

Monroe A. Miller Jr.
19 Big Spruce Lane
Waynesville, NC 28786
January 5, 2016

Subject: E-mail dialog with Becky Johnson, who throws Jackee Brown (Gavin's wife) Under the Bus.

It was brought to my attention that Becky Johnson, newsperson for the Smoky Mountain News, sent a text to a friend of mine (forwarded to me) which stated:

"Re:

Hi...I am not totally sure who this is from as it just showed up as a text from a phone number, but we do not believe the spouses, children or parents of elected officials are relevant.

As a point of gossip, the mayor's wife driving drunk is the talk of the town. Her struggles with alcohol addiction over the years are commonly known. She needs treatment and rehab for her chronic and debilitating addiction, but she is a private citizen.

If we covered crime and car wrecks, then we would report it as we would any other crime or car wreck. But we don't cover crime or car wrecks. If it was Gavin, that would be a different story."

Becky Johnson pointed out that "... Her struggles with alcohol addiction over the years are commonly known. She needs treatment and rehab for her chronic and debilitating addiction, ..." Unfortunately, Becky Johnson stopped a little short by not also calling out her husband, Waynesville Mayor Gavin Brown, who shares the same affliction. Perhaps a page will be turned in Haywood County when Local Law Enforcement no longer turns their back on the driving behavior of these two people. There were three people who were seriously injured when Jackee Brown broadsided the Ramsey's Ford pick-up truck at an estimated velocity of 50 mph, at 9:00am in the morning!

The most important thing here is wishing a speedy recovery for all involved. The next most important thing is to take these two ticking time-bombs off the road.

Meanwhile, over at the DA's Office, it appears that Ashely Welch forgot to pay the light bill, as the DA's Office has gone dark.

Not to worry. In a previous case against Bruce Crawford, then Sheriff Bobby Suttles and/or then DA Michael Bonfoey, threw my complaint against Bruce Crawford in the trash. I believe I was the first person in North Carolina in seventy (70) years to bring a case directly to the (Haywood County) Grand Jury.

[Criminal Complaints against Bruce Crawford, Haywood County Building Inspector, and Johnny Glance, Haywood County Fire Marshall, sent to Haywood County Grand Jury. 12/31/2012...](http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/121231Complaint.pdf)
[<http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/121231Complaint.pdf>]

[Transcript - Meeting with Haywood County DA Michael Bonfoey, ADA \(Assistant DA\) Jeff Jones, ADA Rachel Groffsky, Law Enforcement Officer Russ Conner and Terry Ramey regarding my submitting Criminal Complaints directly to the Haywood County Grand Jury. 5/14/2012...](http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/120511aJonesBonfoeyTranscript.pdf)
<http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/120511aJonesBonfoeyTranscript.pdf>]

[Audio \(.mp3\) - Meeting with Haywood County DA Michael Bonfoey, ADA \(Assistant DA\) Jeff Jones, ADA Rachel Groffsky, Law Enforcement Officer Russ Conner and Terry Ramey regarding my submitting Criminal Complaints directly to the Haywood County Grand Jury. 5/15/2012...](http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/120511_004Bonfoey.MP3)
http://haywoodtp.net/pubII/120511_004Bonfoey.MP3]

I'll not hesitate to do the same thing again.

Monroe Miller
Haywood County Taxpayer

Subject: Re: Jackie Brown, Wife of Waynesville Mayor Gavin Brown, Involved in Wreck.

Date: Mon, 4 Jan 2016 16:05:34 -0500

From: Monroe Miller

To: Jeremy Davis, Eddie Cabe, Jonnie Cure

CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Bill Hollingsed <wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com>, Jon Ostendorff <jgostendorff@wlos.com>, Gavin Brown <GBrown7013@aol.com>, Gavin Brown <Mayor@townofwaynesville.org>, Marcy Onieal <monieal@waynesvillenc.gov>, Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Greg Christopher <gchristopher@haywoodnc.net>, Denny King

Hi All,

Can you please alert your friends on Facebook to this new link?

[WPD Accident Report on Jackee Brown. Estimated speed at impact: 50mph. " ... Jackee had a strong odor of alcohol about her person." Reason - BAC = 0.17. 1/4/2016...](#)

and

[Criminal Case File 14CR702012, Jackee Brown. SHE'S DONE THIS BEFORE! Nearly killed herself while nearly drunk \(0.07 BAC\) in 2014. Drivers License now suspended for 30 days. 1/4/2016...](#)

Also take a look at:

[Vol # 7, Issue # 1: Dec 04, 2016 Women of www.haywoodtp.net](#)

Thanks,

Monroe

Pursuant to Proper Etiquette and N.C.G.S. § 14-196.3, this e-mail conforms to Section (e) which applies to any peaceable, nonviolent, or nonthreatening activity intended to express political views or to provide lawful information to others. This section shall not be construed to impair any constitutionally protected activity, including speech, protest, or assembly.

Subject: Re: Jackie Brown, Wife of Waynesville Mayor Gavin Brown, Involved in Wreck.
Date: Mon, 04 Jan 2016 16:31:40 -0500
From: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>
To: Monroe Miller, Jeremy Davis, Eddie Cabe, Jonnie Cure
CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com
<wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com>, Jon Ostendorff <jgostendorff@wlos.com>, gavin brown
<GBrown7013@aol.com>, Gavin Brown <Mayor@townofwaynesville.org>, Marcy Onieal
<monieal@waynesvillenc.gov>, Greg Christopher <gchristopher@haywoodnc.net>, Denny King

Monroe,

I am unaware of a charge known as DWNI....Driving While Nearly Impaired.

Despite all the dancing around that you doing here, the question is: was it her first offense or not?

You have apparently done the research, so do tell. It will save me some work. Was it her first offense?

