

WDRB-TV
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY
INDEPENDENCE TELEVISION COMPANY

ISSUES & PROGRAMS

EDITORIALS

THIRD QUARTER, 2019

POV | The 1,768th Point of View

Bill Lamb

Jul 2, 2019

Over the past 17 years, I have done 1,768 Point of View editorials on WDRB – and this is my last one. I can almost hear certain people jumping for joy. The time has come for me to accept a new challenge, and Becky and I are moving to Los Angeles where I will join the Fox station KTTV and sister station KCOP as general manager.

Leaving is never easy, especially when you love the people you work with and the city you live in as much as I love WDRB and Louisville. There is never a perfect time to leave, but if there is a good time, it's with WDRB on top. The station has never been stronger and in the fall we will grow to 64 hours a week of news, when we launch the new 5 p.m. newscast.

Everyone who works at WDRB knows that our success is a team effort. So I want to take this moment to remind you that the people who make WDRB a powerhouse news organization are poised to make it even better.

For Becky and me, this move to LA will be a great adventure. We're looking forward to many new challenges and meeting many new friends, but we will never forget our friends and coworkers right here in Kentuckiana.

So for the 1,768th and last time in Louisville, Kentucky, I'm Bill Lamb, and that's my Point of View.

POV | Sen. Mitch McConnell under partisan attack

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Aug 1, 2019

US Senator Mitch McConnell is under attack, and the Democrats aren't the only ones taking aim at him. Morning Talk Show host Joe Scarborough got the ball rolling during a rant about voter security legislation.

Scarborough took a cheap shot, calling the senator "Moscow Mitch" to attack his character. Scarborough went so far as to claim McConnell is quote "Aiding and abetting Putin's attempts to subvert U. S. Democracy."

In addition to MSNBC, two opinion writers from the Washington Post jumped on board the anti-McConnell bandwagon calling him a "Russian Asset".

Mitch McConnell wants to keep the hands of the federal government out of state politics. Yes, I'm sure he wants better oversight for elections, but not at the level Democrats are demanding.

Republicans and Democrats will always argue over policy as they guide our country forward. I just don't think we need to stoop to name-calling and questioning the patriotism of a six-term senator.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and That's my Point of View.

POV | Setting your child up for a successful school year

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Aug 13, 2019 Updated 5 hrs ago

It's back to school time. I believe a good education is one of the greatest gifts you can give a child. Teachers are doing their best work in the classroom, but a good education starts at home.

If you're a parent or a grandparent raising a child, there's a lot you can do to set that child up for success.

Make sure your child has a good breakfast, clean clothes, and help them with homework. If you can't help, find someone who can.

Take an interest in what your child is doing and stay engaged. Before pointing fingers at the school for your child's education, you need to ask yourself, "Am I doing enough?"

Best of luck to all the students in our area, for what could be another great year. And best wishes to the parents.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and that's my Point of View.

CRAWFORD COMMENTARY |

Epstein's prison death, and the demise of American competence

Eric Crawford

Aug 13, 2019

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (WDRB) -- The apparent death of suspected sex trafficker Jeffrey Epstein illustrates, in a nutshell, the problem with American government at many levels and on both sides of the aisle today.

And it's a problem that has concerned me for some time.

American competence is slipping away. We're losing our ability to get the job done, whatever that job may be. The corny notion of a "can-do" spirit which typified this country for most of its existence and pre-existence is becoming a museum relic. And I fear that we're too busy arguing with each other to care.

Last month, we celebrated the golden anniversary of the U.S. lunar landing in 1969. But 50 years later, what big projects are on the American agenda? What big problems are we posed to solve?

Here's the fact, and it's a difficult one to acknowledge for those of us who love this country: We can't even keep a guy in a prison cell alive.

The reason doesn't really matter, but I'll get to that in a bit. If you can't keep a man in custody, one of the highest-profile criminal suspects in the world, a man whose prosecution is important not only as a message to others who would engage in the same kind of disgusting sexual behavior with children but as justice for all those whom he abused, then what can you do?

This July 1, 2019 photo shows the Manhattan Correctional Center, in New York. Financier Jeffrey Epstein died by suicide while awaiting trial on sex-trafficking charges in New York, a former law enforcement official said Saturday. He was found in his cell at the Manhattan Correctional Center Saturday morning, according to the officials, who was briefed on the matter but spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to discuss it publicly. The medical examiner's office in Manhattan confirmed Epstein's death. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

He's basically in a cage. You feed him. You monitor his health. You make sure he doesn't kill himself. There aren't many more basic tasks than that. It doesn't require great education, intellect or technology. If you can't keep that guy standing until trial, it's time to roll the end credits.

