

Titus House Newsletter

Titus House Ministries, PO Box 2376, Tijeras, NM 87059

JANUARY
2021

How I Made it in Trucking

By Jon



From what I understand, my story is different from many others in that I was employed in trucking pre-conviction and my company kept me on post-conviction. However, many of the issues remain the same for me as they would for anyone else. I started trucking in 1996. I attended a company-owned truck driving school. It consisted of classroom work, primarily, how to identify traffic control signs, the hours-of-service regulations, hazmat regulations, and map reading and trip planning. Following that, several hours were spent on a driving range learning to double clutch and shift a 13-speed transmission, backing, and eventually driving on the road. Afterwards, my company required 2 months driving over the road with a trainer. After a road test, I was assigned a truck of my own and sent on my way.

In 2015, I was convicted of a sex crime and required to register as a sex offender. I was worried about how I would travel interstate. It really isn't difficult. I am under Ohio jurisdiction which requires registration after 72 hours in one jurisdiction or another. As a truck driver, I am RARELY in one state for more than a day or 2. I am subject to being inspected and I DO get inspected. In Ohio, your registry status is in your driver's license info and it DOES come up. The general response from DOT and other law enforcement is a shrug and a "Have a nice day!"

I was graciously allowed to keep my job after I got out of jail but eventually, I was offered a job through an owner-operator. The game changed. Ohio requires the truck be registered on my sex offender information page. This often causes issues when signing the truck on with a parent company. Some are very weary of having a registered citizen attached to their company. Some are not. We found a company with no issues and I was off to the open road again. I quickly learned that owner operators end up being inspected more often than company-maintained trucks. Eventually, I went through the arduous process of looking for a company job. It was more difficult than I expected.

Like I said before, companies generally don't want their name associated with sex offenders. The company I drive for is no different. Luckily, the owner knows me personally and he was able to sell his hiring committee on the idea of taking me aboard. He had a very difficult time doing this. He won in the end and so did I! I was offered a generous sign on bonus and an excellent pay and benefit package. I now work as hard as I can to be a blessing and a productive addition to the company. Eventually, I won my supervisors over.

WORDS OF WISDOM: No matter what job you do, do it with pride, do it with dignity, do it with gratitude. THIS is what you will be remembered for. Your registry status is a stumbling block but it is NOT a brick wall. The day I was convicted closed many doors, but it also OPENED some doors. As a registrant, I have to work harder, prove my value, and be more compliant and productive than the person working beside me. I make sure any issue I have is a big enough issue that it disables my productivity before I complain. YES, I have co-workers who make me feel less than human. I have a mechanic who refuses to work on my truck. HEY, GUESS WHAT!! We have 5 mechanics! I don't make an issue out of it! I deal with it.

Overall, the trucking industry is a good place to work if you are a registered citizen. The pay is ok. I made \$52,000 last year. Some drivers see \$80,000. Most first-year drivers will make around \$40,000 in their first year. It is important to check with your P.O. if you are under supervision. They will generally be enthusiastic and will jump through hoops to help you. Mine gave me a travel permit. I found it important to work only for companies within my home state, as a company located out of state could mean dual registration. Look for a company that has a terminal within your state...or a drop yard or a main customer that you can use as an address. And good luck. It has brought me great freedom!



ISOLATED OR NOT???

BY ALICE

What do you mean??? I can't go to church. If I go shopping, I have to wear a mask and stand outside the store in a lineup while I freeze. It's the holidays and I feel so blue. What can I do? It is ridiculous to put the old stuffed Santa in the front yard or lights on the house. Not many people go by where I live to even see my decorations! I wanted some friends to come for Christmas dinner – limit of five? That wouldn't even include my whole family!

Every morning at 7:00 AM New Mexico time about 10 to 15 people suddenly jump on their phones and we share news, make comments, laugh and sometimes cry with friends

from Ohio to California. We open with a devotion "Our Daily Bread." After about 30 minutes, Don asks if anyone else wants to speak and then he ends in prayer, inviting each one who wishes to pray also.

If someone is missing we play detective and often find the person has become a hospital patient, had an accident with his or her car, has been driving all day from Ohio and couldn't make the call. In a short time we have become family to this gang of people. Some have never met many of the callers. Our conversations are mixed with laughing, joking and the sound of best friends checking up on each other.

We are all conscious of the presence of God with us, often speaking to him mingled with tears. Two women on the call lost their husbands not too long ago.

