

# EDITORIAL

*A Rochester MN, Super 8 motel fax*

## Where the newspaper stands regarding the school bond issue.

This newspaper is not a TV station that says it supports the troops from one side of its mouth, while raging on every negative thing it can about the troops from the other side of its mouth.

What this newspaper does and will continue to do is to support our towns, communities, businesses, and school districts that endeavor to make improvements to their communities. Such endeavors involve debate, often spirited debate, including Ponca's School bond issue.

We have reported extensively on the bond agitator group's position, and so far there hasn't been much to report. They have not presented any alternative plan, nor have they presented any financial plan attached to a new building. The best we expect from them at this point is some cheap-shot diagram for a talking point.

This week we received a fax from an Iowa person complaining a "letter writer" didn't identify a certain party affiliated with the Iowa agitator group. We didn't recognize the name referred to in the message, and have no information connecting him to the outsiders informing our local bond opposition group. But it educes the question of how some distant person from a town east of Des Moines would be drawn to disagree with a letter-to-the-editor that appeared in this newspaper. It was an "over-the-transom" fax sent from a Super 8 motel, in Rochester, Minnesota. Did we mention outside agitators were worming their way into our school debate? (They need money to keep their Iowa agency profitable.)

We wonder if our local folks, who have honest questions about the school bond issue, are comfortable with outside agencies from Rochester, Minnesota, and eastern Iowa, mucking about in our local issues. We do not believe any of our local people contacted the outsiders, but we do believe outside agitators heard about our bond and contacted them and have sucked them into their agency. (They want money.)

Much of what has been occurring in the agitator group regarding the bond issue has been conducted in secret. Rumor, only, informs us about them. We will do our best to track down rumors and confirm or deny their authenticity. For now, the Minnesota connection and eastern Iowa connection are irrefutable facts. Currently, their secret interest seems to be in Ponca pork-sucking up local money. Minnesota, Iowa, Profit!

Furthermore, we advise Treasurer Kastning, the solitary name on the "Political Accountability Commission" form, to watch his back for the time when "his" agency is audited for political contributions. Kastning is, after all, one of our local boys from a good family caught up in this issue. He runs the risk of these outside agitators abandoning him when "his" agency fails to comply with Nebraska laws. Mr. Kastning may be left holding the bag, personally responsible for the fines. No doubt, someone will insist on an audit, they always do. Keep a balance, Mr. Kastning, keep a balance in "your" agency to pay fines. (As sole owner, yours is the only vote that counts.) Gauge your associates, Mr. Kastning, to see if they care whether you are stuck for the fines. Fines can be in thousands.

We find it interesting that the outside Iowa expert agitators didn't inform donors that \$25.00 was the threshold for reporting who donated in Iowa. Have they been equally straight forward informing about Nebraska requirements? There seems to be conflicting omissions and output. Can anyone rely on what they say?

Mr. Kastning was wrong when he asserted no donor's name had to be reported. Who misled Mr. Kastning? *Editor.*

September 8, 2005, Editorial Page of the Nebraska Journal-Leader:

**Paragraph two:**

**“What this newspaper does and will continue to do is to support our towns, communities, businesses, and school districts...”**

Finally, some truth. At least the Editor is up front about his intentions, even if it does mean concocting lies about the ABC's Committee. These lies will be demonstrated below.

**Paragraph four:**

**“...it educes the question of how some distant person from a town east of Des Moines would be drawn to disagree with a letter-to-the-editor that appeared in this newspaper.”**

It is ironic indeed that the Editor would see fit to publish a letter from a person from this same town “east of Des Moines” (Tama, IA) but not the rebuttal letter from a farmer in nearby Montour, Iowa. Perhaps the Editor is only open to letters that support his own view of the discussion or that attacks our so-called agitators group; the ABC's Committee. After all, not once did the Editor say he would be fair in his coverage of the issues. It is not much of a debate at all if only one side is allowed to speak. So much for fair-and-balanced reporting.

**To determine the merits of the contents for yourself, see the actual letter (that was not printed in the Journal-Leader) on the Home page of this website.** The author was kind enough to share this with us since he anticipated it would not be printed in the first place.

**Paragraph five:**

**“We wonder if our local folks, who have honest questions about the school bond issue, are comfortable with outside agencies from Rochester, Minnesota, and eastern Iowa, mucking about in our local issues.”**

Again, there is a double standard. It is OK for a negative letter to be printed, but not a rebuttal. The Editor deemed it necessary to print the original letter, with that should come the responsibility to let those attacked to offer their side of the issue.

If the Editor was fair to both sides, there would be no need for this website.

