

The following editorials were broadcast during first quarter, 2015, addressing the topics listed. **Each ran on WDRB's 4 PM and 10 PM news on the date indicated, in addition to twice during the following day's WDRB in the Morning between 5 and 9 AM.**

Each (excluding guest editorials) also aired three times – between 5P and 11P, during commercial breaks - on the date indicated on WMYO.

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, ALL EDITORIALS WERE ONE MINUTE AND THIRTY SECONDS IN LENGTH.

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GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Ark Encounter Deserves No Government Subsidy (1/6/14)

When plans were first announced in 2010 to build a creationism theme park in Northern Kentucky, I supported Governor Steve Beshear's plan to seek state tourism development incentives for the project. I pointed out that the park, *as described*, was intended to be run as a business – not a non-profit organization like a church. And I said that as long as it meets the legal standards required of any other for-profit business, the incentives would be OK.

But in the intervening years, it's become painfully clear that the people behind the so-called "Ark Encounter" have *every intention* of discriminating against non-Christians in their hiring practices, and that changes the whole deal. Governor Beshear now correctly says that disqualifies them from the millions in state aid they were hoping to get, and once again, I agree with the governor.

The park developers acknowledge that anyone who works for them *will* have to be a Christian, but claim that's not any different from other religious organizations. But the problem is, this *isn't* just another religious organization, but a full-fledged for-profit business. And if they insist on defying government rules in hiring, they should not only forget about government subsidies, but should also prepare to be prosecuted for violations of Kentucky's Civil Rights Act.

How do you feel about it? Call and tell us.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

No Do-Overs for Hatfield (1/8/15)

Just like a nagging pain in the....back... that won't go away, Julius Hatfield is back in the news again after withdrawing his resignation as a trustee of the Southeast Bullitt County Fire Protection Board.

You of course remember Hatfield, who demonstrated his racism and unfitness for public office late last year in a number of videotaped incidents and faces multiple claims of insurance fraud, mismanagement and abuse of public trust.

Hatfield says he's taking back his resignation because it was never officially accepted and because he's heard from numerous taxpayers and fire district residents who are concerned about how the fire district is being run in his absence.

I wonder who those concerned residents might be? Surely it couldn't be any of the attendees at last week's meeting who booed Hatfield lustily after hearing his announcement. Then again, it may have been some of his cronies who could have some of their *own* explaining to do if those claims of mismanagement of public funds and fraud receive a close inspection.

Hatfield's attorney, Thomas Clay, says it's up to the fiscal court to take further action. If that's the case, then they need to move swiftly to help Mr. Hatfield find his coat and the exit door one more time so Bullitt County can rid itself of this embarrassment once and for all.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Bullitt Fire Board Needs Leadership (1/13/15)

WDRB News uncovered a lot of wrongdoing at the Southeast Bullitt Fire department back in December, and it doesn't take a genius to figure out what the problem is. Chief Julius Hatfield takes the money from taxpayers and believes that it's actually *his* money.

After making racist comments to our journalist and racist comments about a black family in need, on Monday he found a way to sink to a new low. Journalist Valerie Chinn started asking questions about spending, and good old Mister Hatfield shoved her away in a parking lot. Really? Shoving a woman? Repeatedly making racist comments? And -- oh yeah -- he still has a job.

Part of why this obviously unfit man still *has* a job is because the board is so dysfunctional. They can't agree on whether to throw their good buddy Hatfield out with the other trash, or to just give up and resign from the board themselves. Either way, there's a severe lack of leadership being demonstrated in Bullitt County.

Once and for all, I would like to know who's going to step up and lead? Who's going to do the right thing and show this odious little man the door? Julius Hatfield should have been ousted months ago and yet he lingers. The people of Bullitt County deserve better.

What do you think of Hatfield or the Fire Boards? Call us and let us know.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Don't Let Fear Trump Free Speech (1/15/15)

There's a huge chasm between physical assault and mere insult. But that's a distinction some people seem too anxious to abandon.

