



From the Desk of Jeff Knox

Post Office Box 303
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April 8, 2022

Welcome to The Firearms Coalition and *The Hard Corps Report*.

For almost 40 years, The Firearms Coalition has provided timely, accurate, and actionable information and analysis on everything affecting your right to arms. An important part of our mission has always been to report on, and attempt to influence, the most powerful tool in the gun rights arsenal, the National Rifle Association, with the overarching goal of making that organization as effective and successful as possible.

The NRA's in Serious Trouble right now, and your help is needed.

You've no doubt heard about the lawsuit filed by the New York Attorney General's office against the NRA and four of its current and former executives. You've probably been told that the suit is a politically-motivated attack by NRA-hating Attorney General Letitia James.

All of that is absolutely true.

You've also probably heard from current NRA "leaders," that this hate-filled smear campaign is based on lies and misrepresentations, and that the NRA is in tip-top shape, anxiously awaiting its opportunity to make its case in court, and blow Ms. James right out of the water.

All of that is absolute hog wash.

It's important to note that the suit from the NY AG's office didn't come until months after the credible accusations of fraud and abuse at the top of the NRA had been revealed.

The real situation at the NRA.

Over the past two years, the NRA has lost almost a quarter of its Annual Members, and revenues are down by approximately \$100 million – a reduction of a full third – from where they were in 2018. And 2018 wasn't a particularly good year. The NRA is also spending more on one law firm, Brewer Attorneys & Counselors, than on all of its core firearm programs combined.

So, what can be done to save the NRA?

Unfortunately, the members have little direct authority to step in when the Board of Directors fails to act. There are really only three options for members seeking to restore sanity in the NRA:

1. Rally members to make so much noise that the majority of the Board finally takes action.
2. Replace derelict Board members with new Directors committed to reform.
3. Lawsuits and legal actions to force the Board to obey basic business and legal principles.

Help us pry the NRA from the clutches of corrupt and incompetent leadership.

Plan to join us in Houston on May 28, and return the provided envelope with a generous check, or contribute online at: www.FirearmsCoalition.org. Keep reading for more details.

The Firearms Coalition Jeff Knox, Managing Director 602-730-4570

The judge took dissolution off the table, but destruction is still an option.

Though the judge has officially rejected the NY AG's demand that the NRA be dissolved, that doesn't mean this lawsuit won't destroy the Association. At the rate the NRA's been hemorrhaging money, combined with the pace of declines in revenue, and the liabilities that remain outstanding, the NRA could be truly bankrupt within the next couple of years.

The evidence is clear and readily available.

If you still have doubts about the corruption among NRA "leaders," a little bit of reading can easily clear up most questions. While some of the worst of the allegations might remain unproven, what's absolutely clear is that people in positions of power at the NRA, abused their positions for their own profit, fed lucrative, and often bogus, contracts to friends and relatives, and repeatedly failed to follow basic protocols and procedures for protecting the assets and integrity of the Association. Wayne LaPierre has admitted under oath, to multiple infractions that justify his termination, and he's pled ignorance on a host of other charges that are equally damning.

Links to the pertinent legal documents and other resources, can be found on our website.

So, what can you do to help save the NRA?

1. Attend the NRA Annual Meeting of Members in Houston on May 28.

This is the only time each year that NRA members have an opportunity to come together to let their elected representatives on the NRA Board of Directors know how they feel and what they want them to do. **We need hundreds – better thousands – of angry NRA members there.**

2. Help Recruit, Nominate, and Elect Reform Candidates for the NRA Board.

We must recruit top-notch candidates, get them nominated by collecting hundreds of signatures from qualified NRA Voting Members, and support their election, by purchasing advertising in NRA publications and other venues where NRA Voting Members are likely to see them.

3. Help us pay for lawyers. (A difficult request, but an essential need.)

We will need to hire lawyers for advice. We might need to hire lawyers to file motions and briefs in current lawsuits. And we might need to hire lawyers to file new lawsuits. It might not be us actually hiring the lawyers, but if a good case is brought, we'd want to be able to help. Sometimes litigation is the only viable option, and that, unfortunately, requires paying lawyers.