If you can't do that, don't ask us to believe you can be trusted with anything else. Don't bother with an investigation. If you can't keep a single prisoner alive, you sure can't investigate it to anyone's satisfaction.

I don't really care why he was allowed to apparently take his own life. None of the explanations are good. One of his guards at the time of his death was not a full-fledged corrections officer, it turns out. Anybody feel better now? Nope. Incompetence. The other guard had been working overtime and wasn't around. Nobody checked on Epstein for hours before his death. He was taken off suicide watch despite a previous apparent attempt last month.

FILE - In this July 30, 2008 file photo, Jeffrey Epstein, center, is shown in custody in West Palm Beach, Fla. The wealthy financier and convicted sex offender has been arrested in New York on sex trafficking charges. Two law enforcement officials said Epstein was taken into federal custody Saturday, July 6, 2019, on charges involving sex-trafficking allegations that date to the 2000s. (Uma Sanghvi/Palm Beach Post via AP, File)

That, my fellow Americans, is not giving a damn. And there's a lot of that going around.

A good many people think it's something worse, and it's hard to blame them, if only because the level of incompetence required to let something like this happen is so mind-boggling. They see a payoff, or a political murder, given the number of rich and powerful people Epstein stood to implicate. Some question whether he's even dead, whether he wasn't spirited off in some kind of high-level conspiracy. And you can understand why people would think those things. And not just crackpots, but intelligent people. And why not? A lot of crazy theories have proven not-so-crazy lately.

So in checking the scorecard (sportswriter here, you know), either we've got a Federal prison system too incompetent to keep a single prisoner alive or too corrupt to allow him to be brought to trial.

Neither inspires a great deal of confidence.

I'm not a "bash America" guy. I know we as a nation have had some faults, many of them major. But whatever its faults, this country historically has seen big problems and worked to find big solutions. When Europe was starving after World War II, we had the Marshall Plan. When Russia tried to keep us out of Berlin, we fed the city via an airlift. Yes, we exported our culture as well as large amounts of food and money. Yes, our efforts have sometimes been long on symbol and short on substance. But we did those things out of a knowledge that secure and happy allies advanced our interests in the world and made it a safer place.

Out of this country came the airplane and the cellphone, the internet, the automobile and the first nuclear reactor. This nation has looked less to conquer than to co-exist. When we became the richest nation on earth, we attempted to be a source of hope and help for the less fortunate around the world.

None of it happened without failures. In the 1960s, we didn't see mass shootings in the news, but we saw assassinations. John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. We could send a man to the moon, but we couldn't protect our leaders. We couldn't even prevent the killing of JFK's suspected killer, Lee Harvey Oswald, who was shot dead on national television. There have been conspiracy theories ever since.

And we've seen plenty of failures in recent years. Failures to prevent terrorist attacks. A financial crisis that was poorly understood and nearly crippled the country. Hurricane Katrina revealed the government's inability to deal with a mass tragedy. The gulf oil spill and aftermath showed failures of operations, particularly when it came to safety inspections, but in the aftermath, as well.

All of these breakdowns and others like them are complicated.

This is not: To have a prisoner in a controlled environment, in a cell, completely under supervision and to allow him to kill himself, or otherwise die, is a new low. A new blow to American competence and confidence.

I don't know where we go to regain either, but we badly need to. We have a refugee situation on our own border that we haven't solved. We can't find a solution to the growing menace of mass shootings. We can't figure out how to better deliver affordable health care to many Americans. We can't agree on a unified approach to environmental responsibility. We have major cities in decay, and we can't educate their children or curb the violence that comes as a result.

I wish I had an answer at the end of this, or something better to offer. Unfortunately, if we can't, or won't, keep alive a single prisoner in a single cell, well, I'm afraid the fault lies in ourselves, and I'm afraid it doesn't bode well for the larger, far more complicated problems we face. If we want better, all we can do is demand better. But this problem has been so long in the making that correction may be a long way off.

POV | Stopping gun violence through responsible gun ownership

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Aug 15, 2019

The recent mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton have sparked new debate over guns and gun control.

We need guns in some circumstances. Law enforcement needs guns, hunters and farmers need guns to control the wild game population. There is even room for gun enthusiasts to shoot targets in a controlled environment.

We don't need guns on city streets. Weapons (sometimes stolen) are being used to take a human life. It has to stop.

Yes, the second amendment of the constitution gives U.S. citizens the right to keep and bear arms, but the intention was not to use guns to randomly kill people.

We've got to support responsible gun use and eliminate gun violence.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and that's my Point of View.

