



THE FIRING LINE

Nevada Firearms Coalition

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In this newsletter:

In Memory of Don Turner

President's Message

Division News

Donation Programs

Board Members

1

3

6

7

8

IN MEMORY OF DON TURNER

Donald Turner was the founding president of NVFAC.

Second Amendment supporters across the southwest suffered a heavy loss with the passing of former Nevada Firearms Coalition President Don Turner (March 2, 1947 – Feb. 1, 2021). Born in Wyoming and raised across the world, Turner left an indelible mark upon America's shooting sports.

"I was saddened to hear of Don's passing," said NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre. "He was a tireless advocate for our Second Amendment and for America's shooting sports. His many contributions to our cause in Nevada and beyond have benefitted many. On behalf of the National Rifle Association, I extend my heartfelt condolences to his wife, Betty and their family."

After graduating from the University of Arizona, Turner worked briefly in Utah before securing a position with Arizona Game and Fish. Starting as a Wildlife Manager, he eventually rose through the ranks to become project leader of Statewide Shooting Ranges and ultimately manager of the world renown Ben Avery Shooting Facility. His nine-year stewardship of Ben Avery saw participation number increase by nearly 350%. Such success soon garnered the attention of officials in the neighboring state of Nevada.

Taking everything he learned in Arizona, Turner began working for Clark County, Nevada, to help design and develop the 2,900 acre Clark County Shooting Complex. Six years later he officially retired and launched the Nevada Firearms Coalition Foundation, Nevada Firearms PAC, and Nevadans for State Gun Rights.

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed.

Spring– Summer 2021

GARRETT JOHNSON, EDITOR

Don Turner (cont).

Through those organizations Turner's drive and determination became what some referred to as the heart and soul of the Nevada firearms community. He worked with key players in the Nevada legislature, helped pass a number of pro-gun bills, and was instrumental in creating the Nevada Firearms Coalition Foundation's Annie Oakley Women's Shooting Program, which helped thousands of women to develop their shooting skills through education and training.

Former Nevada Firearms Coalition President Matt Hennager said, "Don Turner was a great man who selflessly devoted himself to the preservation of American's 2nd Amendment rights. He worked tirelessly on the development of the Clark County Shooting Complex in Las Vegas, founded the Nevada Firearms Coalition, and was instrumental in the passage of the pro Second Amendment laws in Nevada. Don was a friend, mentor, and inspirational figure who will be sorely by me, his family, and the 2A community at large."

Don Turner was a biologist, an instructor, a peace officer, a former NRA & NSSF Board member, husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his wife of 27 years, Betty Woods Turner, three children, Christina Kim (Chuck), Daniel Turner, Ted Turner, and step-daughter Catrina Zenou (Israel), as well as granddaughters Lily and Stella Kim. We also wish to thank Matt Hennager for his interim term as president after Don's passing.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Greg Ferrante

I would like to start out by saying thank you to all our members, new and current, alike. As one of the founding members of NVFAC, it is my humble honor to take the helm of the most successful 2A advocate organization in Nevada and to carry on Don Turner's vision dedicated to the safe use and ownership of firearms for self-defense, competition, recreation and hunting. The NVFAC board recognizes that we could not do all that we do without you, and that your continued membership is so greatly appreciated. Secondly, as the new president for 5 months of NVFAC, NVFAC Foundation and Vice President of the NVFAC PAC, I can certainly say that these duties are quite the formidable volunteer task. Following in Don Turner's footsteps has been both challenging and enlightening and a task that I certainly take to heart. Without such a great team of all volunteer board members, I could not see how any of this could be done with any degree of success. It is clearer than ever that Don put together a very good team of people – and to you my board – I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Who is the new president, Greg Ferrante? Well, I'm just another person just like you. I was introduced to shooting in high power rifle national matches back in the mid 80's. I'm a business owner, running a national IT security firm, voice over IP and datacenter services and, a licensed Realtor in Nevada. I'm a father of 5 wonderful grown kids, with my oldest being in the US Air Force and the rest working in various industries. I was approached by Don while he was building the Clark County Shooting Complex and when he decided to form the Nevada Firearms Coalition. I originally came on as the Communications Director, but recently was elevated to the President's role. I enjoy the outdoors, love to go camping in new places and take in as much of our beautiful country's scenery as I can every chance I get.

President's Message (cont).

Now that the phone number rings our office phones, I've had the opportunity to speak with many members.

One of the common issues this year was our lack of keeping our members up to date on all legislative matters. While I can comfortably say we were not sitting around, I did apologize and let them know that we will be making changes to get all of the latest information out on various new platforms over the next few months.

I would like to remind our members that your NVFAC board is made up of men and women who sincerely believe in educating all on gun safety and protecting our 2nd amendment rights. We all have our day (or night) jobs, some work in the gun industry, some do not. But one thing we have in common is the unwavering support for our constitutional right to own firearms and to be able to protect ourselves and our families. Not many organizations can say this, but, your membership dues and donations go towards our efforts 100%. This year, among others, was one of the most difficult.

