

CORRUPTION

How can you expect to get justice in a place like Marksville if there are several Avoyelles Parish politicians who have problems while in office. See for instance the sheriff that was in office when Vincent was arrested. He had a problem living according the law. Or the violation of the former governor Edwin. W. Edwards.

Sheriff F.O. "Potch" Didier

Avoyelles Parish sheriff F.O. "Potch" Didier was tried, convicted and served a seven-day sentence in his own jail for alleged malfeasance. According to Levy, a former legendary newspaper publisher of the Bunkie, Didier and District Attorney Charles Riddle Sr. were at odds. Charges were levelled, and the case went to trial. John Boatner was the prosecutor from the DA's office, and Joe Tritiko of Lake Charles was the defense lawyer. "It was the biggest trial in the parish," said Levy. "It was an amazing spectacle. When it was all over, Potch was sentenced to just seven days, which he would serve in his own jail. I remember that first night he began his sentence, he cooked an andouille gumbo. "He served his sentence, and eventually everything got back to normal," said Levy. "In fact, he was re-elected for his fifth and final term in 1974. He retired in 1980."

Sheriff Bill Belt

Or see for instance the present sheriff Bill Belt. The Federal Grand Jury accuses him, his wife and sister of illegally pocketing profits from telephone services provided at the parish jails.

Belt and his wife, both of Marksville, were charged with eight counts each of mail fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit mail fraud. Bill Belt's sister, also of Marksville, was charged with conspiracy to commit mail fraud, making a false statement to the FBI and obstruction of justice, according to the Western District of Louisiana U.S. Attorney's Office.

According to the indictment, the Belts were involved in a conspiracy "to promote and then cover up the receipt of some of the profits from the operation of phone services provided at Avoyelles Parish jails."

The Belts are accused of reaping more than \$500,000 in profits, said Washington, who indicated that the sheriff has been under investigation for at least the past five years, if not longer.

Michael Small, Bill Belt's attorney since late 2005, said he and Belt are "extremely disappointed that this indictment came down but frankly not greatly surprised."

Small said in a statement that he has maintained frequent contact with the federal prosecutor assigned to the case and has met with him and the FBI a number of times. He said he has responded fully to all questions asked, providing what he is convinced are "perfectly legitimate explanations for their various inquiries."

"All the explanations clearly demonstrated that Bill and Tracy Belt have conducted their several business entities in a perfectly legitimate and legal manner and have violated no laws in the course of their various business activities," Small said in the release.

"Unfortunately, I always sensed that our earnest and truthful representations fell on deaf ears."

The allegations that the Belts profited financially from the operation of the phone services provided by the jails, Small said, are "based almost entirely on statements from a disgruntled vendor." He said he and the Belts are convinced that any fair-minded jury will find those statements to be totally unreliable and unfounded.

Courtney Tassin of Hessmer said she was shocked to hear of the sheriff's indictment.

"I'd have never thought that he'd have done something that would be like this," she said.

"It makes me wonder if he's been truthful all along."

Although the announcement of the indictment is far from a conviction, Tassin said the indictment alone may cast a shadow over the Sheriff's Office and its operations. She said she is hopeful Bill Belt's case will be handled fairly, "just like any old person's."

Bernard's (Belt's sister) charges stem from her alleged interference with the investigation, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. She obstructed the federal grand jury and FBI investigation by lying -- saying she had "minimal involvement" with a company called Cajun Callers and no memory of signing checks on its behalf when she had been issuing checks for the company for more than a year and a half, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

The Belts could face a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine on each mail fraud charge and a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment and \$250,000 fine for the conspiracy charge.

Bernard's maximum jail time under the three counts she is facing totals 20 years and a fine as high as \$750,000.

Small, who is representing just Bill Belt, said he and his client are looking forward to "aggressively preparing for the trial" and is confident all charged will be found innocent of any wrongdoing.

Former 12th Judicial District Judge Michael Johnson

Background of the above mentioned case.

According to an October 1995 article in The Town Talk, both Bill Belt and former 12th Judicial District Judge Michael Johnson had royalty arrangements with Miami-based Peoples Telephone Co. for pay phones at prisons and jails around the state. Belt was

listed as president of Southern Louisiana Communications, a warehouse of other long-distance carriers, and was listed as director at Central Louisiana Communications Inc. Both of those firms had the same address -- 117 E. Ogden St., Marksville -- as did Johnson's Cajun Callers. Both Johnson and Belt told The Town Talk then that there was "no connection" between their companies.

Johnson signed an agreement to lease his pay phones in Avoyelles Parish jails to Belt, as sheriff, in the late 1980s. Johnson was Belt's attorney at the time, according to the article.

