

IOWA FIREARMS COALITION

■ By Michael Ware

The Second Amendment is hot, REAL hot. I'm hearing and seeing that all around me. As a board member of the Iowa Firearms Coalition, Iowa's wing of NRA-ILA and NRA affiliate club, I work with some absolutely great people here in Iowa. We stop poor legislation and promote policy and legislation that benefit the 3,000,000+ of us here in this great state. I'm proud of the combined efforts that have led to Shall Issue, the Dove Bill, the NIAA Bill, and have stopped a myriad of others that harm Iowans.

How did I get started you ask? That's a long story, but I'll provide you the short version. I had been denied the ability to apply for Permit to Carry Weapons from my local sheriff for six consecutive years. I couldn't understand it. My life is worth no more or less than my neighbor, so if a person vetted by the Department of Justice, ATF, FBI, and gaggle of other agencies that holds a Federal Firearms License to Manufacture Weapons can't get a permit to carry weapons, I knew many others were certainly being discriminated against as well. Fed up, I turned to the Internet and found an organization called "Iowa Carry." I joined them in the fight for a "Shall Issue" law and worked to steer away from Jim Crow laws like "May Issue" and others. I began by volunteering. I worked the gun show tables around the state, was asked to serve on the executive committee as a vice president of marketing, then executive vice president from where I was elected to the board of directors. In unison with NRA, we changed the law with all the help from Iowans, and we opted to change our name to the "Iowa Firearms Coalition" to better serve the membership's new broadened direction.

IFC was awarded the coveted "Jay M. Littlefield NRA-ILA Memorial Volunteer Organization of the Year Award" for the work performed to help pass Shall Issue reform, and our president accepted the award on behalf of our membership. Our

organization is 100% volunteer with no paid positions. While we'd very much like to change this and hire a full time executive director, we still need more annual membership to do so. IFC holds a daily presence at the capitol building, and we attend all the DNR public meetings along with the rules committees, and liaise routinely with the Governor's office. Every year we hold a 2A Rally at the

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Brownell's Big Springs Range Complex in conjunction with NRA. IFC has a table for education, discussion, and membership at nearly every gun show in Iowa. When you couple these with our online presence and the tools we provide with information through email alerts to keep you up to date, Facebook, Twitter, our Youtube channel, and tools like the IFC Action Center for sending quick emails to your elected officials, we have built a one stop shop for all things 2nd Amendment related in Iowa.

The relationship we hold with NRA is solid as granite, but the local affiliate clubs hold a great deal of worth and value for more one-on-one work. We recognize one of the strengths we can bring to the combined force is that of volunteerism and grassroots organizing. The volume of people we can turn out to events ranging from rallies, to the Ames Straw Poll, local meetings, etc. is a testament to the dedication and strength of our IFC membership.

Like us all, I get so busy I forget to look around and reflect on what others are thinking as they look in on me. It occurred to me that while I use the acronym "IFC" all over the place, I never have taken the time to explain what it is and how proud I am to have worked with so many selfless volunteers over the years here in Iowa. That and a customer said to me the other day, "what the heck is IFC?" ;)

Become an NRA member. Become an IFC member. Volunteer, learn for yourself, educate others, and vote. These things have brought me much satisfaction and spawned many invaluable friendships. Now is a great time to start. 🗡️



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