A lot of people are complaining, but only a very few are doing anything.

We're The Firearms Coalition. Founded in 1984 by Neal Knox, we've been informing and advising the grassroots rights movement for almost 40 years. We usually don't focus so heavily on NRA matters, but that's what's most important right now. We'll never claim the sky is falling, or send fundraisers just to raise money. We provide information. If you find it valuable, we ask that you contribute. Simple as that. Every little bit helps. We hope you'll join us.

Yours for the Second Amendment



Jeff Knox

P.S. I hope to see you in Houston, but either way, please be sure to share this special "NRA edition" of *The Hard Corps Report* with your NRA member friends. They need to know.



HARD CORPS KNOX Report

Defending Your Right to Defend Your Family

1984 - 2021
Volume 38, Issue 1
March 2022

Special NRA issue:

Not Fake News

The cancer at the top of the NRA is real and malignant.

Members' Meeting

May 28 in Houston, our last chance to fix NRA?

New NRA Board

The current Board refuses to fix things, so fire them.

NRA Might Live

Judge says dissolution too much, but what's enough?

Carry On!

One state shy of half now have Constitutional Carry.

Only One.

On the NRA Director ballot Tait is the only choice.

BATFE-I-E-I-O

Biden's BATFE doing their best to make us criminals.

Every little bit...

If you find value in our work, please pitch in.

In Sight

This issue had a heavy focus on the NRA, for very good reasons.

The Firearms Coalition®

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FirearmsCoalition.org

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NRA Really is in Serious Trouble *Those who say it's all just politically motivated lies are lying.*

Who are you going to believe?

In this corner: NRA "leaders" who tell you there is no truth to the accusations of abuse of power, misappropriation of funds, sweetheart deals, excessive compensation, cronyism, and other charges being leveled at Wayne LaPierre and company!

And in this corner: NRA "leaders" who admitted under oath that they accepted gifts from vendors, arranged multi-million dollar no-bid deals with buddies, misled outside auditors, authorized fat pay and bonuses for executives, giving them golden parachutes with full pay for years after quitting or being fired, and gave juicy, no-show contracts to former employees, and the spouses of employees, all while laying off hard-working rank-and-file NRA employees.

But wait! Everyone is in the same corner!

The "leaders" who say the fuss at NRA is just politically motivated lies, are the same

Houston in May Bring torches and pitchforks.

The NRA Annual Meeting of Members is again scheduled for Houston, Texas, on May 28th of this year. Last year's meeting was originally scheduled there, but was canceled at the last minute, then quietly rescheduled for Charlotte, North Carolina, where they were able to get a whopping 140 members in attendance, with almost 50 of those being sitting Directors, and probably 75 others being staff or friends and family of those Directors.

Without the excuse of the pandemic (though that's not guaranteed to be off the table) it would be hard for them to cancel the meeting this year, so we're planning to show up with an angry mob demanding answers to the Board's failure to take substantive action in response to the admitted corruption from the Executive Vice President and his cronies.

The members no longer have any real power in the Members' Meeting. All we can do is ask questions and make suggestions in the form of resolutions. You can bet that President Cotton, who will be chairing the meeting, will try his best to keep us from ➔

"leaders" who provided the damning sworn testimony! LaPierre admitted to putting a friend on a multi-million-dollar retainer to arrange for private jets and limousine service for him. He admitted to using those private jets for personal trips, and to picking up friends and family along the way, at NRA expense. He admitted to authorizing multi-million-dollar, multi-year severance packages for himself and other top executives – though he claimed that he wasn't aware of a clause in his own contract, providing him with *full pay for the rest of his life*. That claim lost even more credibility when it came out that LaPierre had his personal attorney, whom he hired to represent him in contract negotiations with the NRA, submit his \$100k+ bills to the NRA for payment. LaPierre also admitted to accepting over three quarters of a million dollars worth of gifts from a vendor – without reporting the gifts as required by NRA policy – and to accepting a gift of frequent use of another vendor's luxury yacht in the Caribbean – again, without reporting the gift. ➔

New NRA Directors

We're putting together a slate for 2023.

