

March 27, 2012

Hit Piece - The Mountaineer  
Dialog between Vicki Hyatt, Becky Johnson and Robert Inman.

Two articles were printed by an anonymous author in both the On-Line Mountaineer web site, and in the Mountaineer printed newspaper, regarding a candidate for the upcoming primary election. The two articles had two (2) different headlines and first appeared on March 14, 2012.

The following is a dialog between myself, Vicki Hyatt, the News Editor of the Mountaineer, Becky Johnson, the News Editor of the Smoky Mountain News, and Robert Inman, the Director of Elections in Haywood County.

For readability, I am resequencing the order of the e-mails. Normally, with an e-mail sequence, the latest e-mail appears at the top, and you have to read from the bottom up. Here, I will start with the earliest e-mail and continue to the end with the latest e-mail. Also, original highlights have been retained, and I may add an occasional [**Editors Note:** ...] for clarity or emphasis. Each e-mail begins on a new page.

Monroe A. Miller Jr.  
19 Big Spruce Lane  
Waynesville, NC 28786

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Hit Piece

Date: Wed, 14 Mar 2012 15:26:50 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, jkey@themountaineer.com

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>

So Vicki,

This looks like a democrat Hit Piece to me. Did you write this?

Did you get my link on Oaths? Why don't you have Caroline Klapper write a piece on that?

Monroe

Proudly serving Haywood County since 1885.

# Mountaineer

PUBLISHED MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY      WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2012      WWW.THEMOUNTAINEER.COM

## King continues campaigning because he can't get off ballot

A Republican county commissioner candidate who had second thoughts about seeking his party's nomination is proceeding with the campaign after learning there was no way to get off the ballot.


Denny King, who is one of three candidates whose name will appear on the ballot in the May 8 primary, told party members attending this weekend's Haywood County Republican convention that he intended to withdraw from the race.

Robert Inman, director of the Haywood County Board of Elections, said he received a single page document from King asking to close a campaign finance account, but noted that has nothing to do with the ballot.

"The time for withdrawing is, by statute, the close of the filing period," Inman said.

Even though the primary election date is slightly less than two months away, election offices must have ballots ready to mail out next week. That means the ballots have already gone through the various approval processes and are already at the printer.

"Denny called me to say he made a decision late Friday afternoon that he doesn't want to run," Inman said Monday. "The law does not allow for anything to be done at this point. He does have some options. He can not actively seek the post. He can request that nobody vote for him or he can continue to run or just not accept the nomination



King continues on 11A

Denny King

### King

continued from 1A

should he win."

Phone messages left on King's voice mail were not returned, but King responded to an email asking about the issue with this. "Please use the attached photo if needed during my run for commissioner. I am looking forward to this campaign."

King, who filed for office just before the filing deadline, became the third Republican candidate in a race where

two seats are open. Incumbent Commissioner Kevin Ensley and Waynesville resident Tracy Kevin Coward filed earlier, so King's entrance into the race meant a primary election would be needed. Those at the GOP weekend function said Coward didn't attend.

The winners of the Republican commissioner primary will face incumbent Commission Chairman Mark Swanger and Canton resident Mike Treadway.

----- Original Message -----  
Subject: Re: Hit Piece  
Date: Wed, 14 Mar 2012 18:23:55 -0400  
From: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>  
To: Monroe Miller

Glad to see you are reading the paper.

Sent from my iPhone

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Fwd: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Wed, 14 Mar 2012 18:43:20 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, jkey@themountaineer.com

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>

Vicki,

I did purchase a paper today, at the Mountaineer office. I paid \$.75, cut the article out, scanned it, and threw the rest of the paper away (no place to re-cycle in Waynesville), rather than paying \$.99 on-line to get the on-line article.

Did you realize that the titles for the articles are different?

The title in the paper said: "King continues campaigning because he can't get off the ballot".

The title in the on-line said: "King still a commissioner candidate after withdrawal not possible".

I personally think you, if it was you, did a better job with the title on the paper, since that was more of a slam, i.e Hit Piece.

If there was a difference in the title of the article from the paper and the on-line version, were there differences in the text? Since I thought it was more economical for me to pay the \$.75 rather than the \$.99 (a savings to me of \$.24), I was wondering if you wouldn't mind sending me over a copy of what was on the on-line version, so I could run it through my text comparator program.

