

'Moderate voice' touts incorrect information

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Thursday's (July 22) *Kingman Miner* newspaper featured the creation of an organization that claims to be a "moderate voice for gun owners." Unfortunately, the group's first shot out of the barrel is a misfire.

The former editor of the now defunct *River Cities Business Journal* and publisher of the no longer viable MohaveBusiness.com, whose name was misspelled in the *Miner* article, was quoted concerning the newly formed Citizens Rights League of Mohave County. The self-anointed gun expert writes an occasional column for the *Miner*.

When it comes to interpreting the law, I recommend people listen to attorneys, not advocates. As we have been told from childhood on, ignorance is no excuse for breaking the law. In other words, if you follow the advice of an advocate and break the law, you will be held responsible.

Mohave County government has many well-educated, experienced attorneys who spend a lot of time in court prosecuting lawbreakers, defending clients and interpreting the law. Our chief civil attorney states the *Miner's* gun guru is dispensing inaccurate information that could lead to the arrest of anyone who attempts to break the law by trying to sneak weapons into a county building.

The *Miner* (did I spell that right?) reporter paraphrased the gun guru's remarks with, "State law does not give the county permission to search or screen everyone that enters the building, he said. And what about gun owners

with concealed weapons permits? The permits are supposed to allow a resident to carry a gun into any public building that isn't secured...."

The guru cites jails and courthouses as examples of secured buildings and states that the County Administration Building is not a secured facility. Click! Misfire.

Our attorney's legal opinion is that the activist is spouting claptrap. Entering a public establishment with a deadly weapon after being requested to remove it and offered storage of same is misconduct involving a weapon. Public establishment is defined by law as "a structure, vehicle or craft that is owned, leased or operated by this state or a political subdivision of this state." It is not limited to "secured facilities."

The *Miner's* gun guru wrote his legal opinion in one of his published columns early in June. He claimed at that time as well that "the law cited at the County Administration Building will not allow county officials to force concealed weapons permit holders to relinquish their weapons."

I don't know if he wants local law-abiding folks, who may follow up on his advice, to get arrested or that he just believes that the laws are for other people. I do know that, back in March, this activist brought a gun and a pocket knife to the Admin Building to test the county's security efforts. He questioned the actions and demanded information, which was supplied by the county risk manager. According to the risk manager, he described himself as "working for the *Kingman Miner*."

That made me wonder if any newspaper publisher or editor ever asked a reporter or freelance representatives to

test the security efforts of a governor's office, bank, school or jail concerning deadly weapons. That instance and the advocate's full-page column that followed were not high points in local journalism.

The key here is all laws are to be followed by everyone. Mohave County will continue to follow and enforce the laws. Our security measures will include everything legally possible to ensure the

safety of our citizens and employees. To do anything less would be unethical, ignorant and tantamount to accepting liability for the possibly violent actions of others.

And, we will continue to get our legal opinions from law school graduates who have passed the State Bar and have engaged in years of legal practice – and not from the *Miner's* "moderate" gun guru.