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612, Broken Arrow (9/3/2009 3:12:39 PM)

Posted on the Ledger opinion article "Thanks to Chris Tharp". Trying to make it clear that not everyone is of the same opinion on this.

Not everyone is convinced that the board was trying to keep the billing a secret in order to cover up their wrongdoing.

They did not say they didn't want to release the information - only that they were concerned that releasing it would open them up to more litigation. Assuming, as the Ledger apparently has, that they had to be "forced" is a biased point of view. Not everyone dismisses everything the board says as a lie.

Mr. Tharp has succeeded in getting some level of details on the billing - to what end? He was convinced beforehand that the board was up to no good. With that preconceived notion, it is unlikely that he will change his mind, even if the evidence warrants it (as it has in the Sisney vs. board controversy).

What Mr. Tharp has succeeded in doing is continuing to harangue our much-maligned (and possibly completely innocent) school board, and costing us even more money in litigation.

Not everyone is surprised to see large attorney fees, considering the amount of litigation Dr. Sisney, Mr. Lare, and now Mr. Tharp have brought to the district.

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Jolie2, (9/3/2009 9:22:59 PM)

612, I wouldn't be surprised if the Ledger doesn't publish your comment. I wish we could see all the comments that the Ledger chooses to reject. It's a wonder you don't get tired of trying to get through to people, but I'm thankful you haven't given up. It's a darn shame that the Ledger is one of the obstacles to clear communication and understanding on these issues related to the school board.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/3/2009 10:17:17 PM)

I didn't really want to post anything on an opinion article, but I think about how people reading the article and comments might get the impression that there is a consensus on that point of view. I know I'm not going to make any friends, but the comments need to be balanced out.

It came out more adversarial than I intended, but that might be a good thing, since the Ledger is more likely to publish comments that invite attacks. I guess I can handle anything "Jerry" has to say...

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 8:20:47 AM)

I couldn't help myself - now people have picked up on the 2 years Chris Tharp spent trying to get the billing details.

Posted on Ledger opinion "Where was Doug Mann?"

Yeah, 2 years. He started trying to get RFR's billing details a year before they were hired. Y'all just believe everything you read, don't you?

No wonder there are so many misconceptions and ignorant comments being made about this.

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Jolie2, (9/4/2009 12:36:04 PM)

Looks like it's your lucky day, 612. The Ledger published both of your comments to the op-ed pieces. Put your armor on and prepare for battle!

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 1:09:32 PM)

Yeah, I asked for it this time, didn't I? :)

I have made at least one person really mad.

I went back and looked at Dr. Gerber's explanation for the high legal bills, from back in March (before Sisney's 2nd lawsuit).

Ledger "BA Legal Fees Soar" 3/4/2009

QUOTE

Interim Superintendent Dr. Gary Gerber said there are two reasons why these expenses are higher than was budgeted. The first, he said, "is a significant amount of time required by our legal counsel" to defend the district and three members of the board of education against a lawsuit filed by former Superintendent Dr. Jim Sisney and a taxpayers' demand initiated by a group of 10 citizens.

Second, Gerber pointed to what he called an expanded role assumed by attorney Doug Mann when he was hired by the school board just before Sisney's termination.

To illustrate this point, he pointed to a list of 15 general legal activities ranging from advice on federal programs and finance and tax issues, to contract reviews, compliance with various laws, review of school district policies and personnel issues. The superintendent also said Mann and his associates are called upon to provide advice on collective bargaining issues and provide training for staff personnel in a variety of legal procedures and processes.

"With 1,200 teachers plus support staff and administrators, this is a big operation that faces a number of instances when legal advice is necessary," Gerber said. "But even with all our counsel does, its fees represent only a tiny fraction of our total \$100 million budget."

Union Public Schools, the district closest in size to BAPS with 14,573 students, budgeted \$170,000 for legal services this year.

UNQUOTE

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 1:12:13 PM)

Seems to me the problem is that we just didn't budget enough to cover the expanded duties and defense against frivolous, doomed lawsuits. The lawsuits were certainly not foreseeable, and the expanded duties may not have been either, because Dr. Gerber was not superintendent at the time the budget was developed.