The Covid got you down? Pick up your phone and call Don at 505-315-7940 and he will give the magic answer to becoming part of our morning gathering..



9th Circuit rules in favor of registrants in Ex Post Facto case.

Dec 10, 2020 |

Great news! The 9th Circuit Court of appeals has fallen in line with the 6th circuit in ruling that retroactive enhancements to the Idaho Sex Offender registry, as applied to individuals whose offenses predate those changes, violates the Ex Post Facto clause.

From the opinion, "Appellants, 134 men and women registered as sex offenders in Idaho, claim that the retroactive application of Idaho's Sexual Offender Registration Notification and Community Right-to-Know Act, Idaho Code § 18-8301, et seq. ("SORA") is unconstitutional. According to the First Amended Complaint, a series of amendments to SORA have heightened

registrants' registration and notification obligations and imposed direct restrictions on registrants' movement, housing, and employment. Further, all amendments to SORA have been applied retroactively to all Idaho sex offender registrants. Appellants argue that these retroactively imposed provisions are unconstitutional, in part because they violate the Ex Post Facto Clause and the Free Exercise Clause. The district court granted Appellees' motions to dismiss, dismissing all of Appellants' claims. Because we find the district court erred in dismissing the ex post facto and free exercise claims, we reverse in part. Additionally, because the district court predicated its dis-

missal of the Eighth Amendment and double jeopardy claims on its dismissal of the ex post facto claim, we hold that those judgments were also in error, though we reserve judgment on the merits of those claims."

The following districts are in the 9th Circuit:

Alaska, Arizona, Central District of California, Eastern District of California, Northern District of California, Southern District of California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Eastern District of Washington, Western District of Washington



Prosecutor Stacey Honowitz wants her arrest post removed

By Florida Acton Committee

<https://floridaactioncommittee.org/>

We received an email from an attorney requesting we remove a certain post from our website. The post concerned Broward Sex Crimes Prosecutor Stacey Honowitz's arrest for shoplifting at a Publix Supermarket in 2018. The removal request appears below:

Good Day,

I hope this message finds you well in these trying times. I am writing on behalf of Stacey Honowitz to kindly request the removal of the article published to the above-copied link. The incident, a misunderstanding, is a most embarrassing blemish on Ms. Honowitz's otherwise pristine record and career. The charge was readily nolle prossed (please see attached). As you can certainly appreciate, the continued publication has caused and continues to cause Ms. Honowitz great distress and damage to her reputation.

Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions. We thank you in advance for your time dedicated to this sensitive matter.

Cordially Yours,

Vanessa McGill

Stacey Honowitz is a sex crimes prosecutor and an advocate for harsher sex offender restrictions. To quote Ms. Honowitz, "Tougher laws [are] needed to protect our kids from sex offenders."

While we agree with Ms. Honowitz that sexual abuse needs to be prevented, we strongly disagree that tougher laws are needed to protect anyone from persons forced to register as "sex offenders". The overwhelming majority (95%+) of peo-



ple on the registry will not re-offend and are trying to live productive lives, yet the continued publication of their information on a public registry prevents them from obtaining employment, housing and other basic needs for themselves and their families.

For most registrants, their crime was a one-time offense and a complete aberration in an otherwise law abiding life. Surely most were guilty, but many were not. Some were wrongfully accused, baited and switched in a sting, or a misunderstanding for which they took a plea decades ago out of convenience and to avoid the risk of jail time without knowing what was to come as far as the registry. Arguably their incidents are also a "most embarrassing blemish" in an "otherwise pristine record" and "the continued publication" of their information on a sex offender registry "has caused and continues to cause" them "great distress and damage".

So what to do about this request to remove the article? Since the letter came from an attorney who lists one of her areas of practice as defamation cases, the implication is that if we chose not to take down the article we might face a lawsuit. However, the Miami Herald's story, Veteran Sex-Crimes Prosecutor Accused of Shoplifting is still up. So is the Sun-Sentinel's coverage.

The surveillance footage of her sticking the cosmetic items in her purse and leaving the store has not been taken down. So why should we remove our post?

We did update the story to state that the charges were nolle prossed, but do we need to take down the entire article? Even if the shoplifting incident was unintentional and she simply forgot to pay for the items or mindlessly put them in her purse without realizing, she prosecutes people who unknowingly or unintentionally violate a technical registration rule all the time and even if decades have passed without incident, her office still vigorously opposes petitions for removal from the registry.