The NRA Board of Directors consists of 76 seats, with 25 up for election to a 3-year term, each year. This means it would take at least two years of success at the polls for a member-centered group of reform-minded directors to win enough seats to hold a majority. But there are usually enough fence-sitters and followers on the Board to make it possible to shift the balance of power with the replacement of only a dozen seats or less. So that's what a new group has decided to try to do. They're putting together a slate of at least a dozen, but hoping for 25 or more, highly qualified candidates to run by petition for seats on the Board in 2023.

Candidates for the Board of Directors can be nominated by the Nominating Committee, or by petition of the members. Since the Nominating Committee is dominated by people loyal to Wayne LaPierre, the only way to be sure reform candidates get on the ballot,

Houston Meeting? *continued*

doing either of those things, so we must have a strong majority of reform-minded members in attendance. We need well more than half of the members present, to be unwavering in their insistence that their concerns be aired and their questions answered, or else our efforts will simply be ruled “out of order” by the Chair, and we will be shut down.

The meeting will be chaired by President Charles Cotton, an attorney out of Texas, who is one of Wayne LaPierre’s staunchest defenders. Cotton, as detailed elsewhere in this edition of *The Hard Corps Report*, has served in key roles on the Board, and has admitted to placing his allegiance to Wayne LaPierre above his legal obligations to the Association and the membership. He has also used his position as chair of the last two Members’ Meetings, to stifle dissent and shut down any discussion of the critical issues facing the Association.

In short, Cotton is a big part of what’s wrong with the NRA, and he’s going to be holding the gavel again at the Members’ Meeting in Houston. That doesn’t bode well for those seeking answers and accountability, nor does it help with the New York lawsuit, where the Board’s active resistance to taking any substantive action against those who have admitted to abusing their positions and falling short of their duties, has been cited as evidence of deep corruption within the Association.

The only way members can hope to bring accountability to the Board, is with the power of numbers at the Members’ Meeting, so if you possibly can, please plan to be in Houston, Texas on May 28th, and bring some angry friends.

Dissolution Off the Table

The judge in the lawsuit brought against the NRA by the Attorney General of New York, has ruled that dissolution of the Association, as called for by the NY AG, would be an unfair outcome for the millions of NRA members who make up the Association, and therefore, he removed “the corporate death penalty” from the possible outcomes in the case.

That’s good news, and gives another glimpse in to the thinking of the judge, who seems to be fair-minded and practical in his approach. From early on in the case, we got the impression that the judge thought the AG was overreaching with her calls for dissolution, but it was a relief to have him formally take the option off the table.

The ruling represents a small ray of sunshine in an otherwise dark sky. In the same ruling, the judge dropped three charges that he said were redundant with other charges under more applicable statutes. He left in place over a dozen other charges, so, while good news, this was just a minor bit of relief, and the NRA isn’t anywhere close to being out of the woods yet.

Of course, that’s not the way the NRA painted it. To read their press release, you’d think that they had crushed the whole case, and that the NY AG, Letitia James might be at risk of prosecution for wrongful prosecution. The release included quotes from NRA’s \$40+ million attorney, Bill Brewer, and NRA President Charles Cotton, touting the ruling as proof that the NRA is strong and moving forward under the leadership of Wayne LaPierre...

The case isn’t expected to get to trial until late this year, and even though straight-up dissolution is off the table, total destruction is not. The suit still has the potential to bankrupt the NRA, or put it into receivership. Stay tuned.

NRA in Trouble *continued*

Meanwhile, the Chair and the former Chair of the Audit Committee, both admitted under oath that they had misled a firm of outside auditors regarding LaPierre’s role in the corporation, directing the auditors not to audit LaPierre’s office or his financial activities within the Association.

