



SANDY GET



BY MIRA RADOVICH
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BECKETT

Sandra Froman and Phoebe Ann Mosey have two things in common: expert marksmanship and breaking down barriers for women. Phoebe, better known by her stage name “Annie Oakley,” captivated vaudeville audiences with her legendary shooting abilities. Sandy Froman, a Tucson attorney, is a crack shot and the newly elected president of the National Rifle Association—only the second woman to lead the organization in its 130-year history.

YOUR GUN



NRA PRESIDENT SANDRA FROMAN

Had Froman followed her first inkling, she may have been teaching economics instead of heading one of the world's most influential hunting and gun rights groups. At Stanford University in the late 1960s, Froman changed her major several times, eventually settling on economics.

One day, a college boyfriend broke a date with her in order to take the LSAT exam. Not to be outdone, she decided to take the exam too. Froman not only passed the test; she discovered that law was her course in life.

"Law school and being a lawyer were well suited to my talents," says Froman, who earned a J.D. from Harvard Law School in 1974. "I always liked problem-solving, writing, speaking. The skills you learn in law school are things that are translatable to many fields—the corporate world, the financial world and the political world."

Froman was able to use all her legal skills when she returned to California to work as an entertainment lawyer for Loeb and Loeb in Los Angeles. She recalls representing Walt W. Rostow, President Lyndon B. Johnson's special assistant for national affairs, in one memorable First Amendment Case.

Rostow was suing to stop the exhibition of the controversial Vietnam War documentary *Hearts and Minds*, in which he was interviewed. Froman argued that Rostow's comments were taken out of context and used in a misleading manner in the 1974 documentary. The judge agreed, although the film had already been released theatrically to qualify for the Academy Awards.

"I had the dubious job of serving an injunction on theaters in Westwood [California] to stop the showing of the film," Froman recalls. "All these people lined up to see the movie were sent home. I was not a popular person that night."

Defenses Are Down (But Not for Long)

It was during the time Froman lived in Los Angeles that she first became involved with firearms. After a man tried to break into her house one night, Froman realized that she needed to be able to protect herself. "The way I wanted to do that was to get a firearm, learn how to use it, and be safe in my life," she says.

Froman bought a gun and enrolled in a firearms safety course, learning how to take apart and clean guns, and practicing marksmanship. These early lessons showed her the importance of firearms education training, prompting her to join the NRA.

"Our 4 million members are a diverse group with a common belief and interest: preserving our freedom to exercise the right to keep and bear arms," says Froman.

Over the years, Froman got more involved in the politics of the NRA, becoming a member of its board of directors and serving as a trustee and president of the NRA Foundation. As the NRA's president, Froman is focusing her efforts in three areas.

The first area is making sure "all NRA members, particularly women, have the opportunity to get reasonably priced and good firearms and marksmanship safety training in their local areas," Froman says.

"The second issue is making sure we have good judges on the benches."

Froman served on the Pima County Commission on Trial Court

“The NRA has been a fixture in American culture for over 130 years and a force in American politics for over three decades.”



NRA PRESIDENT SANDRA FROMAN

Sandra Froman speaking at the NRA annual meeting held in Houston, April 16, 2005.



© iAmEdge Publishing, NRA.

Appointments for three years. She says the merit selection process works best when “there is active participation by both the bar and the lay public in the screening and interview process.” She says it is important to have as much information as possible about judicial candidates so that the commissions can make informed decisions on the suitability of those candidates.

“I believe that Pima County has one of the best trial court benches in the country and am proud of the work that the trial and appellate court commissions do,” Froman says.

The third effort Froman is focusing her attention on is the success of the NRA.

“I want to continue to get our message out there about how important the Second Amendment is to the preservation of all our freedoms,” she says.

Froman recognizes that controversial issues—such as the right to own semiautomatic weapons—arise when discussing gun control.

“Sometimes our image is distorted either deliberately or from ignorance,” Froman says. “Gun control groups misrepresent facts to influence people’s understanding of firearms. Semiautomatic firearms are not machine guns or fully automatic firearms. They do not spray bullets. Law-abiding Americans use semiautomatic firearms every day for legitimate purposes, like hunting, competing and protecting themselves.”