Following the terrorist attack on a satirical French magazine, former U.S. National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski last week suggested that perhaps we should re-examine the concept of free speech. While admitting he hadn't personally seen the cartoons that allegedly sparked the massacre, he said, "I've been told...that some of (them) are absolutely appalling and directed at the prophet himself," and he asked "Is that really humor?"

Well, humor is always subjective, but Brzezinski's question implies two troubling suggestions. One, that perhaps writers and artists should avoid making provocative editorial statements so as not to stir things up. And two, that if they fail to do so, maybe they share some of the blame for any ensuing physical retribution.

This is preposterous, and hard to imagine coming from a former high U.S. government official. Rationalizing that massacres may be justifiable reactions to perceived blasphemy is a coward's reaction that will only embolden terrorists – not placate them. And if last week's attack is really enough to make us question our free speech rights, then it was more tragic than we even imagined.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Jim King – A True Loss (1/16/15)

Wednesday evening, Louisville lost a great community leader -- and I lost a great friend -- when Metro Council President Jim King passed away after a prolonged illness.

Jim was one of the smartest people we had in city government, and his was a sane and comforting voice on the Metro Council. That's why he kept getting elected President for so many terms. Jim was also one of probably four or five people who were critical in getting the Yum! Center built. Unlike so many others, he had a complete understanding of how money worked and the critical role Tax Increment Funding districts and bonds played in the equation.

Aside from the public role he played, you might not know what a brilliant sense of humor Jim had. He and I had to stop sitting together at Kentucky Derby Festival Board meetings because he would get us laughing so hard we would disrupt the meeting. He was also a great father and grandfather, and his love for those closest to him knew no limits.

This city will miss Jim King's wisdom and leadership. And I'll certainly miss his friendship.

I'm Bill Lamb, and that's my Point of View.

A Tax That Could Be Good (1/20/15)

I've never been one to casually argue for any new tax. Just like all of you, I like to keep as much of the money I earn as possible.

But consider for a moment the current abysmal state of Kentucky and Indiana's highways and bridges. Then imagine replacing those endless expanses of potholes and crumbling overpasses with what could be the crown jewels of the nation's highway systems.

That's what we in the Bluegrass and Hoosier states could potentially accomplish by implementing an additional, *temporary* tax on gasoline that would be put exclusively toward paying for the infrastructure overhaul that's so desperately needed in our respective states.

With current gas prices so incredibly low, now would be an ideal time to add, say, twenty-five cents to the cost of a gallon to pay for critically needed road and bridge repair. Since gas would still be extremely cheap compared to prices during the past decade, we'll likely never be better able to afford it. And mandating that such a tax would expire after a year would ensure that it wouldn't become just another open-ended cash grab that goes on for infinity.

As I said, I'm no fan of new taxes. But seeing what we could accomplish here with relatively little pain, this is one I could get behind.

What do you think? Call and tell us.

I'm Bill Lamb, and that's my Point of View.

No Bogus Immunity (1/29/15)

In yet another example of a lawmaker considering himself above the people he's supposed to serve, Kentucky State Senator Brandon Smith is claiming that DUI charges against him – stemming from a January 6 arrest in Franklin County – should be dismissed.

Why does he expect such lenience? Because of language in the state Constitution that supposedly shields legislators from being arrested while the state legislature is in session.

Nonsense. While such a provision does exist in the Constitution, it's not there to make any individual member immune from the laws everyone else follows. There's even a specific clause that makes exceptions for cases of "treason, felony, or breach or security of the peace."

If piloting an automobile on a public road while intoxicated doesn't pose a "breach or security of the peace," what does?

It *is* gratifying that Senate President Robert Stivers isn't allowing politics to interfere with his perception of common sense. In a rare, but admirable, rebuke of a fellow Republican, Stivers has stated that Smith's defense is based on a faulty interpretation of the Constitution, and that "no member of the General Assembly is above the law."

Here's hoping the courts will agree with Senator Stivers in this matter. Senator Smith not only needs to pay for breaking the law; he could also use a lesson in humility.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

End Hoosier Sunday Ban on Alcohol Sales (2/12/15)

I often tell Kentucky lawmakers they're needlessly losing money to Indiana and neighboring states because they won't legalize expanded gambling. So now I'm returning the favor by alerting Indiana lawmakers to an opportunity to recoup some revenue *they've* been losing to their Bluegrass neighbors.

