

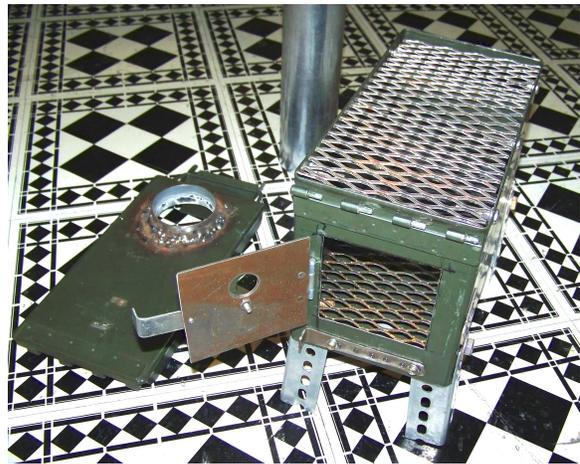
**NOTE:** *Camping in all weather conditions is the very best way to assure your ability to survive cold and heat. You will be required to purchase and test stoves, heaters, sleeping bags, clothing and other necessities. Most importantly you will become proficient and confident of your ability to adapt without modern conveniences. Many survival/preparedness groups conduct such activities for this purpose.*

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## Brian's Ammo Can Stove

One of our members recently brought the stove pictured below to one of our many public preparedness events. It is constructed from a standard 600 round, 7.62 mm NATO ammo can. He used expanded metal for the fire grate and grill top. It can be used closed with the attached pipe as a tent or shed heater or open as a camp grill. The legs keep it off the ground or floor for safety and better heat circulation. A 4 3/4 electrical box cover made a perfect door and 3-inch automotive tail pipe fittings were

used for the chimney and top opening. Welding was required for the chimney fitting only. Pop rivets were used for other attachments. The rubber ammo can gasket had to be replaced with 3/8 #202BK black rope gasket material. This is very durable and efficient heating and cooking system for camping and emergencies. If you have a survival device or technique, why not share it with everyone? Send us some photos and notes.



Stove with top removed to show grill. Note the ventilation control slide below the door.



Stove fully assembled with stovepipe in place. Note the door latch and observation port on the door.

## The Gun Buyback Conspiracy *Bounty Hunters Are After Your Guns*

By Jim Jones

Actually, I don't believe in "conspiracies" because the world and life is just too complex and unpredictable for any complex "plan" to workout as the conspirators intended. I do believe in things working out in intended or unintended ways that look like conspiracies. The case in point here is the so-called gun buy back programs. The advertised intent of these programs is to get "guns off the streets". **This program is a result of what I call "the do something syndrome". This syndrome takes effect when politicians and community activists are beset by a problem that they cannot actually fix or to which a true solution would be politically incorrect.** They then enact laws and initiate programs that look good but have no actual effect on the problem. In this case; marches, demonstrations at gun shops and gun buy backs that have had zero effect on the murder rates. The true effect of gun buy back may be an intended conspiracy or just an unintended result of stupid people.

So how do these programs really work? Looking at the guns being turned in I realized that there were a lot of scoped hunting rifles, nice plated and engraved collectors pistols and new, high-end handguns. These guns were not lying around grammas' house or straight from the local gangs arsenal. **These guns were recently stolen from law-abiding citizens and gun shops**

**around the city. So in effect, the gun buy back programs are actually incentive program for gun theft.** Lets assume that the effect is an intentional conspiracy. The authorities are prevented by the constitution from confiscating firearms from law-abiding citizens so they employ the criminals to do it for them. Criminals and gangs do not disarm themselves. Anyone who believes that is an idiot. The gangs do not actually need to steal guns to arm themselves. The Chicago gangs are run by two of the biggest Mexican drug cartels in the world. They smuggle tons of drugs through Chicago weekly. No doubt they can provide any kind of weapons to the streets regardless of any laws or programs. **What one goal do the cartels and the authorities have in common? They do not want citizens to be armed.**

