

AMERICAN SHOOTING JOURNAL

**PAUL
PAWELA**

**MULTI-
DISCIPLINE
SELF-DEFENSE
MASTER**

**NEW TURKEY
SHOTGUNS**

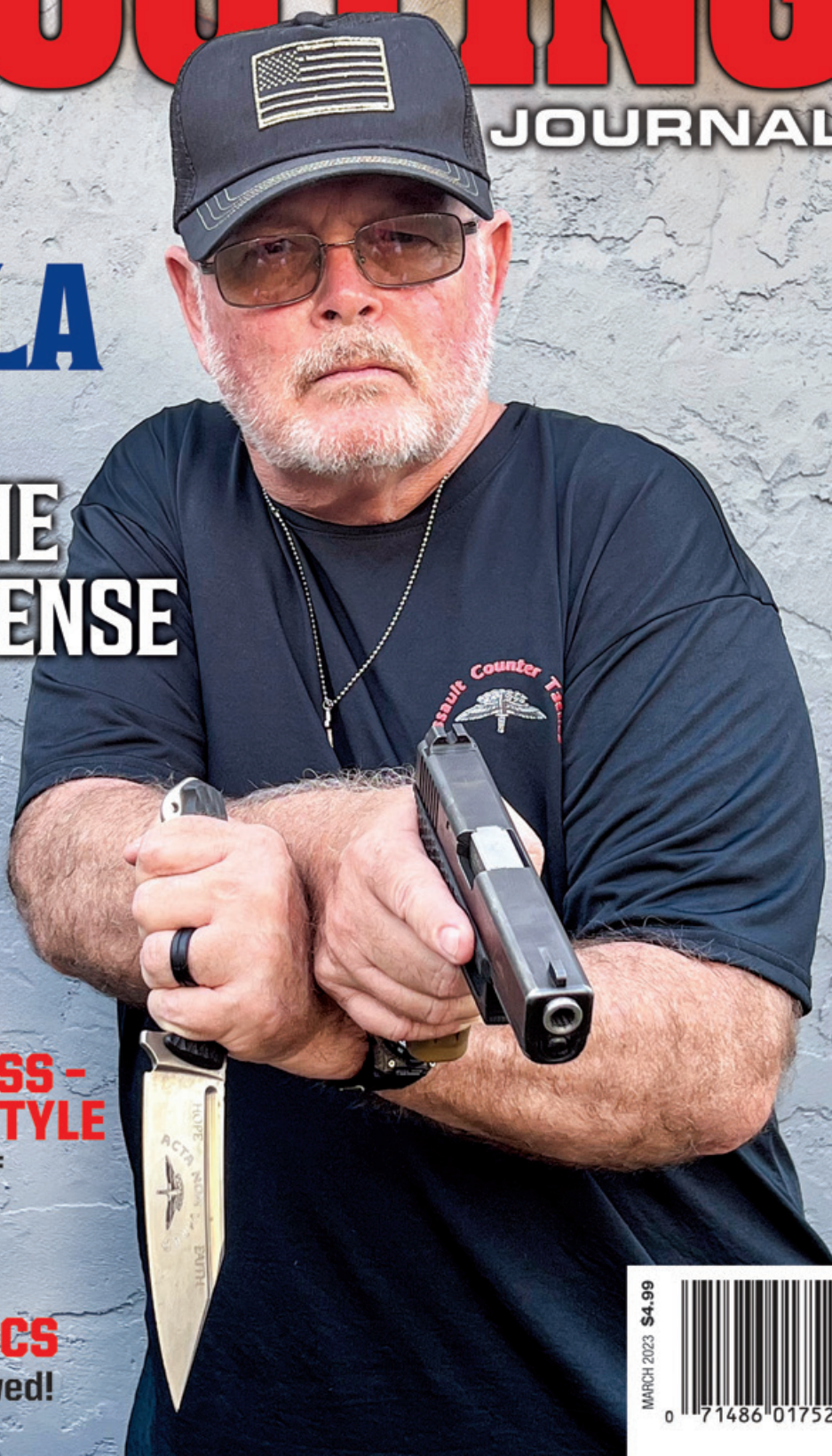
5 Lighter-weight
12-, 20-gauges

**MARCH MADNESS -
UPLAND BIRD STYLE**

The Many Benefits Of
Preserve Hunts

**LOW-POWER
VARIABLE OPTICS**

5 Hot Models, Reviewed!



MARCH 2023 \$4.99



0 71486 01752 3 03

CONTENTS

VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 6

COVER STORY

PAUL PAWELA: MEET THE MAN BEHIND THE ARTICLES

You know him for his Self-defense Training column in this magazine, but there's so much more to this retired Special Forces operator, hand-to-hand combat instructor and martial arts expert. Jason Brooks details the man, the myth, the legend that is Paul Pawela.

(LISA PAWELA)

26

FEATURES

39 L.P.V.O. SHOWDOWN

With all the low-power variable optics on the market today, how do you choose? Nick Perna offers up his take on what to look for in an LPVO and reviews five hot models from EOTech, Vortex, Nightforce, Leupold and Kahles.

51 LAW ENFORCEMENT SPOTLIGHT: LONGTIME DEPUTY FONDLY RECALLED

For over 70 years Bill Hardin kept Texans safe and made them feel secure, all in a career spanning a remarkable transformation in policing. Nick Perna shares a glimpse of the life and times of Deputy Hardin, who recently passed away at 99 – and was still an active officer!

54 SCATTERGUN ALLEY: TIME TO THINK ABOUT NEW TURKEY SHOTGUNS

The 2023 spring gobbler campaign has already begun in Florida, but there's still time yet to consider a new turkey gun. Larry Case details five new lighter-weight 12- and 20-gauges capable of downing a wily ol' tom this season.

63 ROAD HUNTER: MARCH MADNESS – UPLAND STYLE

Whether you're looking to extend your bird season, pursue rare species, treat yourself to a few reliable flushes or get in some more dog training, preserve hunts can fill the bill. Scott Haugen shares what to expect during these late-running opportunities on private lands.

73 BULLET BULLETIN: THE EVOLUTION OF SILVERTIPS

Since its pre-World War II introduction, the Winchester Silvertip has gone through considerable changes. Phil Massaro tracks the bullet from when Peter Hathaway Capstick tinkered with it for leopards to today's modern handgun and ballistic rifle lines.