I'm talking about Sunday liquor sales in the Hoosier State.

For decades now, Kentucky outlets have been free to sell alcohol seven days a week, while Sundays have been strictly off-limits for Indiana retailers. Some may think that's an admirable attempt to protect public morals. But who really believes anyone living in Indiana who wants a fifth of bourbon on Sunday doesn't already simply cross the bridge and buy it here – and let Kentucky collect the taxes on it?

This seems extremely similar to Kentucky's blind spot regarding casino gambling. Governments really should stick to keeping the peace and providing for the communal services and facilities of its citizens – not trying to control how people live their lives in private.

Fortunately, an Indiana House committee is currently considering whether the state's 80-year-old ban on Sunday alcohol sales should finally be retired. I really don't know what chances such a proposal has of passing the full legislature, but unless Indiana has piles of money stashed somewhere they don't know what to do with, I think it's an idea that at least deserves a serious hearing.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

No Way to Run a Country (2/17/15)

It's very likely that no bill will be passed in Congress to continue funding for the Homeland Security Department before February 27. And if that happens, thousands of its employees will be laid off while even more will be forced to work without pay until funding is restored.

How could that happen? Who could be opposed to Homeland Security?

The problem is, House Majority leader John Boehner refuses to consider a bill that simply funds the agency. Instead, he's demanding one that funds Homeland Security *and* overturns President Obama's latest plan to limit deportations of illegal immigrants. And that, of course, will never get enough support in the Senate to overcome the inevitable Obama veto.

I'm no fan of Obama's ever-more-lenient immigration policies. But why should one immediate, critical issue we can all agree upon be held hostage to a totally different topic that we'll probably still be debating five years from now?

The Republicans certainly aren't the only bad guys here. The party roles have been reversed in the past, and that was equally unacceptable. But at some point, our lawmakers have to stop playing politics and consider important issues on their own merits.

The party that recognizes this first may lose a battle. But they'll also take a large step toward ultimately winning the war for the hearts and minds of the voters.

Call us with your thoughts.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Guest Editorial – Kentucky Retirement Account (3/2/15)

Hundreds of thousands of Kentuckians are nearing retirement with meager savings. The average household has only \$3000 set aside and the number of retirees is growing dramatically.

Unless we successfully encourage personal savings, many Kentuckians will retire completely dependent upon overburdened government programs at great taxpayer expense..

That's why I've proposed legislation to create a private sector retirement savings opportunity for the nearly 800-thousand Kentuckians currently without access to a retirement savings plan at their workplace.

Introduced by Representative Martha Jane King and known as the Kentucky Retirement Account, or KYRA, this voluntary program would be managed and marketed by the private sector for small businesses and their employees.

Research shows workers are *15 times* more likely to save for retirement if their employers offer a plan and that most employers want to offer their workers an affordable option.

KYRA answers both needs.

This legislation creates affordable, convenient options for businesses and their employees.

This legislation weans people off government dependency and promotes self-reliance.

This legislation saves Kentucky taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

Finally, this proposal, if enacted, will demonstrate for the people of Kentucky that their elected leaders can proactively address a critical issue before it becomes an unmanageable crisis.

Please call your representatives and ask them to support the Kentucky Retirement Account.

KYRA -- a *win* for every Kentuckian!

I'm Todd Hollenbach, and that's my Point of View.

Senate Republicans Must Support LIFT (3/3/15)

The Local Investments for Transformation – or LIFT -- tax is a proposal to amend Kentucky's constitution to allow citizens to bypass state approval and vote on the funding of *local* projects through an extra one percent sales tax that would expire once the project is paid for.

It easily passed the state House of Representatives with strong bipartisan support. But so far, Senate Republicans aren't even allowing a committee vote on this important bill. And that's just wrong.

For too long Kentucky has relied on failed, top-down management. But while Republicans *say* they're for local control and economic development, they're doing nothing to support that claim in this instance.

This is a pro-job, pro-development, pro-local control idea supported by Kentucky's business community. How can it not get *any* movement in a Republican-controlled State Senate? Could it be because the Frankfort insider crowd is getting nervous that some control might actually move away from Frankfort?