So, what do you think about Caroline Klapper doing a piece on Oaths?

Monroe

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Fwd: Fwd: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Wed, 14 Mar 2012 19:00:28 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, jkey@themountaineer.com, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>

Becky,

How about you? Do you want to weigh in on the article about Oaths?

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Fwd: Fwd: Fwd: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Wed, 14 Mar 2012 20:20:37 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

CC: Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Vicki Hyatt  
<vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>,  
jkey@themountaineer.com, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>

So Becky,

I forgot to ask...

Which title did you like best with the Mountaineer article on Denny King?

"King continues campaigning because he can't get off the ballot".

"King still a commissioner candidate after withdrawal not possible".

Please let me know when you get a chance.

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Thu, 15 Mar 2012 13:33:35 -0400

From: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

To: Monroe Miller

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>

Monroe,

Interesting question.

"King continues campaigning because he can't get off the ballot".

VERSUS

"King still a commissioner candidate after withdrawal not possible".

As a reader, I would be more likely to read the article under the first headline and thus prefer that one. It sounds more interesting, for starters. But also, it uses more active verbs.

The phrase "continues campaigning" is more active and lively than the word "still," which is a shortened version of "still is." In writing, active verbs are preferable over conjugations of the verb "to be."

Also, the phrase "can't get off the ballot" uses direct language, which is again more active and lively than "after withdrawal not possible," which is a prepositional phrase and thus is more passive in its construction.

Finally, the first headline uses shorter, simpler, more concrete words, and thus is just better writing and not as bureaucratic sounding.

Newspapers, one must remember, are not academic text books in terms of their writing style, particularly when it comes to headlines.

We have a joke in our office when it comes to writing headlines. One can have clever and cute, or one can have accurate, but one cannot have both. Again, just a joke! Let me reiterate: just a joke! We actually try to be both clever and cute and accurate – and feel very proud when all of those are able to converge and very sad when we have to forgo a clever pun for gosh-darn accuracy sake.

Hope this provides a little insight, but not speaking for the Mountaineer by any stretch of the imagination.

--

Becky Johnson, news editor  
Smoky Mountain News  
828-507-9141 (cell)  
828-452-4251 (office)

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Thu, 15 Mar 2012 13:57:07 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, jkey@themountaineer.com, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>

Becky,

Thank you.

Monroe Miller



----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Thu, 15 Mar 2012 17:15:58 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Rich Piatt

<rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, jkey@themountaineer.com, Caroline Klapper

<caroline@themountaineer.com>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Denny

King <Kingsplace@charter.net>

Vicki,

So there you have it. The only other bonafide newspaper editor in this county, an expert I would have to say, would be more likely to read the Hit Piece under the headline that you plastered in your newspaper rather than the on-line article. Well done!

Monroe

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Fri, 16 Mar 2012 07:02:18 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>

CC: Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>, Dan Way <nc\_dew@yahoo.com>

Please see attached (two attachments).

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.  
19 Big Spruce Lane  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
(828) 456-3718  
March 16, 2012

Vicki Hyatt, Editor  
Richard Piatt, General Manager  
Jonathan Key, Publisher  
**The Mountaineer**  
220 North Main Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786

**Subject:** Hit Piece

Upon reflection, after re-reading your Hit Piece on Denny King, you mentioned several times reference to the Haywood County Republican convention that:

“ ... told party members attending this weekend’s Haywood County Republican convention that he intended to withdraw from the race. ...” and “ ... Those at the GOP weekend function said Coward didn’t attend. ...”

I happened to attend a portion of that convention over the weekend. I did not see you there. Would you like to know why? You had to sign in and verify your party affiliation, that you were either a Republican, Independent, or Unaffiliated. As luck would have it, you would never guess who was standing right behind me at the check in desk to get a badge. That’s right, Kevin Ensley, and presumably his wife. It took seemingly several minutes after looking at him, that he finally established eye contact, and grunted acknowledgment of a “hello”.

I’m wondering right now who you used as a source to get your comments from “those party members”? Like to share? My first guess would be Jonathan Key, since he is a registered Republican, but my second guess would be Kevin Ensley, an incumbent and opponent of Denny King. It’s easy enough to check with the folks who maintained the registration desk if Jonathan Key registered to attend.

