

Sheriff in conservative county defends free press

By Andres Selsky
Associated Press

SALEM (AP) — Journalists are defending a small newspaper after a county attorney asked the sheriff to investigate whether a reporter broke the law by trying repeatedly to get comments from an official for a story.

Staffers at the Malheur Enterprise, a weekly newspaper in the remote town of Vale, said they were just doing their job. “We’re not going to be bullied,” said editor Les Zaitz.

Brian Wolfe, the sheriff of deeply conservative Malheur County, said Wednesday an inquiry determined no laws had been broken.

“As an elected sheriff, we will always respect the constitutional rights of anybody and everybody. We do believe in freedom of the press and free speech that we believe are our rights given by the Constitution of the United States,” Wolfe said.

The newspaper had been investigating why a car wash did not receive a five-year exemption from local property taxes that was allegedly promised. Bluebird Express Car Wash built a \$4.5 million installation in the town of Ontario after it understood it received the exemption, representing about \$335,000, the newspaper reported.

Greg Smith, the director for economic development for Malheur County — a stretch of high desert almost twice the size of Connecticut — is responsible for determining and negotiating property tax exemptions. Malheur Enterprise reporter Pat Caldwell sought several times to get comment from Smith, who is also a Republican member of the state Legislature.

“This is an effort to get accurate information,” said Zaitz, a former investigative reporter with the Oregonian newspaper and a two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist. “The public is entitled to that information — not only entitled to that information, it deserves it.”

Smith responded only after the story was published on August 14 with the headline “Malheur County lured

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Fit For Sisters

Andrew Loscutoff
Columnist

The power of walking

In the 19th century, Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard wrote, “Above all, do not lose your desire to walk: Every day I walk myself into a state of well-being and walk away from every illness; I have walked myself into my best thoughts and I know of no thought so burdensome that one cannot walk away from it.”

It feels good to get out for a walk — whether it is just around the block, or a trek in the wilderness. Walking as exercise provides many health benefits. Some of these benefits are obvious: stronger leg muscles, better cardiovascular health, increased stamina. Other benefits — social, emotional, mental, and for the immune system — are less recognized.

Walking is a light activity. It will be good for anyone who is just starting with exercise, or for an individual

who needs an additional light activity to promote recovery or basic health. Walking will not help you lose weight as effectively as higher-intensity exercise. It will not build muscle, and has little effect on bone mass. Unless someone is pushing a brisk pace, walking is not an intense enough activity to ensure dramatic results.

This does not mean that walking is a pointless exercise. A Harvard public health article suggested walkers of 20 minutes five times per week had 43 percent less sick days. There are many benefits to walking beyond fitness measures.

Research from California State University at Long Beach found that the number of steps people took translated to higher self

esteem, happiness, and mood. On the same note, *Scientific American* reports that 200 minutes a week of walking resulted in more energy, more social people, and better emotional health.

These benefits translate into some pretty large implications. Take depression as an example. In a time where 1 in 10 Americans are suffering depression of some severity, walking 30 to 45 minutes for five days a week gave 10 of 19 subjects full remission of symptoms, according to a *Psychology Today* article.

Another larger extrapolation of the mental-health improvements of walking is in Alzheimer’s disease. Women aged 71-93 who

walked were 50 percent less likely to be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s than their compatriots. Another study showed 50- to 60-year-old walkers had a 35 percent lower likelihood of death in the following eight years than non-walkers.

Walking is a great form of low-intensity exercise that gives a big benefit to someone outside of the lust of running, cycling, weightlifting, and many of the more exciting forms of exercise. Walking gives someone the opportunity to mindfully explore their thoughts, ponder, and recognize their blessings. This along with the gentle aerobic and muscular activity, promotes a benefit anyone can agree is important.

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