



# THE COMMUNITY PAGE

## We're Making Progress!

### Post Register Finally Admits There Was No Scout "Cover-Up"

*Post Register* Managing Editor Dean Miller has finally admitted that the Boy Scouts did not try to cover-up anything in regard to pedophile Brad Stowell's molestation of several Boy Scouts eight years ago. Sunday, July 3, Channel 8 featured a debate between Melaleuca's Frank VanderSloot and *Post Register's* Dean Miller. Carole Honas, Channel 8 news anchor and host of the Sunday night show Tough Talk, pitched tough questions at both VanderSloot and Miller in a double feature segment of Tough Talk that was recorded June 30. The first segment aired July 2, 3, and 9, and the second segment aired July 10 and again on July 16.

During the show that aired July 10 and July 16th the conversation went as follows:

**Referring to Scout administration, VanderSloot asked Miller:** "Are you willing to say that these people aren't bad people? Are you willing to say that?"

**Miller:** "I think they're human. You just said you might have made the same mistake."

**VanderSloot:** "Are you willing to say that there was no cover-up going on? Are you willing to say that?"

**Miller:** "I am willing to say that there was no cover-up."

**VanderSloot:** "Alright. I think we've accomplished a lot today then."

**Miller:** "People make human, you know, flawed decisions. We're all flawed."

**VanderSloot:** "I agree."

Both debates can be viewed for free on Channel 8's website at [www.localnews8.com/toughtalk](http://www.localnews8.com/toughtalk).

Finally, five months after the *Post Register* ran the series called Scouts' Honor, the *Post Register* has admitted that no one tried to cover-up anything, and that any mistakes that were made were honest mistakes made by honest people.

The *Post Register* could have made all this clear from the beginning. Our question is, why did it take five months before this truth came out from the *Post Register*? Why did it take a TV debate before Managing Editor Dean Miller finally admitted this? And, finally, if there was no cover-up, why did the *Post Register* weave the story in such a way to cause a majority of the public to believe the *Post Register* was implying there was?

Clearly the *Post Register* reads the letters to the editor on its own opinion page. Certainly the *Post Register* has known that many of its readers believe in the *Post Register's* original cover-up theory and conspiracy theory that were forwarded by the Scouts' Honor series. One can only speculate as to why the *Post Register* has not chosen to correct the many letters to the editor that have commented on the "cover-up" that the *Post Register* led its readers to believe existed.

**Our argument with the *Post Register* is not that they reported a story about pedophiles at Scout Camp. That story deserved to be told. But it should have been told without the misstatements, innuendos, and false conclusions that have become the trademark of the *Post Register*.**



### Why did the Post Register target the Scouts?

Ever since June 2000, when the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Boy Scouts of America regarding their policy of not allowing homosexuals as Scout leaders, the Scouts have been a target of the liberal media.

**Out of over 6,000 child molestations reported and filed in the state of Idaho since 1983, the Post Register chose to feature the four cases in the last 22 years involving the Boy Scouts.**

Four cases are four too many! What these pedophiles did to their innocent victims is inexcusable. But we think the more appropriate lesson would be:

Pedophiles are dangerous to our children. They are deceptive and conniving. They will target kids wherever they can find them. All daycare centers, all churches, all elementary schools, all scout organizations, and every parent needs to be watchful for pedophiles. All organizations should consider the "2 deep" system whenever and wherever kids are involved. Pedophiles usually operate individually and hardly ever in pairs. Always having two adults present will usually prevent a pedophile from striking.

### Make No Mistake!

Make no mistake about where the Community Page stands on pedophiles and child molesters. They need to be sought out, found out, discovered, revealed, prosecuted, and reported to the public!

Because of their propensity to offend again they should receive little leniency from the courts. They should therefore almost always receive stiff sentences and the story of their abuses should be held accurately and without reservation, except for protecting the names of the victims.

**Truth is truth. Even when the truth is ugly and implicates our loved ones, we must face the truth, understand it, deal with it, and act on it.** Sometimes acting on it means holding people accountable for their acts. And often, acting on truth, when its bad news, means taking steps to make sure that whatever happened does not happen again. Anyone involved in covering up the truth should be held accountable; especially if covering up the truth prevents accountability or subjects the public to danger.

In regard to pedophiles involved in Scouting, the public deserves to know the whole truth without being misled by any organization or newspaper. To the degree that the *Post Register* adhered to the above principle we applaud them.

