

GUEST WRITER

OPINION

State legislators’ latest power grab is a direct attack on transparency

Ever get the feeling politicians would prefer you did not know what they are up to? Well, House Bill 368 basically is that.

The bill, introduced Feb. 5, would allow government agencies to ditch independent newspapers and publish public notices exclusively on their own websites.

Sponsored by Rep. Jennifer Decker (R-Shelbyville) and backed by a lineup of lawmakers who clearly think transparency is optional, HB 368 threatens one of democracy’s most fundamental principles: an informed public.

Digital for some, silence for others

The biggest problem? Not everyone has reliable internet access—or any access at all. A sizable chunk of Kentuckians, particularly older residents, lower-income families and those in rural areas like Martin County, do not have broadband or even a computer. And yet, HB 368 assumes that shifting all public notices online will not leave anyone behind.

Meanwhile, newspapers remain the most reliable way to reach everyone. They show up at homes and businesses, no Wi-Fi or tech skills required. No digging through government websites, no surprise broken links—just information, printed and accessible.

Gov-controlled info? What could go wrong?

There is also the pesky issue of accountability. Right now, public notices in newspapers exist in a fixed, verifiable format—unalterable, permanent and independently documented. When a government website is the sole publisher, what is stopping officials from tweaking, delaying or quietly removing notices that might be inconvenient?

Newspapers provide legal affidavits confirming publication. Government websites? Not so much. If a notice disappears, who is holding anyone accountable?

Cost excuse debunked

Supporters of HB 368 claim it will save local governments money. But a study by the Legislative Research Commission found that the cost of publishing public notices in newspapers is minimal. Transparency, it turns out, is not that pricy. And even if it were—shouldn’t keeping the public informed be worth it?

Government website that no one reads

Newspapers have built-in readerships. People pick them up for news, sports, obituaries, local events—and public notices are right there in plain sight. A government website on the other hand is the digital equivalent of a bulletin board in a locked office: invisible to most, accessible to a few and ignored by almost everyone.

Besides, how many people have the time (or desire) to scour multiple government websites every day on the off chance something relevant to them has been posted? We check some of these sites. They are clunky, hard to navigate and often a nightmare to use. Many do not function properly on mobile devices.

Call your reps

Let us be clear: HB 368 is a bad idea. It is a blatant move to make government actions less visible and less accessible. And it is on you to stop it.

Call your state representative at the toll-free message line 1-800-372-7181 and tell them to vote NO on HB 368. Because transparency is not optional and government accountability should not depend on whether you have Wi-Fi.

Public notices belong where everyone can see them—not hidden away on a government-run website.

Also email Senator Phillip Wheeler at Phillip.Wheeler@kylegislature.gov. Email Representative Bobby McCool at Bobby.McCool@kylegislature.gov.

HOW TO REACH US

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UNCOMMON SENSE

BY DR. GLENN MOLLETTE

Valentine’s Day: Extend love

Valentine’s Day is almost here and how many Valentines will you have? In elementary school we traded Valentine’s cards. We actually had a big box and we stuffed it full of Valentine’s cards to our classmates. If we received 20 or 30 Valentine’s cards then we felt good because we had a lot of Valentines.

You may or may not receive many cards this year if any at all. Nice cards are expensive, as are flowers, candy and dinners. Whether you receive a Valentine’s card or not doesn’t determine the number of people in your life you care about or who care about you.

Some people may determine their self-worth by how many friends they have on social media. Are they really your friends? Possibly you go to church with a lot of people you care about and who care about you. Maybe you still have several family members you are close to and who love you and you love them.

We have so much hate in the world. Political parties are filled with hate. Many Democrats hate President Donald Trump. Many Republicans hate former President Joe Biden. Some Republicans and Democrats hate each other. Some people hate Elon Musk. Some people hate or love the Philadelphia Eagles.

People hate former husbands, wives, girlfriends and boyfriends.

Hate is obvious in the world. In many of our major cities there is a murder every day. Too often more than one.

What does hate accomplish? It’s a very negative emotion that has negative results. Someone often gets hurt where hate is involved. Hate hurts the hater. It does not create a spring of well-being and joy. Hate cuts deep within us and our bodies don’t react positively to this long-term dark emotion.

There is a line of demarcation. The Jewish people who had loved

ones raped and murdered by Hamas don’t feel loving toward Hamas. The citizens of Ukraine don’t feel loving toward Putin and Russia. We surely understand their feelings.