Look -- this plan is the purest form of democracy because it'll simply give us the right to vote yes for small taxes that will benefit projects we want, or no for a project we don't support.

If that sounds simple, that's because it is. It's time for our Republican Leadership to grow a spine and *lead*, instead of timidly worrying about pleasing Tea Partiers.

Call and tell us what you think.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

In Support of KYRA (3/5/15)

Kentucky State Treasurer Todd Hollenbach recently appeared on Point of View in support of the Kentucky Retirement Account, or KYRA -- a legislative proposal that would automatically enroll all Kentuckians who lack access to a savings plan at their workplace into a payroll deduction plan that would divert a small percentage of their wages into a personal IRA.

I also support this, because it's estimated that the average Kentucky household currently has only \$3000 set aside for retirement. And when all those people reach retirement age with such a meager amount of money, disaster awaits.

The beauty of KYRA is that while it *is* voluntary, it still makes it harder for people NOT to save. Yes, any employer or employee who wishes not to participate would still be able to opt out, no questions asked. But participation in the plan would be the default position that people would have to opt *out of*, rather than *into*. And the plan would cost nothing on the part of either the employee or the employer.

If we don't do this, sure -- most retirees will still survive. But they'll do it on the backs of an already-overburdened and ever-shrinking taxpayer base.

This is a better way, because under this plan, choosing to do nothing will actually be a choice to do something positive. And anything that encourages self-reliance is a good thing in my book.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Stop The Marathon Oil Monopoly in Kentucky (3/19/15)

Earlier this week, USA Today reported that gas prices are dropping again and they could dip under two dollars a gallon soon. Then yesterday, with gas prices dropping all around us, the price in Louisville jumped from \$2.22 to 2.50 a gallon. What a nice way for the monopoly that is Marathon Oil to welcome our NCAA guests to town!

Marathon provides almost all the oil to the Louisville area, regardless of what gas station you frequent. That's the problem with a monopoly: If they take advantage of people simply because they can, they give the government every incentive to step in and break them up. For some reason monopolies just can't help themselves. And if they operate with no regard for what is right or ethical – they *should* be broken up.

The problem is that right now nobody seems to be able to stop Marathon Oil. They are fearless and operate with impunity. They will gouge you any time they see an opportunity. To his credit, Jack Conway took a couple runs at Marathon but he couldn't get the FTC to back him up.

I think Marathon Oil's conduct is outrageous. Maybe if a few thousand of you make a phone call telling them you don't appreciate them gouging you ...maybe...you can persuade them that the customer is always right. Call or email them today, and keep doing it. Make your voice heard.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

(Insert these graphically at beginning of last paragraph.)

Phone number is 866-462-7284

Email address is customerrelations@marathonpetroleum.com

Courier-Journal Admits Polling Errors (3/24/15)

Back in February of last year, the Courier Journal's Bluegrass Poll said Alison Grimes was leading Mitch McConnell. Subsequent surveys maintained that she was leading -- right up until the final poll when it gave *him* a slight edge right before he won big. In an editorial, I said that polls can be skewed depending on what you want them to say simply by surveying the right people. When any organization with an agenda pays for a poll or a study, we should question these things, not accept them without challenge.

A couple of weeks ago, the Courier had a story about SurveyUSA, which conducts the Bluegrass Poll. The C-J said they're making minor changes to the methodology in Kentucky in an effort to correct what turned out to be an unintentional oversampling of more moderate to liberal men.

I don't know if it was "unintentional" or not. The C-J has shamelessly tried to influence elections in favor of Democratic candidates, and they've unapologetically pushed their pro-Democrat/pro-liberal agenda forward even as they continue to try to sell papers in a fairly conservative community.

Do you think now that they're fighting for their survival with more layoffs and firings, perhaps their latest strategy is to finally become an unbiased newspaper with unbiased poll results?

I have my doubts, but call and tell us what you think.

I'm Bill Lamb, and that's my Point of View.