**Paragraph seven:**

**“...we advise Treasurer Kastning...to watch his back for the time when “his” agency is audited for political contributions.”**

At least the Editor has used an actual name in his attack of “one of our local boys”, unlike when he refers to other officers of the ABC's Committee in past articles. **It is indeed a threat to Mr. Kastning personally by the Editor, and one can assume, by those from the “Pride” group.** It is clear that the Nebraska Journal-Leader is the communications arm of the “Pride” group and threats are part of their arsenal. Have they no shame?

The Editor wants to employ an often-used tactic by the “Pride” group; divide and conquer. We will not be segmented, despite their best attempts. United we stand against the lies, innuendoes, half truths, and threats.

September 8, 2005, Editorial Page of the Nebraska Journal-Leader (cont'd):

**Paragraph eight:**

**“...the outside Iowa expert agitators didn’t inform donors that \$25.00 was the threshold for reporting who donated in Iowa. Have they been equally straightforward informing about Nebraska requirements?”**

Thank you, Journal-Leader, for your concern. Look at what the Editor is condemning. First he is condemning comments from a letter he refuses to let his readers see. He is not disgusted that the minion's for last week's letter writer, Molacek, actually went around Tama/Toledo Iowa and intimidated anyone who gave to a local committee that opposed his school's expensive proposal. That intimidation does not offend our editor. Why should it? That's exactly what he is trying to do here in northeast Nebraska. He makes up a so-called harm that this Iowa PAC is supposedly guilty of - that is, not informing these local Iowa donors who provided donations above \$25 that their names would be on public record. But how does he know this to be true? He has no idea, so he simply makes it up in an effort to frighten away our donors. The truth is, the local PAC leaders in Iowa took their consultant's advice and did advise their donors that their name would be on the public record. The Editor lies again. This Iowa PAC did exactly what we are doing and informing our donors of the state law. The offense here is the intimidation that Molacek employed. And clearly our Editor is pleased with that. Meanwhile, as the Editor well knows, since Mr. Kastning has informed him on multiple occasions, the limit is \$250.00 per person in Nebraska before that person must report to the state their total INDIVIDUAL contribution. But don't take our word for it, find out for yourself at:

<http://nadc.nol.org/>

-or-

call Executive Director Frank Daley directly at the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission at 402-471-2552.

We are not afraid to reveal our sources on state law.

**Paragraph nine:**

**“Mr. Kastning was wrong when he asserted no donor’s name had to be reported.”**

This is a flat-out lie by the Editor. Mr. Kastning never said these words without the \$250.00 limit qualifier; as in, “No donor’s name has to be reported, unless that individual contributes \$250 or more in a calendar year.” The Editor knows this, but he thinks if he repeats it enough it will be perceived as truth.

As we have asserted in the past, the Editor wants to scare potential contributors away by stating falsehoods and half-truths. It is also ironic that the Editor did not, and does not, pursue the contributions by the “Pride” group members as vigorously as he has pursued the ABC’s Committee.

A note of appreciation must be given to the Editor on one point though. Thanks to his recent rantings in the last four issues, unsolicited contributions have been steadily rising. And for that, we say HURRAY!

## **Agitators create ill will with neighboring communities**

We hear on the street the agitators are insisting that Newcastle close its school and join Ponca. We double dog dare them to appear on

Newcastle's main street and announce their unilateral plan to close Newcastle's school down by fiat.

They missed an opportunity to make their point. They could have had a float in Newcastle's parade announcing the intention to close their school.

The worst thing about it all is that Newcastle, Allen, and Ponca's School Boards have for twenty years done their best to accommodate the other's views and needs. They have practiced diplomacy. Then along comes a few disingenuos who ignore the history of local efforts toward neighborly diplomacy. This disingenuous heresy cannot be for any purpose other than to destroy goodwill among the communities.

Get off Newcastle's back. We support Newcastle's effort to keep its school.

We've been adequately warned the community won't be the same once outside agitators come in.  
*Editor.*

August 31, 2005, Editorial Page of the Nebraska Journal-Leader:

**Paragraph one:**

**“We hear on the street the agitators are insisting that Newcastle close its school and join Ponca.”**

Right out of the chute with an imagined story provided by an unnamed source. The “street” must be another one of the outstanding investigative reporters employed by the Journal-Leader.

For once we would like to see the Editor actually interview an officer of the ABC’s Committee to verify the “streets” findings, or at least attribute the allegation to an individual.

And for the record, **no ABC’s Committee officer has ever said or indicated that they want Newcastle to close its school.** In the Finance Section of this website, we do mention mergers with Newcastle and/or Jackson as a possible way to increase valuation. It is a HUGE leap of faith to think that means shutting any town’s school doors.

The whole editorial is based on a falsehood that the Editor well knows is not true.

Rumors start and are spread by the Nebraska Journal-Leader and that is a shameful way to run a “newspaper”. The readership should insist on integrity in its “journalists.”