

SPY + SURVIVAL BRIEFING

LIFESAVING STRATEGIES FROM FORMER CIA AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS PERSONNEL

MY PLANS FOR 2024

Why I Bought a \$65 Shovel

By Jason Hanson

Former CIA Officer

I have numerous clients who are small business owners. And many of them have told me it's been a rough year for them and that sales are down anywhere between 30-40%. The thing is, when you drive by restaurants on a Friday or Saturday night, the restaurants are still packed.

So, while people may have pulled back their spending on certain things, they are still going out to eat all of the time. But this doesn't mean they have the money to actually afford to go out to eat. A few months ago, consumer credit card debt hit an all-time high of \$1.03 trillion dollars. Yes, that's trillion with a T. Eventually, they will max out those cards and be in a world of hurt.

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My point is, we've already been in a recession this year and most people don't truly realize it. I guess you could call it a mild recession at this point and it looks like things are going to get far worse in 2024. Some folks are saying they believe the stock market could drop by 50% or more. Of course, I have no idea if that will happen, but I do believe it's not going to be pretty.

So, what are my plans for 2024? Well, I'm slowly continuing to stock up on the following precious metals: Gold, silver and platinum. The government is never going to turn off the

"Eventually, they will max out those cards and be in a world of hurt."

printing presses and the value of the dollar is only going to decrease each year. So, investing in precious metals is never going to be a bad thing.

I also plan to look for more land in 2024. I'm always looking for bug out land/vacation land for the family. Like precious metals, land is a tangible investment and I'm all about tangible investments.

On the gear-front, I need to buy some better tools. With 7 kids, you can imagine that my tools end up all over the place. I often find my hammer in the backyard covered in mud. And my DeWalt screwdrivers are usually scattered around the house in



various and sundry places. Basically, I need to buy tools and do a better job of keeping them away from the kids.

I'm also focusing on quality when I buy anything these days. I just purchased a heavy-duty shovel made by Fiskars. The shovel cost me \$65. I realize many people will vomit at the thought of paying \$65 for a shovel, but I've had too many cheap shovels break on me in the past. In a crisis situation, you want the best gear because if your shovel breaks (and it's a serious crisis) you won't be able to rush down to Home Depot to get a new one. (In case you're wondering, the exact shovel I purchased is the Fiskars 397900 – 1001 Pro Shovel Digging, 60 Inches, Silver.)

Besides tools and gear, I'm focusing on my health more this year and exercising better. I don't drink or

"I will always bet on America and know things will be great in the long run."

smoke, but I do need to eat healthier. Also, I need to up the intensity of my workouts. I work out 5 days a week, but since the birth of baby #7 in October, I haven't gotten a ton of sleep. (A shocker, I know.) My body does not do well these days with little sleep, so I need to get more sleep, so I have the energy to work out harder. I mainly do bodyweight exercises like push-ups, sit-ups, squats and pull-ups, but I plan to do more work with weights this coming year.

Lastly, I'm always training and continuing to stay on my A-game, which means I will attend other people's self-defense classes and firearms courses. I'm actually going to a private firearms course about 2 days after you're supposed to get this. Of course, we will also be holding our training classes at our 320-acre Spy Ranch and most of the classes for 2024 are already

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Magpul DAKA Grid Organizer

Many folks keep their guns in a case when they're not being used. One type of case worth considering is the Magpul DAKA Grid Organizer. The DAKA consists of a foam base that works with pluggable blocks. The Polypropylene foam base is impact and chemical-resistant. The blocks are firm, but lightweight. They won't scratch the firearm and are strong enough to hold the weight of the gun.

The blocks can be set up in a custom configuration that go vertical or horizontal, and you can change the setup (without tools) as needed. For example, you could transport an AR-15 with just iron sights, then you could add an optic and still use the same case by simply adjusting the blocks.

Currently, the DAKA Grid Organizer works with the Pelican Vault V730 and V800 gun cases. So, if you are looking for a gun case organizer that allows for modularity you can't go wrong with the Magpul DAKA Grid Organizer.

full. Since I get asked about Spy Week the most, there are 5 spots left and full details can be found at www.SpyWeek.com.

Overall, I'm excited and looking forward to the future. Yes, I do think 2024 is going to be rough, but I will always bet on America and know things will be great in the long run. So, make a list of any preparations you need to do in the coming year and get going on them.

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MY INTERVIEW WITH STEVE FORBES

Is A Return To The Gold Standard Inevitable?

