

Rita Meyer: You were wise to throw the guy over the side

Other local media broke a story yesterday (Tuesday, January 26, 2010) that someone had rigged it so internet searches for Matt Mead's gubernatorial campaign website would be forwarded to Rita Meyer's website. Both are Republican candidates for governor.

Some might think that was cool, innovative, sweet. But, it's far for those.

It is unacceptable in a political campaign in Wyoming. Or anywhere else.

The story developed on the Channel 5 News at 10:00 Tuesday night. The culprit was live in-studio with Robert Geha and his explanation of what he had done without the candidate's knowledge was a bit unbelievable and totally intolerable.

Paul Montoya, who once owned a couple lesser radio stations in Cheyenne until he sold them to a Spanish language format operation, admitted to Geha that he was more than a "volunteer" with the Meyer campaign. He told Geha he would provide him a scoop - that he (Montoya) was a staffer, albeit unpaid - and claimed that he was "communication director" for the Rita Meyer campaign.

He told Geha he was just proving a point - that others could purchase domain names similar to the ones used by a political campaign. No secret there. I had that experience in 2008 with our Winney for Congress '08 campaign. I was contacted that someone who owned the "Winney for Congress" domain name and offered to sell it to us. Not interested. But, at least in that case, if you typed in their domain name, you would get nothing but a message saying it didn't exist.

In this instance, when you typed in MattMeadforGovernor.com, you were forwarded to Rita Meyer's website.

Some may have taken at face value Paul Montoya's explanation. I didn't.

Had he wanted to make a point that someone could purchase a domain name similar to one used on another campaign, he could have done like the people did to us in 2008. You don't forward the search to your own website - one totally different than what people were seeking. What they were searching for. You just don't.

In politics, that's known as a "dirty trick."

It is not, as suggested by Channel 5 and other print media, negative campaigning. That is entirely different and common.

Rita has said, and I take her at her word, that she had no advance knowledge that an "overzealous" supporter would pull such a stunt. But, her campaign manager referred to the guy as a volunteer instead of admitting he was a staffer. The distinction is huge. Paul Montoya was not

someone who would stuff envelopes, go door to door or put up yard signs. He may not have been paid for his role but a "communication director" is a key player in a campaign - participates in meetings on strategy and planning. And how to get the word out on campaign matters.

Rita risked the story being a much bigger one but she took immediate and decisive action by terminating Montoya's involvement with her campaign. Had she hesitated, delayed or refused to take that action, she would have been criticized by the other candidates as weak and not in control of her own campaign.

Rita Meyer took a big step toward showing Wyoming voters that she is, indeed, in control. She knew his action reflected poorly on her campaign and she would have no part of that. She axed him.

Only someone who had never worked a political campaign in the past would have pulled the stunt this guy (Paul Montoya) attempted. A cardinal rule of campaigns is that no volunteer or paid staffer upstages the candidate. Any action that reflects badly on the volunteer or staffer reflects worse on the candidate.

In Wyoming, there is no training ground for campaign operatives and there are only a handful of experienced campaign workers - let alone campaign managers or directors - in the state. And not knowing what to do is about as damaging to a candidate as doing the wrong thing.

Herald

pick-up locations

City News - Downtown
BLM Building Entryway
Safeway - South Cheyenne
Wonder Bread Outlet - Ridge Rd.
Oroweat Bakery Outlet - SW Dr.
Borderline - Colorado Lottery
Laramie County Library
Laramie County Gov't Center - North
Herschler Building - North
VA Hospital - South Entrance
Town & County Liquors
Burger Inn
Luxury Diner
American Storage
Avenues Pet Clinic
Los Amigos
Diamond Horseshoe
Daylight Donuts (both)
Quick Draw Optical
Village Inn-Downtown
T-Joe's Steakhouse & Saloon
Many, many other locations in the City and Laramie County

In the county ...

Fred's Place, the A & W,
and Wild Horse Restaurant -
all in Pine Bluffs
Panhandle Co-Op and
Antelope Truck Stop
in Burns

You think your house has lost value during the Obama recession?

You ain't seen nothing.

Cheyenne, because of being the state's "center of government" and Wyoming, because of being one of the nation's largest suppliers of energy, have been pretty much immune from penalties of past unbridled and unmanaged growth or national recession. In fact, Wyoming has, as a state, never seen explosive growth and likely won't.

Las Vegas, and Nevada, has.

The local daily newspaper and some political candidates have imagined 3% annual growth, but only two states have seen that kind of expansion, Nevada being one of them. Las Vegas grew fastest. Construction began twenty years ago and continued unabated until the recent downturn. Elected officials want to be careful what they wish for. No locale can support explosive growth over the long haul.

The list of delayed and cancelled hotel/casino/commercial projects in Las Vegas is staggering. Hotels, casinos, lofts and condo projects have been steadily biting the dust over the past few years. Those that are getting done often see foreign money (Deutsche Bank, Dubai World, etc.) backing construction or taking ownership. Some of the names of cancelled projects are: Aqua Blue, Brickwater, Cielo Vista, Center City Harmon, Club Renaissance, The Curve, Evolution Lofts, Galileo, Hard Rock Condos, Icon, Majestic, Monument, Opus, Palazzi St. Regis, Pinnacle, Vegas 888, Vegas Grand and the list goes on and on and on.

You've probably read some of the stories about the beating homeowners are taking in Las Vegas. It has been horrific.

And if you are melancholy because the value of your house here in Cheyenne has dropped a bit, consider these ads from the Monday, January 11, 2010 Las Vegas Review Journal classified section:

3 bd, 2.5 ba, Pool, 2 sty, 2 car
1600+ sf, Blt '97, NO HOA,
Low Taxes, 6000 sf yard
Only \$103,000 Seller pays up to
3% closing costs. \$100 down

NW - BANK OWNED
\$115K, 2150sf, 4bd, 3ba, 2car,
RV parking, 7000sf lot, cul-de-sac,
open flrpln, granite c-tops, built '04

Low Taxes, 2bd, 2.5ba, 2car,
2sty, 1600+sf, \$105 HOA
Private yard, Common pool,
Parks, Gated, Custom Paint
Upgraded wood floors down, BB court
Only \$90,000, was \$253,000

3sty, 2car, Blt '06, 3bd, 3.5ba
HOA \$27, 1700sf, Seller pays 3%
Only \$95,000. Was \$283,000

Like new 3bd, huge loft, 2.5ba,
2car, BQ connectin to kitch, fruit trees
Xlnt city & Strip views, 1 owner
\$165,000

Ranch \$215K New!
3829sf, 4bd, 3ba, 3car, open flrpln
10' ceiling, wtrfl, pool/spa
granite c-tops, was \$438K

NW foreclosure - 4075sf - Blt 2007
5bd, 3car, huge master, private retreat,
Custom kit, SS appl, corner lot
\$290,900

A Cheyenne Listing (January 30, 2010)

4.5 ac, 5bd, 4ba, 3 car garage, 36x48
out bldg, open kitchen and living room w/
stone fireplace. Hardwood flrs, walkout
bsmt, home theater -- \$540,000

Cheyenne Capitals Schedule

High School Age Hockey

Home games are played at the Taco John's Event Center

Admission is FREE!

Home Games Remaining

February 6, 8:00 pm - vs. Rock Springs

February 7, 10:45 am - vs. Rock Springs

February 20, 8:00 pm - vs. Pinedale

February 21, 10:45 am - vs. Pinedale



Cash your tax refund checks! And get cash with:

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- 2.) Current Copy of Checking Account Statement
- 3.) Verification of Employment or Income
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