

Commissioners Exploit the Handicapped at CVII ??? Chairman Hugs Little Girls, And More!!! Report and research by Robert A. Williams

Dictators and Rogue Regimes around the world have all been known to exploit members of their own society. The Germans under Nazi rule exploited the Jews as well as homosexuals and other misfits according to their own prejudices. The USSR under Communism, Stalin and other Communist ideologues pretty much did the same as the Nazis. Red China too. One thing Cleveland County, North Carolina has in common with the Nazis, Soviets, Red China, Cuba, etc. is they all exploit their handicapped citizens and try to punish or discredit all political dissent. A "Dissenter" being defined as someone who questions the moral authority of the ruling class. Etc. All human rights violations.

Over the years of watching Cleveland County agencies operate I have caught a whiff of the corruption surrounding the treatment of the handicapped. And the cover-up. And the extent that the cover-ups go. The New North Shelby School Project is one of the most recent examples of Cleveland County Schools wastefully spending \$millions to cover-up problems with education in Cleveland County Schools. The location of the new North Shelby School Project was poorly chosen in regard to cost effectiveness in the resources spent on the new school. Poor soil and topography cost millions in remediation. Only to recognize that the Project was located at James Love Elementary School, a failing school, to add the handicapped to

the James Love mix to change the category of the school failure to a less offensive grade. All the while CCS leadership didn't give a whit about the handicapped students, except as a smoke screen for a failing school.

Also, over the years, the Cleveland Vocational Industries Incorporated operation has generated a number of quick "hide and go seek" indicators of basic problems with the operation at CVII. When you stop for an instant and apply a little critical thinking to CVII you realize that CVII is the recipient of handicapped students that "age out" of CCS. Are these students really taught at CCS to be a part of a productive society through employment at CVII? Or is CVII just a warehouse for the handicapped to be used, abused and exploited under the cover of confidentiality until they die?

Recent hints of abuse at CVII surfaced in two locations:

1. The new Shooting Range:

Remember the very recent episode of rifle shots ricocheting out of the shooting range onto neighboring occupied private property? The long range rifle course shooting was shut down and corrective actions were initiated. Remember that part of that corrective action was to bring CVII workers in to pick up rocks at the range that rifle bullets might be ricocheting off of? The now disgraced and fired Range Manager, Sam Lockridge commented in a Shelby Star article that bringing in CVII workers was a "win-win" situation? A ready source of cheap and exploited workers might be a "win" for the Shooting Range and Cleveland County government, but it certainly was no "win" for the exploited handicapped workers provided by CVII and graduates of a so-called CCS education. Nor was it a win for taxpayers and parents of handicapped children who want to believe their precious children can have some sort of way to have productive and meaningful lives. Just like the parents of children who are not handicapped. I am sure the last thing these parents and taxpayers want to hear is they have paid many \$millions for a system of exploitation that teaches their

children the skills needed to pick up rocks somewhere.

But, "Oh!" County Officials might say, "this was an isolated incident."

Anybody that might believe that standard lie should have come to the June 5, 2018 Commissioner's Meeting and stayed for the entire meeting. And listened.

2. The Commissioner's initiative to "clean up" Cleveland County:

During the first part of the June 5, 2018 Commissioner's meeting there was a series of "Special Presentations" that any person with basic critical thinking skills would have recognized as an Election Year Political scheme to get the incumbent Commissioners, especially Commissioner Chairman Eddie Holbrook, re-elected. A Commissioner's Chamber full of young children (and their voting age parents) who were going to get awards and their pictures taken with the commissioners. The children were excited and proud. So were the parents.

The occasion, besides Election Year Politics, developed from a Commissioner initiative to clean up Cleveland County. CCS had gladly jumped on board the political scheme that they obviously knew what it was as they do the same thing themselves at every School Board meeting. CCS sponsored a "Poster Contest" for the elementary schools called the "Litter-Bug Coloring Contest." Judges were chosen and the winners were to be given the awards at this Commissioner's meeting.