Opening a Religious Pandora's Box (3/31/15)

Many people are framing Indiana's just-passed, "Religious Freedom Restoration Act" as a license for Hoosier businesses to discriminate against gays. But its problems extend far beyond that.

Supporters say it will simply stop the government from compelling people to do things they object to on religious grounds. But injecting religious exemptions into the legal protections we all enjoy as Americans violates every principle of church-state separation.

When any government gives its citizens carte blanche to ignore any law simply by declaring it religiously invalid, it surrenders its very reason for existence. Don't want to serve someone of a different race or ethnicity in your restaurant? Simply claim it's against your religion and you're home free.

Of course, if someone refused to pay taxes on religious grounds, I'm pretty sure Indiana wouldn't allow that to happen. But that's the very problem with this law -- in the end, it'll simply come down to which violations will be allowed and which won't. And such selective enforcement is discrimination by definition.

If people are incapable of running their businesses in accordance with the law, then they shouldn't be in business -- period. This law is bad for everyone, *regardless* of their sexual orientation. And I hope Indiana's lawmakers will see the error of their ways.

Call and share your thoughts.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

EDUCATION

Assault Charge Would be an Overreaction (1/22/15)

In retrospect, I imagine Ashley Silas wishes she'd done things differently. But some people are overreacting to her supposed "crime."

Ms. Silas is the Brooks Elementary School teacher who was caught on video dragging a first-grader by the arm down a hall after he fell to the floor and threw a tantrum instead of accompanying Ms. Silas as he was supposed to. She was initially fired, then reinstated after an appeal.

I have no problem with the school's policies. Their rules are their rules. But now, things have moved into the realm of the ridiculous with the recommendation of Bullitt County Attorney John Wooldridge that Ms. Silas face criminal charges of *assault* in the matter.

Really? As a look at the video on our website will reveal, she didn't hit the child or yank violently on his arm. He just fell to the floor while she was holding his hand, Ms. Silas was having none of it, and she simply kept walking, pulling him along the floor for about 150 feet.

A smooth, polished floor, I might add. At home with Mom or Dad, most kids would probably consider that a fun game.

This wasn't a gravel road strewn with broken bottles.

Quite possibly, Ms. Silas broke school rules. But getting the courts involved in this matter strikes me as an injustice and waste of resources. Bullitt County has bigger problems.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Keep Dr. Hargens (2/19/15)

The Jefferson County School Board will soon decide whether to renew the contract of Superintendent Dr. Donna Hargens beyond this June. We've had four years now to observe Dr. Hargens' leadership style and its results, and while things are still far from perfect in our public schools, it's indisputable that we've come a long way since 2011.

JCPS has met its academic targets two years in a row. The graduation rate is up. College and career readiness rates are up. Proficiency is up. And this past fall we learned that JCPS moved from the 35th to the 51st percentile in state test results.

Make no mistake, being better than only 51% of the rest of the schools in the state isn't great, but the momentum has been reversed, and Dr. Hargens deserves a lot of credit for that.

Fixing the damage that's been done in recent decades to the quality of our schools is a long term process. And anyone in charge of an organization that serves over 100,000 children with an employee work force of more than 14,000 *and* has to satisfy the demands of parents, a tough teachers union and an out of touch state legislature faces an almost impossible task.

Still, when we ask, "How are things now compared to when she began?" it's pretty clear -- Dr. Hargens has proven herself an able leader, and she deserves to continue as our superintendent.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Change the Teacher Pension System (3/12/15)

Even though the Kentucky State House passed legislation last month to issue 3.3 billion dollars in bonds to shore up the seriously under-funded Kentucky Teachers Retirement System, the Senate this week stripped out all language pertaining to bonds and instead suggested creating a task force to study the problem further later this year.

But why not do both?

I'm no fan of our current over-generous pension system that robs us of teacher longevity and productivity by promising unrealistic benefits at outrageously young ages. But the fact is, we've made those promises and now we need more money to back them up. Issuing bonds now – when interest rates are historically low – would be relatively inexpensive and still allow us to honor the commitments already made to past and present teachers.

But... that task force could still do a world of good by recommending fundamental changes to the retirement system going forward. And the primary goal should be to replace the current extravagant defined *benefits* plan with a defined *contribution* plan.

