

<http://mikeparsons.org/covington-leader-deceives-the-public.html>

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THE VOICE OF TRUTH

LINKS FOR LIBERTY

THE BATTLE FOR TIPTON COUNTY 

## The Leader can't stand the scrutiny of an informed and enlightened citizenry

On November 15, I replied to the negative comments directed at me from Greg Little, one of the editors with The Leader news paper in Covington Tennessee. After several hours I call them to find out why the opinion I submitted was not posted. The lady who answered the phone said no one was there who could answer my question because all of the editors were out of the office. A few minutes later I checked the web site again and found that all of the posted opinions for that article were deleted.

A few minutes later the publisher of The Leader, Mr. Bean, called to say my subscription was being canceled and to not call or come to their property. He gave no reason for his action when asked and hung up the phone.

How ironic that the original article I was responding to was about the first amendment to the constitution and the necessity of freedom of the press. Apparently they skipped over the beginning of the first amendment that precedes the clause about freedom of the press. The section regarding Freedom of Speech.

Please read the entire article below along with the postings prior to my last submission. Remember, they never posted my last submission and when I inquired as to why, the entire blog site was deleted by the staff of The Leader.

Apparently they can not stand the scrutiny of an "informed and enlightened citizenry."

### Journalists justified in reporting news

Dear Editor,

There has recently been some discussion concerning reportage of news events in our community. It might be prudent to consider for a moment, countries which prohibit free discussion of ideas and presentation of news around the world.

In Russia, they are shooting investigating journalists; in Pakistan, they are locking them up; in Myanmar, they are subject to house arrest. Mr. Chavez in Venezuela has no use for the free press and censorship of the internet in China, Iran, Syria, Tunisia, Vietnam and Uzbekistan is occurring.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press and that cannot be limited without being lost." It is part of the First Amendment, not the Third, the Twelfth or the Twenty-Eighth, but the FIRST Amendment.

“The free press is the mother of all our liberties,” said Adlai Stevenson.

Certainly King George didn’t want us to have free press during the Revolutionary War and it was the words of Madison and Paine who kept the fires of liberty burning.

“A free press can of course be good or bad, but, most certainly, without freedom it will never be anything but bad,” Albert Camus.

We cannot limit the press to the things we like to hear. Reporters must be able to report facts and findings without regard to whose opinion it offends or what dignities are affronted.

“Freedom of the press, if it means anything at all, means the freedom to criticize and oppose,” (George Orwell).

This means that our local reporters have the responsibility to make us aware of what is going on in the community. It is not simply their job to report birthdays, openings of new businesses, and graduation news. They are also responsible for keeping us abreast of what is going on in our community and the controversies within it.

“The benefit of freedom of the press, belongs to everyone - to the citizen as well as the publisher . . . it is the citizen’s right to know,” Arthur Sulzburger.

Without free speech, the search for truth becomes difficult. We, the public, need access to information and it is the reporters job to check the “who, where, why, when and how,” just like they taught us in journalism class. It is incumbent on them to avoid self-censorship.

“The only security of all is in a free press,” Thomas Jefferson.

Opinion is to be reserved for the editorial section; facts as they appear are for the rest of the newspaper.

Loren A. Crown, M.D.

Covington

## Member Opinions

**By: mikeparsons on 11/13/07**

What you fail to acknowledge is the local publications biased propoganda and sheer lack of verification of facts that are fundamental principles of journalism. Your failure to identify their constant lack of journalistic integrity indicates your being unaware or ill-informed. Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin both noted the necessity of freedom of the press but railed about the abuse of that freedom by a corrupt press. Your complaint about those challenging the local publications disregard for journalistic integrity disregards our countries founders caution of a press corrupt therein and the necessity of scrutiny of any and all media.

I guarantee you if Greg Little were caught driving while being intoxicated, and was carted him off to jail, do you really think the public would ever read about it in the local publication let alone see his mug shot?

The fact is, there are real news issues that never make this publications printing press due to their blatant agenda for the statue quo. I know. I was able to get the local Election Commission to compare the States list of deceased citizens with their list of registered voters before the 2006 election (resulting in the elimination of over 300 potential illegal votes) and a clear solution to the problem of "Dead Voters" voting as was identified in the Ford Rolland Senate race. Although Ch 5 TV aired the story

and subsequently the Shelby County Elelection Commission used the same technique, eliminating over 3000 decesed persons stil registered to vote, the local publication refused to publish my press release or this fact at all. That clearly showed their bias.