As the winners of the kindergarten category were announced and brought up front to receive their awards and have their pictures taken with the commissioners, they were recognized one at a time. In the first category, Kindergarten to second grade, there were three winners, two girls and one boy. Then as all the commissioners were lining up for their pictures with the children, Commissioner Chairman Eddie Holbrook bent over had hugged both the little girls, one at a time, and shook hands with the little boy. The three children had

puzzled looks on their faces which was plainly visible to me as I was on the front row.

Kissing babies is a so called political campaign tradition, but hugging little girls that you don't know and who don't know you, in this day and time with the criminal prosecution and conviction of Bill Cosby, seemed to me to be a "strange" thing to do. Right in front of a room full of witnesses, including parents with cameras of their own too. My immediate thought upon witnessing this huge lack of judgement on the part of Eddie Holbrook was Holbrook must be desperate in his re-election campaign. Upon further reflection on the times Chairman Holbrook has brought Miss Shelby contestants to Commissioner meetings plus this hugging incident, that no other commissioner involved themselves with, indicates a pattern of behavior that may reflect a problem with Eddie Holbrook's mental state that I am not qualified to define. But I know "weird" when I see it.

3. CVII employees picking up trash and litter on the highway: Later in the meeting, after all the parents and kids had left, County Manager Brian Epley gave a quick rundown of the 2018-2019 Budget and a rundown of the Budget Message. This will be covered in more detail in another article.

Going through all of this Brian Epley mentioned that the implementation of the Commissioner's initiative to clean up Cleveland County included a large effort by CVII employees to pick up trash off the sides of the highways and roads. My original thought was where were all those folks going through the criminal justice system in Cleveland County and sentenced to community service? Was picking up trash off the side of the road considered cruel and unusual punishment for the courthouse convicts sentenced to community service. And, again the pattern of going to CVII for handicapped workers for such menial jobs as mentioned in item 1. Picking up rocks and trash and whatever else seems to be the go to thing for CVII handicapped workers, who apparently do not even have the same rights as criminal convicts to not be punished by anything

cruel and unusual. Is this not exploitation of a class of people, the handicapped, or not? Cleveland County, in this respect, is just as bad as Nazi Germany, and the Communists in Russia, China and Cuba? Don't Cleveland County citizens have a conscience anymore?

And, just what is going on at Cleveland Vocational Industries, Incorporated???

A Google search of CVII turned up these comments from former and present CVII case managers:

1. Management is Unstable:

Great people to work with. Amazing coworkers. However there is no structure in place for accountability at the management level so ideas change constantly without proper follow through or support from the management team. People are moved into positions without training, tons of pressure to accept the new position (Because the BOSS is asking/telling) and no support once you've taken on the new position you've never done before. Good luck! If you want a steady job with good hours, keep your nose clean and your head down— but if you want anything more you're going to be dealing with a ton of stress and no support. Doesn't take long to see that everyone is unhappy here.

2. Needs workshop for developmental disabled individuals

Needs to be a immediately change in Director and Human Resources department to better provide services to individuals whom are employers of Cleveland Vocational Industries. To do what is expected and not to make a profit for someone's personal life other than the individuals who needs services through a non-profit organization. Outlook on why Cleveland Vocational exists and not for other reasons of making money when it doesn't go back to the company for employers needs and the housekeeping of a facility. And better implement the goals and regulations set by the state.

3. Change in management has created below standard employment conditions.

I believe the morale of the employees has diminished greatly due to empty promises and lack of positive leadership. As much as I value the purpose of my job, I would like to explore my options where there is an opportunity to advance and challenge myself.

4. No long term advantages

Very mis-managed they take a lot of steps in the wrong direction considering the people they deal with deserve the best they can get.

Editor's Note: This list of selected reviews of CVII came from a website used by the Cleveland County Economic Development Partnership to recruit management level positions.

So, all you folks with handicapped children, I would recommend you to ask your so called county leadership to explain themselves about the goings on at CCS, CVII and DSS as well. To hear the commissioners, they are all doing good jobs. I beg to differ.

Stay tuned folks, you won't get the facts such as described in this article anywhere else.