

Saturday, April 5, 2008

AFNI Consumer Alert

There is a company called AFNI (Anderson Financial Network Inc.) that has been sending out bogus Verizon bills to West Virginia residents, and especially those in the Huntington West Virginia area. It does not matter to these people if the bills are legitimate or not, it is basically a matter of paying these scam artists to get them to leave you alone. AFNI is well known for frequent computer generated phone calls that are designed to annoy and harass. In many instances the alleged bills that AFNI is trying to collect are older than the statute of limitations. In many instances the alleged bills are not owed at all, and are the product of identity theft. AFNI refuses to provide documentation from the original creditor. AFNI can and will report you to the credit reporting agencies to gain money that they are not entitled to in violation of the fair credit reporting act. If you are contacted by AFNI do not talk to them by phone but call your attorney or the police immediately. A police report filed at the onset of harassment can help your lawyer preserve your rights at a later date. Under no circumstances give AFNI any personal or banking information. The West Virginia Attorney General's office has an excellent track record for shutting down abusive bill collectors and scam artists. Pick up the phone and call the consumer protection division of the West Virginia Attorney General's office. 1-800-368-8808. The best way to deal with AFNI is to give them what they deserve...lawyers.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 12:55

Monday, December 3, 2007

Fred Armstrong Termination

I strongly feel that the Governor of West Virginia has made a serious mistake with the Fred Armstrong termination. If there is one thing to be learned in West Virginia politics from the events of the SEGO disaster, it is that the public perception of our governor is greatly enhanced by the public's perceptions of the governor's humanity. In short the governor has more to gain by admitting to a mistake and reinstating Fred Armstrong than he does to get tough and stand by his decision. If the governor stands by a decision that is widely protested throughout the state, then he merely gains a reputation for being too stubborn to listen to the populace. If the governor gets a reputation for arbitrarily firing long term state employees who have done well for many years, this will negatively effect and adversely impact the ability of the state of West Virginia to recruit and retain high quality people for state employment. I desire that the governor do what is in the best interest of the state and reinstate Fred Armstrong post haste, unless there is some credible reason that can be given to the public as to why this should not happen. If the governor is intent on abolishing the job rather than its holder, the governor would enhance his position by offering Fred Armstrong a job teaching history at one of the states universitys. I feel that Marshall University or West Virginia University would do well to hire Fred Armstrong as a history professor.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 11:30

Friday, November 23, 2007

DirectTV Satellite TV in West Virginia

I recently replaced my cable TV replaced by Direct TV satellite TV at my home in Huntington West Virginia as part of a bundled package deal from Verizon. I am very much unhappy with the satellite TV service that I get from Direct TV. The receiver boxes that they installed by the DirectTV installers are called "standard" boxes. However the standard receivers are not capable of receiving HD signals. This is 2007 and not 1997 and I have an HD TV. High definition HDTV is the standard in 2007 and the standard equipment used by DirectTV is OBSOLETE. You have to pay more for the up to date receiver models. I feel that pawning off out of date equipment and charging more for the up to date models is very deceptive. They promised me 180 TV stations and once it is installed I find out that a large number of the promised TV stations in this package are nothing more than crummy XM radio stations and not actual video content. If I subscribe to a TV service I expect TV and not a bunch of crummy XM radio stations playing some types of music/noise that I don't even like. I am quite disappointed that Verizon is pawning this third rate Direct TV satellite service off on their West Virginia customers. DirectTV is pretty bad in West Virginia and I advise my West Virginia readers to avoid it like the plague and this is especially true with Verizon bundled packages to which Direct TV is a portion. I bought Direct TV as part of a packaged bundle deal from Verizon. I have since discovered that Direct TV has made an unauthorized inquiry on my credit report last October. This abuse of my privacy has been done to me even though I do not have a direct financial relationship with direct TV. I have never applied for employment or credit from Direct TV. I never agreed to Direct TV fishing around in my credit history thats modestly good. I assume they intend to sell the information that they are harvesting from Verizons customers and that is why I am mad at Verizon. It seems Verizon has tarnished their otherwise good reputation by subjecting their vaunerable West Virginia customers to the obnoxious behavior of Direct TV. I am buying the Direct TV service through Verizon, and Verizon is acting as a wholesaler for Direct TV and my financial relationship is only with Verizon. My account is secured by my relationship with Verizon. There was absolutely no reason for Direct TV to access my credit report.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 16:32

Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Religious Freedom In West Virginia

In the days of the founding fathers things were much different than today. There were many people in that time who believed that the statement "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesars and unto God that which is Gods." meant that political allegiances and religious allegiances should and must be separate matters. It was widely believed at that time that politics was a thing of the world, and it was widely believed that ministers should refrain from politics and other vices and concentrate only on spiritual matters alone. Political discussion was a rowdy affair in that era and commonly done in taverns and pubs. It was commonly thought to be best if the clergy dedicated their pursuits to spiritual matters only at that point in history. In short, in that era, politics was seen as having the potential to corrupt the morality of those involved. People did not want ministers practicing politics for the same reason that they wanted clergy to refrain from gambling and prostitution. At that time politics was seen as being beneath the dignity of a legitimate man of God. At that time it was not permissible to corrupt the affairs of god by contaminating religion with the practice of politics. At that point in history, any minister who preached politics from the pulpit would have been immediately denounced as a charlatan and a fraud and then promptly run out of town. The separation of church and state is merely a byproduct of the prevailing mindset in the era in which this country was founded. There is much to be said for a peaceful religion that keeps itself above political agendas. The Christians of that era demanded a high standard of morality from clergy. Political preachers like Past Robertson and Jesse Jackson would have never lasted more than a week in that era. How does this effect us in West Virginia? West Virginia entered the union in 1863 with the understanding that the citizens of the new state would enjoy all legal rights that they previously enjoyed as citizens of Virginia with the notable exception of slavery. The Virginia Statute for religious freedom was in effect at the time that West Virginia became a state, and is therefore part of our common heritage with Virginia. The author of the statute was none other than Thomas Jefferson. A truncated version of this statute is replicated in Article Three Section Fifteen of the West Virginia State Consttution. If one desires to know the mindset of the founding fathers as it relates to religious freedom, a review of Mr. Jefferson's statute for religious freedom is obligatory reading. The full text of the statute is written verbatim below. Stephanie Heck