A quick check of voter records (the latest data I have is from November 18, 2010) of the following people reveal:

Hyatt, Vicki Johnson	DEM	116 Sunburst Drive	Waynesville, NC 28786	P
Piatt, Richard		[Not registered to vote, not listed on file I have...]		
Key, Jonathan Worth	REP	384 Rocky Knob Road	Waynesville, NC 28786	WS-1
Ensley, Lawrence Kevin	RINO*	170 Yates Cove Road,	Waynesville, NC 28785	ID
Inman, Robert		[unknown which Inman referenced on the voting records, multiple entries].		
Klapper, Caroline Eve	DEM	664 Camelot Drive	Waynesville, NC 28786	HA

\* RINO - Republican In Name Only.

Let me know if I need to make any corrections or updates here...

Normally, I would have copied Kevin Ensley on this e-mail, however, his last two e-mails to me on January 16, 2011 contained the following message:

**I AM NOT DOING ANYTHING!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! IF YOU WANT THEM THEN YOU KNOW WHO TO CONTACT. KEVIN ENSLEY, and**

**TO ALL: MAYBE MY MS IS JUST MAKING ME GRUMPY BUT I WILL NOT BE OPENING ANY MORE EMAILS FROM MR. MILLER. I HAVE A DELETE BUTTON. KEVIN ENSLEY**

I have since deleted his e-mail address from my list of contacts in my e-mail address book, so perhaps someone on this copy list can shoot a copy over to Commissioner Ensley. Maybe you could do that for me, Vicki.

You know, Vicki, something does not seem quite right about your Hit Piece, like you may have crossed a line someplace, like it may have been a calculated effort to affect the candidate's chances of nomination or election.

So Vicki, how are you going to fix this, or do you intend to fix this? Do you have anything to say other than [“Glad to see you are reading the paper.”](#)?

I have figured out how to create a color .pdf file, so I am attaching your Hit Piece as a separate attachment for your reference and others on the copy list that may not have seen it.

Monroe

# Mountaineer

PUBLISHED MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2012

WWW.THEMOUNTAINEER.COM

## King continues campaigning because he can't get off ballot

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Robert Inman, director of the Haywood County Board of Elections, said he received a single page document from King asking to close a campaign finance account, but noted that has nothing to do with the ballot.

"The time for withdrawing is, by statute, the close of the filing period," Inman said.

Even though the primary election date is slightly less than two months away, election offices must have ballots ready to mail out next week. That means the ballots have

already gone through the various approval processes and are already at the printer.

"Denny called me to say he made a decision late Friday afternoon that he doesn't want to run," Inman said Monday. "The law does not allow for anything to be done at this point. He does have some options. He can not actively seek the post. He can request that nobody vote for him or he can continue to run or just not accept the nomination



Denny King

King continues on 11A

### King

continued from 1A

should he win."

Phone messages left on King's voice mail were not returned, but King responded to an email asking about the issue with this. "Please use the attached photo if needed during my run for commissioner. I am looking forward to this campaign."

King, who filed for office just before the filing deadline, became the third Republican candidate in a race where

two seats are open. Incumbent Commissioner Kevin Ensley and Waynesville resident Tracy Kevin Coward filed earlier, so King's entrance into the race meant a primary election would be needed. Those at the GOP weekend function said Coward didn't attend.

The winners of the Republican commissioner primary will face incumbent Commission Chairman Mark Swanger and Canton resident Mike Treadway.

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Fri, 16 Mar 2012 11:48:25 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key  
<jkey@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>

CC: Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Becky Johnson  
<becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline  
Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>, Dan Way  
<nc\_dew@yahoo.com>

Vicki,

[?]

No response? I don't know if you are thoughtfully contemplating a response and printing a retraction, or if you are simply digging your heels in. Let me know, as I will be starting to research state agencies to come in to see if we can put The Mountaineer under a microscope for the rest of the election season. I thought I would start with the North Carolina State Board of Elections. Do you have any other agencies that you can think of that would be equally or more appropriate?