I can't tell if you are trying to trick people into thinking she has a prior, or if she actually has one. So could you clarify?

--

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

Subject: Re: Jackie Brown, Wife of Waynesville Mayor Gavin Brown, Involved in Wreck.
Date: Mon, 4 Jan 2016 17:08:06 -0500
From: Monroe Miller
To: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>, Jeremy Davis, Eddie Cabe, Jonnie Cure
CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com
<wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com>, Jon Ostendorff <jgostendorff@wlos.com>, gavin brown
<GBrown7013@aol.com>, Gavin Brown <Mayor@townofwaynesville.org>, Marcy Onieal
<monieal@waynesvillenc.gov>, Greg Christopher <gchristopher@haywoodnc.net>, Denny King

Ms. Johnson,

Of all the people on this e-mail list, I least expected a reply from you, considering the following TEXT Message you sent to a friend of mine...

"Re:
Hi...I am not totally sure who this is from as it just showed up as a text from a phone number, but we do not believe the spouses, children or parents of elected officials are relevant.

As a point of gossip, the mayor's wife driving drunk is the talk of the town. Her struggles with alcohol addiction over the years are commonly known. She needs treatment and rehab for her chronic and debilitating addiction, but she is a private citizen.

If we covered crime and car wrecks, then we would report it as we would any other crime or car wreck. But we don't cover crime or car wrecks. If it was Gavin, that would be a different story."

So, what is your interest here, since you are not going to write a story? Carry Gavin Brown's water, or perhaps pass this off to your husband, who will do a story?

Anyway, still doing research as I have an army of people assisting me with this.

Hope you had a chance to look at Vol # 7, Issue # 1: Dec 04, 2016 Women of www.haywoodtp.net <<http://haywoodtp.net/pubTP/T160104.pdf>>

Monroe Miller

Pursuant to Proper Etiquette and N.C.G.S. § 14-196.3, this e-mail conforms to Section (e) which applies to any peaceable, nonviolent, or nonthreatening activity intended to express political views or to provide lawful information to others. This section shall not be construed to impair any constitutionally protected activity, including speech, protest, or assembly.

Subject: Re: Jackie Brown, Wife of Waynesville Mayor Gavin Brown, Involved in Wreck.
Date: Mon, 04 Jan 2016 18:23:07 -0500
From: Becky Johnson <becky@smokymountainnews.com>
To: Monroe Miller, Jeremy Davis, Eddie Cabe, Jonnie Cure
CC: Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com <wpdchief@waynesvillepd.com>, Jon Ostendorff <jgostendorff@wlos.com>, gavin brown <GBrown7013@aol.com>, Gavin Brown <Mayor@townofwaynesville.org>, Marcy Onieal <monieal@waynesvillenc.gov>, Greg Christopher <gchristopher@haywoodnc.net>, Denny King

Monroe,

Yes, that's right. We really don't cover wrecks, crime or tragedies, unless they involve a public official. The mayor's wife is a private individual.

To step outside the issues and topics we regularly cover purely for the sensational gossip value, or to quench some sort of political bloodlust going on here, would be suspect on our part.

Many news outlets cover crime, wrecks and tragedies, such as the Mountaineer and WLOS. It is part of their role and the routine coverage they do.

It is, therefore, highly appropriate for the Mountaineer or WLOS to cover a DWI resulting in an accident and injury to another party.

But the question we had to ask our self at SMN: since we don't normally cover wrecks, crime and tragedies, to do so in this case, would it appropriate?

You have labeled our decision not to report on the DWI thus far as "carrying Gavin's water."

However, the opposite seems true to me. Since we don't normally cover wrecks and crime, to do so in this case, whose water would we be carrying then?

Would we be stepping outside our normal coverage zone to report on the DWI charge of a private citizen purely to satisfy the political motives of those trying to smear the mayor over his wife's addiction struggles? Wouldn't that be carrying someone's water?

It is not our job to carry anyone's water, thus, we had to analyze it objectively.

Again, if we reported on DWIs or wrecks in general, as other news outlets do, then by all means, we would be obligated to report on this one. Or if it involved a public official. But it didn't. So what then would be the grounds to report it?

Would the deviant behavior of every sibling, child, spouse, parent, etc. of an elected official then become something we should report? And if we did that, what other news would we have to cut from our pages to make room for that type of crime coverage?

As for the message you quoted below, let's get the context right. A reader had suggested we give one our "spoon awards" in our year-end edition to the mayor's wife. I replied that the alcohol addiction of a private individual was not appropriate fodder for a spoon award. The spoon awards are supposed to be humorous or satirical, not jabs exploiting the personal tragedy of others. Thus, that's why we had no spoon award dedicated to Gavin's wife.

I hope this helps explain the thought-process that we very deliberately went through.

On another topic, however, if there is any evidence of preferential treatment in the law enforcement or judicial system, that is something we would definitely report. Preferential justice is the type of issue we would in fact cover.

But thus far that is not the case. I can't report on a conspiracy of preferential treatment if, in fact, there is none. And I have yet to see evidence of any.

Here's what I would be interested in to prove or disprove this insinuation: do an analysis of 20 other DWIs from a multi-county region that had injuries to someone other than the driver. Look at the severity of those injuries and whether a felony or misdemeanor DWI resulted. From this, we could see a pattern of what types of injuries are considered serious enough to bump a DWI up to a felony charge. The prior record would have to be taken into consideration as well, and any other factors. Then, using the baseline from the sampling of other cases, compare it to this one. Is it within the norm or not? That would be interesting to me.

But in the absence of that, all we have now is an empty accusation of preferential treatment and I don't feel comfortable reporting on that.

Which leads me back to the question, are you aware of any prior charges?

--

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