When they consistently miss quoted the credentials of a candidate for Sheriff last year, again they showed their bias. Do you see the problem? There is a concept of fair and balanced in the press that has been lacking in this publication.

For to long they seem to take every opportunity to prop up their buddies, old and new in this so called old boy network, aka, "Buddy System" and unfairly attack those who challenge the corruption and or reveal the facts. We are systematically lead to believe their propaganda as fact. I suggest you put the Kool-Aid down and call those who often complain... and listen.

Remember, you're never too old to learn something new.

**By: greg on 11/13/07**

Parsons:

What planet are you from? Really. I want to know. Life there must be majestic. Maybe the mother ship will come and take us all back there. It must be paradise.

The fact is, you only scream media bias if you don't get your way. Plain and simple. You wouldn't know journalistic ethics if it smacked you in the face, let alone ethics in general. Your personal agenda is all you care about. You claim to care about the people, but that just isn't so.

You rant about Ronnie Coleman, the failed sheriff candidate. Look at the facts. He works for a company who contracts with the Marshal Service. He does not work for that service. Fact, fact, fact. Can't you accept the facts?

And let's talk about the good old boy network. Here's some people you should call and ask how much the paper is in the pocket of that network:

Steve Bringle  
Van Bringle  
Jeff Huffman  
Speaker Jimmy Naifeh  
Duke Brasfield  
Mike Taylor  
Bob Wilson  
Judy Savard-Max  
Russ Bailey  
Tommy Densford  
Tim Fite

That's just a very partial list. Call them up and ask them how much The Leader is in that network. Go ahead, ask them.

Now, call some of these people and ask them about my journalistic integrity and reporting the truth -- and not the truth in Parsons' eyes, the real truth.

Sen. Mark Norris  
Rep. Dolores Gresham  
Jeff Mason  
Sheriff Pancho Chumley

Chief Bennie Carver  
Mayor David Gordon  
Ed Timberlake  
Tommy Black  
Chief Donna Turner  
Randy Tucker  
Billy Lawrence  
Buford Gross  
Kem Ralph  
Sgt. Billy Daugherty  
Lt. Shannon Beasley  
Lt. Allen Wilson  
Judge Joseph Walker III  
Sarah Beth Jenks  
Justin Hanson

And that's just a very partial list. But go ahead, ask them. I would like to hear your report.

And finally, for you, Parsons, to quote Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin is like Castro quoting John Kennedy. It just doesn't fly and you are way out of your league. Get off your personal agenda and act like you speak, that you care about others. You could care less about others. It's all about Parsons and how he is a victim.

I think I'll puke now.

Greg Little  
Managing Editor

**By: retiredrocketeer on 11/13/07**

mikeparsons - Did I see your picture on the front page for some type of dispute or crime? Am I right or wrong?

## Below is my submission that The Leader refused to post

This must be the longest retaliation rant I have seen out of Mr. Little in a while. Although I never mentioned any candidate by name, apparently Mr. Little has such hate for that candidate that he takes this opportunity again to deceive the readers with half truths.

Remember, when you omit pertinent facts you are being deceptive.

For the record, I have only met Mr. Coleman on one occasion during the 2006 4th of July celebration in Munford. We spoke for all of 10 minutes and he impressed me as an honest person concerned with the problems and corruption within the county.

When the Covington Leader published his being a former employee with the TCSO and did not indicate his rank as a Sheriff's Deputy, it clearly indicated their attempt to water down his credentials.

Then when I had a conversation with the past editor J. Albright and he revealed his personal dislike for Mr. Coleman it was obvious. There was an intentional omission of facts to weaken his credentials.

In my own race for public office, the local publication failed to report when the U.S. Post Office failed to deliver thousands of my political mailing or when a Huffman supporter who was an employee of the City of Munford removed my signs from private property and intimidated my supporters in Munford who displayed my signs.

Mr. Little can list as many people past and present in county government as he likes, but the fact remains, he never published the 5 pounds of discrepancies sited by the State Comptrollers Office I offered him at the Candidate Forum. Those included 19 years of violations of law and mismanagement throughout the county under the direction of Jeff Huffman. Just because the past and present DA do not investigate these crimes does not mean they did not happen or do not exist.

We all remember the reported mismanagement with the 911 dispatcher's office. Mr. Little railed about the failures of the 911 board but he never mentioned the fact that Jeff Huffman was over that board and ultimately responsible for their failures by virtue of his lack of oversight.