It's time to stop digging the hole. Even though we're committed to the promises made to former and current teachers, we're *not* obligated to keep making even more unrealistic promises to *new* teachers as they enter the system.

The laws of economics are no different for public employees than private employees, and the sooner we realize this, the better our chances of avoiding disaster.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Graduates Should be Qualified (3/17/15)

This past weekend, the WDRB Sunday Edition story by Toni Konz discussed the Jefferson County School System's Teenage Parent Program. It's a good story and I recommend you take a look at it.

But in reading it, I became aware of what I consider a somewhat shocking revelation: While the overall graduation rate in Jefferson County high schools is 79%, the percentage of seniors considered "college and career ready" is only 60.5%.

That means that nearly a quarter of all students who receive a diploma are judged by JCPS to *not* be college and career ready.

If these kids really aren't prepared for further education or a career, exactly why does JCPS think they should receive a diploma? Isn't that supposed to be the point? What good is a diploma that can't assure a future college or employer that the person whose name is on it possesses at least the minimum qualifications to perform at the next level?

Some may say "What's the problem? These kids put in the time – give them a break." But the truth is, such a policy seriously cheapens the value of the diplomas awarded to those students who truly *earned* them. And that's not fair.

I say if students aren't "college or career-ready," they shouldn't get a piece of paper that implies they are. Maybe some kind of "certificate of completion" would be OK, but no diploma.

But call and tell us what you think.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Guest Editorial – Fund KTRS

Once again, the Kentucky General Assembly ended a legislative session without addressing the single biggest financial issue facing the Commonwealth – funding the Kentucky Teacher Retirement System - KTRS.

The Democratic House leadership did their homework and brought forth House Bill 4 - a credible solution to fund KTRS. Unfortunately, Republican Senate Leaders claimed they had “too many questions” and were unwilling to act. As a result, KTRS officials indicate the system will have to sell more than \$500 million worth of investments over the coming year, just to make payments to retirees. These funds will ultimately have to be paid back with interest by Kentucky taxpayers. That’s more than \$1.4 million every day for the coming year. Based on this, rating agencies have warned Kentucky that its failure to act may lower the state’s credit rating.

Therefore, Jefferson County teachers call upon the Senate Leadership to begin ongoing meetings with the House Leadership, along with all the technical expertise needed to answer their questions, so this issue can be solved before the retirement system has to sell half a billion dollars in investments.

As teachers, we are not covered by Social Security. KTRS is all we have. So if Kentucky is going to attract and keep quality educators in classrooms, our teachers have to know they can count on a secure retirement.

Funding KTRS is not just about keeping our promise to teachers. It’s about having the best educators possible to teach our kids.

I’m Brent McKim, and that’s my Point of View.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Guest POV – West End Walmart (2/13/15)

There are thousands of people in our community who take for granted the convenience of being able to shop for the simplest of goods and services in their very own neighborhoods. Unfortunately, my 62,000 neighbors and I in West Louisville don't have that privilege.

That's why so many of us are excited about Walmart's interest in building a superstore on the corner of 18th and Broadway.

For more than a decade, that property has been a vacant eyesore that has failed to attract a retailer that could change the landscape of Louisville's most underserved neighborhoods. I believe Walmart would change that.

Unfortunately, our city's design codes don't allow Walmart the ability to build in West Louisville the type of superstore that exists in nearly every neighborhood in this community. As a result, the project is now in jeopardy.

That's because Walmart says changing the design of the proposed building is a deal-breaker for them, which means that the members of the Zoning Adjustment Board now have to decide between holding fast to their policies or making an exception that would bring nearly 300 jobs and economic opportunity to the neighborhood that needs it the most.

In my opinion, their decision should be an easy one: grant Walmart the waivers it needs to build in West Louisville. If you agree, share your opinion at the final zoning meeting at 1pm, next Monday at 514 W. Liberty Street.

Your voice could be the one that makes a difference.

I'm DeVone Holt, and that's my Point of View.