While the true value of a given firearm may range from about \$400.00 to several thousand dollars, the street value of a stolen weapon is far less. Brand, quality, engraving, etc have little value to gangbangers. So stealing a gun for street sale has a low profit margin **compared to drugs and other items. The effect of the gun buy back program is to provide an incentive for gun theft and provide a guaranteed profit with "no questions asked".** If a stolen gun is recovered during a raid or search the serial numbers are checked and it may be returned to the legitimate owner, but a gun turned in at the buy back goes directly to the smelter. So a criminal can steal guns and be assured of a safe profit on his inventory. He can also use the gun in a crime and get

paid for ditching the evidence. **Obviously these programs have done nothing to reduce murders in Chicago so why persist in them?** There has been an increase in gun store break-ins in the areas around Chicago with hundreds of new guns being stolen. Is that a coincident? The Chicago police do very little to track down the sources of guns used in crimes. Do they really want to discourage gun theft?

**Are the Chicago (and other) authorities deliberately using the**

**gangs to confiscate the people's defenses or is it just unintended consequences?** Chicago and many other metropolitan areas are rapidly becoming like third world countries where the people are disarmed and caught between the gangs and the authorities. This is even more appalling when you consider that minorities and the poor are the most frequent victims of these crimes and violations.

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### WE HAVE ADDED TWO PAGES!

We have added two more pages to your newsletter. This is the maximum number of pages that we can have without incurring additional postage. We will no longer be able to include extra flyers or even the small renewal notice we previously used. **When your subscription runs out there will be a red stamp on the last issue saying "LAST ISSUE, PLEASE RENEW"**. You can avoid this by watching the renewal date on your mailing label and renewing in advance.

The additional pages will be used for added survival and preparedness information a limited amount of paid advertising and listings of Live Free USA regional and chapter activities. Please note that Live Free dues have not gone up since the 1980s and we will try to keep them at \$20.00 per year. Continuing our chapter and networking support, educational programs and publications will continue to depend on maintaining memberships and contributions. Thanks for your continued support.

#### ADVERTISING IN AMERICAN SURVIVOR

For the first time in many years we will be accepting a limited number of display ads in our newsletter. This would significantly help our bottom line. We will limit advertising to one page. Running advertisements will be contingent on finding a volunteer to solicit the ads and layout the page for every issue. Not a big job if you have MS Word and e-mail. Assuming that happens, we hope to have ads in our early 2013 issues. The proposed ad rates are below.

#### American Survivor Advertising Rates

- / ½ page (4 ½ x 6 ½) \$50.00 per issue, \$250 for six issues / 1-year
- / ¼ page (2 ¼ x 6 ½ or 3 ¼ x 4 ½) \$30.00 per issue or \$150 per year
- / 1/8 page ( 2 ¼ x 3 ¼) \$25.00 per issue or \$125.00 per year

Ads may be submitted as MS Word Documents or PDF files. All ads will be printed in black and white. Live Free reserves the right to reject ads that we deem inappropriate to our mission. Our volunteer staff gets issues together at irregular intervals. Time sensitive ads should be submitted two months before the issue month. For example: ads for the March April issue should be in by January 1<sup>st</sup> if possible. **Send ads to [lfinow@aol.com](mailto:lfinow@aol.com)<sup>9</sup> Send checks made out to Live Free USA to Live Free, P.O. Box 3295, Munster, IN 46321**

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## South West Chicago Chapter Annual Winter Survival Camp

The annual winter camp that the SW Chapter usually does in Will County IL will again be held at the American Military Vehicles Museum just east of downtown Crown Point Indiana. This is because the site in Will County that was supposed to be ready will not be available again. While there is no charge for the camp we would appreciate contributions since we have to pay to provide a sanitation facility at this site. **We do request advance registration and providing a phone number since some extreme weather conditions can force cancellation. This event is not open to the "public" but to Live Free members, chapters, invited groups and guests. A flyer PDF is attached.** For information and registration contact [survivorji@aol.com](mailto:survivorji@aol.com) or [dancingstick13@aol.com](mailto:dancingstick13@aol.com) before November 15<sup>th</sup>.