Maybe, instead of assuming the board was hiding something and demanding detailed billing, a more productive approach would have been to study the new duties that RFR is performing, and compare them to what other progressive school districts are doing. For example, there has to be a reason that Union budgets 170,000 for legal fees, when their district is not quite as big as Broken Arrow. There has to be a reason the law firm's duties were expanded. From Dr. Gerber's description of those duties, the most likely explanation is that the district wants to make sure it is not violating any policies or laws – in order to best serve the community and BAPS staff, AND to protect the district from lawsuits. This does not really seem like a bad idea to me.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 1:42:11 PM)

People have said that it was a waste of money for the district to hire Crowe & Dunlevy for their opinion on whether the billing details could be released, because Tharp and his lawyer had already told them they could.

Are they really that naive, after all this? Only if you assume that the board was trying to hide something would you be incapable of grasping the real reason - they had to go through due diligence to make sure that, if somebody sued them because they released confidential information with the billing details, they would be able to show that they went through the proper procedures to get an official opinion.

The eye-rollers are still intent on rejecting anything the board says, simply because the board said it. All of our lives would be easier and less expensive if they would be open to consider what the board is saying, and apply reason, instead of vindictiveness, to it.

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Jolie2, (9/4/2009 3:38:10 PM)

Without proof, it comes down to the basic matter of trust, I think. Many persons believed Sisney from the very beginning and trusted his assertions. Therefore, they mistrust anything that is said by any of the persons accused by him. I have been skeptical of Sisney early on and my observations of his words and actions have led me to believe he is not a trustworthy individual, which inclines me to give more credence to what his opponents have to say. I do think that you and I are open to considering everything that is presented and try to weigh each fact using reason and logic. You and I both readily admit that the OSBI may come up with proof of wrongdoing that would substantiate Sisney's charges.

I would say that many of the posters on the Ledger are operating more on emotional response and are willing to suspend the nuisance of critical thinking because they are so certain their position is correct. For posters like "Tom"

and "Jerry" I believe there is no possibility in their minds that Sisney has been playing a game and the three board members who stood up to him have been his victims.

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Jolie2, (9/4/2009 3:57:46 PM)

This afternoon I came across a quotation I thought applied to some of the posters on the Ledger and their reaction to you:

"Nothing is as frustrating as arguing with someone

who knows what he's talking about."

That about sums it up. It's why you get gems such as "Everytime I see one of your blogs, I think of insect repellent." in response to your posts. :)

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 4:09:47 PM)

"Suspend the nuisance of critical thinking" - that says it well.

It's taking the easy route to just set your mind to see things in black and white - anything Dr. Gerber says is a lie, everything the board does is an attempt to cover up their crookedness. Then you can only see events through that lens. You have to resort to believing some pretty far-fetched things in order to keep your point of view intact.

We have seen that many of the Ledger posters don't even try to put things together - in fact, they reject attempts to point out erroneous reporting and provide facts. That damages their credibility with me, and makes me less likely to take their point of view seriously.

The OSBI investigation sure is taking a long time. Until we know for sure - we don't know for sure! I would not be surprised if there are instances of the district (but not necessarily the board members) skirting policies to get things done. But I think the likelihood of the board being able to pull off a conspiracy since the 90's, like Dr. Sisney claimed, is pretty low. Hey - maybe Ms. Updike had to file bankruptcy because the other 3 wouldn't cut her in on the HVAC kickbacks...

Hee hee, Tom and Jerry.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/4/2009 4:26:33 PM)

Yeah, they lost me on the insect repellent one. Does that mean they see me as an annoying pest, instead of the Crusader for Truth that I am?

Now where did I put my cape?

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Jolie2, (9/5/2009 7:53:33 PM)

Another personal attack on you, from today, on the Ledger:

QUOTE

2-612 wrote on Sep 5, 2009 7:09 AM:

" ever considered changing your name to 666? It would be a better application of the numbering system. "

END QUOTE

So now you're the Antichrist in this guy's mind? What danger do you pose to these folks that they need to lash out in anger at you? All you are doing is offering up well-reasoned rational thought.

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Jolie2, (9/5/2009 8:12:36 PM)

I've submitted this post at the Ledger in response to the "666" comment:

QUOTE

Comparing 612 to the Antichrist just because she writes well-thought out posts that are difficult to argue with logically (for someone of obvious limited intelligence, anyway) and directly oppose your entrenched point of view, only makes you look ignorant and helpless, "2-612".

