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Anyone Can Do This Stuff. Professionals Need Not Apply

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Anyone Can Do This Stuff. Professionals Need Not Apply

"Power once concentrated in the hands of a professional few has been redistributed into the hands of the amateur many... Millions of Americans who were once in awe of the punditocracy now realize that anyone can do this stuff — and that many unknowns can do it better than the lords of the profession.”

~Glenn Reynolds, An Army of Davids

I'm just a mom who writes in her pajamas into the wee hours of the morning. During the day I teach my children reading and spelling, cook macaroni and cheese and try to keep the dog hair off of... well everything. It's not glamorous, in fact, it's damned hard work. In between I clip dog toe nails and pickle stuff from my garden and find ways to save money (like iron shirts instead of use the dry cleaners)...you know...like regular people. But there are things about me that are different from most people.

When I encountered open viewing of pornography at an area library in full view of anyone nearby which led to the discovery of unreported sex crimes happening in the Orland Park Public Library (against children), I did what most people want to do but don't know how. I threw myself after those responsible like a grizzly bear whose cubs are threatened. I'm just a person like you who has laundry climbing up the wall as I type. The only difference is, I'm semi-versed in media tactics and I abhor evil with such passion that I won't let go when I know I'm right until the threat is vanquished or I'm dead. The Orland Park Public library has been ignoring parents for years and this time, they simply picked the wrong parent to dismiss.

Even though we have example after example of the “little guy” breaking the big story, (the most famous probably being Matt Drudge and Lewinskygate) people (some in my own circle of friends) and anonymous commenters still want to disparage anyone attempting to shine a light on wrong-doing without the help of "trusted" traditional media sources. If you try to report a story no one has heard yet, you’re a grasper, a climber, a self-promoter, a crazy person...or worse, an amateur. (But the people carrying around press passes with capital letters on them are just bringing you information.) Taken from the comments section of the publication of library documents proving staff negligence,

Harry Sinatch
So many unanswered questions. Let’s hope these highly trained investigative reporters find out.

That’s cute. Highly-trained investigative reporter? No, and I never claimed to be. Highly-agitated citizen of the United States who knows her rights and has the ability to question and investigate her government without the help or permission of Wolf Blitzer? Yes. I am. I’m going to just wear that badge right now. I’m a mom with a talent for stringing words together in a way that makes people want to read more. I’m a person who believes that elected boards answer to the public. And I am a person who knows a majority of the public doesn’t want to pay for sex offenders to watch pornography at the public library near children. That’s all. Contrary to rumors, I have never done anything like this before. I’ve interviewed people and written my opinion on numerous topics over many years for different sites and a couple newspapers and (almost) one printed magazine. But I have never used the Freedom of Information Act to extract information from a government entity to uncover wrongdoing (which is time-consuming but surprisingly easy.) I’ve never spoken at any government board meeting about any issue before. The closest I’ve come to it is speaking at a few Tea Parties in
the neighborhood. And I’m learning so much that I hope to pass on to you to help you fight evil in your neighborhood after this is all said and done.

It’s far from over and the kitchen is getting hot. Luckily, I’m a warm weather kind of girl. So far, I’ve met some amazing allies, and more are appearing every day. I’m learning what it’s like to be on the other side of the interviewer (uncomfortable) and the frustration and anger that comes from having to defend what shouldn’t be on trial.

What you have is a front row seat, dear Reader, to my baptism into the boiling water of investigative citizen journalism. The cast of characters lining up to entertain and inform you just gets weirder and more interesting every day. (Library Director Mary Weimar has an interesting take on free speech that includes embracing Islamic proselytizing and using police intimidation when veterans speak out against Islam in her library. Her interpretation of the First Amendment also doesn’t include saying the Pledge of Allegiance in her library either. Fun factoid: Library Board President Nacy Wendt Healy is the sister of George Wendt, “Norm” from Cheers and incredibly, the Orland Park Police Chief is heroic Tim McCarthy, former Secret Service agent who dove into the path of a bullet aimed at Ronald Reagan.) So grab some popcorn, put your feet up and come along. I’ve grabbed the tail of Leviathan, and it’s going to be a hell of a ride.