

Free Press Keeping Jew Hating Secret?

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While the public uproar against the Elko Free Press over a virulently anti-Semitic editorial is still building locally, readers of the the newspaper's website would have no inkling that anything is amiss.

Last Saturday, a Jew hating screed more commonly found on Jihadi and Nazi blogs was the lead editorial on the Elko Daily Free Press's last Saturday's print edition.

It's prominent place in the print edition was not however echoed on the Free Press's website, <http://www.elkodaily.com>.

In addition to not posting the offending diatribe, the Free Press has not posted its formal apology that ran in its Wednesday print edition or any of the numerous responses and letters to the editor. In fact the opinion page on the website has been empty of all content since last Monday.

"Maybe they don't want anyone to know," said Pam Zohar of the Elko County Jewish Community.

The Elko Free Press is one of the smallest newspaper in the Lee Enterprises media chain that also includes the Saint-Louis Post Dispatch, the Arizona Daily Star and the Twin Falls Times News.

Like many mega-newspaper chains it is being hit especially hard in the depression, and the last thing the company probably needs is national condemnation.

Just last week, the company imposed a company-wide pay freeze and halting all matching company contributions to 401(k) retirement plans, while allowing individual publishers to determine whether to order unpaid furloughs to cut costs further, according to a copywrited story in the Associated Press.

Lee's vice president of communications, Dan Hayes, said the pay freeze and 401(k) match suspension were company-wide initiatives, while furloughs are a "local determination."

The Associated Press reported the Post-Dispatch is requiring all non-union employees to take a one-week unpaid furlough that must be taken by March 31. About 300 employees were directed to take the unpaid leave.

Merit pay raises and matching company contributions to 401(k) retirement plans have also been suspended at the Post-Dispatch and other papers, including the Rapid City (S.D.) Journal and the Waterloo-Cedar Falls (Iowa) Courier.

"Like other companies, Lee Enterprises and the Rapid City Journal have had to make some difficult decisions over the past year," Journal Publisher Brad Slater said in a story in the paper. "Regrettably, the economic news does not hold much hope for turning around any time soon." Slater said details of a furlough program are being worked out.

Ironically efforts to keep uproar over the editorial confined to Elko are being undermined by the author of the piece Gary Jacobucci. The piece is now found on over two dozen Nazi, White supremacist and Islamic Jihad websites all over the world and Jacobucci is identified as a "columnist" either of the Elko Daily Free Press or of Lee Enterprises.

The problem for the financially beleaguered corporation is that , Jacobucci is not lying. He was also identified as such by the Free Press in the original editorial.