

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2008

Liberal Media Are Killing Jobs



Featherfest attendance, construction starts, housing sales, IQ scores, and sales tax collections are all down in Springdale, yet the city is being attacked by the liberal media and being sold out by its own elected officials. As **Bill Ramsey** has been trying to tell us for years, sign ordinances are job killers, a term he usually reserves for anything that will inconvenience the Chamber of Cowbirds. Now the liberal media, often the handmaiden of unbridled growth and profit at the expense of aesthetic and environmental concerns, has turned on Ramsey's short-sighted twin **Perry Webb** at the Springdale branch.

The *Northwest Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, a bastion of liberal opinion, today turns on Springdale and says, "Sure, it's the city of chickens and 18-wheelers, and while the town may never have had much eye appeal, it did have a long and successful history of bringing business and industry to town. So let Fayetteville keep its tree-huggers..." Now, it seems, that Alderman **Jim Reed** has grown a pair and joined **Jesse Core** to defy the local Chamber, but the editor warns that "previous efforts have failed. Nobody's been willing to take on the deeply ingrained if dubious assumption that ugly is good for business."

The Chamber acolytes at the *Northwest Arkansas Times* were even more blunt about Springdale. They admit "one can't really appreciate the insanity of the situation just driving down U. S. 71 Business or U. S. 412. But if you come to a stop and get out of the car, then glance down these big boulevards, you quickly see that unbridled enthusiasm for business promotion has its effects. And those effects aren't pretty. ...Parts of Springdale (and just about every town) demonstrate that commercial interests left to their own restraint will often exercise none of it."

It seems that even **Mike Masterson** might be coming around to supporting a ban on billboards as well as library books. "As for the good folk of Springdale and their quandary over limiting the number of highway billboards to the 57 that now exist there, I can appreciate their conflict," he says, because "**Perry Webb**,

president the Springdale Chamber of Commerce, initially said that these giant signs benefit local businesses and sales tax revenues because Springdale is the only city in the northwest corridor that allows them." His point is that "Fayetteville, Bentonville and Rogers have opted for the natural scenic beauty of their communities over erecting billboards that ballyhoo out-of-state casinos and weight-loss programs above their streets and highways," and now, like Sun Tzu, they are tactically using Springdale's billboard farm to hoist them on their own petard and lure business away.

Well, Fayetteville should have listened to **Bill Ramsey**. Instead, it stuck by its 30-year old billboard ban and current sign ordinance, losing all those high paying sub-minimum wage \$2.63 an hour jobs at Cracker Barrel and Fuddruckers. The Cowbirds can't help us if citizens continue to stubbornly insist on being different from Springdale, especially without the constant cover of their dues-paying members in the local media.