More name calling from the anti-board faction toward people defending another point of view is hardly a surprise. It's

what we've seen from the beginning and what is to be expected from people with a weak argument and who prefer resorting to insults and bullying instead of reason.

I think this quotation applies to people who find 612 irritating:

"Nothing is as frustrating as arguing with someone who knows what he's talking about."

612's posts are intelligent, reasonable, and, above all, attempting to be fair in considering the information available. It's too bad some feel so threatened by them that they try to shut 612 down whenever she posts.

There are "concerned citizens" in BA who are running around crying "Fire, fire" after setting the match to start it in the first place and then complaining about the high cost of putting it out.

END QUOTE

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612, Broken Arrow (9/5/2009 9:56:57 PM)

A classic, for sure! Thanks for sticking up for me.

Posted on the same article - I'm sure this will REALLY get through...as if...

Personal attacks don't bother me. If they did, I would have quit speaking out long ago. What does bother me is the attitude that inspires the personal attacks:

- unwillingness to consider available information
- unwillingness to adjust mindset when new information comes to light
- lack of critical thinking and fact-checking
- failure to connect information presented in different news stories and press releases over time
- unwillingness to consider not only possibility, but also probability
- quickness to assume malicious motives, and condemn and slander based only on rumors and unsupported accusations
- inability to recognize leading phrases in a headline, bias in a story, or misleading reporting through omission
- total, utter, and immediate dismissal of one side of the controversy even though their story is plausible and there is no evidence otherwise
- blind support of one side of the controversy in spite of glaring inconsistencies, spectacularly unlikely scenarios, actual evidence disproving its claims, and illogical allegations
- general mean-spiritedness, and delighting in causing undeserved emotional pain to others

I am thankful for the many excellent teachers in the district who are teaching our kids the skills they need to analyze information for themselves, instead of just accepting what is presented to them on the surface.

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Jolie2, (9/5/2009 10:21:57 PM)

Your post hits the nail on the head. I hope the Ledger will publish it. It could be educational but, undoubtedly, it will be ignored by those who choose to remain uninformed.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/6/2009 12:14:11 AM)

Well, at least it was therapeutic to write :)

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612, Broken Arrow (9/6/2009 1:09:31 AM)

And I really am grateful to the teachers who teach the kids to think. I have been impressed with every teacher my kids have had. It is very clear that they went into teaching because they are dedicated to making a difference in kids' lives.

My kids have benefited from their compassion, encouragement, and willingness to go over and above to accommodate their students' needs. And also their insistence on quality work, turned in on time! :)

It can't be easy, but they are professional all the way. Broken Arrow teachers really are the best.

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Jolie2, (9/7/2009 10:26:15 AM)

Surprisingly, the editor at the Ledger chose to publish both of our comments on the "Thanks, Chris Tharp" editorial. I can't wait to read the responses. :)

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612, Broken Arrow (9/8/2009 12:18:44 PM)

Yeah, I'm kind of surprised. Maybe they're looking forward to the responses too.

Accusing the board of "stealing from the kids" is out of line, unless the author, Mr. Morrison, has evidence. If he does, why did he need Mr. Tharp to "force" the school board to come clean?

To me, it just looks like more assumptions of malicious motives, based on nothing but hearsay.

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Jolie2, (9/8/2009 10:15:20 PM)

As predicted, the ignoramuses that post on the Ledger couldn't be bothered to get a clue from the wisdom in your recent post and are continuing to taunt and insult. I've submitted this post in response:

QUOTE

the "Jolie" at Sep 8 at 4:27 pm is not me. I guess the poster didn't take the time to proofread his/her post, and left out the "to" in the username.

Anyone reading comments posted on the Ledger must think that middle schoolers are writing some of the remarks, they're so juvenile. Why the Ledger chooses to publish them and omit others that address the facts and provide information is a puzzle to me.

I do want to thank the editor for publishing the remarks written by 612 and by me on this editorial, even if some people couldn't understand the messages or maybe even bother to read them.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/8/2009 11:29:30 PM)

Well, you had to clarify the "Jolie" post, but nothing else was worth responding to.