Recently Mr. Little failed to return my call prior to publishing his smear about me on the front page. The facts were the perpetrator shot at my wife and me and shot and killed our pet Brandi without any provocation.

I view this as Mr. Littles contribution to the current administration to demonize me prior to the potential new election that may be ordered by the Appellate Court when they review the violations of election law cited in my challenge of the 2006 election. His article ended by mentioning the lower court dismissing my complaint but failed to report the Appellate court now has the case and the potential outcome.

Regarding my reference to Thomas Jefferson and Mr. Littles attempt to challenge my worthiness to do such a thing. Mr. Little did not say my reference was false. That's because he knows it is true.

Because Mr. Little has failed to do so, I will take this opportunity to briefly site Jefferson's intent and the historical record.

Remember, at that time in history, not so different than today, abuses in government and the press were rampant.

Jefferson felt that a press that is free to investigate and criticize the government is absolutely essential in a nation that practices self-government and is therefore dependent on an educated and enlightened citizenry. On the other hand, newspapers too often take advantage of their freedom and publish lies and scurrilous gossip that could only deceive and mislead the people. Jefferson himself suffered greatly under the latter kind of press during his presidency. But he was a great believer in the ultimate triumph of truth in the free marketplace of ideas, and looked to that for his final vindication.

When Mr. Little attacks me personally, it is clear that he can't argue the facts. This is typical of many in the mainstream media, who when confronted with the truth and or when they can't argue the facts, they go negative. That's when they loose credibility and most will see them for whom and what they are.

Source:

Letters from Thomas Jefferson can be seen [here](#).

Despite their disclaimers call for public expression, they are denying this mans access to what is in effect the only State sanctioned source for public notices in the county and in effect are a government sponsored entity and denying access thereto could broadly be viewed as a freedom of speech 1st amendment rights violation.

The Leader Disclaimer found on their web site:

The Leader Online is an open forum for the public expression on the issues of the day. We encourage users to analyze, comment on and even challenge the articles, opinions and blogs contained herein. The Leader does not edit postings and the views expressed on this site do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper, its staff or its advertisers. User comments that contain profanity, vulgarity, personal attacks or other inappropriate or defamatory material will be removed from the site. In the spirit of a free exchange of ideas, keep the conversation clean and respectful. Users may notify the webmaster or employees of The Leader if you feel something has been posted in error or in violation of this policy.

The Leader apparently can't adhere to or perform under their own rules.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### A open statement to the people of Tipton County

In response to the article published on September 28, 2007 by The Leader newspaper in Covington Tennessee, herein referred to as The Covington Leader.

On Monday, September 24, 2007 two of our dogs got out of the fenced area in the back yard and were running around on our property in front of our home. My wife Pat and I were out when this happened and we were rounding them up when we heard gun shots toward the front of our property. Pat ran down the driveway to the front and I ran down the south side of our property to investigate. I went over to the neighbor's field south of our property where the shots appeared to be coming from. As I got to the top of the hill I saw a heavy set man in a white shirt and shorts shooting an assault rifle with a long, high capacity, "banana" clip. The shooter later identified by the Tipton County Sheriff's Department as Barry Laxton was shooting at our dogs Brandi and Dude, both of whom were swimming in the pond at the road more than 250 feet north of where he was standing. It should be noted that Pat was now in the wooded area at the front of our property adjacent the pond looking for the pair at the time of the shooting and therefore, unknowingly was in imminent danger from the shots Laxton fired onto our property.

 Daddy's Girl

I began yelling at him to stop shooting. Our dog Brandi heard my voice and left the pond and ran in my direction to the east. She never ran toward Laxton and as she ran around the pond to me. Laxton looked at me and then moved toward Brandi and continued to shoot at her as she ran toward me up the hill. I yelled repeatedly for him to stop shooting at my dog. I ran toward her as she ran to me.

As she got closer, I heard the shoots flying past me. Because of the houses behind the shooter and the distance, I was unable to return fire so I fired one round to my right side at the ground, hoping the sound would cause him to stop. Again I screamed stop shooting. He fired two more shots at us and then stopped. I counted more than 30 shots fired at Brandi and me before he stopped.

At the moment the shooting stopped Brandi made it to me and collapsed at my feet. I grabbed her as she took her last breath. She looked up at me with an expression as if to say daddy, I was trying to come home. I counted 5 wounds in her side and in the back of her legs. She had no wounds in her chest or face. An indication she was never facing the shooter.