VIRGINIA STATUTE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM [Sec. 1] Whereas Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the Holy author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as it was in his Almighty power to do; that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavouring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world, and through all time; that to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical; that even the forcing him to support this or that teacher of his own religious persuasion, is depriving him of the comfortable liberty of giving his contributions to the particular pastor, whose morals he would make his pattern, and whose powers he feels most persuasive to righteousness, and is withdrawing from the ministry those temporary rewards, which proceeding from an approbation of their personal conduct, are an additional incitement to earnest and unremitting labours for the instruction of mankind; that our civil rights have no dependence on our religious opinions, any more than our opinions in physics or geometry; that therefore the proscribing any citizen as unworthy the public confidence by laying upon him an incapacity of being called to offices of trust and emolument, unless he profess or renounce this or that religious opinion, is depriving him injuriously of those privileges and advantages to which in common with his fellow-citizens he has a natural right; that it tends only to corrupt the principles of that religion it is meant to encourage, by bribing with a monopoly of worldly honours and emoluments, those who will externally profess and conform to it; that though indeed these are criminal who do not withstand such temptation, yet neither are those innocent who lay the bait in their way; that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion, and to restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency, is a dangerous fallacy, which at once destroys all religious liberty, because he being of course judge of that tendency will make his opinions the rule of judgment, and approve or condemn the sentiments of others only as they shall square with or differ from his own; that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government, for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order; and finally, that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself, that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them: [Sec. 2] Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish enlarge, or affect their civil

capacities. [Sec. 3] And though we well know that this assembly elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act to be irrevocable would be of no effect in law; yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation, such act shall be an infringement of natural right.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 19:34

Thursday, September 13, 2007

Logan County Hate crime suspects

Here are the photos of the six suspects who have been arrested for the kidnapping, torture, and sexual abuse of a Charleston Afro-American woman. The crimes are alleged to have happened in Logan county West Virginia and the six suspects were properly arrested by the Logan County West Virginia Sheriffs Department. As you can see from these photos these people don't look very trustworthy. The crimes are so hideous and heinous that many of my fellow southern West Virginia citizens shake our head in disbelief at the situation. We believe that the crimes happened and the victim sustained severe trauma. It is just that this obvious hate crime has stunned the citizens of this state who see what happened to the young Afro American woman as being just too horrible to happen here. But it did happen here. If the US Attorney fails to prosecute a federal hate crimes violation. Then the Department of Justice needs to appoint a special prosecutor to proceed.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 08:37

Friday, September 7, 2007

West Virginia University Vs. Marshall University Football Game

Tomorrow is the big football game between West Virginia University and Marshall University in Huntington at the Joan C. Edwards Stadium. The annual game between West Virginia University and Marshall University is called the friends of coal bowl in West Virginia. The Marshall University fans are out in large numbers today in Pullman Square and in the surrounding downtown Huntington area as there is a shortage of game related festivities in Huntington. There are a large number of West Virginia University sports fans in Huntington this evening. There will be tailgate parties galore tomorrow at the Joan C. Edwards Stadium. The odds on favorite is West Virginia University however many expect Marshall University to make a respectable showing of athletic skill in this football game. I sincerely hope Marshall University can overcome the odds to win the football game.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 21:26

Monday, July 23, 2007

Fruth Pharmacy

Earlier today I went to the Fruth Pharmacy in the 100 block of Seventh Avenue in Huntington West Virginia. The employees of that store are very rude and snotty. I do not know if this rude and obnoxious behavior is due to poor education, or poor training, bad management or maybe all. I will not be foolish enough to go back to Fruth Pharmacy. The cashiers at Fruth Pharmacy have two speeds, slow and slower. They just made a dedicated Rite-Aid CVS customer out of me. At least the people at Rite Aid do not run off at the mouth at the customers like those at Fruth Pharmacy do. I don't want to do business with anyone who does not appreciate the customers business when the customer could just as easily go up the street and be treated like a respectable human being. I intend to do so because I have no intention of being treated badly. West Virginia citizens deserve to be treated well in retail establishments because those West Virginia dollars are hard to come by.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 23:30