By Forest Hamilton
Universal Coin & Bullion

Not too long ago, I attended the IMEX (International Money Expo) Show in Nashville and interviewed Steve Forbes, the Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of Forbes Media. While Forbes is known for his last name being synonymous with the magazine that shares his name, he also happens to be a prolific author of books about gold, inflation, money, and American capitalism.

His latest book, co-authored with Elizabeth Ames and Nathan Lewis, is titled *"Inflation: What It Is, Why It's Bad, and How to Fix It."* The book was released in 2022 at the absolute peak of the inflation spike caused by the United States Federal Reserve and the Department of Treasury in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was exacerbated by the spending policies under Biden and his Administration over the past three years.

In our Nashville interview, we dug deep into the concepts of his book, and Steve provided his insights and views on gold and the upcoming election. Here are just a few of my favorite excerpts from his book and our interview:

"In 1717, Sir Isaac Newton fixed the value of the British pound to gold at three pounds, 17 shillings, and ten-and-a-half pence (3.89 British pounds) an ounce, a ratio that held for more than 200 years. Britain's commitment to unchanging, gold-based money formed the foundation for the country's rising wealth and its emergence as a global financial center... The reliable British pound helped turn that small island from a second-tier nation to the mightiest industrial power on earth."

"More than 70 years after Newton fixed the pound to the price of gold, Alexander Hamilton established a financial system for the young United States that emulated Britain's example by pegging the dollar to gold and silver... The era of the classical gold standard saw an explosion of trade and innovation that, in many respects, remains unequalled... The ultimate lesson of history – and of this book – is that no nation has ever gotten rich by eroding the value of its money."

"The yellow metal has long been used to gauge currency value because its intrinsic worth throughout history has remained largely unchanged... Thus, when the price of gold rises or falls, the changes do not reflect the worth of the yellow metal, but fluctuations in the value of the dollar. Former Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan has noted that over the decades, 'prices of goods and services fluctuated; but the ratio of gold to the goods and services has remained a relatively constant number.'"

"During the gold standard years between 1950 and 1970, real GDP per capita grew by an annual rate of 2.77 percent. But over the past five decades, with a slowly declining fiat dollar, this growth rate has dropped significantly, to 1.71 percent... If the nation had the same growth rate today as we did in the 1950s and 1960s, per capita income would be 72 percent higher."

"Gold's primary characteristic and greatest advantage is that it is stable. However, during periods when the dollar is losing value, the price of gold rises – a lot. For example, during the inflationary period that

began in the late 1960s, gold was priced at \$35 an ounce. Recently, it was priced around \$1,800 an ounce. This is evidence that the value of the dollar has fallen by about 98 percent since then."

"The best way to end inflation, and to spur economic growth, is through a return to a sound dollar anchored by gold... With a gold standard, there would be no inflation. Full stop. A gold standard simply means that money has a fixed value and can fulfill its intended function as a trusted unit of worth."

My favorite answer came when I asked, "Do you believe that a return to the Gold Standard is plausible, or even possible?" Forbes didn't skip a beat, saying, "I don't believe it is plausible OR possible...I believe it is inevitable."

"The value of the dollar has fallen by about 98 percent since then."

I believe, like Forbes, that gold will play a major role in the coming years, and I am grateful that I am still in a position to protect my clients and their future with the beautiful yellow metal.

[Publisher's Note: For questions about buying gold and silver coins you can contact Forest Hamilton directly at foresthamilton@universalcoin.com or call 409-926-7001.

Please know, if you purchase any coins from Forest, we don't receive any compensation from him. We simply know he's one of the good guys in the business that can be trusted.]

FINDING GOOD GEAR IN A BAD ECONOMY

Building A Quality Survival Kit On A Tiny Budget

By EJ Snyder

Former Army Ranger and Extreme Survivalist

A good survival kit is essential to have, and it can be as complex or as simple as you like, as long as it covers all the categories for survival. But what if you are on a fixed income and living paycheck to paycheck? How can you put together a quality survival kit with limited funds?

Well, right now, I'm going to give you "The Dollar Store Survival Kit." The goal is to fill a kit with the essentials needed to survive with a budget of between \$25 to \$30.

One important tip I learned is to ask where the clearance areas are and hit these areas first. You will find some incredible deals that will save you money and help stretch your budget. Also, when you are looking for items, thinking outside the box is key. Get used to finding items that the normal eye may not see.

