



## *Police Department*

905 Court Street • Lynchburg • Virginia • 24504

[www.lyncburgva.gov/police](http://www.lyncburgva.gov/police)

December 9, 2014

Editorial Board  
News and Advance  
101 Wyndale Drive  
Lynchburg, VA 24502

### News and Advance Editors:

Those who serve as law enforcement officers within a free society must balance their sworn duty to safeguard the community as a whole against the need to justly and effectively interact with an infinite variety of people encountered within unpredictable, rapidly developing and often dangerous situations. Even highly trained and experienced law enforcement officers can be daunted by the scope of their responsibilities.

News media representatives within a free society must balance the responsibilities to maintain a profitable business, to maintain journalistic integrity, and to provide a meaningful community service. Even conscientious and respected news agencies can fall short of providing accurate, objective, and well-rounded coverage of complex issues and events.

The Pat Bagley *Officer Friendly* cartoon run in the December 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the *News and Advance* appeared to me to be simplistic, inaccurate and inflammatory – three failings that responsible journalists and responsible news agencies must avoid at all costs. A cartoon depicting demonstrators in conversation about when to begin rioting and looting would be equally simplistic, inaccurate and inflammatory. We must face, discuss and address critical issues like social equity – but we must do so constructively, not divisively.

Law enforcement agencies and news agencies nationwide have these things in common: we provide necessary community services; we must have the public's trust and acceptance in order to effectively fulfill our roles; and the actions of any agency or any person within our professions can affect the reputation of that profession as a whole.



The Lynchburg Police Department is working and will continue to work with any partner who is willing to work constructively with us to make our community a great place for everyone to be. If we work together, each of us can be part of the solution: if we work at cross purposes, we become part of the problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Parks H. Snead". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Parks H. Snead  
Chief of Police