Saturday, March 3, 2007

Marshall University Computer Network

I wish to thank Tony Rutherford for writing an excellent article about the large amount of illegal downloads available from the Marshall Computer Network in violation of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. Marshall University has been listed by a national copyright enforcement group as one of the 25 worst in the country when it comes to illegal music downloads. Copyright violations imply theft of intellectual property and this is NOT a reputation that a progressive educational institution such as Marshall University desires to have. It is not good for Marshall and it is not good for West Virginia. The liberal side of my nature says college kids will be kids, even if they are young adults as defined by law. However the fiscal conservative side of my nature understands that the state of West Virginia has invested millions of dollars for the Marshall University computer network that has all too much of its digital resources abused by students for copyright piracy. This impacts the credibility of Marshall University. I am displeased by the overt waste of money. I can think of better uses for the misappropriated bandwidth. This current situation does nothing to advance the reputation of the state of West Virginia or education. It is a negligent waste of state money that this situation has not been previously abated. Tax money should not be used subsidizing unauthorized digital music distributions by students. If the Marshall University digital network is going to be used for music distribution, then it needs to be to put WMUL online in streaming format. Tony's article states that Steve Hensley, MU dean of student affairs, told The Parthenon that prevention of downloading of illegal music is impossible ?to restrict access to data files.? ,even though the federal law (DMCA) requires Marshall University to regulate its own network to abate copyright piracy. Apparently Dr. Hensley does not understand that all MP3 music files can be rapidly removed from the student server in ten minutes by any competent server administrator. This needs to be done for the sake of Marshall University?s reputation. This situation is not without precedent. A portion of the states computer network at the state capitol was misused and abused about two years ago by state employees who were using state machines to burn pirated DVD's. As I understand it, the Governor of West Virginia promptly fired the administrators of that network at that time, and he was correct to do so. The governor established a precedent to fire those who administer state networks who are abused in violation of law. Marshall University has absolutely and completely lost control of its student network and there appears to be rampant abuse. I am waiting to see if the governor follows precedent and history repeats itself. I wish to make a case in point as it relates to historical context. When Marshall University first started providing digital services to students about 12 years ago, Marshall provided email and computer storage space, and the option of having a small non commercial personal website to students. 12 years ago the Marshall students needed Marshall University to provide ISP services for students because private plans were so expensive, however at this point in history there is no need to continue that extravagant outlay of state money because all services previously provided to students can be easily had for free online. Why does Marshall University not tell the students to take advantage of this as an austerity measure? Rather than be locked into an outdated 1995 mindset. At that time in 1995: (a) It was not possible to get free e-mail from Yahoo at Hotmail like it is today. (b) It was not possible 12 years ago to get free web page space for personal non commercial web pages like it is today. (c) 12 years ago the average college student did not have his or her own computer like they do today. (d.) Marshall University has provided students with 200 MB digital storage space on Marshall University network for the last ten years. Yet a 30 dollar USB portable micro drive provides five times that much storage and it is no bigger than a pack of chewing gum. A portable USB drive fits on your key ring or you can wear it around your neck. Many student and faculty females have one in their purse. Student digital storage is no longer a necessity as the technology and the need is outdated. Today, Marshall University is still maintaining large expensive "computer labs" and acting like a student ISP just like they did in 1995. Students are still using it as an ISP as evidenced by all the illegal downloads. A growing number of academic institutions require students to maintain their own computer and internet access and this frees up enormous University assets for academic programs and salaries for professors who take academics seriously. Some colleges require students to be a wee bit autonomous. Online behavior is much better when the individual is solely responsible for his or her online account. If all students had laptops, then a million dollar computer lab could be replaced by a 200 dollar wireless hotspot router. Some colleges use common sense with state money when the opportunity presents itself. I strongly support the Governors agenda to run the state of West Virginia like a corporation and take austere action to save money due to technology advances. It seems Marshall University has not quite got the message because those who manage the student network that was badly needed in 1995 are now entrenched in the system. The jobs have outlived the need. Therefore the holders of these jobs preserve the status quo (to preserve their jobs) even if the service model is outdated. This was an acceptable model in 1995 but things have changed and the model of the student network has not evolved. The majority of West Virginia students today store their personal files on their laptop or a micro USB Drive so a virtual storage drive on Marshall University network is an very obsolete and redundant concept that needs to take today?s digital technology in context. Many West Virginia students refuse to use Marshall University network because they have email elsewhere and they don?t need redundant storage space on the Marshall University network because they store personal files on their own computer. One purpose of a college education is to encourage

self responsibility and a degree of intellectual autonomy. Why should students not get their own computer and their own internet access when Marshall University encourages them to be dependant on the institution for this? Lots of MODERN colleges now restrict computer services to FACULTY only because they do not desire to spend millions to be a student ISP. Whatever happened to the days when West Virginia Universities encouraged independence from the state when most students have their own laptops anyway? Huge expenses of maintaining thousands of University owned computer terminals may well be the reason that tuition is so high. An account on the states network is not a right but rather a privilege that privilege seems to be commonly abused at Marshall University. It is common knowledge that Marshall University has spent millions on outdated "computer labs" because they don't have the guts to tell students to buy their own computer and provide their own internet access. Marshall University is an academic institution and not an ISP to be digitally exploited. I have no idea why student accounts still exist at Marshall University with the potential exception of preserving the jobs of those who are holding on to the status quo. The evidence tends to indicate that a perfectly good academic institution network is turning into America Online (AOL) right before our bloodshot eyes. WWW = Wild Wild Web This can hurt the University as much as the movie helped it. Not Good. That needs to be fixed and soon. The last time a state network was rampantly abused, the governor or one of his subordinates fired those who administered the network. I am waiting to see what happens this time. It is already illegal to abuse a state computer network for unlawful purposes. Some of the students have been abusing the network in violation of DMCA. The system administrator staff of the Marshall network does share the blame for culpable and negligent failure to enforce the rules. The blame coin has two sides. Both sides need to be dealt with. I contemplate that the president of the university will discipline a few students and fire a few state employees this coming week for negligently letting things get this far out of hand. If the president of the university takes no action at all, it sends the message to the entire student body that online network abuse is permissible, therefore he needs to do something soon to abate the problem. University computing service operates like a student ISP as a separate services entity. Common sense tells me that a University Computer Network should be turned over to the professors in the Computer Science department to restore an academic network model under academic supervision for academic purposes. The legislature gave money to Marshall to fund an academic network and anything else is not right. The services model needs to reflect a 2007 reality even if some entrenched state employees with a retro 1995 mindset don't like it. In the technology field there is no room for a status quo mentality due to the high rate of technical status evolution.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 13:22