### LIVE FREE USA CHAPTER CONTACTS

Our new website page will include more information about our chapters and how to contact them. We will also use our additional space to run listings of their meetings when provided. **We encourage members to contact and support your regional chapters.**

1. Northwest Chicago and Suburbs Chapter: [jetdoc@vzw.blackberry.net](mailto:jetdoc@vzw.blackberry.net)
2. Southwest Chicago and Suburbs Chapter: [dancingstick13@aol.com](mailto:dancingstick13@aol.com)
3. Chicago Southtown (western Chicago & Suburbs):  
[ratman6850@yahoo.com](mailto:ratman6850@yahoo.com)
4. Northwest Indiana Chapter (NWI Family Pre Club) :  
[beth@libertystraightup.net](mailto:beth@libertystraightup.net)
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6. Southern Indiana: [mjg01002@aol.com](mailto:mjg01002@aol.com)
7. Southern Illinois: [lbr@frontier.com](mailto:lbr@frontier.com)
8. Atlanta GA Chapter ( GA Prep & Self-Reliance Group) :  
[rscott.tyner@gmail.com](mailto:rscott.tyner@gmail.com)
9. Phoenix AZ Chapter (forming) : [roy.wrt@gmail.com](mailto:roy.wrt@gmail.com)
10. East Central Illinois (events, organizing) : [templar223@comcast.net](mailto:templar223@comcast.net)

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### LIVE FREE USA WEBSITE IMPROVED & UPGRADED

Your organization invested some time and money a few years ago to provide a first class website that would provide information to the world about Live Free USA and its programs and special information, publications and download to members. **Member who join on-line or request access can download video and photos of Live Free events and also download back issues of American Survivor and Live Free Report..** New members could join and pay online through PayPal. After two years we could see that some improvements

were needed and there were a few things that just did not work right so we have fixed a few things and made a few changes

- / We added a greater variety of photos to the slideshow on the main page and lots of photos to the gallery section.
- / We originally offered a lower priced on-line only membership that included Internet access only and no US Mail, paper publications. Since no one opted for this in two years, we have eliminated it. All memberships are “full memberships” at \$20.00 for 1-year or \$50.00 for three years with both Internet access and paper publications. **All members joining on line must e-mail a mailing address to get all publications.**
- / We fixed the issues with the membership and PayPal programs that made it hard to join on-line.
- / We improved the downloadable application for those who chose to join by mail.
- / We improved and simplified the on-line forum and added many new topics. Please go there and discuss survival and preparedness topics with your fellow members.
- / Fixed the program glitch that caused conflicting dates on the calendar entries. **Live Free sponsored events are listed here.**
- / We have added a special page under the “Become a Member” for each chapter to list information and contacts. **Go there to contact your local chapter or have us help you start a group using this tool.**
- / **We have added more video from past Live Free training events to the video section. This includes several classes from 2012 Camp Independence**

You can help us make this investment work by linking it to other pages and by passing it on in social media and e-mails.

*NOTE: When you pay on-line your access is automatically established. If you do not join on-line you must request that we manually enter you into the system. Provide a preferred user name and password. This may take up to 30-days.*

**SAVE THIS DATE!**

*CAMP INDEPENDENCE 2013 is set for May 3-4-5 at Tippecanoe River State Park in Northern Indiana. We filled up all of the available cabins last year so you will want to get your group and family reservations in early. Live Free members and members of Live Free chapters registered through the chapter will get first priority. Full details will be published in January. We already have lots of great courses lined up. If you will need a group cabin or want to do a class contact [survivorjj@aol.com](mailto:survivorjj@aol.com) ASAP.*

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**Advertising**

*In order to provide the maximum useful content to our subscribers we do not accept advertising in this publication*

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