

Texas DA and Attorney General Declare Assisted-openers NOT Switchblades

As a result of a February, 2005 arrest of a Texas college student for bringing an assisted-opening knife on campus in Brazoria County, TX, we have another ruling by a District Attorney that such knives

do not meet the definition of a switchblade.

According to Jeff Goddard, Director of Sales and Marketing at Kershaw Knives, Tualatin, OR, "The DA, Angie

Morris, got several opinions, including one from the Texas Attorney General. They have all stated that these assisted-opening knives do not meet the definition of a switchblade."

Goddard indicated the parents of the college student "were pretty upset since the knives are sold everywhere."

DA Morris acknowledged that the knives "do open fast", but they have dropped the charges against the student and they have backed off of all issues regarding these knives, Goddard reports. "She told me they are legal to sell in Brazoria County, TX," Goddard said.

The DA also indicated there is a website for the TDCAA (Texas District & County Attorneys Association) where quite a bit of discussion took place regarding the knives. DA Morris said there were postings that informed all DA's in

Jones and Hall Elected AKTI Officers



Michael A. Jones - AKTI President

Michael A. Jones, Vice President, Operations at Gerber Legendary Blades, Portland, OR, was selected as the new President of AKTI at the 2005 Annual Meeting held in conjunction with the Blade Show in Atlanta, GA, in June 2005. Formerly the Vice President of AKTI, he will serve as the AKTI President until June 2007.

Michael shares the following comments about his interest in knives and the future of AKTI.

"I've been involved in the knife industry professionally for almost 10 years now, but have always had a love of pocket knives and mechanisms. My dad was one of those rare individuals who could carve a chain from a piece of wood. He taught me how to use a knife safely when I was very young.

"As an adult, my fascination with the craftsmanship and ingenuity seen in the industry has rekindled my love of tools. I have been involved in manufac-



David Hall - AKTI Vice President

David Hall, the co-founder, President and CEO of United Cutlery Corporation, Sevierville, TN, has been named the Vice President of AKTI. Under the normal progression of officers, he will become the AKTI President in June 2007.

David Hall was a member of the U.S. Army from 1975 to 1978, holding a rank of E5. He joined Blue Ridge Knives in 1979 and remained affiliated with Blue Ridge through 1988. In 1984 David, with three partners, formed United Cutlery. David acquired full ownership of United in 2000.

He developed a family of companies that manufacture, sale and distribute a full range of cutlery and fantasy products. In 2003, David formed Arrowhead Manufacturing & Technologies, LLC. In the formation of Arrowhead, the company features state of the art equipment and innovative, highly technical production processes. It is reportedly the most modern knife-making facility in the world.

"The DA, Angie Morris, got several opinions, including one from the Texas Attorney General."

Texas that the opinions about these knives were that they were NOT ILLEGAL, Goddard adds.

The site is www.tdcaa.com Go to "User Forum" tab and type "assisted knives" in the search on the bottom of the page. Below is the actual link to some postings by Texas attorneys. <http://tdcaa.infopop.net/2/OpenTopic?q=Y&a=search&f=157098965&s=347098965&reqWords=assisted+knives&submit1=Find>

Texas (continued)

Editor's Note: In 2004, we published a similar report on a court case in Michigan ...

Michigan case declares Kershaw "Speed Safe" not a switchblade

Waterford, Michigan — A Michigan jury decided that a defendant arrested for carrying a Kershaw "Speed Safe" Model #1560 was not in statutory violation of statute MCL 750.226a which prohibits carrying a "switchblade." The defendant had all charges dismissed and the knife returned to him.

The case was in the Michigan District Court for the 51st Judicial District, Case 020062SM, decision rendered on January 21, 2003, in Waterford, MI.

"We're pleased with the court decision," Kershaw national sales manager Doug Flagg said. "Switchblades, by definition, are opened by pressing a button in the handle. Our 'Speed Safe' knives require that blade opening is started by fingers on the blade or on a thumb stud."

