

## Notice to MSA and CSA members

Judging from the thousands of people reading recent posts by the MSA on our Facebook page, it is clear that there is much interest in what many have represented as a fight between the two leading mounted shooting associations. Based on several recent posts by CMSA members, it has been revealed that this was not a fight started by the MSA. The posts proudly bragged that as soon as my husband and I purchased the MSA in 2012, a smear campaign was begun against my husband. This is not the first time an owner of the MSA has been smeared by the mounted shooting community. Competition in mounted shooting has not been welcomed and offering a fair and transparent association has been viewed as an attack on the powers that be.

After three years of personal abuse, listening to this smear campaign and being powerless to stop it, our lives have been disrupted in ways good people will understand and cruel people will sadly be entertained by. I am not writing for sympathy, as it has been clear over the past three years that this is not something we will receive.

As we have openly stated, we are preparing a legal case to deal with the illegal activity that has been used to crush our organization. As it has been very clear to my husband that his reputation has been irrevocably damaged, he has made the strategic decision to engage those he knows to be enemies of our association by provoking them into coming into the light with activity that has been occurring for three years, mostly by word of mouth. It is very difficult to prove a case of slander. People have been very willing to tell us the terrible things they have heard about my husband, but no one has been willing to stand up for him, for fear that they would then be subject to the same treatment. As the target of defamation and hatred, we do not judge those who have chosen to stay away from this case, as we know what that would bring into their lives.

In order to prove defamation, we must have written communication that represents my husband in a false light and there is also a law against intentional infliction of emotional distress. For those who have been proudly publishing embarrassing and false information with the proclamation that since it is public they have committed no crime, should have sought legal advice before they took such action, as they are horribly and dangerously wrong.

Knowing he would never be able to repair the damage to his reputation, my husband decided to give the defamers what they wanted and he lowered himself to their level. He responded to attacks that were intended to provoke him with provocation of his own, including using language that was used towards him. He fully understood that this would be used against him in the court of public opinion. He was rightfully at his limits of forgiveness after three years of non stop abuse and he was determined to gain the evidence necessary to obtain justice, even if it meant

finishing the destruction of his personal image that he long since considered a lost cause. This strategy proved very successful and has given us the proof of defamation that has been ongoing ever since purchasing the MSA. As he has already posted, the case will be made public as soon as it is filed and the truth will finally be available to all mounted shooters.

What I am writing for is to explain my own part in what has been published about my husband. My husband has always insisted that I not attempt to explain my involvement, as he believed I would then receive the same treatment he has been subjected to.

Since our case is about to be public anyway and recent Facebook activity has brought the defamers out of the dark, I feel it is important that I clear up some things that have been said and shown to defame my husband. First, my husband has never hit me and those who have heard so should think twice about their relationship with those who have claimed to know this first hand. Second, he has a loving family that he is very close to. His parents have passed away and his siblings have been an important support system as he has suffered the abuse from a community he has been so generous to, while many of them have encouraged him to walk away from such a sport and not waste his money and efforts. The absurd assertion that he is paid to stay away is another reason those who have been told such a thing should question the integrity of those who would spread such a hurtful and cruel lie.

Finally and most importantly, the arrest record being published that has been circulating in secret for three years, contains false charges and the record itself includes the disclaimer that someone who has been charged, has not been found guilty of anything. Those who have claimed to have read the police report, which was illegally obtained by an Arizona private investigative agency by someone who will be discovered once our case is filed, have also read and shared false information and the proof of such was presented by our attorney in order to get the false charges dropped. I can't imagine there is no one else in our mounted shooting community that would be embarrassed by actions they have taken in their lives.

The arrest occurred when I was taken off of medication by my Doctor, cold turkey, causing severe side effects. This led to effects on my thinking that my husband paid a dire price for. In my mind, I was calling the police for help, yet their agenda was only to make an arrest and beat my husband, near death. I have lived with the guilt of the harm I caused him as I have watched him suffer the consequences of what terrible and hateful people have used this incident to achieve. Through it all, he has not asked me to go public with the truth. He has remained a loving partner who I also love and respect. We have stood together against the hatred that comes with being so bold as to compete with the CMSA. He has been financially generous and has insisted his association treat its members fairly and has paid back more to his members than he could ever hope to recover. He has not cared about money spent,

however as tough of a man that he is, I know he has been devastated that his efforts have earned him such hatred from the sport he loves.

My husband is an outspoken, caring, intelligent, sensitive and loving man. He is not perfect. He would be the first to admit it. As he has had to stand up to abuse, he has had to carry himself as tough, so as not to give the haters the satisfaction of knowing he can be hurt. Good people will understand this. Haters will continue to hate. Attackers will continue to attack. This is something we have learned we cannot change not matter how many letters we write or what we do for mounted shooting.

I am writing this for the good people. I am writing this for thoughtful people. I am writing this for the people that have been afraid to speak publicly about their support for the MSA. At the destruction of his own reputation, my husband is fighting for the good of our sport. He is standing up against an association that has ruled through intimidation. He did not start this fight, but he is capable and determined that he will put an end to it once and for all, through the legal process.

I ask that you give my letter some thought and do not leap to conclusions based on the sabotage that has been so effective at destroying our efforts. Ultimately, you will all choose what kind of sport you want to have. You will all choose what onlookers see about our community. If you choose not to support my husband and all he has done for the sport, that remains your choice and he will find another passion to pursue. I just want to finally go on record that you would be hurting yourselves to do so. Please send any written responses to this letter directly to the MSA office and do not post on Facebook, as this is a private and very sensitive communication between us and is not meant for public debate.

Ann Pihl  
Vice President, Mounted Shooters of America