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Fri, 16 Mar 2012 15:40:59 -0400

From: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

To: Monroe Miller, Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key  
<jkey@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>

CC: Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd  
<ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie  
Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>, Dan Way <nc\_dew@yahoo.com>

Monroe,

It seems you are lacking in your understanding of what a private, for-profit,  
newspaper is.

--

Becky Johnson, news editor

Smoky Mountain News

828-507-9141 (cell)

828-452-4251 (office)

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Mon, 19 Mar 2012 08:42:18 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>, Dan Way <nc\_dew@yahoo.com>

Mr. Inman,

FYI.

Monroe Miller

**[Editors Note:** Forwarded last two attachments sent to Vicki Hyatt].



----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Tue, 20 Mar 2012 10:26:55 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Vicki Hyatt

<vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Rich Piatt

<rpiatt@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd

<ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie

Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

Please see attached (120320 Inman.pdf).

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.  
19 Big Spruce Lane  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
(828) 456-3718  
March 20, 2012

Robert Inman, Director  
**Haywood County Elections**  
1233 North Main Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
[rinman@haywoodnc.net](mailto:rinman@haywoodnc.net)

**Subject:** Hit Piece

So, Mr. Inman,

You are presumably an expert in election stuff, what do you think about a question I asked Vicki Hyatt that I never received a response?

“You know, Vicki, something does not seem quite right about your Hit Piece, like you may have crossed a line someplace, like it may have been a calculated effort to affect the candidate's chances of nomination or election.”

What do you think. Does something not quite seem right about her Hit Piece? Do you think it may have been a calculated effort to affect the candidate's chances of nomination or election?

I had also asked her, again, never receiving a response:

“I don't know if you are thoughtfully contemplating a response and printing a retraction, or if you are simply digging your heels in. Let me know, as I will be starting to research state agencies to come in to see if we can put The Mountaineer under a microscope for the rest of the election season. I thought I would start with the North Carolina State Board of Elections. Do you have any other agencies that you can think of that would be equally or more appropriate?”

What to you think? If I were you, who would you pick up the phone and get over here to Haywood County?

Additionally, and this is probably a little out of your area of expertise, what do you think of Becky Johnson's accusation about me?

Monroe,

It seems you are lacking in your understanding of what a private, for-profit, newspaper is.

--

Becky Johnson, news editor

I was checking up on the political affiliation of some people, as summarized below.

Hyatt, Vicki Johnson	DEM	116 Sunburst Drive	Waynesville, NC 28786	P
Piatt, Richard		[Not registered to vote, not listed on file I have...]		
Key, Jonathan Worth	REP	384 Rocky Knob Road	Waynesville, NC 28786	WS-1

Ensley, Lawrence Kevin	RINO*	170 Yates Cove Road,	Waynesville, NC 28785	ID
Inman, Robert		[unknown which Inman referenced on the voting records, multiple entries].		
Klapper, Caroline Eve	DEM	664 Camelot Drive	Waynesville, NC 28786	HA

\* RINO - Republican In Name Only.

Are you the:

Inman, Robert Dewey, 104 Grace Lane, Maggie Valley, NC 28751, or  
Inman, Robert Douglas, 54 McCracken Road, Canton, NC 28716?

i.e., are you a DEM or REP?

You know, I can probably save you some time and effort. Instead of your having to re-distribute this e-mail to your employees over at the Election Department, why don't you send me all their e-mail addresses, and I can put them on this distribution list and save you a whole lot of trouble.

Monroe A. Miller Jr.

----- Original Message -----  
Subject: Re: Re: Hit Piece  
Date: Tue, 20 Mar 2012 10:30:47 -0400  
From: Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>  
To: Monroe Miller

Your e-mail has been blocked by this recipient

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Tue, 20 Mar 2012 19:43:40 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>, Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>

CC: Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

FYI.

I received this bounce back from Rich Piatt <rpiatt@themountaineer.com>. He is the General Manager of the Mountaineer...

Your e-mail has been blocked by this recipient

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: Hit Piece

Date: Wed, 21 Mar 2012 19:02:06 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>

CC: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Vicki Hyatt  
<vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Denny King  
<Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline  
Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

[?]

Do you respond to your e-mails, or should I drop by your office to get answers to these important questions?