Out of the arrangement, the Sheriff's Office, as a public body, received 5 percent of the net revenue. At that time, Belt "guesstimated" that the Sheriff's office received about \$40,000 a year in pay phone revenue.

The Public Service Commission cited Peoples Telephone Co. in 1994 for overcharging customers by \$107,695 for long-distance service.

Johnson was re-elected as district judge with 57 percent of the vote in spite of controversy raised during the election about his connection to the prison phones, according to a 1996 Town Talk article. But on Nov. 25, 1996, he was removed from office for what the Supreme Court called "persistent misconduct."

Johnson was sworn into office in December after requesting a rehearing with the Supreme Court, where he vowed to sell his and his wife's interests in the phone company before his new term began on Jan. 1, 1997.

Johnson, who in a 1997 Town Talk article claimed he "has not been charged with a crime, much less convicted of one," said the ruling applied only to his first term that expired Dec. 31. A new election was held the following term to fill his seat after he was removed again.

Some comments from people on the criminal activities from the sheriff:

#1

Aug 9, 2007

Toni
Lafayette, LA

Well i got to say for Bill Belt is u reap what u sew....And trust me this has been a long time coming for this man....When I lived in Marksville Bill belt locked up my grandmother for disturbing the peace....When 2 guys and 2 girls came on to our property and threatened us my grandmother simply told them to leave or she was going to call the cops..They didnt leave so she called the cops and when Bill Belt got to our house he arrested my grandmother and she sat in jail for 8 days when she did nothing at all.And when i went to talk to him at his office about getting my grandmother out of jail he asked me who are you here for hunny. i told him my grandmothers name and looked at me dead ion my eyes and said "well if you're here for that woman then you might as well get out of my office" now you tell me IS THAT FAIR??? NO it ISNT so all i have to say to him is so long....

happy
United States

|
#2
Aug 10, 2007

I am sure this will hurt his race for the state senate.

**Ida -
Simmesport**
Alexandria, VA

|
#3
Aug 13, 2007

Been a long time coming, now change gonna come. When found guilty he should be assigned to cell block c marksville parish jail. I'm sure he and his wife would not be lonely.

port barre
Lafayette, LA

|
#4
Aug 26, 2007

happy wrote:

I am sure this will hurt his race for the state senate.

Can anyone give a list of the candidates in Avoyelles Parish for the State Senate and their platforms and party affiliations? Most of the candidates are from Avoyelles Parish and don't campaign in this area. Eric Lafleur is the only one campaigning in this area and I will certainly not be voting for him.

Allison Briley
"No News is No
News"
Camarillo, CA

|
#5
Aug 29, 2007

From Busting Folks to Getting Busted. I'll drink to that!

Shelly
Austin, TX

|
#6
Sep 18, 2007

I was born in Marksville 33 years ago and this man and his wife have had their hand in much more evil and dishonest deeds. Just shows why MOST of Marksville's children leave never to return, when the law and legal system is alllllllll wrong and has been for years it would be nice for something as simple as a phone service could get'em. I really hope he spends his time with all the people he's locked up for profit or spite.

[Reply »](#)

Allison Briley
"No News is No
News"
Camarillo, CA

|
#7
Sep 18, 2007

Shelly wrote:

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And that's all she wrote...

You have a good way with words Shelly.

on the island
Atlanta, GA

|
#8
Sep 20, 2007

so shelly< u live in austin now?

|
#9

Oct 29, 2007

**Jackie -fort
worth texas**
Dallas, TX

I wonder how much money he bilked from my poor Momma's outrageous phone bills when my brother was in jail there? How does a person get a \$1900 phone bill in a month? I wonder how many other evil deeds that have been covered up since the 80's? I can think of a couple of of incidents at the jail that made me scratch my head and wonder. I'm another Marksville daughter that left 23 years ago and won't be back. It sounds to me that nothing has changed since I left.

gary
Fort Wayne, IN

|
#10

Oct 29, 2007

yes it is redemption and hopefully LARRY WILMER wins the run off...

|
#12

Nov 17, 2007

lois
Shreveport, LA

I lived in marksville for 33 years, abused and beaten by my spouse, bill belt told me to go home and it will go away. I had to leave my family to get protection from the police. now bill belt go home to a cell block. Reap what u sow i left 20 years ago and believe me the town will do a lot better with out the belts and family.
Bill Belt and Family go to hell and rot

|
#13

Sep 27, 2008

Maybellene
Houston, TX

I left that parish 17 years ago - I thought back then that Belt and Knoll were evil - people who live there can not imagine how much better life can be when you climb out of that little piece of hell on earth - Bill Belt needs to suffer for ALL of the misdeeds he has done to people who didn't deserve it and so should Eddie Knoll - if you people continue to put crooks into office (T. Knoll) you will suffer the consequences - I can't imagine Tristen will be much better than his father considering he was raised by him - my thought is this, why take that chance?