Thanks to Gerber...

and congratulations to new AKTI member Mark Wesesky. Mark attended Blade Show West in Portland and was the winner of the Gerber LMF 11 Infantry knife with sheath graciously donated by Gerber Legendary Blades.

AKTI Honored Attorney Daniel C. Lawson for his valuable contributions to all knife-users

Daniel C. Lawson Esquire, of Meyer, Darragh, Buckner, Bebenek & Eck, P.L.L.C., Pittsburgh, PA, was presented with a plaque by AKTI's Executive Committee in appreciation of his expertise and dedication on the Guide to Knife Laws, the Blade Length Protocol and Knife Definitions.

The American Knife & Tool Institute says, "thank you and job well done."

TSA Asks for Comment on Allowing Knives on Airplanes

Editor's note: The Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) requested comment in August, 2005 on the prospect of allowing passengers to once again carry knives on airplanes. AKTI sent the following letter on August 25, 2005.

Mr. Edmund S. Hawley
Administrator (TSA – 1)
Transportation Security Administration
601 So. 12th St.
Arlington, VA 22202-4220

Dear Sir:

The American Knife & Tool Institute (AKTI) is a non-profit organization that represents knife owners and all segments of the United States knife industry. A recent *Washington Post* news item, which indicated you and your staff were re-evaluating regulations that prohibit passengers from carrying knives on board commercial aircraft, has generated considerable positive interest among our members.

AKTI emphatically supports a revision of the Code provisions, which now prohibit passengers from carrying small knives or having such items in their carry-on bags.

There is widespread sentiment that prohibitions relating to small knives and other such items do not promote legitimate aviation security interests. Moreover, the American knife industry has experienced considerable harm. For example, the largest company in the United States knife industry, Imperial Schrade, celebrated its 100th anniversary last year by going out of business. Among other things, alienated travelers whose pocketknives were confiscated have simply stopped buying them.

We are also not unmindful of reports of confiscated personal items that include family heirlooms, gifts and other items with emotional value. The majority of these became TSA property through passenger forgetfulness, inattentive flight packing and ignorance. For example, to download the TSA Prohibited and Permitted Items List from your website requires a preliminary one-hour-and-22-minute download of the Adobe Acrobat program.

We do note that the recent news item regarding your proposed re-evaluation also mentioned other items such as bows and arrows, ice picks and "throwing stars." AKTI takes no position on these non-knife items.

We do, however, suggest that pocketknives and other small knives have long been recognized and used as everyday tools by millions of ordinary citizens; by home gardeners; by tradesmen such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians, emergency personnel, and law enforcement officers; and by sportsmen such as campers, mountain climbers, hikers, bikers, fishermen, hunters, and boaters.

We suggest that a revised regulation, which would permit airline passengers to carry (on their persons or in carry-on baggage) knives with a blade length of five inches (as you propose), would minimize the current negative impact of knife users in the above categories. It should also reduce the anxiety of those persons concerned about the relaxation of the current restrictive rules. I have enclosed copies of AKTI's Protocol for Measuring Knife Blade Length.

We also applaud the efforts of TSA and the airlines to focus on explosives and cockpit assaults, both significant threats to airline security. TSA and the airlines have addressed those issues with hardened cockpit doors. Such TSA programs as the Crew Member Self Defense Program, the Armed Security Officer Program, the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program, the National Explosives Detection Canine Program, and Explosives Detection Trace Portals will further reduce significant threats when we fly.

AKTI would welcome any inquiry you may have about this issue.

Sincerely,
Jan Billeb, Executive Director
Michael Jones, President

Jones (continued)

turing and engineering for most of my career. I feel fortunate to be at Gerber Legendary Blades.

“With Gerber’s involvement in AKTI, I have become more aware of the legislative and regulatory environment concerning our old friend, the knife. We have been left with a legacy of legislation and regulation that have limited our freedoms. AKTI is committed to providing resources to develop responsible legislation regarding knives and tools. I am very proud to serve in an organization dedicated to preserving a certain set of values and a way of life. We look forward to making AKTI an ever-more-substantial voice and reference for knife enthusiasts and professionals.”