Yet, somehow and some way in this life we have to find a way to rise above and soar higher. It’s not always easy to love, but love covers a multitude of sins.

I don’t know how Jesus could love me. All my sins put him on the cross. Yet, over and over again, the Bible tells me that God loves me and for what reason? I have done nothing to deserve his love.

Try to show and tell more people you love them. Call some people this week and tell them you love them. Tell some Democrats and Republicans you love them. Tell some sinners you love them. You never know. Some of the love you give just might come back to you.



Dr. Glenn Mollette

When Mary anointed Jesus in the Bible, the entire house could smell the perfume. Jesus had the perfume all over him, but Mary also had the perfume all over her. Love anoints others but often we end up anointed as much as the ones to whom we extended love.

Dr. Glenn Mollette is a graduate of numerous schools, including Georgetown College, Southern and Lexington Seminaries in Kentucky. He is the author of 13 books and his column is published in all 50 states. Visit Dr. Glenn Mollette online at glennmollette.com. Find his books on amazon.com and stream his music on all streaming platforms.

Kyle’s Corner

A Valentine’s Day Love Story



BY VICKI LOVERN

(Editor’s Note: This week’s Kyle’s Korner is a guest column written by his wife Vicki Lovern.)



Kyle and Vicki Lovern during the first weeks of their marriage.

I met Kyle when my daughter, Tina, was a senior in high school, or I should say, we met again. We had known each other since childhood and had grown up in the same small town of Nolan with very similar values and beliefs. Kyle had led as sheltered a life as I had. My mom, who really was a wonderful mom, nevertheless sheltered me so completely that when I was 16, I bit a date’s tongue when he tried to French kiss me. In my defense, I did warn him. But, safe to say, that little incident did nothing to enhance my popularity.

Kyle and I have joked that had we dated as teenagers there would have been no need to worry about tongue biting because there would have been no tongue to be bitten. He didn’t know any more about French kissing than I did.

We both grew up riding our bikes or walking everywhere we went. We both knew what it was like to go to sleep gazing up at the stars under an open screened window in the summer to get some cool night air. We both had phone “party lines” and loved drinking cold milk right from the glass bottles delivered by the milkman directly to our front doors. Neither of us had wealthy families and

neither of us cared. However, we were both rich in family and love and these things we cared very much about.

We both watched Hee-Haw on Saturday nights and Gunsmoke on Mondays. And he is the only person to this day who remembers the cartoon “Precious Pup.” We were both amazed that we each remembered this long-forgotten classic—well, classic to us at any rate. And we eventually had our own “precious pup” in Petey.

Growing up, Kyle and I both had active imaginations and loved reading and writing at an early age. We spent an inordinate amount of time searching the night sky for constellations, shooting stars and the occasional UFO. We both bought a hot dog, a bag of Snyder’s and a pop for a quarter at Fannin’s Restaurant and played the pinball machine and the jukebox at Curry’s.

Granted, we grew up in a more innocent time, but even at that, we were both

late bloomers. We valued our family and friends, believed in working hard for what you wanted, and knew beyond a doubt that God is real and Jesus died on the cross and rose again to save our souls.

We also both believe in destiny and remember an incident when I was 16 and he was 13—one that we never forgot. It really was such an ordinary moment (and moment was truly all it was) that neither of us had any reason whatsoever to recall it—especially after some 20 years. But recall it we did—and quite vividly at that. It happened at Nolan, of course.

He was riding his bike south towards Fannin’s restaurant. Donna Reed and I were walking north towards the school when we met directly on the

railroad bridge tracks. He stopped briefly, taking one foot off the pedal, resting it on the tracks and smiled at me. It was a shy smile but filled with so much genuine sweetness and innocence and just plain goodness. He smiled with his whole essence and the clearest, baby blue eyes and deepest dimples that I had ever seen. I smiled back at him and said, “Hello.”

The entire exchange could not have lasted more than a moment, which makes it all the more remarkable that that moment would be forever etched in both of our minds and eventually become a primary connecting point in building our relationship all these years later. We have, of course, discussed why that seemingly insignificant encounter made such an impression on us both and have mutually agreed that the only explanation is that it was a sign from above. In that brief moment, we saw our future soulmate in each other’s eyes. And even though I knew he was too young for me then, I knew also that he wouldn’t always be.

Fast forward 23 years

See **CORNER**, page 9A

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