## Mike & Brandi weeks before the shooting

I held her for a moment and then noticed Laxton with someone else next to a truck by the Helicopter Hanger where Laxton, the shooter had been. I knew Dude was still in the area but was not sure where. I had to find him before they shot him as well.

I did not see Laxton holding the rifle at this point so I went down the hill to where he and the other man were. I then noticed the other man had a gun in his hand and I told him to put it down. Then I asked, "where is my other dog and where was Laxton's gun?" I told him I was making a citizens arrest. I then looked in the open window of the truck for the rifle. I saw no rifle but did see a hand gun holster. As I confiscated it I noticed the two men approaching me. Now, knowing they both likely had hand guns, I told them to stop. I said you are threatening me and to take your hands out of your pockets. As they advanced I took my hand gun from the holster and pointed it at the ground. They stopped their advance. I repeated, where are your guns? The man with the maroon shirt that read helicopter wing said that he worked there, that his gun was in his pocket and that my dog went that way, pointing to the north in the direction of my property. This man was later identified by the Tipton County Sheriff's Department as Nick King.



Because they refused to remove their hands from their pants where they were holding guns and because they refused to get rid of their guns, I was in fear that they might shoot at me at any moment. So I backed to the rear of the truck to take cover. There I noticed the assault rifle Laxton had been shooting laying in the back. As I confiscated the rifle, Laxton and King ran to the rear of the hanger. I ran back to Brandi and took her back to our property.

While crossing our field Pat called and said she was now at the house and needed help. With Brandi's coat full of water from the pond she was heavier than I could run with so I laid her under a pine tree and ran to help Pat. I called a friend and family members to come over to be witnesses. Why, because three years earlier another James Wells and Brent Seay, shot and killed another one of our dogs just because she walked on their property. And when I called the deputies to arrest Wells and Seay, the deputies allowed Brent Seay to attack me. When I defended myself, deputy Lang assaulted me and would not arrest Wells or Seay for shooting our dog.

It appears that a few people who live around us have conspired to shot and kill our dogs if they see them out and the Sheriff's department covers for them. Just like when Laxton Shot Brandi and then hid his rifle, Seay also hid his rifle. They

apparently have been told to do this when they shoot at us or our dogs.

My past experience with these people leads me to believe they are not afraid of our dogs, but they are just mad we bought our property and they did not.

Neither we nor our dogs have done anything to these people and their hostile and attacks against us and our dogs is unjustified.

Our animals are very gentle and have never tried to harm anyone.

On September 28, 2007, The Covington Leader published a libelous and deceptive article full of lies and distortion in an apparent effort to demonize me and my family. Their reference to my run for County Executive office only proves their intent to assassinate my character and reputation in the community prior to a potential election.

The fact that I called the Covington Leader to give Greg Little a statement two days before this article was released and he not returning my call indicates he is not interested in getting both side of this issue.

The fact that the arresting officer stated he was charging and arresting me without bond at the direction of General Sessions Court Judge William Peeler indicates a clear violation of due process. this Judge violated the cannon of ethics because he latter refused to recuse himself from hearing the probable cause hearing. This is typical of a back woods mafia, corrupt system. This is why Tpton County Sufers from a lack of industry and business that would otherwise move the the county. But then they like it that way. They want every one beholding to their power base.

The fact that there was a rushed investigation that night, that the officers were not paying attention to what I was telling them, that they did not want to see Brandi and that they did not even let my wife tell them what she saw is a clear indication they did not want to do anything that would mess up their frame of me. Even though the officers did not witness anything, they had their minds made up an did not want to be confused with facts. If only Jeffrey Dalmer had been a friend of the Tipton County Executive and the Tipton County Sherrifs department like Laxton, he might still be free to kill his neighbors and their pets today.

While I was being transported to the jail the officer asked where had I left Brandi. I said I would have to show him. Then after I was booked in the jail the officer told the jailers to, "give him back his stuff we have to take him back to look for the dog." I asked, "was I un-arrested?" And he said "kind of". He then took me back to my property and I took them to where I had laid Brandi under a pine tree. I had marked the tree with a broken branch. However, she was not there. And while the officers were supposed to be looking for Brandi, one of the officers was heard saying, "It would be better if it rained." Rain would actually distroy evidance. But then, that was what they were hoping for.