Former governor Edwin W. Edwards

The Avoyelles Parish politician, Edwin W. Edwards, who served four terms as Louisiana's governor, while his ex-wife, Elaine, served as a U.S. senator. He **was found guilty of racketeering, conspiracy, and extortion.** The charges stemmed from a scam in which he extorted millions from applicants seeking riverboat casino licenses.

Close friend Raymond Laborde, a politician, recalls his close friend: "Everyone knows the story about how I beat him for class president, but what few people may remember is when I beat him ... no, beat a tax he was trying to push through the Legislature." Laborde, who served as Edward's floor leader for many years as well as his commissioner of administration later, was elected on a platform of "no new taxes" and took office as a state representative in 1972. However, he quickly found himself caught between a rock and a hard place as Edwards' floor leader, when the governor tried to get a tax passed to raise an estimated \$1 billion.

"Without really trying, I helped to defeat the tax," chuckled Laborde, who also served as speaker pro tem, chairman of the Ways and Means and Appropriations Committees under Govs. Dave Treen, Edwards and Buddy Roemer.

"And, oh man, did I catch hell. When I got back home, Edwin had put the word out, and everyone was calling me. Let me tell you, it was mighty uncomfortable. I couldn't wait for him to call a special session, so I could get back there and get that tax passed."

In 2000 he was convicted of extorting payoffs for casino riverboat licenses. Well now was facing the machinery of justice himself he was claiming that the trial was unfair!!!!!! His lawyers have asked that the verdict that sent him to federal prison for 10 years be vacated because his trial was unfair. His lawyers say that prosecutors failed to disclose a key witness's financial incentive to testify and that one juror thought Mr. Edwards had not used his influence to help investigate her daughter's death.

Triston Knoll

He is the son of Eddie Knoll and Jeanette Knoll, the two persons who were involved in Vincent's case as the D.A. and assistant. Triston run for Judge in the Third Circuit Court of Appeal in Marksville, Louisiana. The elections were held on October 4, 2008.

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some one with facts Cottonport, LA	#1 Aug 5, 2008 How can you talk about honesty and fairness when your wife has outstanding court orders that she has not followed for over a year and
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has not had to comply because of your political pull. Also can you explain the issue at cvs pharmacy? Please explain your fairness and ability to judge?

Kylie_bug
Avoyelles Parish
Hessmer, LA

#2
Aug 15, 2008
I have known Triston for several years now and I also had the benefit to work with him. He is an excellent, honest, and down-to-earth person. He is extremely educated and would be an asset in the Third circuit court of appeals.

Jim
Natchitoches, LA

#3
Aug 15, 2008
I am voting for Lampert.

doug
Keithville, LA

#4
Aug 17, 2008
anything but a knoll in office. There is no integrity nor is their honesty with any in that family.

some one with facts
Cottonport, LA

#5
Aug 19, 2008
to Dough in Keithville - boy you hit that nail on the head!!!! I guess you know him like I do.

12 gauge
Ruston, LA

#6
Aug 19, 2008
Just go around town and see who has the Knoll signs up. That's enough to let you know, you probably don't need him to be elected.

nonbeliever
Atlanta, GA

#7
Sep 22, 2008
I was told that the most recent Tina K. case, was at Wal-Mart....?

Mamma K (Super Judge)told the family from the very "get go", that she did not approve of this unity to begin with...in fact, she was "fit to be tied", when Triston unloaded his choice.
AS funny as all of this is...it really is just very, very sad. The DARK SIDE of us...etc, etc....Good Night People :),:(...

tchaffers
Dallas, TX

#8
Oct 15, 2008
I was raised in that town and that is the reason I'm out of that town. It is still as crooked as it was 15 yrs. ago. Knoll running for something and the rich are getting away w/ murder. That town has always been and will always be a "dirty little town". It's who you know! Glad to go home a couple of times a year to see family but really glad to leave. The same ole crap, just a different day!

some one with facts
Moreauville, LA

#9

Oct 21, 2008

some one with facts wrote:

How can you talk about honesty and fairness when your wife has outstanding court orders that she has not followed for over a year and has not had to comply because of your political pull. Also can you explain the issue at cvs pharmacy? Please explain your fairness and ability to judge?

To whom ever judged my statement clueless and nuts I stand behind my name - someone with facts which makes you clueless and nuts. Let me know where and when you want to meet and I'll show you the facts

some one with facts
Moreauville, LA

#10

Oct 21, 2008

nonbeliever wrote:

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AS funny as all of this is...it really is just very, very sad. The DARK SIDE of us...etc, etc....Good Night People :),:(....

