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FIGHTING BACK

Woman 2, thugs 0 after home invasion

Oklahoma break-in turns deadly when 'victim' pulls gun and fires

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By Bob Unruh
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One gun isn't enough.

That was what Linda Smith (a pseudonym) was thinking after two thugs broke into her Oklahoma apartment. One was holding a weapon (she initially thought it was a knife but it turned out to be a screwdriver) at her throat, and the other was pacing back and forth while holding her purse and demanding her money and valuables. She screamed, and was told if she screamed again, she'd be dead.

She was doing as police recommend in robberies – comply with a robber's demands. But her Lady Smith & Wesson .38 special, which she carries by permit, was hidden in her purse – and the purse was being held by one of the attackers.

Then the situation, suddenly, got much, much worse: One of the



Entertainment center smashed while intruders were attacking Oklahoma woman (Photo by Steven Conrad of Conrad Images)

robbers demanded that she take off her clothes.

"Come on, what are you waiting for," he told her as he started to yank on her sweatpants, trying to take them off.

Smith pleaded for her safety and distracted the attackers by telling them she would get her money, which was "in my purse."

The robbers inexplicably allowed her to drop to her knees and crawl across the floor to her purse, which the second attacker had dropped.

She reached inside, and the first shot was clear of the muzzle and into the torso of one of the attackers before she even pulled the weapon clear of the purse. Four more shots followed shortly and, in the end, one of the attackers was dead and the second was hospitalized facing a murder rap for having participated in a felony in which someone died.

Smith, in an exclusive interview with WND, explained she comes from a family that believes in self-reliance and courage.

"I choose to carry a concealed firearm, because even though I am immensely grateful for the protection from our police departments, I realize they're not God, so they can't be everywhere at once.

"Deadly situations can happen in the blink of an eye," she said. "If you are not proactive ... you are a vulnerable target."

Smith, an Endowment member of the [National Rifle Association](#), said she's carried a gun for almost half a decade, but never dreamed she'd be in a situation where she'd have to use it to defend her life. But she's glad the training she's had over the years kicked in at a time when it saved her from injury, or possibly much worse.

"Ironically, I thought I was really prepared," she told WND. "I remember that night and saw my life flash before my eyes. Darreon Carter, the man who was attempting to rape me, had me pinned down to my couch, with a knife at my throat. I knew I didn't have access to my gun. I thought to myself, I really need to have a firearm for my home, and directly on my person."



Mess left by two attackers shot when they invaded Oklahoma woman's apartment and she shot them. One died. (Photo by Steven Conrad of Conrad Images)

Rachel Parsons, an official for the NRA, said, while Smith's case is among the more dramatic, there are similar scenarios that have been reported. But even more, there are many crimes that simply are not carried out because of the possibility that a "victim" is fully armed, she said.

"We see every day in newspapers across this country times when law-abiding people are able to protect themselves because they have concealed-carry permits," she said.

"Numerous studies [show] having a concealed-carry permit, having a firearm and the ability to use one, has thwarted crime without the firearm ever having been fired," she said.

"The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun."

All the gun laws, regulations, rules, restrictions, plans and advisories in the world are not going to change the fact that criminals have guns, she pointed out.

"By definition, criminals break the law. All of these regulations do absolutely nothing [to stop] criminals," she said.

Jason Willingham, a public-information officer with the [Tulsa Police Department](#), told WND that officers encourage people to cooperate with robbers if they find themselves in the situation of losing a wallet or cash.

"However, if it's a situation where a rape is going to take place, or a kidnapping, we definitely encourage people to fight," he said. "You do not want to go willing. Scream. Make people wonder what's going on."

"Obviously, in this situation she did exactly ... the right thing," he said.

While the prosecutor had not yet made a formal decision regarding her case, Willingham told WND that Oklahoma not only has a "make my day" law allowing residents to use deadly force inside their homes, but also a "stand your ground" law allowing force to be used against an attack outside the home.

He said the surviving attacker probably will face a murder charge under a state law allowing that charge when a person embarks on a felony and someone dies.

He said the two perpetrators are "well-known" to the Tulsa police "for criminal activities."

He said he had reviewed the 911 tapes made of Smith's call to police after the shooting.



"It's amazing. She's calm and collected. You always wonder what would happen in such a situation," he said.

According to records, the attack happened early on the morning of July 15, and one of the intruders, Darreon Carter, 18, died hours later in a hospital in Tulsa. The other, Daniel Holman, 23, was facing charges while still in critical condition.

Capt. Travis Yates of the Tulsa Police Department told the Tulsa newspaper it seemed to be an "opportunity crime."

"Somebody saw a woman walking up to an apartment, and they decided to commit a crime, and here we are," he said.

The attack developed only about 24 hours after another home invasion was reported in the area – and that one left a resident dead. Willingham, however, told WND it was unrelated to the Smith ordeal.

On the Tulsa World forum page, Smith came in for virtually unchallenged praise:

- "The scumbags got what they deserved and I hope it is a lesson for the rest of them out there."

- "God bless this shooter."
- "Pay attention to this one. This is what is going to have to start happening to let all these no good punks [know] that you won't stand for it and are taking your freedom back. ... You come to take whats [sic] mine 'I will shoot you.'"
- "KEEP SHOOTING!!!"
- "Buy a gun. Learn how to use it. Kill intruders. Any questions?"
- "A perfect example of why we need the concealed carry! this is my kind of woman! fight crime! shoot back!"
- "Lock and load people, it's a different world out there."
- "I love the great equalizer."
- "This story makes me feel all warm and fuzzy."

Smith told WND she had come into her apartment after a late-night run for errands – she keeps unusual hours because of shift work at a hospital. She had one more item to fetch from outside but never got the chance because, within 20 seconds of her entering, the suspects followed.

She recalled with clarity the five shots, including those in which she picked out the attackers even though her boyfriend, black like the attackers, was struggling with them. He had been visiting and came in from the next room after the shots rang out.

He reported to Smith later that one of the attackers actually had a headlock on him when she fired, knocking the assailant off of him.

He had jumped into Smith's defense as both attackers were beating Smith's face and head, trying to knock her out to break her "death grip" on the weapon.

"We need to stand up and we don't have to be victims," Smith told WND. "We don't have to passively stand by and allow criminals to overtake us."