They proved our point better than we could. Is that really the best they can do? It is embarrassing for our community that these voices make more than their share of noise.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/8/2009 11:37:53 PM)

Still, I'm kinda jealous...Jolie still elicits the most vitriolic responses. Marcia, Marcia, Marcia! :)

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612, Broken Arrow (9/8/2009 11:49:24 PM)

All right, I responded anyway. A waste of time and certainly of words...

Did I mention general mean-spiritedness? Oh, guess I did.

But I suppose I left off "resorting to weak and childish personal attacks when confronted with undeniable facts, irrefutable arguments, and penetrating questions".

Anything else?

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Jolie2, (9/9/2009 9:28:44 AM)

Is Bob Lewis on vacation this week? Our comments were both published, again! I'm not used to this even-handedness on the Ledger's part.

It won't be long before those editorials slip into the archives.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/9/2009 10:00:21 AM)

I noticed that the articles about the school board voting on the bond issue was written by Judy Collis, instead of Bob Lewis. So maybe he is on vacation.

I hope the bond issue articles don't get many comments, so they'll drift away quickly. There are negative comments from the usual ignorant self-righteous grumblers. It's too bad these people can't see they've been manipulated.

They're making fools of themselves, which they're probably used to, but this time it could do some damage. I hope the majority of people who will be voting on the bond issue look at what's in it, not just at the grouching of people who

still can't get over being dead wrong on the Sisney thing.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/9/2009 10:49:12 AM)

On the "District Bond issues set for Dec. 8" article on the Ledger - there's that perplexing two years again:

QUOTE

It was a two-year battle for Tharp. Doug Mann, the board's attorney, had contended his firm's billing records fall under attorney/client privilege and are not subject to open records requirements.

UNQUOTE

And there are still people who don't question their reporting.

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thenight1, (9/9/2009 4:22:02 PM)

I thought I saw a picture of Bob Lewis with a comment about it being his last story. I can't find where I saw that though. I did find in the BOE minutes the following:

"Mrs. Whelpley recognized Mr. Bob Lewis of the Broken Arrow Ledger. She thanked him from "Our Board to you for all the service to the community of Broken Arrow and to our children and staff" and wished him luck with his retirement. "

That was from the August 24th meeting.

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Jolie2, (9/9/2009 5:46:51 PM)

Well, I can't say I'll miss Bob Lewis's biased reporting at the Ledger. I hope the new managing editor is reasonable and fair in her reporting and editing. It would be a breath of fresh air if both sides of the Board controversy could be reported and freely commented on, without censorship.

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Jolie2, (9/9/2009 6:09:46 PM)

to thenight1

I found the photo and caption that announced it was Bob Lewis's final reporting assignment. It was a photo of him standing in front of new Walmart on Kenosha (which opens today, btw). It appeared on page 9 of the September 2, 2009, print edition. That same edition, as well as today's (September 9) does not list Bob Lewis or anyone as managing editor in the roster of staff. Judy Collis is listed as news editor. The August 26 edition did, however, list Bob Lewis as managing editor. The Ledger website contact us page still lists Lewis as managing edito, but I'm guessing no one has had time/bothered to change it yet. My guess is that Mr. Lewis is retiring from both reporting and editing on the Ledger. (sigh of relief from me)

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Jolie2, (9/9/2009 6:11:53 PM)

correction to "edito" to "editor" in last post.

(I will take time to carefully proofread.

I will take time to carefully proofread.)

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Jolie2, (9/9/2009 6:20:18 PM)

Bob Lewis said his professional goodbyes in a viewpoint piece from the editor titled "Saying goodbye nowhere as easy as it may sound" published on page 5 of the August 26, 2009, edition of the Ledger.

If any of you want me to type it in full, just ask, but here are the first four paragraphs excerpted from it:

QUOTE

This is a bittersweet moment for me.

After 46 years in the communications business, I have decided the time has come to stow my trusty camera, put away my blue pencil and try my hand at a totally new endeavor--retirement.

To all of you who have taken time over the years to tell me you've enjoyed and appreciated what we have written, I offer sincere thanks. It is always nice to hear people like what you do.

To all of you who have taken time to lambast me for what we have written or for what you felt we failed to write, I offer sincere thanks. If you didn't care, you wouldn't have said anything. And if there is anything this world needs it is more people who care.

(continued)

END QUOTE

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612, Broken Arrow (9/9/2009 7:21:04 PM)

We'll see if there is a change in the censorship policy. Thanks for the info about the article.