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----  
Subject: RE: Hit Piece  
Date: Thu, 22 Mar 2012 13:39:41 -0400  
From: Robert Inman <RInman@haywoodnc.net>  
To: Monroe Miller

Mr. Miller, With all due respect; this office does not regulate the news media. Our mission is to perform very complex procedures in accordance with the election laws of the state of North Carolina. Myself, dedicated staff and all board members do everything humanly possible to ensure that Haywood County elections are fair in conduct and honest in results. As for responding to emails, I would ask for your understanding in that this office is busy preparing for the May 8, 2012 primary election. Again I apologize for delay, and also please know that you and all other citizens are welcome in this office.

Robert Inman  
Haywood County Board of Elections  
1233 North Main Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
rinman@haywoodnc.net  
Phone: (828) 452-6633  
Fax: (828) 452-6750

----- Original Message -----

Subject: RE: Hit Piece

Date: Fri, 23 Mar 2012 08:40:17 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

Mr. Inman,

Thank you for letting me know your office does not regulate the news media. I'm fairly sure there are some state agencies that regulate both the news media and your office in accordance with the election laws of the State of North Carolina. I'll be doing some research on that. I have since deduced that Vicki Hyatt created the Hit Piece, at least the on-line version, and since you had enough spare time during your busy schedule to spend with her during your interview with her on her Hit Piece, I believe I will take you up on your offer that I, as a citizen, can come over to your office to ask you the questions I posed to you in my letter that you never bothered to responded to. I will plan to drop by early next week.

Thank you,

Monroe Miller



----- Original Message -----

Subject: RE: Hit Piece

Date: Fri, 23 Mar 2012 09:13:33 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>

CC: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>, Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Denny King <Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

Vicki,

Guess what I discovered the other day by accident? As I usually do, if there is something interesting on the Mountaineer web site, I capture it, so I captured your Hit Piece on March 14, 2012, as shown below:

The screenshot shows the Mountaineer website interface. At the top left is the logo "Mountaineer" with the tagline "Proudly serving Haywood County, N.C. since 1885". To the right is a green banner for "WH" (Will Hepper, CPA) with contact information. Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for Home, News, Sports, Business, Community, A&E, Opinion, Obituaries, Calendar, and Photos. A weather forecast for "Fair 64° F" and a search bar are also visible. The main article is titled "King still a commissioner candidate after withdrawal not possible" and is dated "Mar 14, 2012". It features a photo of Denny King and text stating he is a Republican county commissioner candidate. To the right of the article is a "biz/orgOffers" sidebar with several promotional items, including "Turn Key Log Home in Maggie...", "Tired of paying ATM fees?", "The Girl Next Door by Brad Parks...", "Maggie Valley Bank Owned Reduced...", and "RETRO NIGHT TONIGHT". Below the article is a login section with fields for "Username:" and "Password:", and a "Join" button. To the right of the login section is a "Buy Now" button for \$0.99. At the bottom right is a large advertisement for "BOGART'S RESTAURANT & TAVERN" featuring a bear logo and the address "303 SOUTH MAIN STREET WAYNESVILLE NC 828.452.1313".

Notice that no one claimed authorship of this article, which is why I asked the original question - "Did you write this?" Also, there was no hint of ownership with the Hit Piece splashed on the front page in your paper, same date, see attached. Then, a couple of days later, I happened to check the website again, and do you know what? Someone had added your name as the author of that March 14th article. I captured this on March 17, 2012:



## King still a commissioner candidate after withdrawal not possible

By Vicki Hyatt | Mar 14, 2012

Share



A Republican county commissioner candidate who had second thoughts about seeking his party's nomination is proceeding with the campaign after learning there was no way to get off the ballot.

Denny King, who is one of three candidates whose name will ...

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By Will Hopper, CPA - Mar 17

**Closing Costs Paid to Both Owner ...**  
By Realty World Heritage - Mar 15

**FAJITAS GRANDE FOR TWO**  
By Maria's Mexican Pueblo - Mar 16

**\$1.00 ENCHILADAS TONIGHT!!! 5PM ...**  
By Maria's Mexican Pueblo - Mar 14

**858 Sq Ft With over 1.5 Acres & ...**  
By Realty World Heritage - Mar 16

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828.452.5111 • 524 Russ Avenue, Waynesville, NC

See where is says "by Vicki Hyatt"?