Here are a few examples: First, I found a 6' x 6' shower curtain made of fairly durable material to use as a shelter roof or poncho. It's not a tarp but does the job like one. Second, for water, I originally planned to get a large plastic water bottle and find a metal vegetable can as a small cooking cup for two dollars. But I found a 32-ounce stainless water bottle for \$3 — a "no-brainer" since I could both carry and boil water in it.

Honestly, I was pretty amazed at how quickly one could build a survival kit on a budget with really decent items. Soon, I had all the critical items covering almost every category. (The core 4 of survival areas to look at are shelter, water, fire, and food, and the secondary 4 of medical, navigation, signal, and communication).



I also learned that many of the items in the so-called "Dollar" stores aren't a dollar but are still a decent price. For example, communication was a category that took a hit because the battery-operated radios I found were \$10. So, no-go, I guess I'd get my news by word of mouth.

I made my final assessment of what I had in my basket, put a few things back, and was ready to checkout. When the last item was in the bag, I looked at the total and it was \$30.01. I blew my budget by a penny, but I had everything I needed for a budget survival kit.

I thought if I checked out all the Dollar Stores in the area, I could get the most for my money. So, I went to every Dollar Store I could find and discovered a \$25 to \$30 budget will get you way more items and bang for your money.

Sure, you can save time and just hit one Dollar Store and get it done, but if you just take a little time and effort and hit several Dollar Stores you real-

ly can build a quality budget survival kit that won't break your budget.

Out of curiosity, I went into Walmart to see if I could put together a budget kit there. I found that you could build a survival kit for \$50 or less. For example, they had a small folding pocketknife for \$2.97 along with a lot of items that were \$5 or less. I also found that you could visit their camping gear aisle and get everything you need in all survival categories to build a budget bug out bag for roughly \$100.

Now, a survival kit is worth its weight in gold when you need it. The good news is, I proved you can build one on a small budget with a little time and effort and by thinking outside the box. You can start with this type of kit and upgrade things as you can afford it. When people say that they just can't afford one, that's just an excuse because I proved you can build one of the "Dollar Store Survival Kits" on a tiny budget. So, grab the change out of your ash tray and go get yours today, and survive on.

YOU ARE YOUR FAMILY'S "FIRST RESPONDER"

My Ride-Along With The Police

By Michael D.

*Former Clandestine Officer, CIA,
DIA, NSA*

I was invited to do a ride-along with the police department of a major city. I was scheduled to ride along with a police officer from 10pm to 4am – the most active hours of dangerous crimes in that city. The mayor and chief of police wanted to help influential city members become more aware of what police officers face while the city sleeps. Twelve of us were invited to attend the shift briefing and then do the ride-along.

All they really knew about me was that I was on the Governor's Workforce Development Board and a sitting member on the city's Chamber of Commerce Executive Panel. The idea was to observe but not participate and the rules were simple: The officers were not to take us along on any 'high-risk' calls such as felony arrests, warrant service by SWAT or involve the mayor's guests in any activity that would put them in harm's way or at heightened risk.

Before leaving the briefing room, the chief made us all confirm we were not carrying any firearms or other deadly devices and would not get in the way. I am confident that was just fine for the other 11 invitees, but I am not an observer.

So, just before being given ride-along assignments, I visited in private with the chief, shared my background, training, and experience, and was frank with him. I told him I wanted to see the worst of things and I wanted to ride with an officer who was bold and experienced.

I promised him, and I meant it, that

"When we got back into the vehicle, I asked him why he did not gear shift while driving fast."



I was not going to play cowboy or create any problems. But I did want more than a tour of duty that was limited to traffic tickets and jaywalking. He warned me that if I stepped out of line, he would have his officer arrest me on the spot for interfering, and I agreed.

Our first call was to the scene of a convenience store that was vacant and unlocked. A patron noticed that there was no one in the store and called 911. We were just blocks away, and dispatch warned responding officers of a potential robbery in progress and hostage situation. I had only enjoyed about 30 minutes of bonding and chatting with the officer before the radio call came in.

As soon as we arrived, he looked at me one last time and said something like, "Dude, are you SURE about this? Because if you get us hurt or in trouble, I will take you down." I

assured him that I was ready, competent, and reliable. I said, "You go inside and clear, I will watch the back door."

I reassured him that I would only observe and report what happened if someone emerged from the back door. On my way around the building to the back door, I picked up a two-by-four about three feet long that was just lying there. I figured, why not?