That Audit Committee Chairman, who admitted to putting his personal relationship and trust in Wayne LaPierre above his fiduciary responsibility as a Director and Chair of the Audit Committee, is also LaPierre’s loudest cheerleader, and is now, as of last October, the President of NRA, Charles Cotton. His co-conspirator, the former Chair of the Audit Committee, who stepped back and was serving as Vice Chair, was David Coy, elected in October to serve as 2nd Vice President of the Board.

It’s worth noting that the President, 1st Vice President, and 2nd Vice President, also serve as the Compensation Committee, setting salary and benefits for executive officers. While the NRA has laid off about three quarters of their staff and reduced most salaries by about 20 percent, closed the museums, shut down NRA TV and the expensively-hyped Carry Guard program, and engaged in a variety of other deep cost-cutting measures, LaPierre’s compensation jumped some 55 percent, from \$1.4 million per year, to over \$2.2 million, and was last reported to be holding at about \$1.6 million last year.

So who are you going to believe?

New Directors *continued*

is through the petition process. But that’s a difficult task, especially for a large number of candidates working together, as each prospective candidate will need to collect over 600 signatures of qualified NRA Voting Members. Guys at gun shows don’t want to spend a half-hour filling out and signing two dozen different nominating petitions.

For more than two decades, petition candidates for the NRA Board of Directors, have been relatively few and far between. There have generally been no more than two or three in any given year, and they have rarely won a seat. Those numbers have gone down in recent years, since the current regime convinced members to make it even harder for petition candidates to get qualified.

But back in the 1980s and ‘90s, it was not unusual for there to be a dozen or more petition candidates, along with several Nominating Committee candidates who would go to the trouble of circulating petitions, so they could claim to be a “dual nominee.”

The greatest success of any organized petition-only slate of candidates, was in 1991, when Neal Knox headed a slate of almost a dozen candidates, all sponsored by a group called “The Federation.” The group had originally been called “The Federation for NRA,” but the NRA sued them for using “NRA” in their title, and somehow won that suit, forcing the group to remove “NRA” from its name.

Those 10 or 11 candidates winning seats, changed the balance of power on the NRA Board, and soon Neal Knox was in line right behind Marion Hammer, to become President of the Association. Unfortunately, a dispute arose about the methods Wayne LaPierre and his associates were using in conducting the Association’s fundraising, the amounts they were paying to do it, and the way contracts and money were being doled out.

Our readers know that none of the recent scandals are anything new, just the same behavior, with bigger numbers.



by Jeff Knox, Director of The Firearms Coalition®

Too Much NRA...

This issue of *The Hard Corps Report* is heavily loaded with NRA information. There's a good reason for that.

The NRA is, and has long-been the most important, powerful voice for gun owners in the United states, by a long-shot. While the other most prominent gun rights organizations in the country top out at anywhere from less than a million up to maybe \$21 million per year, the NRA had been averaging between \$350 and \$400 million per year before things began crashing down in 2019. That's an astounding difference, and, while money isn't everything, it paints a pretty clear picture.

Since details about the misuse of funds by NRA's top executives started to come out in late 2018, and really exploded into the public in early 2019, there have been a number of challenges facing the Association, costing tens of millions of dollars, while fundraising and membership have fallen through the floor.

There's also the problem of the NRA repeatedly failing to live up to the principles they are supposed to be holding sacrosanct. That's been a huge problem from the beginning.

Many in the gun community are advocating for NRA to burn to the ground, so other, more worthy organizations can rise up and take the mantle of leadership in the fight. That's short-sighted and unrealistic.

The NRA didn't become the big dog in the rights fight because they were the best lobbyists or the most philosophically pure. They became the big dog in the rights fight because they were the biggest dog in the gun world. They were the biggest organization in the firearms training world. The biggest organization in the competitive shooting world. The biggest organization in the hunting world. And the biggest organization in the gun collecting world.

