

**BLADE
SHOW**

NO. 1 KNIFE PARTY HITS HOT 'LANTA!

AUGUST 2007

www.blademag.com

BLADE

BLADE

THE WORLD'S #1 KNIFE PUBLICATION

**BOWIE
in BLUE**

**Mosaic Damascus:
STEEL STUNNERS**

*Jim Walker's BLADE
Show ABS auction knife*

**MEGA-MOLARS
Mammoth Teeth**

**New Knives of
The BLADE Show**

**INSIDE
BLADE
SHOW
Program Spectacular**

AUGUST 2007

BLADE

World's #1 Knife Publication

F+W Publications



unsheathed

unsheathed

By Steve Shackelford

He Does Not Suffer Anti-Knife Fools Gladly

If you are looking for someone who will go to bat against anti-knife laws, they don't get much more gung-ho than attorney and *BLADE*® contributor Evan Nappen.

Excuse the cliché, but Evan walks the walk. A lawyer who specializes in defending those who are charged unjustly with gun or knife crimes, he wrote an entertaining novel on constitutional rights (*The Declaration*) and moved from his native anti-gun-and-knife New Jersey to the constitutional-friendly state of New Hampshire, where he is active in the pro-liberty Free State Project.

When it comes to knife enthusiasts, few have the fever as much as Evan, who has traveled cross county to visit *BLADE* field editor Ed Fowler's knife shop to learn how to make knives. To paraphrase the saying, Evan does not suffer anti-knife fools gladly.

A case in point: the recent hit this past April of almost a half-million dollars that Spyderco incurred after an investigation of

the company by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"). Spyderco had to pay a \$75,000 criminal fine, \$125 special assessment and forfeit all of its butterfly knives and even its Bi-Fold models—a side-locking folder that won the Blade Magazine 2006 Most Innovative Imported Design®—all valued at over \$400,000.

The U.S. Customs and Border Patrol issued a ruling stating that the balisongs fit the definition of "switchblade knives," and that Spyderco not only was importing the components for the folders from Taiwan but also was mailing the finished knives via the U.S. mail.

Somehow, Customs concluded that butterfly knives have blades that "open automatically by operation of inertia, gravity or both," and thus are not allowed into the USA according to the Switchblade Knife Act, and, further, are not to be mailed in the USA. Even more ridiculous is that, apparently, Customs also included the Bi Fold under the switchblade definition. (Come on

guys, it's a folder for heaven's sake!)

Evan, who keeps *BLADE* regularly updated with news of anti-knife laws, seizures, etc., started revving up his engine when I asked him about the sordid affair.

"This is a loud wake-up call," he began. "If Spyderco could get 'whacked'—that's a Jersey term—with a criminal conviction and fines and forfeitures of almost \$500,000, who is safe?"

"Are butterfly knives such a public danger? When was the last drive-by attack with a butterfly knife?" he waxed rhetorical. "Bad case law doesn't change the fact that butterfly knives are not even gravity knives in the first place! Who will speak the truth about the absurdity of a law that the U.S. attorney so aggressively enforced against a great American company?"

Evan, that's who.

"Balisongs are factually not gravity knives. Bad case law may support the government's position, but now is the chance to challenge it and set the record straight. Shoot," he continued, "the whole federal knife law is screwed up and, not only that, exceptions specially exist for manufacturers."

The unfounded seizure of Spyderco knives and the fining of the company is the latest in a trend by anti-knifers to mislabel legal knives as illegal and/or to paint all knives as dark weapons of potential terrorists, including last year's infamous *Wall Street Journal* story, which referred to key-chain knives as "keyring tactical knives"—whatever the heck that means!

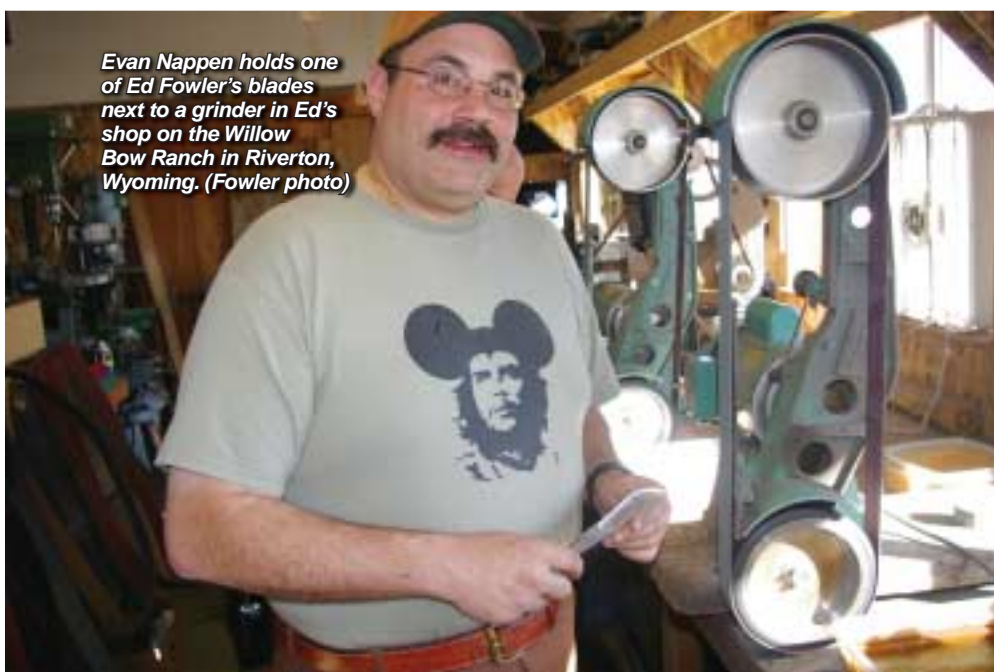
All of these topics are fuel for Evan's internal fire. And he, along with Doug Ritter of KnifeRights.org and David Kowalski of the American Knife & Tool Institute (AKTI), will conduct the seminar, "How To Protect Your Knife Rights" at the *BLADE* Show June 8-10 at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta. The seminar will be Saturday at 10 a.m. in Room 103.

If you value your knives and are concerned with the anti-knifers' willingness to misrepresent and rewrite knife law to fit their warped agendas, you will attend.

BLADE

blademag.com

AUGUST 2007



Evan Nappen holds one of Ed Fowler's blades next to a grinder in Ed's shop on the Willow Bow Ranch in Riverton, Wyoming. (Fowler photo)