Friday, January 5, 2007

Global Warming Record Temperatures

Both yesterday and today we have had record temperatures in Huntington WV. Global Warming means warm January weather. It also means record temperatures in July when the old folks are having heat strokes left and right. 60-65 degrees in January is proof in my mind that global warming is impacting the weather more so than we thought. This has profound implications for West Virginia and the future of coal as a fossil fuel that produces lots of greenhouse gasses.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 12:37

Sunday, September 17, 2006

Raese Attacks Byrd

Once again I see the Republican attack Ads being used by republican senate candidate John Raese to manipulate West Virginia citizens against Senator Byrd, and I think it is a vulgar lie. John Raese claims there is enough oil in Alaska to power West Virginia cars for 200 years. Then John Raese goes on to claim that Senator Byrd has voted against drilling for oil in Alaska ten times. I wish to give the honest voters of this state the truth. The arctic environment in Alaska is pristine and fragile, and many parts of Alaska are game preserves and national parks. A huge amount of land in Alaska is set aside for native Americans. Senator Byrd has voted to preserve the Alaskan wilderness for our children to enjoy. The oil there will wait until such time as we have the technology to extract it without environmental damage. That oil is not going anywhere. According to John Raese, it is irresponsible energy policy to be concerned for the environment. Who needs that type of propaganda. John Raese is not smart enough to understand that West Virginia citizens are far more sophisticated than they used to be. Yes Senator Byrd may doze off in the Senate from time to time. However when he is wide awake he tells the truth. When Bob Byrd is asleep, well somebody in congress has a dream of a greater America. Senator Robert C. Byrd is the model for Senators to aspire to. If we must break the mold, then let it be for a man or woman, of great integrity and not a propagandist like John Raese.. Stephanie Heck / Huntington WV

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 04:22

Thursday, August 24, 2006

Bridgeport High School

The question about the legality of the religious painting at Bridgeport High School in West Virginia is most properly submitted by the school board to the attorney for the West Virginia State Department of Education in consultation with the attorney generals staff. Why was this not done? Government entities in this state have the right to solicit a legal opinion from the Attorney Generals office at no cost. It is cheaper than federal litigation. It is in my mind totally irresponsible for a local state funded government body, to contract with out of state lawyers to fight a lawsuit on constitutional issues, without first seeking a legal opinion from the states attorney general to determine if the school boards legal position is tenable or defensible at law. The religious painting was allegedly "stolen"? The presumption that the painting was "stolen" is based on the presumption that the school board had a legal right to own it and display it. That is what the lawsuit was intended to determine. In much the same way that possession of marijuana by private citizens is regulated by statute. Possession and displays of religious items by government entities is regulated by the establishment clause of Amendment 1. Private citizens have the unlimited right to own both secular and religious personal property, however it is somewhat questionable if religious property rights extend to government. However, I question the logic of those who believe that state government funded entities have the right to own or display religious items. This is exactly the reason that the state cannot own a church. I am not opposed to anyone's faith, but I am pro Bill of rights. What kind of bothers me more than the religious painting issue is that the school board has been involved in raising money via a third party out of state law firm for the defense of an alleged right of a government funded body to post a religious painting in a public funded building. Does this right exist? I doubt it according to the case law I have read. I think the Harrison County School Board should have first procedurally solicited a WV Attorney Generals legal opinion on the constitutional issues before proceeding to get involved with an out of state law firm. It appears that fanaticism has impeached proper procedure, and the West Virginia Dept. of Education needs to look a little closer at this situation.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 03:40