For decades, the NRA tried to avoid getting involved in politics, and in 1975 they initiated a plan to get them completely away from gun politics, with an eye toward being more of an environmental organization focused exclusively on hunting, competitive shooting, and collecting. Thankfully, it was that plan to dramatically shift the Association away from gun politics, that fired up the members in 1977, forcing the Association to do exactly what they were trying so hard to avoid, become the big dog in the gun rights arena.

No other organization comes anywhere close to the NRA's budget, its infrastructure, its diversity of programs, or its membership, much less its reputation and connections. If the NRA dies, we will eventually rebuild something to replace it, or possibly a few somethings. Most likely the rebuilding process would come up from the state association network, and might end up being even better and stronger than the original, but it would almost certainly take years to get there, and those could be years that we can't afford to have the NRA on the sidelines.

So we're dedicated to doing whatever we can to save it.

Biden's BATFE

Back to the bad old days of harassment and abuse.

The BATFE is moving forward with plans to ban pistol braces, homemade guns, homemade silencers, and forced-reset triggers, and they appear to be preparing to go after gun dealers' licenses for even the smallest of paperwork errors.

Joe Biden has, on several occasions, spouted a bunch of nonsense about going after "rogue gun dealers." We all know that licensed dealers intentionally violating gun laws in order to sell guns to prohibited persons and other criminals, are about as rare as unicorns and hens' teeth. But based on a recent notice, it looks like the BATFE is planning to revoke the license of any FFL who commits any of a wide variety of violations, including the generation of "fraudulent" firearm transaction paperwork. But, "fraudulent" in what way?

In the past, the BATFE has issued citations and warnings to dealers for such things as accepting 4473 forms with errors like "Penn" instead of "PA," or "N," instead of "No." In fact, it's extremely rare for an FFL to go through a BATFE inspection without getting several such dings. Perhaps that's due in part to the fact that the number of citations an agent issues, is a major factor in Performance Reviews, meaning it's in the agent's personal interest to be nit-picky.

Are we about to see these nit-picky citations turn into revoked FFL's? It seems to be a real possibility, so we encourage gun dealers to really up their paperwork game, and to be sure to video all interactions with BATFE agents.

On the "Ban This" front, the BATFE has decided that "arm braces" for pistols, which they previously approved, are now actually stocks, and their installation constitutes converting a pistol into a "Short-Barreled Rifle," in violation of the National Firearms Act of 1934.

They're also declaring most "forced reset triggers" to be machineguns, and that almost anything intended to be used for construction of a firearm or silencer, is itself a firearm or silencer, creating a strange chicken vs. egg Catch 22.

And they're trying to redefine "firearm," to include parts such as the barrel and the upper receiver, meaning these parts would require serial numbers and special handling as firearms.

How exactly all of this will play out is still up in the air, but it's clear that the Biden administration is going to do their best to make things difficult for gun owners and dealers for the rest of Biden's term. Hopefully a heavily pro-rights majority will take over Congress in November and block this nonsense.

Supporting Our Work

We depend on your support to keep us in the fight.

For almost 40 years, The Firearms Coalition® has been a leading voice in the fight for rights. Founded in 1984 by life-long shooter and prominent gun writer, Neal Knox, TFC has been working with grassroots groups and individual activists, to give them a voice in DC, and to make their efforts more effective in their own cities, counties, and state legislatures.

In all of our 38 years of operation, we've relied primarily on small donations of less than \$100, to fund our work and allow us to keep fighting. We simply request that if you find value in the information we provide, and the work that we do, that you help pay for those efforts as you're able.

Contributions can be made at: www.FirearmsCoalition.org or by mail to: TFC, Box 303, Tombstone, AZ 85638

Twenty Five Constitutional Carry States?

But for a few betrayals, we would have crossed well past the halfway point this year.

We've focused heavily on NRA matters in this edition of *The Hard Corps Report*, but that's not the only news.

