

Scott,

I mentioned to Jane Healy that there is another side to your recent article. I'm addressing the larger scope of the issues in a My Word piece on Friday, which does not mention your article. However, I would like you to have some facts on the cases you mentioned. Having previously experienced the inevitable vice industry spin that follows most vice cases, believe me it would have been a lot easier to turn our backs and not enforce the law in these difficult cases. Instead we chose to do our job.

1. In reference to the unlicensed adult bookstore operating in a neighborhood with zoning protection from such businesses, charges were only dropped against a lesser defendant when she agreed to provide testimony. The testimony led to a search warrant and evidence of felony sales tax evasion and grand theft charges relating to the primary operators. The business closed and the problem was solved.

2. In reference to the high-end strip club. All 32 employees pled guilty or no contest to include two general managers, four managers, two supervisors, 24 employees, and one drug trafficker. Rachel's North was forced to close for two years, the corporation pled guilty to racketeering, and they are paying more than \$620,000 in costs and fines. During the six month investigation, the money spent inside Rachel's by MBI was \$27,000, not the \$200,000 figure used by some of the media. The owner hired a lobbyist, ex-speaker of the house, to cut a deal in Tallahassee reference his fate. We did not employ a lobbyist. The bottom line, even that settlement solved the problem, as the club is now operating legally.

3. In reference to the one escort service owner who got away; her partner and employees pled guilty or no contest, and she closed her escort service after the trial. A win for her, but also a win for the community, as she joined 285 advertised escort services that no longer operate here.

Have we made some mistakes in the almost 30 years of enforcement? Of course we have, and the MBI has learned from them and changed policy accordingly. But the big picture is that we have law enforcement officers, who come to work everyday with the intent to make this a better place for your family and others. It's not the illegally zoned Adult Business, the Strip Club providing prostitution and narcotics to high-end customers, or the escort service owner who feigns that she has no idea what her 14 call girls are doing- who deserve your support. Please put yourself in an objective frame of mind when you read the My Word column this Friday, and try to consider the other side of what the men and women of law enforcement are accomplishing, as they deserve your support.

William A. Lutz, Director

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