Sunday, August 6, 2006

Bridgeport WV High School and the West Virginia Constitution

It is my understanding that the Harrison County Board of Education has voted to allow a portrait of Jesus to continue to hang at the High School in Bridgeport WV. As I understand it, the Bridgeport High School and the Harrison County Board of Education have been sued by the ACLU in Federal Court for allowing a portrait of Jesus to hang in the Principal's office at the school. Nobody knows what Jesus actually looked like but the Bridgeport West Virginia High School allegedly has a picture of him. Some devout people see "pictures of Jesus" to be "graven images". So the question before me revolves around the concept that the Bridgeport WV High School and the Harrison County Board of Education is either the owner of a religious or a sacrilegious artistic display depending on the readers perspective. According to numerous sources, the alleged portrait of Jesus has been hanging in the same place for more than 30 years. I asked a few devoutly religious people that I know what they thought of this, and was told that the posting of religious art is a form of "artistic ministry", and this is why the churches have commissioned works of religious art for centuries. I thought this "artistic ministry" to be an interesting perspective that I had not previously contemplated before. I did some research in the West Virginia State Constitution and discovered that the West Virginia Constitution does not directly address the topic of "artistic ministry" or "religious art displays". However the West Virginia Constitution does indirectly address the situation at the Bridgeport High School and the Harrison County Board of Education. The West Virginia State Constitution does prohibit the collection of public tax money to support any type or religious place of ministry or worship and many devout people see "religious art" as a valid form of ministry. The West Virginia State Constitution expressly states that religious freedom is an individual right and no expressed or implied provision is made for a state tax funded entity to have religious freedom or religious opinions or commentary in any capacity, as that right is exclusively reserved for individual citizens. The West Virginia State Constitution poses a second problem for the situation at the Bridgeport High School and the Harrison County Board of Education. Compulsory attendance to any religious art display or religious place or ministry IS a VIOLATION of the expressed prohibitions in the West Virginia State Constitution. The state of West Virginia compels students to attend school. If a non christian student steals or destroys the portrait of the person that the Bridgeport WV High School alleges to be Jesus. How will the school board punish the kids religious dissent without violating the kids civil rights? As long as the alleged portrait of "Jesus" is hanging in the Bridgeport High School under the control of the Harrison County Board of Education. Compulsory attendance (truancy) laws cannot be enforced within the scope of the West Virginia State Constitution because the wall where religious art is hanging is a "religious place" and no student or teacher can be compelled to frequent a religious place under the state constitution. It does not matter if that religious place is a single wall in a school house, or 10 city blocks of religious art in a huge gallery. The size of the religious display in a religious place is irrelevant. Read the state constitution and make up your own mind what it says. I am not anti religious but I am pro constitution. Article Three, Section Fifteen of the West Virginia State Constitution is below: 3-15. Religious freedom guaranteed. No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever; nor shall any man be enforced, restrained, molested or burdened, in his body or goods, or otherwise suffer, on account of his religious opinions or belief, but all men shall be free to profess and by argument, to maintain their opinions in matters of religion; and the same shall, in nowise, affect, diminish or enlarge their civil capacities; and the Legislature shall not prescribe any religious test whatever, or confer any peculiar privileges or advantages on any sect or denomination, or pass any law requiring or authorizing any religious society, or the people of any district within this state, to levy on themselves, or others, any tax for the erection or repair of any house for public worship, or for the support of any church or ministry, but it shall be left free for every person to select his religious instructor, and to make for his support, such private contracts as he shall please.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 06:00

Wednesday, July 12, 2006

Huntington West Virginia Blog Update

A Local News and Political Commentary Blog in Huntington West Virginia, Politics and political news in Cabell County Huntington West Virginia WV 25701, Blogging in Huntington West Virginia. News on Election 2006 211 I have changed this Huntington West Virginia blog a little bit, I will be blogging more about politics and political news about the West Virginia politics of election 2006 in West Virginia, I have a great interest in the politics of election 2006, especially the race between that right wing loon John Raese and the senior legend of the Senate Robert C. Byrd. Election 2006 should be interesting from a political point of view. There should be a lot of local news on that race over the next few months. I am just a West Virginia blogger with a West Virginia website with an interest in putting a little politics and political commentary on my blog web site. Cabell County blogs are rare and scarce commodities even to a webmaster and computer programmer like myself. I will be writing on the topics of Huntington West Virginia News on Election 2006 from the middle of good old 25701. Hopefully business will pick up in the aftermath of the election 2006 politics here in Huntington West Virginia.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 11:50

Thursday, May 4, 2006

West Virginia Invasion of Privacy Rights

West Virginia has a law which makes it unlawful to use a computer to violate someones privacy rights. I recently tried to advise one of my former website clients that the message board that they operate had a user who was using a computer to violate the privacy rights of others. West Virginia has strong traditions of upholding the privacy rights of the citizen. West Virginia does not appear to have a law against cyberstalking but the West Virginia Legislature has adopted a law protecting a West Virginia citizens privacy rights. The law is quoted below. I thought my readers should know about this because the law is hard for police and lawyers to find in the legal database using customary keywords and therefore this law is not widely known among police and prosecutors. While this law is styled to protect privacy rights against abusive computer users, it most certainly is a potent weapon against cyberstalkers in West Virginia. _____ 61-3C-12.

Computer invasion of privacy Any person who knowingly, willfully and without authorization accesses a computer or computer network and examines any employment, salary, credit or any other financial or personal information relating to any other person, after the time at which the offender knows or reasonably should know that he is without authorization to view the information displayed, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars or confined in the county jail for not more than six months, or both. _____

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 10:16

Sunday, March 5, 2006

Welch West Virginia

The Welch West Virginia police chief is accused in a federal lawsuit of stopping a would-be rescuer from performing CPR on a gay heart attack victim because he assumed he was HIV positive. Claude Green, 43, died June 21 in Welch West Virginia after suffering the heart attack, yards from the Welch City Hall. The West Virginia Civil Liberties Union (ACLU affiliate) filed the suit against Bobby Bowman on behalf of Green's mother. The lawsuit alleges Police Chief Bowman pulled Billy Snead who was Green's friend, off of the man as he was performing CPR. I am familiar with Welch. It is a small coal town in southern West Virginia (Appalachia). I hope that there will eventually come a time when no person will die because of the denial of medical care by a bigoted public servant. The right to medical care is not dependant on ones orientation in Welch West Virginia or any place else. Medical care is a human right that is independent of stereotypes.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 01:01

Sunday, February 26. 2006

Don Knotts

A native West Virginian and globally famous movie and television star, has passed from this world at the age of 81. Don Knotts who played the role of Deputy Barney Fife on the Andy Griffith show has gone into eternity on February 24. Don was a native of Morgantown West Virginia. We in West Virginia will miss him and enjoy his unique comedy for decades to come in syndication.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 18:03