The only one to come out the back was the police officer, who reported that the convenience store clerk was in the restroom ill, and that was why the store was left unattended. No crimes. When we got back into the vehicle, I asked him why he did not gear shift while driving fast through the residential areas.

It was around midnight, and there were no kids out in the streets, and although he was responding Code 2 (lights, no siren) and driving as fast as he could control the vehicle



through the 90-degree turns in the neighborhood, he was not using his vehicle to its highest potential. When I asked him about this, he said they never taught them how to gear-shift. So, I took him for a bit of a drive and showed him how driving in second gear – or even first gear in some situations, gives you much better performance for high-speed maneuvering in situations where you constantly have to speed up and slow down.

By shifting down to 3rd, 2nd, or even 1st gear, you don't need to use your breaks to slow down, and you are already in the power band and can accelerate instantly. It takes practice, but learning to gear shift while in pursuit or trying to evade pursuers provides the greatest advantages in short-burst driving.

Learning and practicing this driving skill can change the distance between you and your prey, or someone chasing you, far more effectively than trying to out-drive someone on the open road.

Another skill I explained and discussed with him over the rest of his shift was how to "trunk" a vehicle. In the movies, you always see the prey trying to outrun the predator. We were trained differently. If you are being pursued by a hostile

in a vehicle, gain lots of speed in a straight line where there is little chance for your predator to pass you. Then, suddenly, use your emergency brake.

This will deprive the predator of seeing your brake lights and steal precious seconds from his ability to brake before slamming full speed into your trunk. Your trunk will absorb most of the crushing impact, while the predator will get a face full of airbag and a destroyed radiator, fan, and put his vehicle out of operations. You can drive off, he will just be sitting there, probably with significant injuries, and definitely a deployed airbag, and a decommissioned vehicle.

What I learned that night is that we are spending far more on technology and gadgets than we are spending on training those we trust to protect us. Be cautious in your own life that you do not begin to rely on things like GPS while not learning how to use a paper map. Don't allow the convenience and pleasant experiences of technology like backup cameras to deprive you of the skills of backing or parking without the aid of a video screen.

But most of all, don't allow movies to teach you survival skills. Seek out professional training so that you

can adequately protect yourself and your family. It's sad to know that a mature police officer in a major city was never taught how to defeat a hostile in a one-on-one car chase. What is even more sad is that we, as a society, are forgetting that we have to take care of ourselves because we are our own first responders.

Learn and practice skills that will protect you and your family and be polite and friendly to police officers. They have a very difficult job and often do not get the training they deserve.

One of those skills is to learn how to drive as though your life depends on it. Sadly, the way things are going, the day may come where to protect yourself or your loved ones, you will need to know how to "trunk" a hostile.



SAVINT YOUR MONTHLY SAVINGS INTELLIGENCE

Do you want to come inside my home and see exactly how I set up my food storage, water storage, and complete survival stash? The fact is, I did something unique for a few private clients and now I want to share it with you too. This shows you exactly how I'm prepared for 2024 to make sure my family is taken care of. Simply go to www.GoldPrepared.com for full details.

SIMPLE PREVENTION COULD SAVE 36,000 PEOPLE EVERY YEAR

How To Stay Healthy And Alive By Staying On Your Feet

By Dr. Omar Hamada

Special Operations Physician

We've all fallen multiple times in our lives. But there's a big difference in how we fall when we're 5 or 20 or 40 or 70 years old. When we're young, it's kind of fun, then embarrassing, then finally traumatic with the potential for serious injury or even death.

I fell just last month. I was in New York City rushing to get from my hotel to an event at the Penn Club at which I was speaking. I was in slick dress shoes and a blue suit. One of the street corners was a bit slick, and before I knew it, my feet slipped from under me and I fell backwards, landing in a spider-crawl position. Thankfully, my pants didn't split and I had no injuries — other than my ego.

In 2019, my 91-year-old father fell. He wasn't as fortunate as I was. Though he was fairly healthy and on no medications, when he fell, he hit his head. He ended up with an internal head bleed that led to his death shortly thereafter.

I work in the Emergency Room and I see falls almost every day. Some falls are from ladders, roofs, and tree stands, but the falls we are talking about today are surface-level falls. Most people under 60 who have surface-level falls tend to come away without serious injuries. Once we cross the 60-year-old barrier, we start seeing more hip fractures and head injuries associated with these falls.