I wonder why Interested Citizen offers his point of view and claims of inside knowledge on the Ledger but never offers any real information. Anyone can claim to be an insider and to have seen documents. What good does it do anyone to tell people to believe something bad about someone without proof? All Jolie and 612 have said all along is things aren't necessarily the way they have been presented in the press and by commenters. Why would he have a problem with that?

If what he is saying is true, why not come over here and enlighten Jolie and 612? I would be interested in knowing which people we shouldn't trust, and what they have done. Documents would be even better - I can put them on the website to enlighten everyone.

Without any more specific information, I can't give his opinion much weight. I think some posters are making, as he called it "wild speculation", but in other cases, I think it's calculated misdirection.

Statements like the one about Dr. Gerber blaming Dr. Sisney even though Dr. Gerber caused the problems don't seem to take into account the wacky antics of Dr. Sisney. No amount of troublemaking by Dr. Gerber should have been able to force Dr. Sisney to behave in such an unprofessional manner himself. "He made me do it" excuse just doesn't fly for a superintendent. The apparent one-sidedness of this statement makes it sound like Interested Citizen either is truly not as objective as he tries to come across, or is trying to steer opinion. Hey, just realized - someone else mentioned the off-limits topic - Sisney! Maybe I'll write back and explain that it's not about Sisney any more.

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Jolie2, (9/10/2009 11:57:44 AM)

612, the Ledger published one sentence of the comment you submitted:

QUOTE

I do think some of the comments are wild speculation. Others though, I believe, are calculated misdirection.

END QUOTE

I guess that's better than not publishing any of your post.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/10/2009 12:47:43 PM)

That's the only part I posted on the Ledger. I should have copied it here.

I don't really want to engage Interested Citizen on the Ledger, where we can't be sure that our responses will be posted. But I wanted to at least let Ledger readers consider the possible manipulative nature of his posts.

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Jolie2, (9/10/2009 10:48:57 PM)

Hasn't Chris Tarp already received the billing details he requested? I thought he was expecting at least some of the information a week ago. Wouldn't he have had this information posted on the BAParentsfortruth website, along with the other FOI material the group has requested?

Or will they hold onto the billing details and allude to what they say, thereby controlling the message in the media on this issue? If they do that, I hope the board will find a way to post it somewhere else for all to scrutinize, now that they've been released to do so by recent legal advice.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/11/2009 6:46:05 AM)

Good questions, and very good observation about controlling the message.

It's not clear how much detail is included in what the district has released. I would agree that it's in their best interest to make the information public; otherwise, it's open to speculation by people who are less than objective.

The details released are only those that would not "compromise attorney/client privilege and any pending legal actions against the school district". So any details involving Dr. Sisney's lawsuits, Mr. Lare's actions, and any other legal actions from any other source would not be included. According to Dr. Gerber, there is plenty of other work being done by RFR that is not directly related to lawsuits against the district.

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Jolie2, (9/13/2009 2:45:22 PM)

I'm going ahead and submitting this post to the Ledger today:

QUOTE

to get informed:

Chris Tharp has or will receive copies of some of the details of the legal billing from the district. Won't he be posting this on the baparentsfortruth website (formerly known as baparentsvsbaboe), like so many other documents obtained by the group, which Mr. Tharp belongs to, through FOI requests? If not, why not? Is it because there really is nothing incriminating in them and it will be easier to convince others of improprieties and wasteful spending if they don't have the actual documents to review for themselves?

END QUOTE

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612, Broken Arrow (9/14/2009 10:07:53 AM)

Hm, the article is still there on the Most Commented tab, but your comment isn't. I would have expected to see it by now, if the screener deemed it fit for us to read.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 10:51:20 AM)

I was thinking about how Ms. Updike claimed to have "no idea" why the board would suspend Dr. Sisney. This is an utterly ridiculous statement.

We're supposed to believe the board suddenly and without any previous documentation or discussion decided to get rid of him? And they didn't document any problems in his personnel file, knowing that it's required as part of termination procedure?

Now they have listed his personnel file as an exhibit in his defamation case. We're supposed to believe that they would use it as an exhibit if it showed that they illegally terminated him, abruptly and for no apparent reason, just as he has claimed? How gullible do you have to be to believe that?