Sunday, February 12, 2006

West Virginia Snow

Huntington West Virginia has a fresh coat of snow on the ground this morning. The city has the salt trucks up and running and we have 3-4 inches of snow on the ground at the moment. The roads in most residential areas of the city are safe and passable. Police are advising motorists to use caution in traveling throughout Southern West Virginia due to weather issues and to be careful of slick spots in the highways and on bridges. The temperature is expected to fall this evening and this could potentially make more ice spots on the road. Be careful folks and remember West Virginia is beautiful in the winter. Let the children enjoy the snow, its time for sensible adults to cuddle up with a good cup of coffee.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 13:20

Sunday, January 29, 2006

Joe Manchin

It is my understanding that Joe Manchin has currently established the highest public approval ratings of any governor in the country. Joe Manchin is allegedly thinking about a run for higher office according to statehouse rumors. As Democrats go, Joe Manchin is somewhat profoundly conservative, although he would be seen as a moderate by GOP standards. If he would seek higher office it would be quite difficult to tell the difference in agenda between a conservative democrat and a moderate republican. It is quite possible that Joe Manchin would be perceived as more conservative than a moderate republican. While this philosophy may serve him well in state Politics. Joe Manchin is far too conservative to obtain the support of the moderate to liberal faction of the Democratic National Committee and therein is the problem. While Joe Manchin is perceived as a conservative Democrat within West Virginia, he would be perceived as a "closet case Republican" in any state other than West Virginia. I do not see a run for federal office in the future for Joe Manchin, however I believe he will remain a fixture in West Virginia politics for years to come. He is not going away, but Joe Manchin is not moving to Washington in the foreseeable future. Much of Governor Joe Manchin's political future will depend on the outcome of the 2006 elections, many American citizens are very upset about the war in Iraq and right wing extremism from the Bush administration. I see the political pendulum swinging back toward a centrist mindset on the national scene, and this could leave an ambitious conservative democrat in a potential hornets nest of hostility without much support from the national Democratic party, if he seeks federal office. In all fairness to Gov. Joe Manchin, he did come across as very humane and compassionate on camera during the recent coal mine disaster in West Virginia. This without doubt has raised his popularity index significantly in recent weeks.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 12:24

Thursday, January 12, 2006

Fred Phelps

It is my understanding that Fred Phelps is coming to West Virginia this weekend to protest and picket the memorial service for the dead miners who died in the SEGO mining disaster. I fear that Fred Phelps is coming to West Virginia to incite violence. We all know that if he does what he says he will do, some good ole boy will seriously and profusely clobber him. Fred Phelps was at one time an attorney, however the ethics committee of the Kansas state bar association asked the Kansas Supreme Court to disbar Fred. They did...and correctly so. Fred then became a preacher of sorts who spreads hate against gay people in the name of God. Phelps runs a very hateful website called god hates fags dot com. Many legitimate clergymen question his sanity because of his extreme malice that is seen by many mainline Christian groups as being unscriptural. Fred Phelps is the alleged cult-leader of the alleged Westburo Baptist Church in Topeka Kansas that claims that America is being punished for tolerating gay people whom Phelps thinks should be executed.. Phelps claims 911 was a punishment from God against New York City and he claims America deserved 911. Phelps appears to be enjoying harassing people by picketing funerals and exploiting the grief of others for his own agenda. Phelps first started picketing funerals at the funeral of Matthew Sheppard several years ago. Matthew Sheppard was a gay man who was murdered in a well known hate crime. Fred Phelps has grown more outrageous with each passing year. During the last two years, Fred Phelps has picketed numerous funerals of fallen American soldiers and Marines whom have died in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. His justification for picketing the funerals of deceased soldiers is that he believes America is an evil country for failing to execute gay people, and he believes that any soldier who dies for this country in combat goes straight to hell. Fred Phelps is probably the most hated man in the United States. He has offended millions of people by picketing funerals of fallen American soldiers who died in combat for their country. As I said, many mainstream clergymen believe this Phelps guy is massively insane. Phelps is seen as an insane hatemongering cult leader by large numbers of sincerely religious people. Phelps recently makes the vulgar claim that the coal mine disaster was Gods punishment on West Virginia. Phelps claims that SEGO Baptist church is a "sodomite whorehouse" and that is the most insane thing I have ever heard of. Phelps claims on his website that the dead coal miners went to hell as gods punishment on the state of West Virginia. That is severe lunacy. In the past, Fred Phelps has protested at Marshall University because Marshall policy does not discriminate against gay people. Fred Phelps and his cult followers are seen by many as a bunch of seriously demented people who are seen as nothing but trouble in the numerous jurisdictions where they have protested funerals. I have talked to a friend of mine who is prominent in the states gay community, He tells me that the West Virginia gay community will ignore Fred Phelps out of respect to the families of the deceased miners and no protest will be made by the gay community as a counter demonstration against Phelps. This is out of respect to the families of the deceased. I thanked him for his compassion for the families of the dead. My gay friend is content to leave Fred Phelps to the rednecks and coal miners who would be correctly and justifiably offended by Phelps and his vulgar claims about the dead miners going to hell. It would please me greatly to see the West Virginia legislature outlaw all forms of picketing and protesting at funerals. The dead have a right to be buried in peace with a proper and respectable funeral by a clergyman of the dead mans choice or one chosen by the next of kin of the deceased. Stephanie HeckHuntington WVWest Virginia's top blogger

