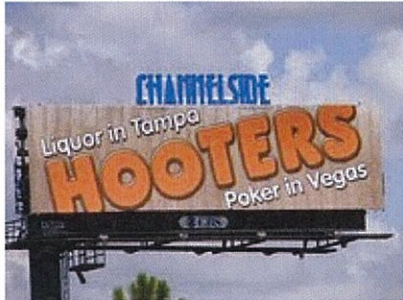


MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2008

Literati On a Stick



The big surprise last week was the billboard ban adopted 4-3 by the Springdale City Council. It was a victory for **Kathy Jaycox, Jesse Core, Philip Taldo**, and common sense over **Mike Overton, Jeff Watson, Bobby Stout, and Cowbird Perry Webb**. They get to keep the 59 existing billboards already littering the scenic byways until they rot, but there will be no more.

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* expressed support for the four progressive votes on the Council. "It's as mind-boggling as if Fayetteville voted to cut down all its trees. ...It's a new day for Springdale. Together, the ban on billboards and restrictions on other signs amount to a down payment on a continuing makeover. Springdale's gotten serious about improving its looks."

The ban was not the only surprise. *The Morning News*, usually the most sensible of the local newspapers, said, "Cluttering the roadside with signs of all shapes and sizes is unattractive and doesn't guarantee commercial growth. But we're not sure an outright ban is the way to go. ...We're not suggesting the city return to it's earlier days when a business could locate anywhere regardless of zoning. But we do suggest city leaders stop fussing about signs and concentrate on ideas to get Springdale moving forward"

What's up with that? Maybe the editors at *The Morning News* didn't get the memo. Not long after the 1993 sellout by the **Donrey Media Chain** that brought the paper a new corporate cage with the **Stephens Media Chain**, the new owners dumped the Donrey Outdoor division on **Clear Channel** in 1999. Maybe they are still holding the note, maybe there is some newspaper axiom about never questioning any advertising expenditure, or maybe the *Morning News* editors in Springdale just like billboards. Anyway, just kinda queer.