

the nation

# New Haven adopts strict handgun law

United Press International  
NEW HAVEN, Conn. — A local law has been passed banning handgun sales between private individuals.

Now, the citizens group that led the victorious fight says it will campaign now for state approval and a wider-ranging law.

The New Haven law, believed to be the first of its kind in the nation, was approved by the city's Board of Aldermen with an 18-4 vote Monday.

Steve Masters, spokesman for the Connecticut Committee for Handgun Control Inc., said Tuesday the group will try to get the ordinance approved in nearby suburbs to put pressure on the Legislature to adopt it statewide.

He said the committee also would like to see the state adopt a system of two types of handgun licenses — for loaded and unloaded guns — and require proficiency tests for those applying for the licenses.

"We feel much stronger standards should be imposed before a person gets that kind of permit," he said.

The New Haven law restricts the sale of pistols and revolvers to retail

dealers who comply with all state and federal gun laws and bars private individuals from selling handguns among themselves. It also allows the city to enforce state and federal gun laws.

"Without a doubt, it's nothing but another emotional and non-enforceable ordinance," said Alderman Robert Silverman, who voted against the proposal. "Guns will continue to change hands in New Haven legally and illegally."

Silverman said people wanting to buy or sell handguns can simply go to a neighboring town to avoid the new city restriction.

"It doesn't serve any purpose. Something like this should not be on the municipal level. This is a state issue where it could be enforced by the agencies that could handle it," he said.

New Haven Police Chief Edward Morrone called the law a small step in the right direction.

Violators of the ordinance can be fined \$100 or jailed for 60 days. The ordinance does not affect the common practice of pistol clubs to loan or rent out handguns on their premises.

# Entertainment battle nears

## Home video systems replacing normal viewing

United Press International  
Remember the "45" record player?

Its fat spindle now shares a shelf with the Edsel, but for people deciding which video cassette recorder to buy, the memory is indelible.

Compact and economical, in 1948 the 45 was touted as the brave new home entertainment system by the folks who developed it at RCA. After all, transferring the strains of Glenn Miller from those hefty 78's to a featherweight finegroove vinylite platter was revolutionary enough to serve up a special machine.

The 12-inch, long playing disc made its debut the same year. Like the 45, the idea was to decrease the revolutions and increase the playing time — but Columbia's version spun at 33 1/3 rpm's. With a smaller spindle and a larger disc, it bore little resemblance to the 45.

The two gizmos marked the dawn of high fidelity. Consumers went wild over the quality and longer playing time. But, because neither company wanted to back down and agree on one speed, both machines were rushed into the marketplace.

The battle began.

By 1950, a gaggle of high fidelity players incorporating all three speeds were on the market, although audiophiles were beginning to agree that Columbia's choice of rpm's gave the best sound reproduction, as well as 30 minutes of play. Even so, RCA kept its marketing muscle behind the 8-minute 45.

Then somewhere between the jitterbug and the twist, alas for the 45, the catch word changed to "stereo." Recorded music took another evolutionary step and it took it at 33 1/3 rpm's per minute.

As it turned out, what one well-known company advertised as the final audio answer was merely a flash in the pan.

And of those left holding the 45, many vowed in the next format fracas, they would wait until the dust settled and a clear winner emerged

before laying out money for a potentially incompatible piece of hardware.

Well, round two is here and this time, television spawned the dilemma.

Wall Street has dubbed the future of television "the emerging video environment" and manufacturers are calling a wide range of gadgets that hook into the basic boob tube "home video."

Consumers are befuddled.

When they shop for the most enticing video offering — the machine that can record the Dallas Cowboys on a half-inch videocassette while they are out for the evening or watching the Rams on another channel — they notice an ominous symptom. There are two incompatible technologies for sale.

And although the videocassette recorders (VCR's) in the stores are "Beta" or "VHS", a little research turns up other half-inch tape formats that once promised to do the same job but are already extinct, such as

appear and although VHS owners outnumbered Beta owners three to one at last count, with more than a million units sold, the minority consists of a whopping 250,000 Beta fans.