AMERICAN SHOOTING JOURNAL is published monthly by Media Index Publishing Group, 941 Powell Ave SW, Suite 120, Renton, WA 98057. Display Advertising. Call Media Index Publishing Group for a current rate card. Discounts for frequency advertising. All submitted materials become the property of Media Index Publishing Group and will not be returned. Copyright © 2023 Media Index Publishing Group. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication may be copied by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording by any information storage or retrieval system, without the express written permission of the publisher. Printed in U.S.A.





Paul Pawela: Meet The Man Behind The Articles

You know him for his Self-defense Training column in this magazine, but there's so much more to this retired Special Forces operator, hand-to-hand combat instructor, martial arts expert – just Google him or read on, the list's literally too long for a single subheadline.

STORY BY JASON BROOKS • PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS BY PAUL PAWELA

Being a U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran, lifelong martial artist, tactical firearms instructor and a close protection officer and trainer, I must admit there are times I wonder about some of these so-called “expert writers” when I read different articles on shooting techniques, training tips and defensive tactics. If you are anything like me, there are times you shake your head and wonder how these people have a platform to spew their opinions.

I usually do not break into the writing or public arena over these matters because I have a lot on my plate, but when my friend, brother and mentor called me and asked me to write about him, I humbly and gratefully accepted the challenge. You might think I am biased about Paul Pawela because my kids call him Grandpa Paul, but I would not write these things unless they were true, and I wholeheartedly believe in them.

PAWELA RETIRED FROM the 10th Special Forces Group and was designated a Military H instructor identifier and SOCOM hand-to-hand combat instructor. He is a former team leader and tactical QRF (quick reaction force) trainer for counterterrorism, and he previously worked with all Special Operations CT forces, which included U.S. Army 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment (Delta Force) and U.S. Navy SEAL Team 6.

