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# The Leader

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Wednesday, October 30, 2019

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## Jefferson County should be a no-doxxing zone

### Bullying family of opponents is thuggery

Posted Wednesday, October 30, 2019 3:00 am

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There's not a lot of partisans we can agree on these days, but as we work through hard local issues in Jefferson County, can't we at least agree the intimidation tactic known as "doxxing" will not be tolerated here?

As diverse as our opinions are, can't we unite in speaking out against anyone who seeks to intimidate a policy opponent by widely broadcasting the home address of that opponent's family?

Doxxing isn't a novel idea. This is an online version of the stadium cretins who shout at young players: "We know where you live" or the clods who whispered "Sweet kid, that daughter of your'n. Shame if sometin' happened to 'er."

The chilling difference is that doxgers post home addresses and other personal information online, where there is no way to know how many sick individuals have seen that you have kids to protect and where to find them. Randomness is what makes doxxing extra-intimidating and extra-objectionable.

The Constitution protects our right to vigorously debate public policies and public matters, run for office or support allies. When one side fails to get its way, there's also court, where we seek redress against policies we abhor.

But if someone in the public arena lashes out by publishing the home addresses of their opponents' spouses or kids... is it too much to expect allies and government entities to speak out forcefully and clearly against it?

Sure, it's legal. And sure, politics and public policy can be combative, but anyone with an eighth-grade education knows the entire point of our Constitution was to replace brute force with a safe and sane free market of ideas.

If you want to rewrite law or declare policy, go win an election.

Otherwise, stand in line with everybody else at the podium, say your piece and build winning arguments that persuade change in your direction.

We don't make policy at knifepoint and local officials should draw a wide and bright line around any participant in local affairs who ignores the fact that all of society's gladiators disdain the targeting of non-combatants.

Children are off-limits in the code of military conduct and the creeds of the various branches of service. Even in criminal court, your spouse is beyond the reach of the most zealous prosecutor. Ditto sports, from boxing to football: you're disqualified if you reach out of bounds and clout some spectator as a way to punish your opponent.

This plea for a no-doxxing agreement isn't abstract, unfortunately.

There's already been at least one doxxing attack in one of Jefferson County's fierce policy debates. God forbid an unhinged ally uses the information to do something unforgivable. Let's make no mistake: that's the implicit threat in doxxing.

Today, we're not naming names. We don't want to drive any more eyes to the online post in which one of our neighbors has adopted the kind of terrorizing tactic favored by the Taliban, the Mob and drug cartels.

Mistakes are made in the heat of an argument and there's still time for this person to take it down and make a good faith apology.

We're calling on the doxxer, who knows full well what they've done, to tell every known ally or supporter to stand down. Do nothing with the information.

Meanwhile, Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Progressives and every elected official should speak with one voice on this: Gambling with the security of family members of people we disagree with is not a tactic to be tolerated.

*The Leader's Editorials are the opinion of the Editorial Board: Publisher Lloyd Mullen; co-owner Louis Mullen; Editor Dean Miller and Leader readers who lobby The Leader. Each editorial is signed by the person who writes that editorial on behalf of the Editorial Board.)*

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### Harvest Fete returns to Quilcene (</stories/harvest-fete-returns-to-quilcene,65794>)

For the second year in a row, the Quilcene School District teamed up with Worthington Park to offer a Quilcene Harvest Halloween, complete with pony rides, a scarecrow contest, a bonfire, cider and popcorn.

</stories/harvest-fete-returns-to-quilcene,65794>)

### Hospital commission race ramps up with last-minute entry (</stories/hospital-commission-race-ramps-up-with-last-minute-entry,65861>)

The hospital commission race for position 5 is ramping up as supporters of former candidate Cheri Van Hoover have organized a write-in campaign.

### County conducts private mediation with Fort Discovery (</stories/county-conducts-private-mediation-with-fort-discovery,65859>)

As the county, as critics complain, having private talks with Fort Discovery about owner Joe D'Amico's planned gun range or Quilcene?

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