Why did you do that? Are you planning on "fixing" the article that you ran on March 14th in the paper by splashing up the same article again on the front page, but this time attaching your name to it?

So I am going to make the radical assumption that the question that started off this whole e-mail dialog has been answered. Did you write this Hit Piece?

I've also attached convenient .pdf files of the above images to this e-mail.

Monroe Miller

----- Original Message -----

Subject: RE: Hit Piece

Date: Tue, 27 Mar 2012 09:34:32 -0400

From: Monroe Miller

To: Robert Inman <rinman@haywoodnc.net>

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Becky Johnson  
<becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>, Denny King  
<Kingsplace@charter.net>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Caroline  
Klapper <caroline@themountaineer.com>, Jonnie Cure <jcubed41@gmail.com>

Please see attached - 120327 Inman.pdf

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.  
19 Big Spruce Lane  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
(828) 456-3718  
March 27, 2012

Robert Dewey Inman, Director  
**Haywood County Elections**  
1233 North Main Street  
Waynesville, NC 28786  
[rinman@haywoodnc.net](mailto:rinman@haywoodnc.net)

**Subject:** Hit Piece

Mr. Inman,

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to sit down with me in your lobby to answer the questions I posed to you in my March 20<sup>th</sup> letter.

- You indicated right off the bat you have no political views on any candidates.
- You were not aware of any state agencies that govern newspapers and newspaper articles.
- Your middle name is “Dewey” and you are the Inman that lives in Maggie Valley.

[After rechecking the voter registration records with this new information, your party affiliation is DEM.]

You volunteered that your office of **Haywood County Elections** is governed by the North Carolina State Board of Elections, and if I found out any agency or statute that related to newspapers or newspaper articles, to be sure to let you know.

Did you know that there is a whole chapter on **Elections and Election Laws**? It is Chapter 163 of the North Carolina General Statutes. It was brought to my attention that the following section could apply to newspaper articles, such as the Hit Piece recently published on-line and print version in the Mountaineer newspaper [only relevant sections (7) and (8) reprinted here]:

**§ 163-274. Certain acts declared misdemeanors.**

(a) Class 2 Misdemeanors. – Any person who shall, in connection with any primary or election in this State, do any of the acts and things declared in this subsection to be unlawful, shall be guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor. It shall be unlawful:

(7) For any person to publish in a newspaper or pamphlet or otherwise, any charge derogatory to any candidate or calculated to affect the candidate's chances of nomination or election, unless such publication be signed by the party giving publicity to and being responsible for such charge;

(8) For any person to publish or cause to be circulated derogatory reports with reference to any candidate in any primary or election, knowing such report to be false or in reckless disregard of its truth or falsity, when such report is calculated or intended to affect the chances of such candidate for nomination or election;

(b) Class 1 Misdemeanor. – Any person who shall, in connection with any primary or election in this State,

do any of the acts and things declared in this subsection to be unlawful shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. It shall be unlawful for any person who has access to an official voted ballot or record to knowingly disclose in violation of G.S. 163-165.1(e) how an individual has voted that ballot. (1931, c. 348, s. 9; 1951, c. 983, s. 1; 1967, c. 775, s. 1; 1979, c. 135, s. 3; 1987, c. 565, s. 13; c. 583, s. 9; 1993, c. 539, s. 1112; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 762, s. 58(a)-(c); 1999-424, s. 7(h); 1999-426, s. 2(a); 1999-455, s. 21; 2007-391, ss. 9(b), 16(b).)

Goodness!

Now see the potential problems you can unwittingly get into when you give interviews? This, by the way, is one reason that I do not give interviews. Someone can print a piece in a newspaper, slap a title on the piece, fail to provide any hint who authored the article (anonymous), and before you know it, it appears to look like a democrat Hit Piece, and you become part of it. Did you notice the penalties in **§ 163-274. Certain acts declared misdemeanors**? Both Class 2 and 1 Misdemeanors.

Being associated with stuff like this can put you on the radar.

I'll continue to check around to see what agency takes the responsibility for the enforcement of **§ 163-274. Certain acts declared misdemeanors**, whether it is the North Carolina Board of Elections, the Attorney General or other entity(s), and let you know when I find out.

Monroe A. Miller Jr.