With the passing of our founding president Don Turner, reorganization, and formalization of the organizations business matters, and probably one of the most difficult legislative sessions over the last 10 years, we had a great deal of "mess" to deal with. But, once again, thanks to our members and the unwavering dedication of our board members, we have successfully grown and managed to hold our ground and weaken many of the state bills that were put on the floor this year. We were able to do this with the sheer number of members, newer members, and continued support and donations that we received which helped pay for our lobbyists fighting the fight in Carson City for us.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE: 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION WRAP-UP

By Randy Mackie, Vice President Legislative Division

Second Amendment supporters started out the 81st session of the Nevada Legislature at a disadvantage, as we have for the last two sessions: Democrats controlled the Assembly and the Senate, and the Governorship. While they lost their super-majority in both houses from last session, Democrats still had an overwhelming majority in both houses sufficient to pass anything, excepting financial bills, they wanted as long as the Democratic caucuses stuck together.

News coverage and reports leading up to session indicated the Democrats had an aggressive anti-firearms agenda, including killing or weakening state-wide firearms law preemption. This did not end up being the case.

There was clean-up legislation on the Red Flag law from the 2019 session, made necessary by the poor crafting and hasty passage of that law. We monitored and cleaned up the clean-up efforts, including issues relating to funding for municipal jury trials, and definitions of dating relationships. This came about at the urging of the Nevada Supreme Court, which had issued an opinion mandating a jury trial for any misdemeanor charges of domestic violence that carried a penalty including loss of Second Amendment rights.

The clean-up for this involved some heavy lobbying by the City of Henderson. Their city council wanted to

Legislative Wrap-Up (cont).

crack down on an influx of domestic violence in dating relationships, but Henderson does not have the physical facilities to accommodate jury trials in their municipal court system, or money in their budget to pay for it, so they were looking for ways around the jury trial requirement. This resulted in a behind-the-scenes struggle over the definition of ‘Dating’ which would have an influence on the number of domestic violence arrests. In the end, they were given funding by the state to help accommodate the jury trials. This was important to NVFAC because we champion jury trials in any prosecutions where gun rights can be forfeited on conviction.

One of the session’s biggest battles was over AB 286, the so-called “Ghost Gun” bill, which aimed to ban and criminalize kit guns, the unfinished lower receivers and other parts used by lawful gun owners to assemble rifles and pistols for their personal use and not for sale.

The bill also had sections allowing casinos to enhance their trespass policy to make their properties, both casinos proper and other non-casino property as well, gun-free zones, and giving their gun-free notice signs the force of law. That meant that people found to be carrying guns on such property were subject to having police called to enforce the gun-free zone. Concealed Firearms Permittees would be allowed the opportunity to leave the premises or remove the gun from the premises before police were called, but open carriers could have police called on them on sight and without warning.

The casino trespass portions were stripped out of AB 296 in the Assembly, having fallen prey to an unusual coalition of political bedfellows opposed to it: NVFAC PAC, NRA-ILA, Nevada Families for Freedom, the Firearms Policy Coalition, the Nevada Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Public Defenders, and the Assembly Black Caucus, among others. The casino trespass portions were eventually stripped out of AB 286, only to return in the Senate as SB 452.

The kit gun ban remained in AB 286. Americans have been making guns for their own use since colonial times. Demonized by the Left for their lack of serial numbers and accused of being used in crimes, there is no reliable evidence of an epidemic of their criminal use, only gun-control advocates spouting talking points. The “Ghost Guns” bill was viewed by Democrats as an easy win, since reports of similar action at the federal level by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives were circulating in the press and media in the early days of the session.

Nevada’s Democratic legislators wanted to be the first kids on their block to ban “Ghost Guns,” and they succeeded. The bill as crafted and signed by the Governor offered no grandfathering for current legal owners of kit gun firearms, had no compensation for gun owners for their formerly legal property which was suddenly rendered criminal, and had no provisions for serializing existing kit guns so they could be rendered legal, thus making it a tour de force of legislative unconstitutionality on 2nd, 4th, and 5th Amendment grounds.

Despite the Constitutional problems, and despite acknowledging to our team that they knew the bill had constitutional problems, Nevada’s Democratic legislative majority in both chambers voted unanimously for AB 286. They were so dead set on scoring a “gun scalp” this session that the bill’s sponsor and author, Assemblywoman Sandra Jauregui, would not even speak to our lobbyist about her bill, rebuffing several

Legislative Wrap-Up (cont).

attempts to meet. The Firearm Policy Coalition (FPC) has already filed a suit against AB 286 shortly after its signing by the Governor. NVFAC is evaluating that suit to see if we want to join it or help it in other ways. Despite the united Democratic support for AB 286 in both chambers, and their unified refusal to even discuss it with us, the PAC still managed to make AB 286 one of the most publicly opposed bills this session.