We applaud the *Post Register* for publishing the story about pedophiles operating within the Scouting organization.

We applaud the *Post Register* for getting the case unsealed so that the public has access to the facts.

We applaud the *Post Register* for asking hard questions about the safety of our young men in the Scouting program.

The *Post Register*, however, has the responsibility to report these stories accurately and without false accusations, misleading headlines and outright untruths.

**The public deserves to know the truth about what the court records actually say regarding these cases. The *Post Register* does not have the right to weave its own reporters' inaccuracies, biases and theories into the case and report them as facts.**

In an effort to learn the truth, the Community Page hired attorneys from the firm of Thomsen Stephens to research the case and determine if the *Post Register's* story matched the facts. What the researchers found was amazing.

The research team discovered that what the *Post Register* said about the Bradley Stowell case and what the real facts of the case are varied significantly—to the point of causing us to believe that some of the *Post Register's* errors may have been intended to mislead the public. In the least, its reporters had to be aware that these discrepancies existed and they did not take steps to correct them.

We first suggested to the *Post Register* that they look into what our legal research team had found and determine if they would like to correct the inaccuracies themselves. The *Post Register* refused to meet with the research team. We are tempted to conclude that they had intentionally put biased reporters on their story in order to get the story they wanted. **We doubt that this serves the communities best interest.** We hope that the *Post Register* will change its tactics to be more fair and balanced.

### Needed: A New Newspaper?

For years, the *Post Register* has told the public it prints all of the letters received except for slanderous letters or letters whose writers cannot be identified or confirmed. The *Post Register* has recently admitted that that has never been its true policy and that the *Post Register* reserves the right to print or not to print, totally at its discretion. We do not argue that it is their prerogative to choose which letters it prints. However, we feel it is wrong for the *Post Register* to mislead its public to believe that the letters they read in the *Post Register* are all that were received.

**For as long as anyone can remember, the *Post Register* has attacked conservative organizations and conservative individuals through its news articles and its opinion pages.** Its procedure is to first lodge an attack through a front page story as it has recently done to the Boy Scouts of America, Trish and Halli, various legislators and other conservatives such as Larry Lyons (see *Post Register* on June 27, 2005. The *Post Register* would never deem it worthy of front page news if a liberal was late in making a mortgage payment or in paying a traffic ticket. Only conservatives get that treatment by the paper.)

Articles in the *Post Register* are often written in a manner that appears to attempt to inflame the public. And that is often the end result. After pointing out to its readers its intended target, the *Post Register* lies low and lets its designated writers-to-the-editor do the rest of the job. Armed with the information provided by the *Post Register*, readers attack on queue.

Presenting their conclusions as facts in their letters on the opinion page, these writers' conclusions now become the new "facts" in the minds of many *Post Register* readers. To make matters worse, the *Post Register* chooses which letters to print on its opinion page and often letters disagreeing with the *Post Register's* do not get printed.

We understand that there is limited space to print letters, but

many newspapers display all letters they receive on the paper's website free of charge to the public. **We challenge the *Post Register* to follow suit and post all of the non-slanderous letters on their website—free of charge to its readers.**

Then all readers and the public at large could read all submitted letters and determine for themselves whether the *Post Register* is fair in which letters it chooses to print. Writers would be no longer left wondering whether their letters were not printed because they were "not received" by the paper. And they could re-submit as soon as they noticed their letter was not on the web-page.

We realize that this would limit the paper's ability to influence public opinion by cherry-picking which letters to print. And we recognize that the paper has never stated that its policy is to strive to be fair and balanced, but such a policy would go a long way in gaining back public confidence in regard to the *Post Register's* intentions in how it reports the news.

**Many have suggested that we need a new newspaper in our community. We think that starting a newspaper should only be considered the solution of last resort. Although that solution may be a viable one, and maybe, in the end, the only remaining solution to getting fair and balanced news, we think that the *Post Register* is currently in the best position to give us news that is unbiased, honest and truthful. We know that it can do that and we hope that it will.**

The *Post Register* should correct its mistakes whenever it makes them. It should cease slamming and unfairly attacking those affiliated with conservative causes. It should leave its liberal agenda on the opinion page. And it should fairly print all letters to the editor as long as they are not slanderous.

**The Community Page remains solidly committed to the concept of fair and balanced reporting. We hope the *Post Register* will join us.**