



Editorial

"And the more transparent he became, the more fogged was the air..."

Hiding In Plain Sight: The New Transparency

By William C. Thomas

Those of us who raise children have probably encountered an issue that requires a suspension of disbelief: Little Sally was playing with Johnny in the yard and they broke a window. Little Sally told you, but it was when you were napping.

That's just what the BOCC is doing for us: publishing notices of meetings on their bulletin board exactly 24 hours prior to the meeting but failing to put them up on the website, so anyone on the Internet hasn't a clue as to what's going down. He has to go to the County Building to find out. At a late March BOCC meeting, Commissioners promised to make sure the agenda would be posted on the Internet; on the County's webpage. Did they screw up; or intentionally withhold information? They certainly didn't keep their promise.

The BOCC has also made sure its new Rubbish Ordinance, 12-01, has been published in the Elbert County News. That's really neat! The problem is that the Elbert County News has only 536 subscribers. For a weekly supposedly covering Elbert County, that's pretty pathetic. The West Elbert County Sun depends on at least 3,000 subscribers in Elbert County. Why didn't they put the Ordinance in the West Elbert County Sun? Probably because they were afraid someone would read it.

The new rubbish ordinance, for those who don't know, is designed to make money for the County. It has fees and conditions for rubbish and a designated clean up time. Also, it makes sure the Sheriff enforces it, so we can see the collector of 3,000 tomato cans or the guy with five Barcaloungers in his front yard spending time in the County Jail. We hasten to point out that the Commissioner with two tire swings in his front yard could also be up for charges. They could be considered "rubbish."

This "transparency" is puzzling to us. Why would the BOCC ram through their new ordinance for approval, then put its entire text in what amounts to a comic book on the bottom shelf of the discard pile? Is the BOCC merely following the letter of the law and not its intent?

