

4 Corners News & Views

for Ohio's Cradle of Education

Common Sense Where Main Meets Wooster
Bowling Green, Ohio Vol. 1, No. 2 June 15, 2005

An Open Letter from the Publisher

Bowling Green can reclaim neighborhoods from students

After 50 years of college students invading Bowling Green neighborhoods and disturbing the peace, a unique opportunity to reclaim them for families has emerged.

It is clear now that BGSU students would rather live with their own kind in amenity-filled apartment complexes than dwell in overcrowded, under-equipped single family homes in residential neighborhoods unless they are all-student residential neighborhoods.

The massive apartment complex under construction to the east of Interstate 75 along with the one open south of town next to the slaughterhouse – yes, students would rather live near a slaughterhouse than in the middle of a residential neighborhood closer to the campus – are demonstrating college student tastes circa 2005.

The mega development of apartments proposed east of the Meijer store – east of I-75 – also appears aimed at students.

These developments have Bowling Green's traditional landlords all shook up. There is an epidemic of houses for rent signs in the neighborhoods near the downtown and the campus.

Some of the landlords are so concerned about filling their houses with students that they are backing an initiative petition to put to a citywide vote the zoning change approved by City Council – and not vetoed by the mayor – to permit the massive apartment and retail development next to Meijer.

If enough signatures are collected and legal challenges are overcome, the community will be asked to vote Nov. 8 on repealing the zoning and blocking the project.

I fear that the citizens' opportunity to vote will be thwarted by lawsuits and various maneuvers by the City Administration that does not appreciate mere citizens questioning its judgment.

All this is a new battle in the five-way war between landlords, the City Administration, BGSU, students, and the citizens. The opening battle pitted the city against one landlord who allegedly was packing too many students into his all-student single family home neighborhood on the east side. Other landlords, owning single family rentals closer to campus, used the City Administration as a surrogate in an attempt to reclaim student renters who preferred to live in houses in the student-only neighborhood. The city announced it would hire a new zoning inspector. That triggered a lawsuit from the targeted landlord. It is in the court's hands now.

What good can come from all of this?

Oh, just the reclamation of the neighborhoods near the campus and the downtown area that have been ravaged by student renters and the student lifestyle. That's all.

Now is the time for City Administration and the BGSU Administration to step in and put up the dough to purchase, remodel and resell these former student rentals to families with a legal covenant that under no circumstances will the properties again be student ghettoized.

Imagine the Bowling Green of yesteryear where families lived near the campus and did not have to worry about barfing, urinating, fornicating, cussing and late-night partying college students disturbing the peace and providing a bad role model for younger children. Not to mention the drop in their property value when the students moved in next door.

Imagine Ridge, Crim and South (I know it's closed but it should be a school not an art museum) elementary schools filled with students from their neighborhoods rather than bussed in from elsewhere. Bowling Green's public schools are losing 100 students a year and need a shot in the arm.

Imagine walking or bike riding through those neighborhoods without tripping on beer cans and other debris of the college student party lifestyle.

Imagine a City Administration or a BGSU Administration that gives a darn about the neighborhoods surrounding the downtown and the university.

I was just dreaming. It will never happen.

Best regards, John K. Hartman, publisher, *4 Corners News & Views*, John.Hartman@dacor.net

A follow-up as the Noe scandal cover-up continues

On June 8, the *Sentinel-Tribune* editor David C. Miller ran a lame column defending his cover-up of the Noe scandal and comparing it to the Michael Jackson trial. Miller's column ran all the way across the top of page 4 while local citizen Russ Frye's letter complaining about the cover-up was downplayed below Miller's column. The next day Miller did some PR for himself – I wonder why – by running a lame article about some library award he got. He put it on page 2. Better play than the Noe scandal ever gets. The original article is reprinted below.

Why does the *Sentinel-Tribune* cover up the GOP scandal?

(Reprinted from Vol. 1, No. 1 of *4 Corners News & Views*, June 1, 2005)

One reason that Democrats are a poor second to the Republicans in Wood County is the biased news coverage policies of the Bowling Green *Sentinel-Tribune*, which clearly favor

the Republicans. It is Wood County's equivalent to the Fox News Channel.

This bias has never been more apparent than through the *Sentinel-Tribune's* coverage - or lack of coverage -- of the Tom Noe Coin Scandal that reportedly will result in the loss of \$10 to \$12 million of the Ohio taxpayers' money.

By my unofficial count since the Toledo *Blade* first reported this scandal on April 3, 2005, the *Sentinel-Tribune* has put this story on page one only once. And that was to report a defense of the investment of state tax money in rare coins. (Ohio is the only state in the union to make this high risk investment of government funds.) The *Sentinel-Tribune's* other coverage of this scandal has been from the Associated Press and has been "buried" on inside pages where readers are less likely to notice. The *Sentinel-Tribune* apparently has yet to assign a reporter to this scandal.

Even a beginning journalism student knows that this scandal should be big news in Bowling Green and Wood County. It involves a PROMINENT citizen with LOCAL ties. Its MAGNITUDE is the entire state of Ohio and its IMPACT is on every citizen who ultimately will have to pay more taxes to make up the loss. And it just doesn't affect Tom Noe, who grew up in Bowling Green, attended BGSU, has served on the BGSU trustees.

It affects Ohio Auditor Betty Montgomery of Perrysburg, who sat on her hands for seven weeks before deciding to sort of investigate. This would be the same Betty Montgomery, who as attorney general, failed in her responsibility as an ex officio member of the State Teachers Retirement System a few years ago while the STRS lost \$1 billion on faulty investments (Enron, etc.).

It affects State Sen. Randy Gardner and State Rep. Bob Latta, who as legislators should be watchdogs of the state treasury.

Yet this scandal that puts the Republican grip on state government at risk remains virtually uncovered by the *Sentinel-Tribune*. In other words, the newspaper is covering up for the Republicans.

Why?

One reason may be that David C. Miller, editor of the *Sentinel-Tribune*, has been a Republican appointee to the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission for more than a decade, according to news reports of December 2004. Miller was reported making nearly \$50,000 a year as in a job given to him by Republican Gov. Bob Taft. In other words, the supposedly non-partisan editor of the *Sentinel-Tribune* owes the governor for his high-paying second job. No wonder Miller appears covers up for the Republicans with news coverage, or lack thereof.

It makes one wonder why Democrats, Independents and open-minded Republicans should support the *Sentinel-Tribune* and its advertisers. The *Sentinel-Tribune* is making Wood

County more and more a one-party county every day.

Do something about it. Contact Thomas M. Haswell, R. Richard Morris, and Kathryn A. Haswell, the officers of the *Sentinel-Tribune*, at Box 88, Bowling Green, OH 43402 and 419-352-4611, and tell them that their readers and patrons deserve fair and objective coverage of the news.

Please let me know what you think.

Best regards, John K. Hartman, publisher, *4 Corners BG*, John.Hartman@dacor.net

What is this new publication you are reading?

4 Corners News & Views of Bowling Green was founded June 1, 2005 by John K. Hartman, its publisher. Its purpose is to provide additional news and points-of-view to citizens of Bowling Green in the belief that thorough awareness of and discussion of issues makes for a better community. It will be available free at various drop-off points in Bowling Green. Patrons may support *4 Corners BG* for \$10 per issue. Ads may be purchased for \$20 per issue. Comments and submissions are welcome.

Contact information: John.Hartman@dacor.net ; 419-352-8180; 1400 Wren Road, BG, OH 43402

4 Corners BG, Copyright 2005, John K. Hartman, All Rights Reserved.