In fact, every year there are over 3,000,000 ER visits due to falls, and these falls result in over 36,000 deaths annually — not to mention all the broken bones, dislocated shoulders, and head injuries.



So why are falls so much more dangerous for those who are older? As we age, we lose muscle mass, bone density, skeletomuscular strength, flexibility, balance, vision, hearing, gait stability, and reflex speed. Of course, age is "just" a number. Some 40-year-olds are frail and fragile, while some 80-year-olds are active, strong, and resilient.

Though some of this is genetic, much of it is core fitness brought about as a result of habitual and intentional lifestyle choices. These choices include nutrition, weight bearing exercise, stretching, and proper recovery.

Why do we have surface level falls and are they preventable? Well, sometimes they just happen when we're not paying attention and we simply lose our balance. Sometimes, like what happened to me in NYC, we slip because our shoes and our walking surfaces are slick.

Other times, it's because we trip over something or someone. While we're young, we're more able to catch ourselves quickly and reflexively. But as we age, our reflexes and strength-related abilities deteriorate, if we let

them, and instead of catching ourselves, we end up on the ground (and usually hard.)

So, what do we do? First, stay in shape, stay active, eat well with meals with high protein content, and stay strong through regular weight bearing exercise.

Next, make sure your paths are clear. Take up loose rugs or rugs that have curled corners. Pick up and don't leave things on the floor. You don't want to run into something at night, in subdued light when you're sleepy, lest you trip over it.

Be careful of slick stairs. Finally, wear shoes that are comfortable, secure, and with good grip. One of the worst things I see is someone who lives alone, slips and falls at home and breaks their hip, then lays there for a day or two in their waste waiting for someone to find them. Not only is it painful, costly, and debilitating, but it is also humiliating. A few preventive measures coupled by good lifestyle choices will go a long way in helping you maintain great health and prevent you from becoming a statistic.

THE HIDDEN DANGERS OF THE HOLIDAYS

Reviewing “Run, Fight, Hide” To Stay Alive

By Matt Numrich

Head Instructor Of Spy Black Belt

As we move into the winter holiday season, social events start to increase, along with personal stressors and depression for many people. Unfortunately, these days, this can be a recipe for a possible mass shooting event.

Many organizations and government guidelines prescribe a “Run, Hide, Fight” model for defending yourself in these violent scenarios. However, instead of giving those basic terms, I want to dive deeper into each option, noting that you could choose one of these, but may need to mutate to another option if circumstances require it.

The first option is to run. This could be simply escaping the area as quickly as possible. Or, depending on the venue, it might be more difficult than just running out a door. So, when you enter any building, look for and note where the exits are.

Ask yourself which ones might clog first and find an alternate. Also, knowing which ones might sound an alarm if you need to exit is important if you need to exit without notice, but if bullets start flying that’s of little concern. Don’t forget to see if you can figure out where exits are that may be used for deliveries or “employee only” entrances. Realize, however, if the employee is the shooter, they may know the ins and outs of the location as well.

Finally, ask yourself if there are soft exits around, such as walls that can be climbed or even windows that could be busted out if you need to find a creative way to exit.

Now let’s go into the “Hide” aspect



of surviving a shooting. Hiding might be easier if you work at the location, as you probably know the nooks and places people use to get a second to themselves or escape prying eyes. Understand that the length of time you can stay in that hiding place is a factor. For example, safely hiding in an indent in a hallway is likely very temporary and you will want to move to a more covered place when possible.

Look for hiding places with multiple entries, so you won’t pin yourself down to a specific spot. Lastly, if you do decide to hide, look for improvised weapons you can use if the attacker should find you.

What about the “Fight” part of all of this? Fighting may be a conscious choice or a forced action. Having family and friends around could motivate you to take an action which you ordinarily might not take

"If the employee is the shooter, they may know the ins and outs of the location as well."

if you’re alone. Seeing a loved one in harm’s way will make up your mind for you.

If you choose to engage, find a weapon if you don’t carry one. Bar stools, broom sticks, binders, kitchen knives or rolled up magazines all count. Be aware there could be multiple attackers, so always keep your head on a swivel.

If and when law enforcement or other “helpers” show up, you need to clearly identify who you are and what your intentions are with proper non-aggressive postures and verbal communication. Drop any weapon, and make sure they know by your actions that you are not the attacker.

Although these are not things you probably want to think about around the holidays, by reviewing these options and their details, you can stay ahead of the game, make better decisions, and stay alive.