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 12:09

Wednesday, January 4, 2006

Coal Miners Alive West Virginia

12:03 AM The coal miners trapped alive in a Sego West Virginia coal mine have been found alive. 12 out of 13 men survived the explosion. Condolences to the deceased.4:15 AM Update: Four hours after I was given this news, the coal company at sego has released the news that 12 of 13 miners are deceased. I feel very mislead along with the rest of my fellow West Virginia citizens.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 00:03

Monday, January 2, 2006

Coal Mine Explosion

TALLMANSVILLE, West Virginia (Jan. 2) A coal mine explosion that may have been sparked by lightning trapped 13 miners underground Monday, officials said. The mine had been idle over the holiday and the explosion occurred as the first shift of miners entered to resume production, said Lara Ramsburg, spokeswoman for Gov. Joe Manchin. This coal mine explosion with the trapped miners is a dreaded nightmare in portions of the state of West Virginia where coal is mined. A coal mine sometimes has methane gas that creates extreme danger of a mine explosion at times. It is my understanding that relatives of the trapped miners are meeting in a church near the mine to pray for their loved ones trapped as the result of this coal mine explosion. Rescue efforts are in progress.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 19:34

Saturday, December 3, 2005

West Virginia Nightclubs

I recently went out for a few drinks with friends at Macintosh's. Macintosh's is one of the better nightclubs in Downtown Huntington West Virginia. Most of the regulars know each other, and it is Huntington's version of Cheers. It is a safe place for women to go without fear of abuse or obnoxious drunks. The place is well managed and controlled and prices are reasonable. Macintosh's is a small nightclub located next door to the viaduct on Eighth street and Seventh Avenue in downtown Huntington West Virginia. Many female professional people from the Huntington Community go to Macintosh's as it is one of the safe places for local professional women to relax. Visitors to Huntington are advised that most of the Bars and nightclubs on fourth avenue in Huntington WV are primarily inhabited by college kids from Marshall University.

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 08:35

Tuesday, November 22, 2005

Animal Shelter in Point Pleasant

Emergency assistance is needed for the Mason County Animal Shelter in Point Pleasant West Virginia. A fire has destroyed the shelter today and numerous animals are in need of foster care or adoption. Make Donations to the Mason County Animal Welfare League at: MCAWLPO Box 285 Point Pleasant, WV 25550

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 19:40

Wednesday, November 9, 2005

West Virginia Cellular Phone Provider

I recently changed my cell phone provider from Sprint PCS, to Cingular Wireless, after being with Sprint for several years. I did this in September 2005 because Sprint PCS service is not that good in the Huntington West Virginia area. Sprint also outsources its customer service overseas and it is horribly hard for me to understand the English language skills of Sprint's Customer Service people with a thick oriental accent who dos not seem to understand what I am trying to say because their English Skills are not that good. I speak typical English for my area of West Virginia, and Sprint as a cell phone provider needs to hire people who understand the language spoken by the West Virginia customers who have absolutely no idea how to speak Chinese or pigeon English. When I cancelled my account with Sprint, that is when the nightmare began because after I paid what they told me was my final billing, they kept billing me. I could not make the foreign woman with Sprint Customer Service understand why I was displeased because her English was so bad. I just paid a seventy dollar billing today to a company that has not provided me service since September. I paid the bill because I was afraid it would affect my credit rating if I did not. I am trying to get my credit in good shape to buy a car. So Now I have paid the second allegedly final billing to a company (Sprint) that I am rapidly growing to profoundly detest. Exporting jobs and outsourcing is not my idea of loyalty to ones country. So I ponderously dumped Sprint PCS as a cell phone provider service and trashed the crummy Sprint phone and got myself signed up with Cingular Wireless as a cell phone provider in September 2005. The cell phone I purchased was made by Motorola and called a V3 Razr and it works great and I have yet to have a single dropped call in the Huntington West Virginia area. The Customer service people at Cingular Wireless speak fluent English like American Citizens because they are American citizens and this makes communication much less frustrating, after all is said and done that is what cellular technology is all about...communication. So my nightmare with Sprint as a Cellular Phone Provider is over I hope, my cellular service has never been better since I dumped Sprint. Anyone who signs up with Sprint is well advised to take a college course in foriegn relations and foreign languages before talking to Sprint Customer Service. Stephanie HeckHuntington West Virginia