President Bush Signs Historic ‘Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act’

Showing his continued support for legal reform to protect America’s law-abiding businesses and its economy, President Bush on October 26, 2005, signed into law a bill that will put an end to “junk” lawsuits against the nations firearms industry.

The ‘Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act’ will block any future lawsuits attempting to hold firearms industry companies liable for the actions of criminals who misuse the industry’s lawful products.

“Our industry offers its sincere thanks to the president and Congress for recognizing the importance of this much-needed legislation. This law will not only help protect law-abiding businesses and the jobs of thousands nationwide, but it will also help ensure a positive future for our nation’s hunting and shooting traditions and our firearms freedoms,” said Doug Painter, president of the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), the trade association representing firearms and ammunition manufacturers.

President Bush praised Congress for the bill’s passage adding “...Our laws should punish criminals who use guns to commit crimes, not law-abiding manufacturers of lawful products. ...”

Hall (continued)

Arrowhead is an OEM manufacturer for the cutlery industry. Also in 2003, David formed Tomahawk Trading Company, LLC as a sourcing element to the business. United, Arrowhead and Tomahawk all function as separate business entities.

United® Cutlery Brands — an independent manufacturer of hunting, camping, fishing, military and utility knives — also markets fantasy and historical swords, knives and collectibles, many of these under license. They also offer outdoor accessories Known in the industry for its creativity and innovative product designs, United Cutlery differentiates itself by offering exclusive designs, patented mechanisms and exclusive brands.

Knives Taken From Katrina Refugees

Reports following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina indicate people seeking refuge or assistance were searched for “weapons,” including pocketknives. FEMA and various government agencies required pocketknives to be discarded or the person could not enter any of the shelters.

Should homeless people in such situations, who may have escaped the storm with what was on their back and in their pockets, be required to give up the only “tool” that may be in their possession?

What do you think? Send your comments to Jan Billeb, AKTI Executive Director, and we will include a sample in our next issue.

YES, I will join AKTI and help support responsible knife use!

Give generously! Your membership dues help ...

- 1) Fight for your knife rights...as we did in California, in Boston, in Florida, wherever AKTI is needed!**
- 2) Communicate regularly with knife users and the editors of more than 50 outdoor publications!**
- 3) Help lawmakers and law enforcement personnel with information...such as the knife measuring protocol.**

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Check here if you prefer to not receive any possible additional mailings.

Note: Since the American Knife and Tool Institute, Inc. has filed as a 501(c)(6) not for profit tax status, dues may be deductible as a business expense, but not as a charitable contribution.



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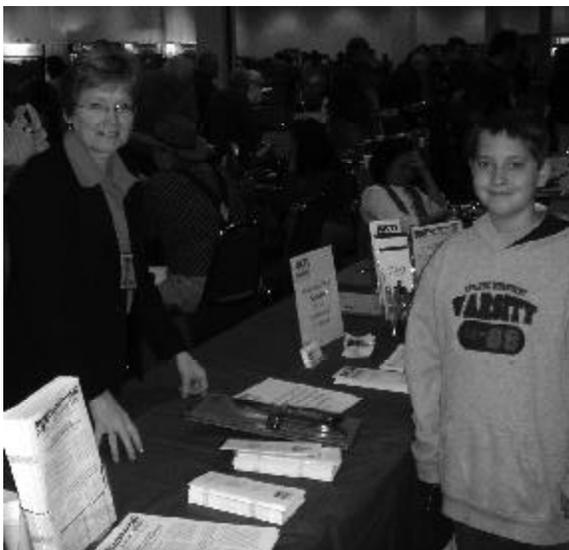
Forum: go to www.akti.org and click on AKTI Forum or go to www.bladeforum.com or knifeforum.com

**Serving the
Knife Industry
and Individual Knife Owners
Since January 1998**



Keeping Knives In American Lives

AKTI Thanks Blade Magazine for its continued support of our efforts by providing display space at the October Blade Show West



AKTI Executive Director Jan Billeb sharing knife safety information with a young attendee at Blade Show West, Portland, Oregon.