The other hard-fought battle was over SB 452, the Casino Trespass bill. Written by anti-gun activists hired by MGM to get it through the legislature, this bill was a solution in search of a problem which the MGM really wanted! Smarting from their bad press following the 1 October 2017 massacre from one on their high-rise resorts, the MGM has made all their properties gun-free zones.

Unhappy that their bill had died in the Assembly, MGM persuaded their Democratic allies to bring it up in the Senate as an emergency bill, under special rules making it exempt from legislative deadlines, and easier to pass. It was also sponsored and carried by Senate Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro, one of the heaviest of Democratic hitters in the legislature.

This bill was MGM's attempt to make Nevada's police forces, especially the Las Vegas Metro Police Department, their private security when it comes to dealing with armed casino patrons. MGM's own security isn't armed because they don't want the liability of having gun-toting employees, so they feel at a disadvantage when their security forces need to tell customers that their properties, casinos or otherwise, are gun-free zones.

In an interesting mélange of strange bedfellows, SB 452 was strongly opposed not only the usual gun rights defenders, the NVFAC PAC, NRA-ILA, FPC, and Nevada Families for Freedom, but also the Nevada Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Public Defenders, the Las Vegas Police Protective Association, and the Assembly Black Caucus. When a bill gets that diverse kind of opposition, you know it's a bad bill, and this one died in the Senate Judiciary Committee in the last days of the session.

AB 321 was another bill we closely watched and opposed. While not specifically a gun bill, it is an attack on the voting rights of Nevadans. It makes permanent the temporary election changes used during the COVID-19 pandemic. We opposed this legislation because voting rights are just as important as Second Amendment rights, and without fair and secure elections, all our rights are at risk.

This bill was part of the legislative end-game and was passed partially to allow several new ballot initiatives to be removed from the 2022 general election ballot. AB 321 makes election cheating easier than ever to do, and harder to detect. Fortunately, cheating in elections is not fool-proof for the cheaters. It can be defeated, and we can still win at the ballot box by getting out our vote, and by supporting candidates we think and trust will defend your gun rights. That makes our efforts, and YOUR efforts, leading up to the 2022 election more important than ever.

To sum up, over the last several sessions with Democrats in control of both legislative chambers and the Governorship, we're holding back the tide, but losing a little ground by not being able to advance the ball, each session. We have a defensive political action effort that is working for us in the legislature and we need to continue to invest in that strategy, which has proven successful in both gaining ground during the '15 GOP majority and holding the line in the '17, '19 and '21 sessions. [continued next page]

Legislative Wrap-Up (cont).

NVFAC and its PAC, and you, our members, also need to stay engaged in elections, candidate selection, and voter turn-out efforts, because if Democrats keep chipping away at the Second Amendment, the Silver State will soon look like Eastern California.

I am pleased to report that your PAC was responsible for mobilizing our supporters to send 64,377 emails to legislators during the 81st Legislative Session, which is no small feat for a grass-roots advocacy group.

I take this opportunity to commend our PAC team. We are fortunate, indeed, to have on our side Megan Bedera, our PAC manager, and Randi Thompson, our lobbyist. Both have been with us since the beginning of NVFAC's political activity, and they make it possible for NVFAC to "punch above its weight class." NVFAC is well regarded in Nevada political circles because of the superb work they do for you.

NVFAC is still the only grassroots Nevada organization to have a full-time lobbyist in Carson City fighting to protect your gun rights during the biennial legislative sessions. Our PAC team and their work is made possible by the generous support of members and donors like you. We face bigger challenges in the next election

Yours in Liberty,

Randy

Duncan Rand Mackie

President, NVFAC PAC; Vice President, NVFAC Legislative Division

DIVISION NEWS

Southern Division

What's with the construction at the Sloan and Las Vegas Blvd. shooting spot?

You may have noticed a post and cable fence line established at the entrance that has occasionally closed the popular shooting spot about six miles south of the M Casino. Steph Clark with BLM told us that they are creating a clear route to take people to the location that is acceptable to safely shoot. The fence line traverses the length of the unsafe zone to the 1/2-mile marker. Kiosks will be installed to provide recreational shooting guidelines and information. This will increase safety and provide easily discernable boundaries for legal and safe shooting.

"Since Sloan is known to be the most utilized site as well as the most unsafe, we have focused our fencing and education efforts at that location," Clark said. "Additional plans for kiosks to provide recreational shooting guidance are planned for the 'gravel pit' and other locations off Light Weight road and other prominent shooting accesses within the Jean/Roach Special Recreation Management Area."



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If you wish to help NVFAC with its programs, find out more information, contact a board member or contribute an article to *The Firing Line* please feel free to contact the above officers.

THE FINAL WORD

The right to keep and bear arms is the insurance policy behind the right to life.

—— Judge Roger T. Benitez, *Rhode v. Becerra* ——