Pawela has personally trained with some of the world's best hand-to-hand combat trainers and martial artists, such as Rex Applegate, Gary O'Neal, Dan Inosanto, Joe Lewis, Steven Seagal, Frank Cucci and many others. With over 50 years of martial arts experience and certification as an instructor in Jeet Kune Do and Kali, Pawela is also recognized as a Grand Master and one of the foremost knife instructors in the country.

His Rolodex of friends and colleagues he trained with also includes

“Master of defense in unarmed hand-to-hand combat, knife/counter-knife, handgun/shotgun and rifle” – those are just some of the qualifications Paul Pawela holds and which have grown out of his fascinating and full 61 years of life, described in the subsequent pages.



Me (left) and mentors Allen West and Gary O'Neal.



Steven Seagal – yes, I trained with him.



I am a certified instructor of Jeet Kune Do, which was Bruce Lee's form of martial arts. Here I am with Lee's senior instructor, Dan Inosanto, who I have been training with since the 1980s!



13 Hours hero Dave Benton.



Good friend and mentor Mas Ayoob.

Massad Ayoob. Pawela has known and trained with Ayoob since 1982. He attended all of Ayoob's LFI classes and became one of his adjunct instructors. In fact, Ayoob considers Pawela one of the "all-around best tactical trainers in the country."

Dave "Boon" Benton has been a friend of Pawela for many years and says that Pawela is one of the most humble tactical trainers in the business. Danny McKnight of Black Hawk Down incident fame, who was also Pawela's best man at his wedding, says he is rock-solid in his training, his word and his faith. Fred Mastison is another friend and mentor who is also a giant in the industry. Pawela has also known Graciela Casillas for over 30 years and trained with her at the JKD Smokey Mountain Martial Arts Camp and Karate College.

PAWELA HAS GRADUATED from three different police academies and has served as a police officer in three different states. Amongst his LEO training, he is a graduate of the FBI Hostage Negotiation School, Smith & Wesson, H&K, SIG Arms Instructor Academies, NRA Police Firearms Instructor Schools, and is a graduate from 10 different national shooting schools.

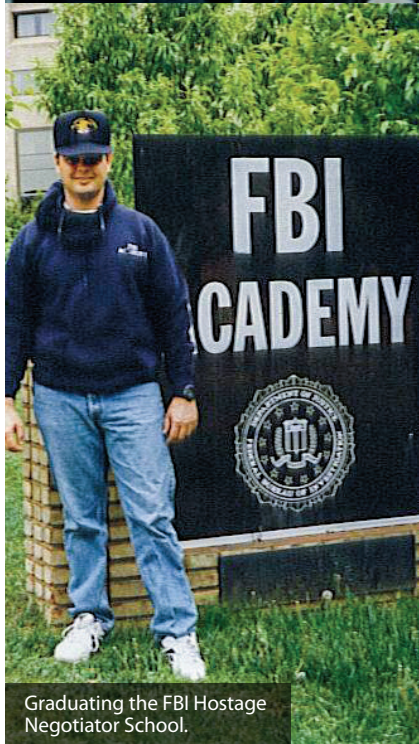
Pawela has also attended and graduated from multiple



As test noncommissioned officer in charge for Fast Rope for all military special operations units worldwide.



One of three times I've served as a sworn reserve police officer.



Graduating the FBI Hostage Negotiator School.



As director of law enforcement training for the National Association of Chiefs of Police.

executive protection academies like the Executive Protection Institute, Lethal Force Institute, KDI, Scotti's School of Evasive Driving and Protection, and CRI, an Israeli counterterrorism training school. He doesn't just attend these classes as a writer; he goes through these courses as a student first and a writer second.

I was the lead instructor when Pawela came through CRI, and I can attest that he trained side by side with students half his age and even outshot them on the range, earning my coveted "Bang Energy Drink Trophy," which he keeps on his shelf at home. Range time was just part of his training at CRI's Counter Terrorism Instructor Course. Pawela had to go through all of the training with me at CRI, including survive, evade, resist, escape (SERE); close-quarter battle (CQB); defensive tactics; weapons disarming; knife throwing; kidnapped VIP rescue/recovery; tactical driving; counter ambush techniques; VIP protective measures, and so on. Not only did he complete all this training with me, but he did this at numerous other training facilities.