Then, one officer said "I found her". Someone then said it was not her. That it was "a possum". However, he was in the exact spot where I found her three days later. And after he said it was a possum I started to walk over to that area where the officer said "I found her" and Inspector Richard Nessey, said that we had looked long enough and that we had to leave. He called off the search and forced everyone to leave the field. I was then taken back to jail.

When I found Brandi, I took her to our veterinarian and he took X-rays. I then took Brandi to Nashville for a necropsy. The medical examiner there identified multiple bullet fragments on the X-ray in her and that she had not been shot in the front area. The doctor reported Brandi had on a collar with a rabies tag and a Home Again Companion Animal Retrieval System tag. They even recovered Brandi's metal sutures from where she had been spayed at the age of one. Brandi would have been 7 years old in April.

Several factors lead me to believe this was not a botched investigation but a cover up.

Including:

The fact that on Thursday, September 27, the Investigator Richard Nessey stated he had no statement from me in spite of the fact one was given to the Deputies that night, nor did Inspector Nessey ever ask me for a statement that night when he met me. Then, when I informed Investigator Nessey I had found Brandi, he did not want to come out and take photos of the scene where she lay or her wounds before I took her to the Vet. It was clear, they had made up their mind and did not want to see any evidence that might mess up their case against me.

The fact that I was arrested for defending my family after Laxton had killed Brandi, shot at me, threatened me and recklessly endangered my wife by shooting onto our property where she was standing, as well as the rest of the people living in the area by shooting over 30 rounds into the air at my property and at my dogs and he was never charged is a clear indication of the corrupt old boy network in action.

According to the article in the Covington Leader, Laxton even stated he shot into the "uninhabited wooded area." That would be the front of our property where just beyond the trees is our home and there are several other homes in this area. There are over 80 homes with a half mile of where he was shooting. The listed deadly range of the ammo he shot is 1.5 miles. If he was shooting from his yard as he claimed, he would have had to shoot across two other neighbors' properties to reach our property.

Would this not be reckless endangerment? When he say me and continued to shoot in my dirrection, was that not aggravated assault.

The fact is, I never shot at anyone nor did I even touch anyone. I never got closer than 30 feet of them. Contrary to the police report I did not point my gun at their face or tell them to get on their knees. In fact, Laxtons and Kings own hand written reports say nothing about having a gun pointed at their face nor having been told to get on their knees. Don't you think they would have remembered that? Of course they would have. The fact is those thing never happened. Those were fabricated by the officer to justify the arrest and for the purposes of drama in the News Paper head lines. It soulds more like something someone saw in a hollywood movie.

The fact is, I was denied Bond and forced to stay in jail for a day. The fact that my bond was set high, (\$5000.00). A bond is based on flight risk and the fact is, I am not a flight risk. I am a local land and business owner and involved in bettering the community. I recall hearing about someone recently that shot a person in the head in the county and was given the same \$5000.00 bond without delay and they were out of jail in a few hours.

The fact that the article in the paper stated this was their property is a lie. The fact is, Laxton lives across the street from this property and King works there as an employee of the helicopter wing. Neither of these two men live at nor own the property where Laxton shot at me an Killed Brandi. The owner is Allen Burnett. Also, what is a member of the helicopter wing doing with a hand gun? Did either of these two men have the permission of Mr. Burnett to be armed at his property and place of business? And more importantly, did they have a carry permit to legally go armed in the community? NO.

I don't believe Laxton who said our pets walked in his yard. But even if they did, why did he pursue them off his property. He said he shot at them and that they ran away but then he went after them. He was the aggressor. Did he use lethal force to scare away dogs. No, his intent was to kill them.

His conduct was extreme and unjustified under any circumstance.

What are they going to do next?

The article states that, “Deputies went to Parsons’ house and found him at home, where they placed him under arrest on the four felony counts”. That statement published by The Covington Leader is another lie. The fact is I called the Deputy’s via a friend who was at the street and I informed them I was bringing them the assault rifle I had confiscated. The arrest occurred in the street and not on our property. They never came to our home.

Again, such deceptive reporting of these events by The Covington Leader is malicious and libelous on their face. I call for every concerned citizen and pet owner to speak out and stand with us against this cover-up of the brutal slaughter of our innocent girl Brandi and these unjust charges against me. This unprovoked attack against our family is an orchestrated criminal attack against all the people of Tipton County.

## Citizens to Elect Mike Parsons

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