The big story in the rights world is the ongoing expansion of Constitutional Carry around the country. Despite repeated claims from the anti-rights zealots, that people carrying "loaded, hidden guns around in public," with "no background check," no training, and no government permission slip, endangers police and the public, and that it's a "return to the wild west," where "blood will flow in the streets," Nothing like their predictions came true in Vermont or Alaska or Arizona, or any of the other 20 plus states where Constitutional Carry has been restored. In fact, the exact opposite has proven true. When Constitutional Carry has become the law, violent street crime has dropped.

Even the whining of certain sheriffs about the loss of revenue that their departments will suffer once citizens are no longer compelled to pay them for carry licenses, has been proven to be a non-issue. Similar complaints have frequently come from professional firearm trainers who have developed a business model based on training people for their carry license. While there typically is an initial reduction in the number of people getting licensed, that reduction represents only a small percentage, and a significant number of people who don't choose to get a carry license, do choose to seek out professional training. State after state has repeated the process, and the data shows that people don't require government mandates to do the responsible thing.

Of course we'll not see these facts broadly reported in the legacy media, as they tend to support the anti-rights, gun control agenda. What you will see is reports talking about these new laws "allowing" people to carry guns, and various other discussions about what gun owners are and are not "allowed" to do. This use of the word "allow" is inappropriate, and should be called out whenever it appears. As we have

frequently repeated, rights are never "allowed;" they are either respected or infringed. So when a law rolls back carry restrictions, that is not "allowing" carry, it is recognizing the right to carry. If the state can allow or disallow something, it's not a right, but a privilege. The only time the word "allow" is appropriate in the context of the right to arms, is when questioning how far we are going to allow the government to encroach on those rights. We need to be diligent about correcting reporters when they use such misleading and inaccurate terminology.

The fight for Constitutional Carry has been predominantly a grassroots phenomenon, which has slowly gained support from the national rights groups. The Firearms Coalition has actively supported Constitutional Carry and helped grassroots groups work toward that goal, for almost two decades. Other national groups, particularly the NRA, have been slower to embrace the idea, but they're more than willing to try to claim credit when new laws pass around the country.

We're still hoping to reach the landmark of 25 states, half of the country, recognizing Constitutional Carry, as a bill is still bouncing around the Georgia legislature as of this writing. We should have passed that mark by at least two this year, but the Democratic governor of Pennsylvania vetoed the bill after it was passed by the legislature, and for the third year in a row, Republican "leadership" in the Florida Legislature blocked a Constitutional Carry bill from advancing there.

GunVoters need to get involved right now, to ensure that solid, pro-rights candidates win their respective primaries, and then conquer in the general election.

There are big changes coming this year, and GunVoters must lead the way. The first step is to make sure that there are good, pro-rights candidates running in the primaries, and that those candidates win. The primaries are where GunVoters can have the greatest impact, so get busy now!

Bullet Vote for Frank Tait

If you haven't yet done so, you have until May 8 to return your ballot for the 2022 NRA Board of Directors election.

If you are a Life Member, or Annual Member with 5 years of continuous membership, you should have received a ballot in your March NRA magazine. If you did, and you have not mailed it in yet, please take a moment to put a mark next to Frank C. Tait's name, sign the envelope, attach a stamp, and send it in. All ballots must be received by May 8.

Frank Tait is the only candidate on the ballot who was not picked by Wayne LaPierre's Nominating Committee, but was nominated by petition of the members. He's also the only candidate who has publicly called for LaPierre to be replaced.

With the passing of long-time NRA Director and member of Congress from Alaska, Don Young, and the death of long-time Director John Cushman, along with the resignation of long-time Director Todd Rathner, there are now 29 candidates for 28 seats, including the 76th Director seat, which will be elected at the Members' Meeting in Houston, so Tait is all but guaranteed a seat, but the higher up in the polling he lands, the stronger message is sent, so please dig out the March issue of your NRA magazine and give Frank a vote.

Buy One Get One

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of one. No catch.
Only \$5.00 shipping.
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politician, or your
local library.

2 books
for just
\$19⁹⁹
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