

Kittrell Community Watch gets an introduction to firearms

Area residents met at the Kittrell Community Center recently for a lively discussion of gun issues with Chad Coffey. Coffey is a sergeant with the Granville County Sheriff's Office where he provides firearms training and is part of the Aggressive Criminal Enforcement Unit. Coffey also provides instruction on law enforcement topics at Vance-Granville Community College and provides concealed carry and other firearms training for the public (<http://coffeysconcealedcarry.com/>).

Edward Woodlief, president of the Kittrell Community Watch, convened the meeting. Mary Jo Floyd gave a tribute to John Greenwood, organizer and first president of Kittrell Community Watch, who died of a sudden stroke Oct. 2. Rev. Carolyn Roy, pastor at Plank Chapel United Methodist Church, delivered the invocation, which included a moment of silence in memory of Greenwood.

For the main program, Coffey addressed the group using a question-and-answer format. There was no shortage of questions. Topics ranged from purchasing a gun to avoiding becoming a victim. Coffey used numerous personal experiences, examples and

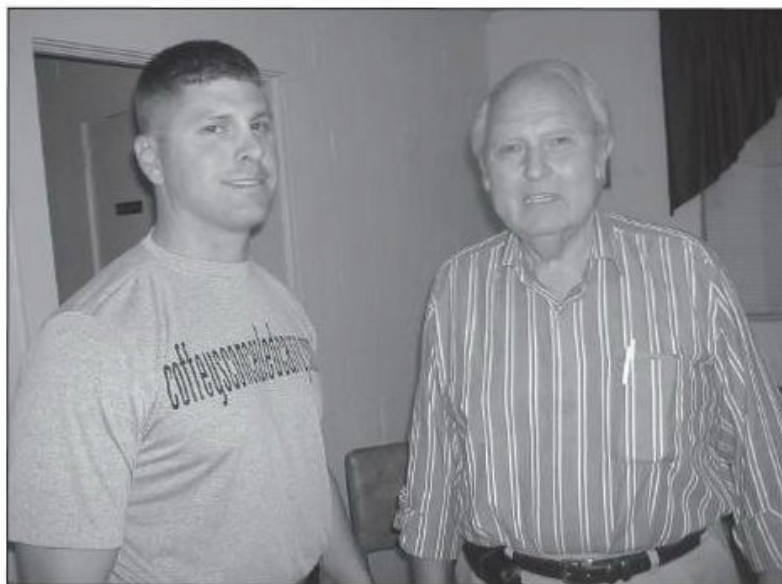
a healthy dose of humor to illustrate his points.

Coffey discussed the laws on the use of firearms for self defense. He said citizens may use deadly force only when they reasonably believe it necessary to prevent an imminent threat of death, great bodily harm, or sexual assault. He clarified that great bodily harm (compared to simple assault) means something that would put a person in the hospital.

He said that forcible entry into your home is reason to fear death or great bodily harm. When possible, a person should retreat to avoid a lethal encounter but retreat may be impractical or impossible. Finally, the instigator of a confrontation can never use lethal force to end it.

Coffey discussed a hypothetical situation where a police officer stops the vehicle of a legally-armed citizen. The citizen should keep both hands in plain sight, well away from any gun, preferably on the steering wheel or open window.

If the citizen does not have a concealed-carry permit, the gun must be in plain sight, such as on the dashboard, unless it is inaccessible, as in a locked container or in the trunk. He said one should avoid surprising the officer. Even



Chad Coffey (left) was the guest speaker at the October meeting of the Kittrell Community Watch. Edward Woodlief is president of the group.

with a gun in plain view, it is good to mention it to the officer.

Coffey also described the requirements of private gun sales and discussed potential hazards and ways to avoid them. For example, buying a stolen gun is a felony which can be avoided by checking the serial number with your sheriff before purchase, he said.

Likewise, selling a gun to someone prohibited from owning one (such as a convicted felon) is also a felony which can be avoided by insisting the buyer show a pistol purchase permit, even for rifles and shotguns. Sales through a licensed gun dealer also avoid these problems.

Finally, Coffey said

anyone who is serious about owning firearms for self defense needs to get professional training and he described the concealed-carry course.

Afterwards, Deputy Craig Thorpe of the Vance County Sheriff's Office warned the audience to watch out for scams and also to be observant and lock their doors at drive-throughs. Be cautious but not paranoid, he emphasized.

In adjourning, Woodlief reminded everyone to be observant, know their neighbors, and keep their doors locked. He announced the next Kittrell Community Watch meeting will likely be in January or February 2012.