POV | Teens out of control at the fair need to learn respect

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Aug 20, 2019

What was supposed to be a night of fun, games and music at the Kentucky State Fair got out of hand Saturday night.

Hundreds of kids gathered in front of Freedom Hall. But when someone set off fireworks and there were false reports of a shooter, it turned to chaos. Police tried to restore order but the tone of this teenage crowd changed.

While I can't speak to the actions of all officers, you can see teenagers being disrespectful to police in several videos posted on social media. The teens ignored warnings to move on and at times resisted. One even calls on the crowd to jump an officer who was alone. In the rush, people were shoved and injured.

It's a shame because all of this could have been prevented. Teenagers need to show respect for police. Officers are there to protect all of us.

If you're a parent, you need to know what your children are doing. More importantly, we need to teach children the importance of respect. We want the State Fair-- and our community-- to be a safe place for everyone.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my Point of View.

POV | An emerging leader

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News
Aug 22, 2019

Kentuckiana came very close to having a big medical problem on its hands. A few weeks ago, Jewish Hospital was on the verge of shutting its doors. This would have threatened the health and well-being of our community. It would take away valuable medical resources and talented doctors and medical professionals. It would have cost our community hundreds of jobs.

One person in particular stepped in to rally and make changes. I'm talking about U of L President Dr. Neeli Bendapudi. Dr. Bendapudi is the leader of a university. She didn't have to get involved, but she saw a need that had to be fixed and decided to take action.

Behind the scenes, there were many people involved on this project from U of L and state government, but it was Dr. Bendapudi who pulled everything together. Even our governor acknowledged her leadership to save jobs, patient care and more. I want to congratulate Dr. Bendapudi for emerging as an effective leader who is thinking beyond the boundaries of her job.

A successful university is an important part of Louisville, but it gets even better with strong leadership.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and that's my Point of View

POV | A gun in an unlocked car is an invitation to criminals

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News
Aug 27, 2019

It's been a deadly year in Louisville as the number of homicides climb. This summer, a pretty scary trend has emerged that could be prevented.

Louisville Metro Police announced that guns are being stolen out of cars. What I can't believe is that most of the cars were unlocked. This isn't happening in one neighborhood, but all across the city and suburbs. We can't afford to have guns stolen because many weapons could be used in a violent crime.

First of all, guns don't belong in cars unless you are transporting them for hunting or going to target practice. Yes, I know about the Second Amendment, but we need to be smarter about protecting property.

Second, lock your doors. In this day and age, not only should you lock your car at night, you need to keep your car locked at all times.

Everyone needs to take steps to keep stolen guns off the streets and out of the hands of criminals.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my Point of View.

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I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my Point of View.

POV | Football season is here, so be a better fan

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News
Aug 29, 2019

It's here. It's finally here. I'm talking about football season. This weekend all of our teams from high school to the pros are in action.

Are you going to cheer for UK or U of L? I know I'm wading into dangerous territory with that question. Each year we want our favorite team to be better, but you may want to ask yourself "can I be a better fan?"

Coach Satterfield and his team are starting a new era. You bought the tickets, you have the jersey. Good fans don't walk out at halftime. Stick around and support your team.

At UK, Coach Stoops and his team have prepared for another strong season. Don't sit around and complain about stadium beer sales. Put your energy into supporting the student athletes who have worked so hard, and want to win. No matter who you cheer for, I hope it's a great season filled with great fans of the game.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and that's my Point of View.

POV | Indiana test scores get a failing grade - but not just for students

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News
Sep 5, 2019

Congratulations kids, you're failing in school. That would be a horrible thing to say to a child, but that's what the new Indiana state test results are showing us.

The new I-learn test scores show only 47 percent of Indiana's third through eighth graders are meeting the new standards for math and English. So, what's at stake? Teachers' performances could be called into question, and schools could receive a failing grade.

But did students really fail the test, or did the test fail the students? The State Schools Superintendent Jennifer McCormick said she doesn't believe the students are backsliding. She insists that the new test is more rigorous.

Indiana has switched standardized tests three times in five years and each new exam has exposed a new set of problems. The question we must ask is, does standardized testing benefit students? If it doesn't, state education leaders need to stay after school and sharpen their own pencils until they find the right solution.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my Point of View.

POV | Remembering 9/11

Sep 10, 2019

You've probably never heard of Edward Earhart, but you should.

Petty Officer 1st Class Earhart was from Morehead, Kentucky. On the morning of September 11th, 2001, he was serving his country in the U.S. Navy, and working at the Pentagon. That day, he was among the thousands of innocent people killed by terrorists who crashed planes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania.