Some of you might think it would be fun, and you are right, but Pawela is not a 30-year-old hard-charger looking for challenges. He's not even in his 40s or 50s – Pawela is 61 years old and still sacrifices his body to train and educate the masses. He even survived my tactical baptism (waterboarding) training during SERE class.

ALSO A PUBLISHED author, Pawela collaborated on *The Special Operations Tactical Sniper Manual*, considered by experts as one of the best books out there on the subject. With over 400 published articles and counting, Pawela's work has appeared in the following magazines: *The Chief of Police* (the official publication of the National Association of Chiefs of Police); *Police Magazine*; *Police One*; *Tactical Gear Magazine*; *Tactical MilSim Magazine*; *Concealed Carry Magazine*; *Armed Lifestyle Magazine*; and, of course, his monthly column here in *American Shooting Journal*.

Pawela's articles have also appeared in: *Black Belt Magazine*; *Guns &*

Ammo; *SWAT*; *Combat Handguns*; *Glock Annual*; *Martial Arts Insider*; *Bodyguard Magazine*; *Filipino Martial Arts Magazine*; and *Real Fighter*.

In addition to his words appearing in print, Pawela himself has appeared and/or has been featured in magazines such as: *Gung-Ho*; *Soldier of Fortune*; *SWAT*; *Black Belt*; *Martial Arts Digest*; *Real Fighter*; *American Handgunner*; and *Combat Handguns*.

PAWELA PREVIOUSLY HAS

worked as an adjunct instructor for several nationally recognized training schools, such as Lethal Force Institute, Defensive Training Inc., American Small Arms Academy, Red Man, and ARMA. He has also served in the military and law enforcement as an SRT team leader and certified personal protection specialist.

Currently, Pawela is a full-time instructor and CEO of Assault Counter Tactics, a self-defense training company covering all subjects. I am proud to work side by side with him as (full disclosure) co-owner and head instructor.

Pawela believes in "realistic self-defense" training regarding firearms and edged weapons. You won't find his classes being taught in an indoor range, as the tactical maneuvers and shooting positions call for a larger area where moving is allowed. He uses rubber dummies when he trains clients, not just paper targets or steel (although those are used during certain portions of class). The rubber dummies allow for enhanced training, as we put shirts on them and tape blood packets to the dummies. When you are up close and personal with a threat, you must understand and learn about the backslash that occurs when engaging a target at that distance. This type of training was conceived after Pawela analyzed real-world encounters he went through as a member of the military and a private citizen. Even the edged weapons training consists of "getting messy" because you won't understand the importance of the grip he teaches you until your hands are wet while you're plunging a weapon into the rubber dummy. While I can't divulge all the training secrets Pawela



The late Gary Harrell, executive officer for Delta Force during the Black Hawk Down incident.



Black Hawk Down Delta operator Kyle Lamb.



Norm Hooten, Black Hawk Down team leader.



Lt. General Jerry Boykin, Delta commander during Black Hawk Down.



Medal of Honor recipient and SEAL Team 6 plank owner Mike Thornton and Tom Norris, also a SEAL Team 6 plank owner.



As NCOIC sergeant with fellow Joint Special Operations Command and Delta Force operators training with a CASA 212 cargo turboprop.



I'm the first author ever given permission to publish an image of C Squadron, Delta Force, which fought during the Battle of Mogadishu, also known as the Black Hawk Down incident after the book and movie of that name.



SEAL Team 6 members Craig Sawyer and Dr. E.J. Owens, and Delta Force member Jim Erwin.



Getting to go on a SWAT raid.



Orlando SWAT legend instructor Frank Repass.



At my Master Sergeant promotion.



The pic at upper left was during a military exercise in Korea and was not staged – the Korean never knew what hit him. Above right, me shooting with Delta; bottom left, as plane jump master; bottom right: me at 12,500 feet!