To who ever you are, your roots must be from Avoyelles Parish because you hit the nail on the head - and thats only a piece of the cake you haven't even touched the icing yet.

natch campaign
Natchitoches, LA

#11

Oct 21, 2008

his Natchitoches campaign person is rude. i see shannon gremillion all over town and he is friendly...has Knoll even shown his face here or the bald Williams boy doing all his bidding?

questions of fairness
Alexandria, LA

#12

Oct 24, 2008

I would like to know why none of the papers are running anything about Tina Knoll and how the family apparently has covered up some of her "stealing" problems? If they have worked to keep it out of the papers and her out of court....isn't that just a little illegal? I don't think I could trust him to make fair decisions from the bench.

the truth
New Orleans, LA

#13

Nov 4, 2008

He should have had his wife help maybe he could have STOLEN the election. She could probably fit 500 votes in her purse.

d day
Houston, TX

#14

Nov 4, 2008

some one with facts wrote:

<quoted text>

To whom ever judged my statement clueless and nuts I stand behind

my name - someone with facts which makes you clueless and nuts. Let me know where and when you want to meet and I'll show you the facts I've known Tina sense way back. Haven't seen her in years but I guess time doesn't change a thing.

skaalh
Brusly, LA

#15

Nov 4, 2008

some one with facts wrote:

How can you talk about honesty and fairness when your wife has outstanding court orders that she has not followed for over a year and has not had to comply because of your political pull. Also can you explain the issue at cvs pharmacy? Please explain your fairness and ability to judge?

I love me some good old Louisiana politics. Can someone give me the details of what's going on here.

Dark Chocolate
Atlanta, GA

#16

Nov 5, 2008

Triston's alright with me if he can satisfy Tina. If I had to describe her in one word it would be insatiable. The only thing Tina likes more the a five finger discount is a good old ménage à trois.

d day
Houston, TX

#17

Nov 5, 2008

Like I already said, though I've long left the small town of Marksville for Houston, I guess time doesn't change a thing.

Go Tina!!!!

Go Obama!!!!

justice served
Moreauville, LA

#18

Nov 5, 2008

when you put down another to make yourself look good it just shows how dirty you really are. Its ashame that you, Tristan, would go as low as lieing about Mr. Gremillion at the end. But, from whan I understand and have been told, that is exactly how you opperate - even in your own family affairs. Is it not true that you even hired a PI to stop the people in court from saying the truth about your own family affairs and that you did what you had to do to stop the people from saying the truth about what you and your wife did.

Be careful what you do - because it does come back to haunt you

some one with facts
Moreauville, LA

#19

Nov 5, 2008

Well you guys, its like this

You can't take a working mans money who is trying to teach his son morals and values and know that justice will not be served because of you and your family's political power. Lets face it; you cant blame your loss all on Tina. You chose your own path. You didn't mind a hard working honest man wasting money in the court even when you and

your family knew justice willingly would not be served. But, look what it ended up costing you.

Pay back is a BITCH ain't it when you descide to corrupt a true fathers authority over his real son.

It's good to have friends in the 3rd circuit court of appeal area. Thanks you guys

#20

Nov 5, 2008

some one with facts wrote:

<quoted text>

To who ever you are, your roots must be from Avoyelles Parish because you hit the nail on the head - and thats only a piece of the cake you haven't even touched the icing yet.

My family is from the Simmesport area and Eddie Knoll always treated us fairly. What's going on with Triston?

Yellow Bayou
Austin, TX

#21

Nov 6, 2008

Someone with the facts is a crazy man. He beats his child and shoots bullets in people's camp full of people (attempted murder) becasue he is bitter. Anyone that beats and/or chokes a child should lose their rights to a child. He's bitter and only has negative things to say. He needs to look in the mirror.

somonewfactsisac
razyman
Shreveport, LA

#22

Nov 6, 2008

The man that beats/chokes his child surely he was convicted. What jail is his in? Because no matter how much political power Triston has he can't produce something that is not true. But, I can produce the Psych eval from mother, father, and child which you may want to see before you cast judgement.

By the way, which camp did the bullets come from 1) the one in yellow bayou where there was a murder committed, or 2) the one down Landry in Mks where a supper took place just hours before a murder was committed in Mks. Which one of the Knoll camps are you talking about?

some one with facts
Moreauville, LA

#23

Sunday Nov 23

i have know the knoll family for years, tristan and i played football back in the day. i've live in dallas/fort worth for the last 15 years and watch marksville news online. i think Tristan would be a good judge, time for a change in marksville and Tristan could be the one to make the change.

murray davis