The Greedy Big Four Bridge (3/10/15)

A few weeks ago I praised the folks behind the brilliant LED lighting on the Big Four Bridge. Most of the expense was covered by private donations with city government covering the rest. I think it's dynamic, vibrant, and gives a bit of quirkiness to the city's personality.

This bridge restoration was paid for by taxpaying citizens. Citizens paid to light it. It should be for our citizens to enjoy and make Louisville a little nicer place to live.

Recently, I asked the people who run the bridge if they would be so kind as to light it in all red for a few days in March to remind people that March is Red Cross month, that Red Cross does a lot of good in our community during times of need, and that it's having its big fundraiser gala in March called Wrapped in Red. Many companies are lighting their buildings in red for that very reason.

And how do you think the board of directors of the Waterfront Development Corporation responded? Sure, we'll turn all our lights red for the Red Cross or any other charity - for \$5,000 a day! I think that is outrageous. The bridge is not a business, but every business in every city donates goods and services to charities. The board of the Big Four Bridge should do no less, especially when it's such an easy ask.

Am I missing something here? Or is the Board completely out of line with this demand? Call and tell us.

I'm Bill Lamb, and that's my Point of View.

HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Guest POV – Medicinal Marijuana

I have Multiple Sclerosis. I've been fighting this disease for eight years. I have muscle spasms, tremor uncontrollably, and I'm scared. Cannabis relieves these symptoms.

In Kentucky, thousands of Veterans suffer from PTSD and haven't responded to treatment. Sadly, too many choose suicide as a last resort for escaping their demons. I have personal combat veteran friends who testify that smoking Cannabis relieves them within seconds after waking up from horrendous nightmares.

Kentucky has the highest cancer death rate of all 50 states. You probably know someone who has had cancer. Cancer treatments also bring some of the most debilitating side effects. Twenty thousand Kentuckians a year face this diagnosis. Marijuana has been studied and proven to relieve these effects. The nausea brought about by chemotherapy is relieved within seconds of inhaling Cannabis.

The Epilepsy Foundation of Kentuckiana report over ninety thousand individuals suffer from epilepsy in our area. Like cancer treatments, medications used to manage seizures have debilitating side effects. Not every patient can tolerate the treatments, and the drugs often stop working. Cannabis oil has been heralded for decreasing certain patients' seizures from three hundred per week to zero or one.

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Cannabis is helping us cope with our symptoms. Please help us by contacting your legislator at 800-372-7181 asking them to support medical marijuana legislation.

I'm Jaime Montalvo, founder of Kentuckians for Medicinal Marijuana, and that's my point of view.

Get the Vaccine (2/3/15)

When I was a young child, measles still killed thousands of children per year. But since then, breakthroughs in vaccination research – coupled with laws mandating the vaccine for all children attending school or day care -- has allowed America to virtually eradicate measles as a concern.

But now, that progress is being threatened.

Because of unfounded fears that the measles vaccine may cause autism in young children, too many people are insisting that their children not be vaccinated, citing religious objections. The problem is, this is causing the percentage of vaccinated children to drop to the point where measles epidemics could once again become a real problem.

Some parents may say “We’ll take that risk.” But since many children *can’t* take the vaccine because of particular diseases of deficient immune systems – and a small percentage simply don’t respond to the vaccine -- they’re putting *them* at risk, too. And for no good reason.

No matter what noted medical expert Jenny McCarthy may say, the measles vaccine does *not* cause autism. The single study in 1998 that purported to prove it does has since been retracted because of dishonesty and unethical behavior by its author.

Despite the hysterical Internet rumors, failing to vaccinate your child is a selfish, ill-informed decision that puts everyone else’s children at risk as well as yours. And we need to be smarter than that.

Call and share your thoughts.

I’m Bill Lamb and that’s my Point of View.

Texting's Not the Only Thing That Should Be Banned While Driving (2/10/15)

In this week's "Sunday Edition" story on WDRB.com, Jason Riley reports that while *citations* for texting while driving are up nearly 500 percent since it was outlawed in 2011, the *conviction rate* is lower than ever.

Why? Because while the law specifically forbids texting, it doesn't include any of the other ways drivers can distract themselves with their phones. And since officers can rarely swear they saw someone texting – as opposed to browsing the Internet, updating social media or taking a selfie – the offenders usually get off on a technicality.