It's very possible that the arrest has given Ms. Honowitz a different perspective and greater empathy for people who "as [she] can certainly appreciate" are suffering great distress and damage from their continued publication on the registry. Or, it's possible she could care less. We'd like to see where she stands in light of the fact that she's "kindly requesting" we take down a post.

Frankly we're impressed that our little forum would even concern her enough to retain an attorney to contact us. But, before we act on the request, we'd really like to hear the thoughts of our membership, so please feel free to share them in the comments below. We'd also love to hear from Ms. Honowitz herself, given the ironic nature of her request. If she would like to be a guest on a future member call, consider this a public invitation.



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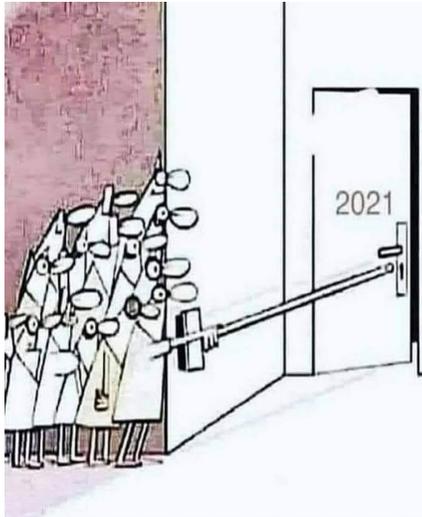
Don's Cell: (505) 315-7940

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We're on the Web
titushouseministries.org

Hebrew 13:3 - Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

Remember if you change your address you need to let us know if you want to continue to receive this newsletter



What is FEAR

George Sweeting says "Starting a new day (or year) should be exciting; yet for millions of people it is haunted by fear".

WHAT IS FEAR? The dictionary defines it as a "painful emotion marked by alarm or dread or disquiet." Fear began in the Garden of Eden where Adam and Eve disobeyed God. It has shadowed each member of the human race ever since. We fear as babies. We fear as children. And the fears of our youth seem to multiply and hound us through adulthood and into old age.

But not all fear is bad. The Bible repeatedly tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Do you have this kind of fear – a reverent respect and awe for God? Only those who do can expect to know Him and enjoy His blessings.

Faith in God is the key to overcoming fear. God holds the future. If we fear the future, we do not have faith. If we have faith, we cannot live in fear.

For years David was hounded by King Saul. But God's servant found help: "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Psalm 34:4). David looked to the Lord and found relief.

Psychologists cite four basic fears. The comforting truth is that God, in His Word, provides the solution to each one.

THE FEAR OF WANT. "What if I cannot find a halfway house that will take me in?" you say. "What if I get sick and cannot

work?" Are these legitimate fears? The Bible says no, because God is the great Provider (Psalm 37:25).

THE FEAR OF SUFFERING. Suffering—the pain of body or spirit—may be for the glory of God. It may be for the accomplishing of His purposes. Or it may be used to refine our character. Whatever the reason, we can trust the God who permits it. Rest on His gracious provision, and leave the outcome totally in His hands (1 Peter 4:12-13, 19).

THE FEAR OF FAILURE. We fear failure because we rely on ourselves and not on the Lord. The first chapter of Joshua gives three good rules for success: go forward, trust God, and be guided by the Word of God. And then, God promises, "...I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Joshua 1:5).

THE FEAR OF DEATH. This is the greatest fear of all, but Jesus says, "...I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:25-26). He can make this promise because when He died on the Cross, He paid the penalty for man's sin. If we accept this payment, death only leads to eternal life.



Circle of Concern has gone ZOOM



Our last meeting of the Circle of Concern was canceled face to face due to the Covid-19. Therefore, in a last minute we decided to hold our meeting by ZOOM. It seemed to work out well for us and we had people from Maryland, West Virginia to San Diego, come join us! If you have been reading this newsletter you know the Circle of Concern is aimed at breaking down isolation and fear by providing a safe place for registrants and their loved ones to get together, build community,

and learn ways to step out and take charge of their lives and overcome the stigma they face.

The Circle of Concern is a group of concerned registered citizens, family and friends that meet together on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are meeting this month on January 17, 2021 at 3 pm—5 pm. Mountain Standard Time. We will be on ZOOM for upcoming meetings. You can join us by video or dial in by phone.

We encourage and try to help each other. It is a safe place to share our strengths and struggles. We hope you will join us. If you are planning to attend call Don at (505) 315-7940 so he can send you the information on how to join ZOOM.