*Sgt Pawela
The Fastest Team
May 1986 Best
of Luck
Pawela*

I am standing second in line on the steps. This was the first Special Operations jump team to jump out of a commercial jet airplane. The man next to me is one of Delta Force's greatest operators; the rest are either Delta or legends in the Special Operations community!



Images from when I became a black belt in Kuk Sool Won in Korea.

uses, I can tell you that everyone who attends his classes gets a quick dose of reality when they go through his battle-tested drills.

Some feedback about training with Pawela comes from people like Green Beret/Ranger Hall of Fame legend Gary O'Neal, who has trained with him since their time in the military together. O'Neal says, "We have trained in many different aspects of warriors. In the air, on land and at sea. We trained in hand-to-hand combat with and without weapons; we tested equipment and parachutes together; we did test jumps from new aircraft,

both fixed and rotary wing. We have trained together since 1982, and it has been a long and hard journey together for God, country and family."

Fred Mastison, president of Force Options and beloved firearms trainer and writer, says of Pawela, "I have had the pleasure of working with a number of what I consider to be serious men in the past. Men that have been there and done that. These are all men that follow the path of the warrior in all aspects of their life. One man that personifies that is Paul Pawela. Paul also has the gift of teaching. Rare is the day that we find someone with

the true ability to impart knowledge effectively to a new generation of warriors. Lastly and most importantly to me, he is one of the few people I consider a friend."

Pablo Martinez, flight mechanic systems engineer at NASA's Kennedy Space Center and Battle Line Tactical instructor, says, "I had the pleasure and honor of meeting Paul while I was a student at a different course where Paul was there to write an article. He told me all about his Assault Counter Tactics training. I enthusiastically signed up for one of his classes. I thoroughly enjoyed his ability to



Demonstrating different fighting scenarios.



Hand-to-hand training techniques.

break down relevant concepts to their most basic form that can be applied regardless of skill level. He explained every detail behind the ‘why’ of the techniques and had me hooked on learning more about firearms training. I have attended multiple classes and worked my way up to being one of his assistant instructors in armed and unarmed self-defense. Learning about training is one thing, but learning how to teach what he teaches and putting realistic training methods into practice takes things to a new level for me. I have learned many things over the years of training with Paul and am humbled to call him a friend and mentor. Everyone could benefit from training with Paul, as he is willing to help anyone at any time. He is a devout husband, father, mentor, teacher and a faithful man of God.”

With decades of training behind him, I can fill a book with all of Pawela’s students’ comments and testimonies about how amazing of an instructor this man is; many of them convey how honest he is, and he has been recognized as a courtroom expert. John Rea, former SEAL Team 6, says that Pawela “has been on top of the training game individually for



My wife Linda.



My hero who taught me to be a man – my dad, Marion Pawela.



My dad and my daughters when they were young.



Me pinning my jump wings on my granddaughter Hope.



My other twin granddaughter, who is a military police officer.

over 30 years. One only achieves that through integrity and honesty and Paul has both!"

A RESUME LIKE Pawela's cannot be summed up easily or briefly. There's a running joke in our family about him. When introducing him, it's easier to tell people to Google him rather than list all his accomplishments, so we call him Paul "Google Me" Pawela. I even told him I would make T-shirts with that saying on them.

I'll leave you with a funny story: Last SHOT Show, he and I were at

the Industry Range Day and there was a mix-up with our badges. We didn't have the proper media badges, so when the lady at the counter asked for proof that he was a writer, I looked at him with a sideways smile, turned to her, and said, "Google him." Naturally, they pulled up his latest article in *American Shooting Journal*, and the proper passes were given to us without hesitation. I promised him that story would haunt him, and now it's in print!

It has been a true honor to write about my fellow warrior and brother,

Paul Pawela. He is much more than just a writer, and I thought I would share more about the man. ★

Editor's note: If you would like more information on Paul Pawela or would like to attend one of his classes, please visit assaultcountertactics.com. Jason Brooks is a combat medically retired marine, force recon hand-to-hand instructor, counterterrorism instructor trainer, recognized national law enforcement trainer, active personal protection specialist and co-owner of Assault Counter Tactics.