

# The Iconoclast

"A true man will speak, not in humble whispers, lest he offend potentates and powers, but in clarion tones, swerving neither to the right nor to the left, till at last his words of fire burn through dull understandings and into cold hearts."

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

## The Chicken that Laid the Golden Egg



A little more than two years ago, we told you about the "working vacation" at Mt. Magazine Lodge, a new resort with hot tubs and an indoor pool, where **Chickendale Cowbird** 'business leaders' told local city officials what they wanted in addition to the \$177,000 slush fund from the taxpayers. In October 2007, [we wrote](#):

The Springdale Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a three-day obedience school designed to help their city officials set appropriate goals. **Springdale elected officials, school administrators, and city department heads** are a captive audience for the so-called business leaders, who are holed up away from public view at beautiful Mount Magazine State Park Lodge in Logan County to get together on what the business community expects and how the city can deliver.

At that time, we said it wasn't clear who was picking up the tab for this fun get-away, but we noted that it was "sponsored by undisclosed construction companies, banks, food processors, engineers, and architects." What we didn't know then but know now is that the Chickendale Cowbirds spent **\$16,497.21** for a Texas outfit called 9G to "facilitate" the discussions and **\$23,911.64** at the resort for two nights' "lodging." This from an account co-mingled with city funds that were supposed to be for "economic development" and "promoting Springdale."

That is a sweet deal for someone, or a lot of someones, considering that the most expensive suite in peak season is only \$209 a night, including, "Fireplace, River Valley View, Satellite Television, 2 balconies,

living area with separate bedroom, king size bed, jacuzzi, telephone, coffee pot, microwave, in-room safe, high-speed internet, iron & ironing board, refrigerator." That doesn't include the mini-bar.

Why didn't they have this big party at the Springdale Holiday Inn & Convention Center, so the Cowbirds and their captive elected officials and city employees could sleep in their own beds, and keep the money in the local economy? Maybe because they would have been distracted by local citizens asking what was going on, listening to the discussions, and having some input from ordinary citizens who weren't on the Cowbird A-List? Yes.