

June 2, 2024

Last year when I was elected to the BPPOA board and subsequently the BPSD board, I stated that I would not engage in any communication on Facebook. My reason for this is that my experience with social media is not a positive one. Anyone can say anything about anybody at any time and because it is in print it is assumed to be true by the masses. At that point, everybody grabs a torch and a pitchfork and willingly participates in the festivities only to find out later that there was partial or no truth in the matter.

This past week a post concerning the removal of a POW/MIA from the Bear Paw Gate implied to everyone that the BPSD board had facilitated the removal of this flag during the Memorial Day weekend. **THIS IS FALSE.** Rumor then circulated that the BPSD board had voted on and approved the removal of this flag in our recent meeting. **THIS IS FALSE.** *At no time in any meeting that I have attended has any board member made such a motion or has any such discussion occurred.* If you attended our last BPSD meeting, the elderly man in the back corner who sat through 4 hours of bureaucratic proceedings was Command Sergeant Major Arthur E. Lecours who retired after 37 years of service. He is my father. I was raised in a military family and attended college on an R.O.T.C. scholarship. A number of our current board members have served, and some have family members who were killed in action during service to our country. *So, knowing this, do you really think that such an action to remove a patriotic tribute could have or would have been taken by the board?*

One post in particular slandered an incoming board member in my opinion. My opinion is based on a personal interview with the person accused and this person denied providing any direction to our gate guard to remove the flag in question. *I followed up on that conversation by having the guard in question interviewed and it was confirmed in the interview that the person named in the Facebook post was not the person who voiced concerns with the guard. It was also confirmed by the guard that the person who voiced concerns was not a current board member nor an incoming board member.* The guard was provided with direction on how to address any requests in the future before taking any action. **BASED ON THIS RESEARCH OF THE ISSUE, THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE FACEBOOK POST IS FALSE.** Slander is defined as making false statements which damage the reputation of an individual. **THIS IS FACT.**

Determining fact from fiction these days can be challenging. I have found a best practice for me is to look for the best in people and not assume the worst. When questions exist, go talk (personally) to the people involved and understand their side of the story. Clearly explain your side and see if you can find common ground to resolve the issue at hand. Opportunities exist for all of us to be better neighbors. Perhaps we can take advantage of this one.

Sincerely,

Art

BPSD, Chairman & BPPOA President