

# What do you think?

an opinion for The People by pete edwards

## Gun banner at work

What mentality believes it is safe for government employees to bear arms but not ordinary citizens that, but for their employment status, are one of the same? What spark of wisdom encourages a person to be afraid that his neighbor carrying a concealed weapon in a park in some way puts people in mortal danger? Who would be so mentally confused? The answer is no one. The real reason for the concern is not public safety but a desire to thwart the guarantees afforded by the US Constitution and ban ordinary people from bearing arms; owning, carrying and using guns in a lawful way. On the Cleveland City Council there appears to be an individual of this persuasion, a gun

banner that would rival the likes of Rosie O'Donnell and Robert Redford. He is Lee University Professor, Bill Estes, who not surprisingly would also like to ban your right of free speech and equal opportunity and everything else he doesn't agree with.

Recently, The Tennessee State Legislature (reasoning that it is a radical liberal hoax to label gun owners dangerous, and considering that Tennessee citizens in general do not conceive firearms as evil) passed a law allowing people with a valid permit to carry a concealed firearm the right to do so in a public park, with the proviso that cities and counties could opt out and continue the ban with a majority vote. At first glance, this opt-out provi-

sion seems unpopular and stupid, but it does provide a useful service in that it baits gun banners to show their true colors. Estes took the bait and made a motion to ban guns in all City of Cleveland parks, which failed through lack of support. I will say no more about Estes because you know what I think.

## Johnston park

Sometimes wisdom peeks through the malaise of self-centered back scratching the Cleveland City Council calls public service. Richard Banks, who once tried to close down this paper because he considered it too outspoken, showed a rare glimpse of common sense when he recommended Johnston park be handed back to its original owners

if they would not lift unreasonable use restrictions. Apparently, when the park property was given to the city in the 1930's as a memorial to Joe Stuart's parents, it was on condition that Clyde Johnston Hardwick heirs retain some control of its usage. Over the years the descendants of Hardwick have demanded restrictive use be enforced. After last month's Singing in the Park hosted by State Representative Eric Watson, an order was sent banning further gatherings on the property which Banks rightly was offended by. The park's use is now administered by the Johnston Memorial Park Advisory Board who, according to Cleveland City Parks and Recreation Director Patti Petitt, the board wrote Watson a nice

letter (what a suck-up) telling him he could not have the gathering there in the future. It seems among the restrictions the Hardwick heirs enforce is that there should be no politicians or preaching, no playground equipment, picnicking or public speaking.

The Stuart, Johnston, Hardwick families are spoken of in hushed tones and reverence by Cleveland's elite as though they were the keepers of the city. Streets and monuments abound glorifying their names, yet the truth is exposed that they are from the same petty mold that Cleveland's other privileged families evolve. For once Banks is absolutely right. Dump this no-good park. Let them pay for the memorial's up-keep themselves. Charge them the

same taxes ordinary folk pay. Remove the honor of public benefactor and treat them for what they are.

That's what I think. What do you think?

## Worth a thought

Word has it that the Cleveland City Council's outspoken criticism of the Cleveland Board of Education's handling of the contractor bid process was not about fairness more about Cleveland's exalted contractor supreme Tri-Con being eliminated. If that is so, Tri-Con will be the place to start job hunting before they are awarded the contract. I wonder what other wonders Cleveland's democratic and unbiased processes have in store for us? The plot thickens.

That's what I think. What do you think?

## Residents Unhappy With Mayor's Comments

by Tonya Brantley

In the October 5, 2009 issue of *The Cleveland Daily Banner*, it was reported in an article entitled "Residents unhappy with lack of internet" that residents of the opulent Mountain Pointe Subdivision in Cleveland, TN are frustrated and upset at their inability to get access to high-speed internet. So much so, a few of the residents recently met with city officials to express that frustration.

Barry Ray, Jay Leggett, Mike Claudio, Lou Patten and Ken Webb met with Cleveland City Mayor Tom Rowland, State Representative Kevin Brooks, City Attorney John Kimble and AT&T Regional Director MaryStewart Lewis at the Municipal Building to voice their opinions about the unavailability of

access through Charter Communications or AT&T. *The People News* was not informed of the meeting.

The article stated the following:

The mayor said the 55 homeowners are bankers, business owners and Patten is a former State Senator. "They are the kind of people you would want to provide service for," he said. "They would subscribe to all of your services if they were available."

Since *The People News* was not aware this meeting was going to take place, the *Cleveland Daily Banner* article is the only insight into what was said and by whom.

For many who read the article, Mayor Rowland's comments have been interpreted as meaning those who are better off finan-

cially should receive preferential treatment before the ordinary folk. *The People News* wanted to know from Rowland what kind of people you would not want to provide services for.

In a telephone interview with the mayor on October 22nd, *The People News* questioned him about his quote stating the occupations of certain affluent residents in the Mountain Pointe Subdivision, to which he replied, "Actually, I didn't say that. Another person in the meeting said that. Uh, it's a misquote. I didn't mention anybody or describe anybody that lived there. One of the people there at the meeting, I don't remember who it was, mentioned that, trying to, I guess, let AT&T know that other people probably could afford all of their

services."

When asked about his quote on the types of people you would want to provide services for and the quote stating they would subscribe to all services if they were made available, Mayor Rowland said, "I didn't say that. I may have said that they might subscribe to all of your services, the total package, but I did not mention the lawyer or the banker thing."

To reiterate his answer, Mayor Rowland was asked if he was misquoted in the *Banner* article to which he replied, "Yes." He went on to say, "I think the thrust was, among those people there, that they were desperate for some kind of service, whether it was Charter or AT&T. They would be good customers and they would probably take all of their services,

where as a lot of people maybe wouldn't. They were desperate to get and are still desperate to get any kind of service they can get. But, I haven't heard back yet from AT&T, and I have not heard back yet from Charter."

When asked if he had given any thought to correcting the misquotes in the *Banner* that the mayor said were not his, Rowland said, "No, I have not."

As far as possible solutions to the Mountain Pointe residents internet woes, another article on this topic entitled "Charter Cable to Bankers, Business Owners, a Former State Senator and 55 Others: Pay \$1850 Each for Internet" posted on the website [www.stopthecap.com](http://www.stopthecap.com) has some insight.

The article states Charter Communications is willing to wire the subdivision, if the residents agree to foot \$1850 apiece to pay for wiring expenses. The article suggests a short term solution as well: AT&T could provide DSL service by installing equipment nearby that would reduce the distance between Mountain Pointe residents and AT&T's switching equipment, using a device known as a Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (DSLAM). It is commonly installed in more remote locations to provide DSL services in areas where direct service isn't possible.

In the event *The People News* is informed of any future meetings regarding this matter, an update will be provided in an upcoming issue.