

## Letter from the Editor – Get the picture

Posted by [TBN Editor](#) On 09/22/2016

**Hollywood, MD** – A friend and former coworker of mine whose opinion I value once told me he thought taking pictures of a messy car crash was the lowest form of photojournalism. Crashes seem to happen frequently in our community, so what's the big deal? Mundane as they may seem, these crashes still impact lives. They impact those directly involved, their families, plus the motorists traveling at the same time in the same area--and they are part of the community's history. That's one reason why The BayNet expends resources to publish them.

Personally, I'd rather take pictures of magnificently restored classic cars and trucks at a local car show but readers don't always find that to be a priority. And we don't exist without our readers.

Because of periodic complaints we receive, now might be a good time to remind folks of a few things about those crashes you see on our site. First of all—and I know this is not going to go over well with many folks—the fact is, the laws of the land do not require us to receive the permission of the affected parties to publish the pictures, nor is it our policy to solicit that permission. If the crash occurs on a public road it is not a private matter. If it were, the injured parties might have to get private ambulance services to transport them to hospitals and hire private detectives to investigate the crash. Thankfully, the responders are rapidly on the scene, working feverishly to save lives, courtesy of the taxpayers.

Speaking of those responders, the lenses of our photographers' cameras often capture emergency medical specialists doing their jobs. When viewed, we are most often reassured and our trust in them is validated.

The BayNet goes out of its way—on the scene and in the newsroom—to ensure the faces of victims are never revealed. We also blur or block license plate numbers of any vehicle in the immediate foreground. Much consideration to people's feelings goes into any decision about what pictures to use.

Photography might arguably be the greatest technological advancement of humankind ever. Matthew Brady's grainy, gray images of the Civil War had a profound impact on America. For the first time, instead of viewing a battle in an over-dramatized oil painting, people saw the reality of war. It's hard to imagine life without images. Unfortunately, not all of life's images are pleasant.

**The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the management and staff of The BayNet.**

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