

A letter from the editor - It's everybody's concern

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Hollywood, MD - Early Tuesday morning, July 5 brought with it the bad news that a local woman had been the victim of a violent confrontation with a man she knew.

Despite the best efforts of responders and doctors the woman died a few hours later. Thanks to the quick work of law enforcement, the suspect was apprehended hours after the incident and is facing murder charges.

From what we are learning about the suspect, he had a violent past and very often women were his victims.

Sadly, domestic violence is commonplace in Southern Maryland. Even sadder, when domestic arguments that turn physical are reported by this news service it's the messenger, not the perpetrator, who gets berated by the public. In their anger, both victims and perpetrators have called The BayNet demanding that stories about these confrontations with bad results be purged from our pages. "Go report some real news" or "this is a private matter" or "you are ruining lives" are a sampling of what we hear.

Let me explain why this is real news and the matter isn't private. A slap in the face, a cut on the arm, a punch in the nose etc. might seem like a script for a cheap comedy sketch but in real life there is nothing funny about it. If such behavior is condoned or dismissed it has the potential to eventually escalate. If law enforcement is summoned, a report is filed and charges are pressed—guess what? The matter is no longer private. Cops are paid by taxpayers and they are dealing with a dispute among individuals on the public's dime.

Sure, there are two sides to every story and whoever was charged will have their day in court to tell a judge their side of the story. Of course, the victim may decide to recant the original story and get the charges dropped. The matter shouldn't end there. This would be an appropriate time for friends and family of the recanting victim to be on guard because history could repeat itself. At the same time, the aggressor who is now off the hook needs to seize the opportunity to seek help for his or herself. There is solid evidence an anger management issue needs to be addressed at once.

Thankfully, after centuries of regarding domestic violence as a private, family matter, society—through its law-making, law enforcement and judicial system—has opened its blind eye and is becoming intolerant of any behavior that has the potential to get uglier.

Another accused abuser is now behind bars and awaiting his day in court. Sadly, another victim is to be buried. Those who regard domestic issues as private must now seriously ponder whether this could have been avoided.

Peace to the family of the victim.

This letter does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Baynet.

What's your opinion? Contact Marty Madden at marty.madden@thebaynet.com

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