Ms. Updike has made some seriously oddball statements. It makes me wonder about her judgment and state of mind.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 11:03:45 AM)

Someone tried to smear Dr. Sisney by saying that when he asked for copies of all of the Air Assurance documents provided to anyone outside the school district, a "school employee" was afraid he would destroy the documents, so she gave him only copies. Of course, he only asked for copies, and it's normal procedure to make copies and keep the originals locked up, so this was a ridiculous accusation.

I believe the school employee was Ann Wade, the CFO, though I can't verify it in the Ledger story because it was in the timeframe around Sisney's firing, which is now gone from the archives.

Ann Wade came from Bartlesville in July of 2008, after Trish Williams went to TPS.

Is this timing coincidence? I wonder what the circumstances were around Ms. Williams' departure. If Sisney's claims of a conspiracy were true, there is no way she could have escaped blame. Yet - she disappears, he never implicates her, and Ann Wade shows up from Bartlesville.

Was it Ann Wade who made the statement about fearing that Dr. Sisney would destroy the documents?

Hmm.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 12:10:37 PM)

I was looking for a TW article about the school employee giving Dr. Gerber copies, and ran across this post from a level-headed reader. Wish more people had listened. This person is clearly not "biased" like Jolie and 612, yet has the same message:

Sportsfanatic, Tulsa (10/9/2008 10:08:21 AM)

I, along with 95% of the other people reading this article, do not know enough about what has happened to be able to comment fairly. From what I have read, this does seem a little fishy.

Alot of the comments posted are relating to the school board not providing details on his suspension. I served on a local school board for several years, and there were several times we had to make a decision with facts that we were not able to share with the public. I would listen to people make comments on our decision, but since they did not know all the facts, they assumed we had made a bad decision. Because of legal reasons, we were not allowed to share "personnel" issues with the public. Had the public known the reasons, they would have fully agreed with our decisions.

But, the last thing you want is a school board member going around discussing personnel issues with the public. I am not taking the school board's side in this matter, I am only stating that they are only doing what they are instructed to do by their attorney's by not discussing the details of this matter in public.

In the end, the truth will come out. If after you know the full story and you still disagree with the board members, it is the responsibility of the voters to correct this matter in the next election.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 12:11:36 PM)

And this one:

(These are on the "BA school board action puzzles many patrons" from 19/19/2008)

Crouching Tiger, (10/9/2008 11:55:49 AM)

Can someone explain the titls of this article? Does the title even have anything to do with the content of the article? It sounds to me like the Tulsa World might be a little biased towards Sisney.

For those of you who are jumping to conclusions you might want to think about things a little before you comment. If you are on trial for anything do you run to the media and answer every little question they throw at you? Or do you do what your lawyers say and reserve comment for the actual trial? Seems to me that they are doing exactly what they should do. Sisney will have his day to try and prove his case. The problem is that he doesn't have one. So...let's all just sit back and enjoy the fireworks. The Sisney supporters are going to have enough egg on their faces to make an omelet big enough for the whole city to feast on.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 12:18:27 PM)

...and one more. Some of these people seem pretty perceptive. They speak from experience, and advise waiting to learn more before passing judgment. How some people can fail to see the common sense in their posts is beyond me.

Sooner Lawyer, (10/9/2008 3:38:42 PM)

I'm glad that Crouching Tiger and Sportsfanatic get it. As a lawyer I would never advise any employer, not just a school board, to discuss personnel issues. That just opens up the employer, or in this case the BA school district, to a lawsuit. I think there is a lot more to the story here and all we are hearing is the version Dr. Sisney's lawyer is putting out.

And, who names three unnamed co-conspirators and then waits until he can get the most publicity possible to name those co-conspirators? Whether intended or not, it seemed to me that Sisney and his lawyer were trying to intimidate the board members into not discussing his employment. That is certainly is not how I practice law. I'm guessing a large part of the Tulsa legal community would agree with me that it is not the best way to practice.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 12:20:43 PM)

Typo...I meant 10/10/2008, not 19/19/2008.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 2:54:59 PM)

Yikes, another typo. Or maybe it's a "thinko".

612, Broken Arrow (9/17/2009 11:03:45 AM)

Someone tried to smear Dr. Sisney...