I don't care if you're texting, talking or looking for directions, you shouldn't be doing it while driving, and the law should say *that* instead of being so narrow as to be unenforceable.

State Representative Tom Burch has introduced a bill that would bar *any* use of a hand-held cell phone by a driver whose car is in motion. Only hands-free devices would be allowed for making actual phone calls.

You'd think this would be a no-brainer. But Burch says he's failed in the past to get it out of committee because, he believes, "Most legislators want to talk on the phone while *they're* driving."

If that's the case, shame on them. The safety of all should always trump the inconvenience of a few, and putting real teeth into this law would save a lot of real lives.

Call and tell us what you think.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Time for Statewide Smoking Ban Has Come (2/26/15)

Over the past several years, Louisville, Lexington and dozens of other Kentucky cities have all passed laws banning smoking in public buildings and workplaces. And by doing so, they've freed the large majority of their citizens from the proven health hazards of second-hand smoke and motivated others to give up the habit.

Opponents of these laws all argued that they'd cause irreparable harm to businesses – especially restaurants and bars. And in every case, they were proven wrong, as the few who stayed home because of the ban were more than outweighed by the many who were *more* likely to patronize businesses that didn't pose a threat to their health.

Now, Kentucky has taken the first step toward extending this common-sense policy to the statewide level. But while the House approved a statewide smoking ban earlier this month, Senate President Robert Stivers says he doesn't believe the Senate is likely to follow suit.

If that's the case, the people will have been ignored. Surveys indicate that more than two-thirds of Kentuckians support such a law, and the time has come for them to be heard.

If this is important to you, I urge you to contact your state senator and make your feelings on this proposal clear. This is a rare chance for Kentucky to make meaningful progress toward a much healthier environment and it would be a shame to squander it.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.

Guest POV – Homicides

I find the homicide rate of Louisville Metro Area to be abhorrent. On average the homicides are proportionally about the same as Chicago. The Metro area has about 1/10 the population of Chicago and has about 1/10 the homicides. But this is not an average year so far.

As reported in the news, the shooting incidents 2015 year to date are about the same as 2014 year to date. Apparently the difference is the accuracy of the shooters. Last year more survived!

What is being done? If we listen to the Mayor and Police Chief as reported in the news recently, more layers of investigation are being added. Is this just 'feel good' activity? You judge.

If the number of shootings, as reported, has not changed, one has to wonder why remedial actions were not taken last year.

Does the mayor believe that bringing additional layers of bureaucratic 'investigation' by the FBI, ATF, DEA will reverse the pervasive actions of the perpetrators? Will this somehow give them new powers of insight which will prevent the perps from shooting someone instead of either walking away or agreeing to disagree? The answer is NO!

I submit a segment of the population supports these acts by not calling the tip lines and actively participating will not change in our lifetimes.

Therefore I submit that the Mayor and Police Chief are pandering to their political base with another 'feel good' activity rather than seeking an effective solution. This is also known as CYA!

I'm William Rutherford and that's my Point of View.

Save the Trees (3/26/15)

Louisville has a tree problem that's getting worse every day.

Specifically, we're *losing* trees -- to disease, ice storms, insect damage and other causes -- at a rate of about 54,000 a year.

That's approximately 148 trees *every day*. And unless things change, the end of that pattern is nowhere in sight.

If you think this is just a question of aesthetics, you're wrong. A healthy tree population is essential to any community's public health and quality of life.

One mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year. Trees clean the air and soil, reduce noise pollution and soil erosion, lower heating and cooling bills and add considerably to property values. But they can't keep providing these benefits if they're not replaced as they die off.

Mayor Fischer is rightly concerned about this, and he's urging citizens and businesses to e-mail input and ideas about how to preserve and replace our tree canopy to communityforest@louisvilleky.gov through the end of May. There'll also be a series of public meetings on the subject, the first of which is scheduled for Thursday, May 14, at 6:30 p.m. at Louisville Metro Hall.

We've all contributed in some way to the problem. Now's the time to take part in the solution.

I'm Bill Lamb and that's my Point of View.