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 18:40

Saturday, October 29, 2005

DAR

Opinion by Stephanie Heck: My mother is a member of the local Buford Chapter of the D.A.R. (Daughters Of The American Revolution) here in Huntington West Virginia. Some of the West Virginia women I have encountered from that group give new definition to the word "pompous". The Members of the WV D.A.R. claim to be the descendants of those who fought the American Revolution against the hereditary monarchy of England. The Buford chapter of the D.A.R. here in WV is an ancestral pride organization, I do not know what D.A.R. is like in the rest of the country. I have never understood just what drives the need that some people have to elevate themselves above others based on genetic lineage. After all is said and done, that is exactly what ancestral pride is based on, is it not?....genetics. History teaches us that it was none other than Elanor Roosevelt who resigned from the D.A.R. in 1939 because of the overt bigotry that she witnessed the organization practice against the Afro Americans. The Roosevelt family had a clear historical record of being "somewhat opposed" to those who claimed genetic or ancestral privilege in this country and elsewhere in the world. Our only biological connection to our ancestors is our DNA. The revolutionary soldiers, and founding fathers, who rebelled against the King's government in 1776 were opposed to any government that was based upon the inheritance of privilege and authority via a bloodline (Kings). The founding fathers rebelled against the British nobility and their hereditary rights, because they wanted to live in a world where people rose and fell because of their own deeds rather than their ancestry. They believe that all men were created equal at birth and that concept did not allow for expanded rights by hereditary birthright. The Members of the local D.A.R. here in West Virginia seem to think they have some special pompous claim to patriotic purity because of the deeds of their alleged ancestors based upon the flawed logic that patriotism is hereditary. Ancestral Genetics does not equate to a hereditary monopoly on patriotism. In the state of West Virginia we have laws that prohibit discrimination on the grounds of ancestry and gender. Yet D.A.R. is a mono-gendered group that restricts membership on the grounds of ancestry. Many people whom are eligible for membership will not join them for precisely this reason. There are many good people who share the beliefs of the founding fathers and want nothing to do with any group that confers membership based on a bloodline or ancestry because they respect the "rule of law". Pedigrees are far more appropriate to farm animals, and canines, than human beings. The founders of this country intended people to be judged on their own actions as opposed to the actions of their ancestors. I have witnessed this myself by watching my mother's associations with these people. I had an ancestor who fought in the revolution as well as my mother, presuming we share lineage, but the difference between myself and the absurdly snobby women in the Buford Chapter of the D.A.R. in West Virginia is that I do not feel that it makes me any better than anyone else. Ancestral snobbery is the blatantly illegitimate offspring of common decency. It is because I do respect the founders of this country and the fight they waged for freedom that I do not desire to condone genealogical or genetic pride of the WV D.A.R. as a ruse for pompous ancestral snobbery. I hope my mother sees the light and gets out of that genetic cult. I am somewhat disturbed that a member of my family is involved in that pompous D.A.R. group. I am a descendant of Captian John Savage of the well known Savage land grant that now makes up most of Cabell County. The Savage Land Grant is the original land deed to the property that Huntington now sits upon. However that does not make me any better than anyone else, because genetics and lineage is not relevant to quality of personage. I refuse to be a blue blooded snob and I strongly advise the Buford Chapter of the D.A.R. to follow my good example. Stephanie Heck Huntington West Virginia

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 13:44

Saturday, October 15, 2005

litigation against drug dealers?

What would happen if the West Virginia Legislature granted those persons addicted to narcotics, the expedited right to litigate against the drug dealers who exploited their addiction? Drug dealers would quickly find themselves in well deserved litigation hell completely surrounded by a ponderous horde of greedy lawyers. If the State of West Virginia wants to fight against the flood of dope in our streets. We should unleash the power of the civil courts as well as the criminal courts on drug dealers. If this were done, the civil process server would be just as much feared by drug dealers as the DEA is currently feared. In the State of West Virginia, it is all too easy to litigate against your boss, and all too difficult to sue the drug dealers who entice our youth into chemical bondage. The legislature needs to change that. Stephanie Heck

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 07:35

Thursday, August 11, 2005

Iraq Reconstruction

Political Commentary:

It is my understanding that U.S. Taxpayers are paying for the construction of new schools , airports, bridges, roads, power plants, Military Bases, and training police, and numerous other programs to rehabilitate the Iraqi economy and infrastructure of the Iraq nation. It is further understood that the U.S. Taxpayers are paying for the installation of an honest government in Iraq according to the White House. 200 Bil. have been spent.

I am wondering if the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution gives the citizens of West Virginia and the Citizens of Iraq an equal right to benefit from the U.S. Treasury on the basis of a per capita allotment.

When the U.S. Army is done with the occupation, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of Iraq, they are cordially invited to invade West Virginia. We could use all that Iraq reconstruction money here in West Virginia.

Stephanie Heck
Huntington
Cabell County West Virginia

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 10:24

Monday, July 18, 2005

West Virginia Sex Offenders

The West Virginia State Police have made a search able website available to the general public at: <http://www.wvstatepolice.com/sexoff> This allows the public to search the database of the more than 1700 convicted sex offenders living in West Virginia. You can search by county or by the convicted sex offenders last name. State law requires convicted sex offenders to register. Pictures of the offenders are on the "free web pages" given to individual sex offenders. I have never seen such an ugly bunch of mugshots in my life. Advice to single women: Run you new boyfriends name through the database to make sure he has no history of sex crimes. Hopefully he comes up clean and no reference to him is found. If you do find him in the database, call your attorney or the state police for advice on how to handle the situation. Do not attempt to handle it yourself. Some of these characters are quite dangerous. Stephanie

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 08:47

Saturday, July 2, 2005

West Virginia Casualty Report from Iraq

I compiled a simple web page called the West Virginia Casualty Report as a tribute to native West Virginians who have died as the result of combat in Iraq. May our fallen West Virginia Soldiers and Marines never be forgotten. Have a happy fourth of July folks and remember those who made the sacrifice for freedom. The West Virginia Casualty Report <http://www.sheck.com/westvirginiacasualtyreport/>

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 14:41

Monday, December 20, 2004

I returned to West Virginia Last Year

I returned to West Virginia last year after being gone for a number of years. I was in Saint Peterburg Florida for a long time. I love the mountains of my home state but the cultural attitude is a bit regressive here. I frequently make jokes about West Virginia as being the land that time forgot. I have a zany sence of humor and there is much that provides me with comical ammo here!In West Virginia it is quite common for gentlemen to wear gloves to keep the knuckles from dragging the ground.Stephanie HeckCabell County Huntington West Virginia

Posted by Huntington West Virginia in West Virginia at 17:04