I meant Dr. Gerber of course.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/18/2009 9:51:36 AM)

Why is Dr. Sisney's 10/01/2008 letter to Mr. Rampey not included in the lawsuit? Has this letter been published anywhere? As reported in the Tulsa Beacon's 10/9/2008 article:

QUOTE

On Oct. 1, Sisney sent a letter to Mann claiming that there may have been some violations of the state competitive bidding laws in the hiring of Air Assurance by the Broken Arrow Board of Education. It asks the law firm to stop representing the school district.

The letter claims:

- The board did not support an investigation of a lack of competitive bidding.
- When Sisney started to investigate on his own, some board members pressed to hire the law firm of Rosenstein, Fist & Ringold and three board members (defendants) boycotted a board meeting. They then held extended closed meetings to discuss Sisney's employment.
- A board member spoke with an area superintendent (Dr. Kyle Wood of Bixby) about applying for the job at Broken Arrow when there was no vacancy.
- A board member was quoted saying that Mann was hired "to help get rid of Dr. Sisney."
- Updike asked Mann about his role in advising only three members of the board and he invoked lawyer-client privilege.

The letter states, "You and three board members engineered the entire series of events. These activities obviously took considerable planning, considerable communication and considerable coordination... You made no effort to communicate with or inform me, as superintendent, the board president, or board member Mrs. Updike of any aspect of the planning, intentions or coordinating of meetings that only three board members participated in with your legal guidance."

Sisney claims to have copies of e-mails that show Mann was involved in meetings that may have violated the state open meeting laws.

"...it appears that you have become too entangled in collateral matters to properly represent the entire board of the Broken Arrow Public School System," the letter to Mann states. "Frankly, I fail to see why a respected firm like Rosenstein, Fist & Ringold would be involved, given the lack of trust and divisiveness surrounding these issues – and your role in them."

UNQUOTE

Where did the article get this information? It's not in the lawsuit. This story tells one point of view – Sisney's. Where did all this information come from? Was it fed to them by Sisney?

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612, Broken Arrow (9/18/2009 9:52:51 AM)

The Beacon story continues with Dr. Sisney's version of events, including this paragraph regarding the 77,000 invoice whose work order was entered after the invoice was paid (common practice before the new procedure was in place, done for tracking purposes):

QUOTE

Alarmed by this revelation, Sisney informed the school board. Sisney discovered that the competitive bidding process had not been used with Air Assurance for some time. The correct process is for issuance of a work order, money encumbered, approval, the work completed and then an invoice. Instead, the suit alleges that Air Assurance did the work, sent an invoice and then a work order was created. Sisney decided to make changes to correct the problem.

UNQUOTE

The article does not say that "Sisney says that the correct process is..." That was not the correct process at the time. This is propaganda directly from Sisney. Who got this questionable piece of journalism published in the Beacon? Is

there a connection with one of the state legislators listed in his witness list (Ritze or Brown)?

I will put a link to this article on the brokenarrowforum website.

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Jolie2, (9/20/2009 12:38:24 PM)

612, your latest posts are very interesting. I do not have answers for you at this time. I'm currently preoccupied with serious events happening related to the Madeleine McCann case. The McCanns and those opposed to having the facts of the investigation, including forensic details and investigators' findings, from becoming widespread knowledge in the UK are taking legal action against citizens' free speech rights. This is alarming and unacceptable. Please, I would like your help and advice, 612. Read my comment posted today at the bottom of the article here at the TW "Police halt probe of absent girl" dated 7/22/2008 and respond there. I would be most appreciative of your help.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/21/2009 2:35:48 PM)

I would be interested in knowing what the HVAC costs for the district are now. I believe there are 4 HVAC maintenance staff, and there is an open position on the website for a maintenance director. There are at least two outside vendors doing work as well: Airco and Custom Heating and Air.

The owner of Custom Heating and Air, Bob Townsend, is listed as a witness for Dr. Sisney in his defamation case. He was one of the people picketing the board meeting when Sisney was fired.

The commercial services manager of Airco has also been involved with the group of people who have been actively advocating Sisney's story from the beginning.

