

NEWS&REPORTER Viewpoint

OUR VIEW

County wrong to threaten to sue

Both the State Law Enforcement Division and the State Budget & Control Board are looking into purchases made by the town of Fort Lawn and particularly one officer. Procedures weren't followed. We'll know soon enough whether that means anything criminal occurred.

That is not our major concern. Tempers are running hot, and people are saying and writing all sorts of things, including accusations against a couple of public officials, comments that have absolutely nothing to do with the matter. Some go way beyond the pale. Some nasty comments were posted in our web stories about this fuss. We yanked them, and we'll continue to pull comments we believe to be libelous.

The questions being raised about the purchases are legitimate. But many comments go beyond legitimate inquiry.

People are entitled to their opinion, and in America, free to share it. But you can't say anything and everything about anybody. So people need to calm down and let the investigation and review run their courses.

That's what County Attorney Joanie Winters had in mind when she went to Fort Lawn last week.

That's not how it came across. She wanted to urge patience for the results of the investigation. That's valid. She wanted to chide Fort Lawn Town Council for its handling of the affair. That's possibly valid. Lastly, she said she wanted to stop slanderous and defamatory comments.

We agree the latter should stop. But she did not say she was representing the officials as a private attorney. She said *Chester County* would take legal action if the "defamation" continued. In other words, *Chester County* would sue its own citizens.

There was obviously more to her statement than the above threat. (Her entire statement is on our website for you to see.)

But once uttered, the threat was all anyone could or would hear.

She explicitly said the *county* would take legal action to stop "defamation." She told us she was instructed to go to Fort Lawn by Chester County Supervisor Carlisle Roddey.

Your average Joe doesn't know exactly what defamation and slander are. So when they hear a threat to take legal action to stop it, it doesn't put a stop to just slander and defamation. People wonder if their comments are legitimate questions or will get them sued for slander. They are given pause.

Such a pause means speech is chilled. We believe the officials being questioned to be honorable. We regret and are frankly horrified by some of the things being hurled at their feet. They may indeed have been slandered. If so, we hope they take the slanderers to court and win a civil judgment.

But they need to do that as private citizens. Chester County has no business threatening to sue its citizens. That horrifies us more than slander.

We believe the County Attorney and County Supervisor erred in taking this action. They owe their constituents an apology and a promise never again to consider this kind of tactic.



Heroes in real world, not Never Land

The King is dead! Long live the King! Michael Jackson is gone, but not forgotten. He was an entertainer at a level that few have attained, and his music shall live on. Thriller, Bad, Billie Jean, I'll Be There, and probably one of the best covers of Rockin' Robin I have ever or will ever hear.

A great performer? Yes. The best? Fans of Elvis, Frank Sinatra, and Ray Charles will probably argue that. A huge talent? Yes.

An American Hero? No. Without taking anything away from his brilliant musical career, and not even going into everything else that whether true or not made up Michael Jackson, a congressional resolution is a little much. Gary Gordon.

Guest Column

Bill Yeater
Richburg

Randall Shughart. Who were they? Do we know? Do we care? Do we know the names of the 13 young soldiers/marines that died in Afghanistan during "Michael Jackson" week?

Gordon and Shughart were two soldiers, U.S. Army, Delta Force; they were snipers. On Oct. 3, 1993 they were involved in the battle that was shown in the movie "Blackhawk Down." They volunteered to go in and defend the second crash site against the crowd of Somalis that were converging on the downed helicopter. All two of

them. They were killed in action by that Somali crowd, and were among the dead Americans that were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu to provide footage for the news cameras after the battle. Then President Clinton sent a carrier task force to retrieve a captured pilot; the Somalis released him, and the task force sailed away.

These two men, Master Sgt. Gary Gordon, and Sgt First Class Randall Shughart were posthumously awarded the nation's highest award, the Medal of Honor, by the same President who afterward moved a task force into the area, the same President whose advisers would not provide proper support to the Rangers and Delta

involved. These men are American Heroes. Jesus said it best, "Greater love hath no man, than he lay down his life for his friends."

There are over 3,000 names on the Medal of Honor rolls. Over 3,000 names of men who went above and beyond the call of duty for their country, their service, and their friends. These are American Heroes.

Michael Jackson was a great performer, a huge talent, but he was no American hero.

It is a sad commentary on the condition of our country when a performer receives such acclaim, and media coverage; while our real heroes labor, and fight, and die for our liberty and freedoms are not recognized and so soon forgotten.

YOUR VIEWS

Seniors wants Senior Services to continue

To the Editor:

I have received information that the Catawba Area Agency on Aging has chosen other providers for older American services in Chester County.

I have been receiving meals and other services at the Senior Center on Armory Road for over three years. The services provided under Senior Services Inc. of Chester County, managed by Michael Wessinger, have been provided with excellence.

I drive three miles to the center each day. Another location would

mean a great distance and great cost. Please continue the services with Senior Services of Chester County.

Willis Tarbox
Lowrys

Writer appreciates D-Day articles in paper

To the Editor:

Sir, I am writing to congratulate you for your colourful and explicit article on the Omaha landing and the important contribution to the success of the operation performed

by John (Buddy) Hernandez.

I think he should have been considered to receive the Legion of Honour medal from President Sarkozy on the 6th of June, 2009, when the presentations were made at the Normandy Cemetery - I am sure that he was as deserving of the Honour as the recipient was - if not more!

Anyway thanks to you he has at last got some recognition of the hell that he endured and I am sure that he has appreciated the fact that you have made people aware of what was it was really like on 6th June 1944.

Ken Brazier
England



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