

EDITORIAL AND COMMENTS

Truth will prevail.

"For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known."
Luke 12:2

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...That we may glorify the Father
John 15:7-8 and John 14:12-14.

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A word

Allison Hollon, Assistant Editor

Bridging the gap

The Adair County School Board is in the process of developing a public relations plan in order to build a relationship with the media and provide positive awareness for the school system.

They unveiled a possible plan at last month's regular board meeting.

I am all for building a relationship with the school system that creates a solid line of communication. I say to the school board, "By all means, go for it." I applaud you for making the effort.

However, I do have a few concerns.

PUBLIC RELATIONS VERSUS DIRECT INVOLVEMENT

A little over a week after the meeting, I received a press release from the school district.

As a journalist, sometimes press releases and public affairs officials make my life easier, but sometimes they make it a lot harder.

When I am doing a story, whether it is a news story or a feature, I like to talk to the people directly involved.

For example, if I were doing a story on any crime that had been committed, I would rather talk to the officer that was on the scene than a public relations official.

Sometimes public relations officials already know all of the information, but the officer on the scene can give me a better picture of what happened because he was actually there.

Some organizations have a policy where employees can't talk to the media without going through a public relations person first.

I hope that doesn't happen in this situation.

I believe that employees of any school district already have reservations about speaking to the media without having a

rule/policy that it needs to go through a public relations department.

In some cases employees are scared to go on the record for any kind of story already without having that stigma behind it.

About a year ago, I called a teacher in the Adair County School District about a feature story that was non-controversial. That teacher made it clear that she was uncomfortable talking to the media.

I have also had instances where staff or teachers are extremely forthcoming.

However, I strongly believe if the school district develops a system where employees have to go through a public relations department before they can speak to me or any other media, it will increase that fear.

I hope as the board is developing how they are going to approach their public relations plan, they take that into consideration.

PRESS RELEASE VERSUS ORIGINAL CONTENT

Superintendent Darrell Treece said at the board meeting last month that they want to come up with "print ready" news releases.

I don't have a problem with news releases. More often than not I can take a news release and run with it. They give me story ideas.

When I receive a press release in "print ready" form, the first thing I do is come up with a way to change it that makes it unique to our publication. Any good journalist worth their salt would do the same thing.

I can honestly say that any feature/news story I receive that is worth printing or investigating is not going to be printed as it is with the exception of regular announcements,

etc., and even then we change the wording or grammar to match our specific style.

In other words, if we receive a story tip or news/feature release, we are going to go beyond "print ready."

MODEL PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

While in college, I had one year of public relations classes where I developed public relations plans. I know how it works on the side of an organization that wants to maintain a positive image.

I also worked on the student newspaper, where I had to refer to the public relations department.

With experience on both sides, I believe a good public relations plan matched with a school system that has an open line of communication beyond the public relations department is the key.

I believe Lindsey Wilson College is a good example of that.

They have a public relations department that sends out news releases on a daily basis. I always know what is going on at Lindsey Wilson.

They also have an open line of communication. I can call just about anybody at LWC and have an on-the-record conversation.

That is another thing I hope the school board thinks about before they develop this plan.

Developing a relationship with the media is more than just sending out story tips or press releases.

It's also about developing an open line of communication between the media and janitors, teachers, bus drivers and administrators.

If they feel comfortable talking to the press, then that will go a long way in creating a positive relationship with the media.



Buzz Around Town

By Mindy Yarberry

It isn't my nature to complain about things. My glass is always half full, but I will use my complaining capabilities to talk about these nasty gas prices. I do not drive a large SUV. It is a small-midsize type and is good on gas, but when I have to pay \$50 or more a week to run my normal errands it is getting a little too expensive. It is my freedom to complain and I will! I asked these four citizens this question, "How do you feel about the soaring gas prices?"



Clarence Murphy

"I think it is useless. There is no shortage, only speculation."



Bobbie Easler

"Gas prices, it's life. You can't live without food, water and gas. There are other things in this world that are worse."



Bobby Keys

"It is pretty ridiculous."



Angela Walden

"I think it is ridiculous. It is crazy."

*We welcome
your
comments
and
suggestions!*

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

**Adair County
Community Voice
P.O. Box 159
Columbia, KY 42728**

Letters to the editor must be original and include the name, address and daytime telephone number of the writer. The editor reserves the right to condense and/or reject any letter and to limit frequent writers. The opinions expressed in the letters to the editor and other editorials are those of the writers and do not reflect the views of the Adair County Community Voice.

How to contact local officials

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Email:

jim_bunning@bunning.senate.gov

Website: bunning.senate.gov

Sen. Mitch McConnell: 202-225-2541

Email: senator@mcconnell.senate.gov

Website: mcconnell.senate.gov

Rep. Ed Whitfield: 202-225-3115

Rep. Whitfield's field office, Sandy Simpson, field representative:

270-487-9509

Website: whitfield.house.gov

Kentucky General Assembly

Sen. Vernie McGaha

Capitol: 502-564-8100 ext 656

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Rep. John "Bam" Carney

Capitol: 502-564-8100, ext 708

Home: 270-465-5400

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Governor

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502-564-2611

Adair County Fiscal Court

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Email: acjudge1@duo-county.com

Magistrates

District 1—Harold Burton: 384-1439

District 2—Daryl Flatt: 384-4224

District 3—Sammy Baker: 378-6496

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District 5—Billy Coffey: 384-4201

District 6—Joe Rogers: 384-4831

District 7—Billy Rowe: 384-1424

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Adair County Board of Education

Superintendent Darrell Treece: 384-

2476

Board Members

Marsha Walker, Chairman: 384-2243

Floyd Burton: 384-5255

Mike Harris: 384-2165

Bro. Joseph Payne: 384-3582

Rebecca Turner: 378-3181

The Big Voice in the Little Corner

The *Adair County Community Voice* office is located in the corner of the public square in the alleyway next to the former Loy's Department Store.

Bring us your items to run in the next issue of The Voice!