She continues, “The NRA has a solid reputation in national polls. Our approval rating is higher than those for the Democratic Party, the Republican Party and the United States Congress. We have been a fixture in American culture for over 130 years and a force in American politics for over three decades.”

No Business Like Show Business

Froman succeeds actor and civil rights activist Charlton Heston as president of the NRA.

“I worked with Charlton very closely and found him to be a warm, friendly human being,” she says. “When I practiced in L.A., I got to know a lot of celebrities and I would say he is among a handful of people in the



NRA PRESIDENT SANDRA FROMAN

SANDRA S. FROMAN

*Law and Mediation Office
of Sandra S. Froman PLC*

EDUCATION

*Harvard Law School (JD, 1974)
Stanford University (AB, Economics,
with honors, 1971)*

PREVIOUS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

*Snell & Wilmer LLP, Tucson (1989–1999)
Bilby & Shoenhair PC, Tucson (1985–1989)
Santa Clara University Law School,
Santa Clara, Calif., Visiting Professor
of Law (July 1983–June 1985)
Loeb and Loeb, Los Angeles (1974–1984)*

MEMBERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES

*Boy Scouts of America, Catalina Council,
Board of Directors (1999–2003)
National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation,
Immediate Past President
National Rifle Association of America,
President and Member, Board of Directors
(since 1992)
Firearms Civil Rights Legal Defense Fund,
Member, Board of Trustees (1992–1998)
Wildlife for Tomorrow,
President (2000–2002)
University of Arizona Law College
Association, Board of Directors
Republican Precinct Committeeman
(since 1994)*

entertainment business who are just genuine, down-to-earth people.”

Heston received inadvertent screen time in 2002 when documentary-maker Michael Moore showed up on his doorstep asking questions about gun control and violence for his film *Bowling for Columbine*. Given her experience in the Rostow case, Froman was very sensitive to Heston’s situation. She says that if Moore approached her for an interview, she “would have serious concerns about working with anyone who blurs fact and fiction.”

They Say It’s Wonderful

One thing that is fact is Froman’s love of Tucson. Back in 1983, Froman and her late husband, a career law enforcement officer, were living in the Bay area while she taught law at Santa Clara University. One day they received an invitation to visit friends who had just moved to Tucson.

“We came out here and fell in love with Tucson,” Froman says. “Literally, we got off the plane—I think it was July—and we both just loved it. The second day of our trip we called a realtor. We looked at eight houses that day and a week later we bought one. We didn’t have jobs here, didn’t know what we were going to do. It was quite a daring move.”

Froman has never regretted that move. In addition to the desert scenery, open spaces and abundant sunshine, she enjoys Tucson’s intimate legal community.

“When I left Los Angeles in 1985, there were about 120 superior court judges,” she recalls. “At the same time, there were maybe about 10 in Tucson. You could get to know all of them and the federal court judges as well. Because it’s a small, close legal community, it’s possible to accomplish a lot of things because your word means something here.”

Today, Froman represents employers before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and before state and federal courts. Her cases run the gamut of employment and housing discrimination, sexual harassment, wrongful discharge, negligent hiring and retention, defamation, invasion of privacy and employee benefit claims.

“A large part of my practice involves alternative dispute resolution services to other lawyers and their clients,” says Froman, who has taken extensive training in arbitration, mediation and negotiation.

Froman is juggling her law practice with the responsibilities of being NRA president, a two-year commitment. She says she expected some adverse reactions from her clients when she assumed the position, but she says the opposite is true.

“People are so proud of me and they understand that I am doing something I believe in,” she says. “Even the people who don’t agree with me support what I am doing.”

At the turn of the last century, Annie Oakley was a “dead shot” who thrilled audiences with her abilities as part of Buffalo Bill Cody’s Wild West Show. Sandy Froman’s stage and her challenge are considerably larger, as her words and actions have led her to a successful practice and to the top post of one of the most influential lobbying groups in the country. 