This week we mark the September 11th terrorist attacks. As time goes by, memories can fade, but we owe it to our country to never forget.

We must continue to honor the people who perished. We must ensure that those who weren't born yet understand the true depth of what happened that day. We must protect our freedom.

Every one of us should stop for a moment and think about how that one day changed the world. It strengthened our commitment to our country, and to fight against anyone who threatens it.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my Point of View.

POV | Deadly Vaping

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Sep 12, 2019 Updated Sep 12, 2019

When I was a kid it seemed like everyone was a smoker. It took time, but now we know the dangers of cigarettes. Today, it appears we're trading one bad habit for another. This week a 6th person died from vaping related illness in the U-S. One of those people that died was from Indiana. Health officials are scrambling to find out the exact cause, but we can no longer ignore the fact that vaping and e-cigarettes appear to have deadly consequences.

The Centers for Disease Control warns people about the "highly addictive" nature of e-cigarettes. It also calls the dramatic rise in use by children an epidemic. It's time we put vaping in the same ashtray as cigarettes. Common sense and education about vaping will help. We also need regulation that can be put into action quickly from the federal, state, and local level.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my point of view.

POV | Google search that's leaving scars in Louisville

Barry Fulmer WDRB Media Vice President of News

Sep 17, 2019

In 2017, everyone celebrated when Google announced it was bringing its high-speed fiber to Louisville. Soon after the installation started, the reality was hardly worth cheering for.

City leaders allowed Google to come in with the promise of great things. What we got was failure: torn up streets and a fast exit from a company that suddenly pulled the plug on us. Google paid the city \$3.8 million to clean up the destruction it left behind and ran out of town.

Louisville started repaving streets a few weeks ago, but in some cases, the job is only getting half done. Many roads aren't getting the full treatment. Instead, crews are just repaving the sides of the road where Google dug trenches.

The result is a mashup of asphalt that looks terrible and scars the streets. This is an ugly reminder of the mistake we made. I hope our leaders learn from this and think twice before offering up our city as a failed scientific experiment.

I'm Barry Fulmer, and that's my point of view.

POV | Who really won in the battle between Rick Pitino and U of L?

Sep 19, 2019

The battle between the University of Louisville and former basketball coach Rick Pitino is finally over.

After years of accusations and demands, both sides reached a settlement. But who really won? I think it's a victory for both.

U of L removed a troubled coach and didn't have to pay him one more penny. But it's also a win for Rick Pitino. He can try to put this ugly part of his career behind him and search for a new coaching job. He just turned 67 this week, so the clock is ticking on his career – especially if he wants to end it on a positive note.

But most importantly, this is a win for the fans who have stood behind their school through all this turmoil. The men's basketball program is now in the extremely capable hands of Coach Mack, and we have an upcoming season that is worth cheering for.

It's time to leave scandal in the rearview mirror and look forward to brighter days ahead.

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my point of view.

POV | Hate speech backfires in the best way possible

Sep 24, 2019

Stop what you are doing and take a look at this picture. Vandals created this hateful message over the weekend, but what happened next is inspiring. The threat of violence against police officers led to an outpouring of support for them instead.

Police deserve our respect. Officers run toward danger while others run away. They are on the front lines fighting drugs and violence. They make a lot of personal sacrifices to work the long, hard hours the job requires, and they're not getting rich putting their lives on the line for the rest of us.

I understand we have a right to free speech, but this display of hate speech crosses a line that threatens people's lives. I want the vandals who created this horrible message understand one very important thing that didn't pop into their pea-sized brains. You may up in the hands of the people you hate. And where would you be, if they weren't there for you when you need them?

I'm Barry Fulmer and that's my point of view.

GUEST POV | Goodwill urges support for people with addictions

Amy Luttrell Goodwill Industries of Kentucky

Sep 26, 2019

Kentuckians are very aware of our addiction crisis, because we see it all around us. More than 1,500 of our neighbors died of overdose in 2017.

September is National Recovery Month, and at Goodwill, we're all wearing purple wristbands to make a statement – "Recovery benefits everyone" - and to show support for our friends and family who battle addiction.

We know that people with addictions shop in our stores, participate in our programs and are part of our workforce. So we're also putting overdose treatment kits at all of our locations. We're providing employment services and other supports to help people return to their communities after addiction treatment.

Every day we see people with addictions who've received the supports they needed and are now working, reuniting with their children, and rebuilding their lives, so we know it's possible.

Overcoming this crisis calls for an all-hands-on-deck approach. Goodwill will do our part, and I invite all of you to find a way to help.

I'm Amy Luttrell and that's my point of view...