I wonder if the two HVAC companies are concerned about their image. When the OSBI investigation and Dr. Sisney's lawsuits are completed, how will it look if no corruption is found, Air Assurance is exonerated, and Dr. Sisney is found to have been lying and manipulating? Will they appear to have been perpetuating the rumors and misinformation - fanning the flames to further their own interests? Whether they really believe Sisney's story or not, they may be jeopardizing their reputation by associating with this group.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/22/2009 3:01:02 PM)

This is from 9/15, TW article "Sperry board votes to settle ex-principal's suit"

QUOTE

Following the recommendation of Superintendent Jim Sisney at a special meeting, the panel unanimously approved the agreement for Stephanie Holcomb.

UNQUOTE

I notice they are calling him Superintendent instead of Acting Superintendent. Maybe this means he has been hired permanently.

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Jolie2, (9/23/2009 10:49:04 AM)

612, why don't you post a comment directed at the TW reporter for the Sperry story of 9/15 and ask what Sisney's employment status is? Even if the reporter doesn't respond, if other Sperry residents are still reading the comments, they will.

I noticed that Sisney's signature line on the August 10 board agenda was simply stated as Superintendent.

I also noticed that of the 10 comments posted after the article, other than yours, none were particularly favorable to Dr. Sisney. :)

Glad you were able to get a reference in to your forum. Sperry folks will likely make a nice meal of the information you've made easily accessible to them. I hope word gets out there about the forum and the documents available on it.

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Jolie2, (9/23/2009 10:54:36 AM)

I should have explained my comments about the August 10 board agenda more fully. Sisney was still under a short-term contract at the time of the August 10 board meeting. The August 28 special board meeting discussed offering him a new contract.

The Tulsa World reporter certainly has the ability to pick up the phone and call someone on the Sperry school board

to confirm his employment status. You might also send an email to the reporter at the TW through their 'contact us' feature and state that an official press announcement was never made after the August 28 special board meeting and enquiring minds want to know. The TW may decide to do a short new piece with the information you're asking for; in which case, jump in quickly on the comments to it with your forum location.

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Jolie2, (9/23/2009 10:55:53 AM)

I left out the information that the Sperry district's website still shows Sisney as "Interim Superintendent" which, of course, could just be an oversight, procrastination kind of thing.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/23/2009 2:42:23 PM)

Good idea emailing the reporter.

I emailed him and he responded immediately, saying that the board had extended Sisney's contract a short while back, but they have not relayed the terms to the TW. They will report on them when they are available.

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612, Broken Arrow (9/23/2009 4:30:01 PM)

Jolie, I put the "33 questions" on the brokenarrowforum website...let me know what else I can include, or if I've got anything wrong in there. Thanks for your input!

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Jolie2, (9/23/2009 9:39:43 PM)

I read the list of 33 Questions and think it is a great list of points. When you have time, you might want to go through the list and identify some of the people more precisely the first time they are mentioned, such as Richardson, by stating Gary Richardson, Sisney's attorney. I would also put a heading above the one you already have stating this is related to the Broken Arrow Public Schools controversy, as there seems to be quite a number of board controversies, in particular Sperry School District's. Since Sperry folks may be some of the ones checking in on your website and perhaps copying some of your information, it can help keep them straight on which controversy they're reading about at the moment (particularly since they now share the same history of having Sisney as the district superintendent).

Item 6 - Is there a reason you don't want the current CFO Ann Wade named at the end, after you mention that she came in from B'ville?

Item 9 - Elaborating that the four of the ten taxpayer signatures were withdrawn by the persons' named (but in better wording :)) instead of asking what happened to them would be clearer.

Item 10 - Giving more information describing the Sequoyah invoice will make it easier to understand exactly what it is for those people who have not been closely following the minutiae of the controversy.

Proofread item 16, 3rd sentence. Either you've left something extra in that needs to be deleted or you've left something out.

Item 21, perhaps you should you reword it to state changes in the audit engagement letter.

Item 28 - That statement about Updike's \$4 million debt really stands out. Ouch! But it's a matter of public record. And it's pertinent as a possible motive for her support for Sisney and opposition to her fellow board members.

Item 29 - Suggest putting month and year of e-mail Sisney sent and perhaps a quick summation of message.

Item 30 - Perhaps you could be more specific in describing the fire (at a storage unit).

**

Great job, 612. You should find a TW reporter who has reported on the board controversy previously (even better if the same reporter covered BA's and Sperry's problems) and give them your website address so they can have access to the wealth of information you've put together. It would be invaluable to a journalist looking to get at the heart of the story, without having to reinvent the wheel.