Sony, who started the whole home VCR sweepstakes with "Betamax," say they'll continue to churn out Beta designs, along with Sanyo, Sears, Zenith and Toshiba. Everyone else, including RCA, JVC, Panasonic, Magnavox, Hitachi and Quasar, is committed to VHS — most manufactured by the Japanese electronics giant, Matsushita.

There are 18 companies making at least 50 different models of VCR's.

For the prospective buyer, the trick is to determine what each system does, how well it does it, and for how much money.

First, both formats use half-inch tape packaged in cassettes, but Beta cassettes don't fit VHS machines and VHS tapes don't fit Beta machines. Beta's "Omega wrap" tape path is particularly resistant to twisting. VHS cassettes have an "M-wrap" design — simpler than Beta, but more stressful to the tape. And when stopping a VHS tape, it is impossible to start up at exactly the same point in the program. Tape cassettes come in varying lengths, but time capacity depends ultimately on the machine.

Beta VCR's can tape 3 hours or 4 1/2 hours and a new cassette with more tape in it can increase recording time to 5 hours. VHS machines record 2 hours; 2 and 4 hours; 2, 4 and 6 hours or 2 and 6 hours. A VHS cartridge loaded with enough tape to preserve 9 consecutive hours of television is in the works and should be for sale soon.

Both systems can also play back thousands of major movies that are sold for \$40 to \$100 nationwide in cassettes for either format. Pre-programmed tapes run 2 hours.

To decide the best format, you must decide what you plan to do with the machine. For some, recording hours and hours of network televi-

sion may not be important.

Setting the machine in advance may be useless to others. But for consumers who want the time-shift function, both species of VCR's bristle with timers. Many have preprogrammers that can be instructed up to a week in advance to record football on two channels Sunday and a pre-dawn Fred Astaire movie Tuesday, or other combinations of selections.

VHS units generally have more program choices built in — as many as seven in one week on Sharp's newest VCR — but a special Sony tuner can add more than the basic three or four choices to the Betamax and Sanyo builds five selections into its latest "Betacord".

In at least one way, Beta and VHS are alike. Both evolved from commercial video recording.

TV studios use 2-inch tape moving at 15 feet a second on a huge machine

with four rotating heads — two for each half of the picture.

Sony pared down the professional machine for home use by incorporating only two tape heads — 58 microns. Then they developed less expensive, half-inch tape and laid the tracks down diagonally and closer together. And in 1975, Sony introduced the result of their tinkering: the 1-hour Betamax.

Video is simply information laid down on tape in magnetic tracks and translated into the soundtrack and the lines of a television image through tape heads reading the signals. The heads (at least one to trace each half of the picture) are attached to a drum that travels over the tape surface at a fixed speed. To achieve the speed, you can either have fast-moving tape, fast moving tape heads or more tape heads.

# Court denies suit over legality of income tax

United Press International  
NEW ORLEANS — The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has denied a suit by a Texas man claiming the requirement to file a federal income tax return is unconstitutional.

The federal appeals court Tuesday upheld a lower court ruling saying the tax return requirement is constitutional because Hanson had no grounds on which to state a valid claim against the tax return.

Hanson had asked the 5th Circuit to strike the tax return requirement because it violated United Nations

resolutions concerning the protection of human rights and access to the courts.

The appeals court said, however, Hanson never made that contention before U.S. district court, and so it did not have to consider the argument on appeal.

"Furthermore, a United Nations resolution does not confer rights on United States citizens that are enforceable in court in the absence of implementing legislation," the 5th Circuit said.

Wall Street has dubbed the future of television "the emerging video environment" and manufacturers are calling a wide range of gadgets that hook into the basic boob tube "home video."

Quasar's "Good Time Machine." Even more confounding, there are rumors of as many as five other VCR formats, either cheaper or more talented, on the horizon.

The problem? In this format war, standardization may never come about. Neither system is likely to dis-

# Travelers checks total nearly \$30 billion yearly

United Press International  
NEW YORK — Some \$30 billion worth of travelers checks are issued worldwide each year, one industry estimate.

The new entry into the travelers check market, Visa credit card, says the nation's hopes to collar 10 percent of the market, some \$3 billion worth, during the 1980 season and that it aims to gain 40 pct. within five years.

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