Your Turn: The miners and the media

If it's your credible source...

It seems ironic to me that your executive editor, Julie Doll, jumps to the conclusion that someone heard a phone call, misinterpreted what was said and spread the word that the West Virginia miners were alive. Is this what you call a credible source?

Many of the same newspapers have condemned President Bush for action on credible sources that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. It seems when the shoe is on the other foot the news media falls back on "I thought we had credible sources." This seems to make it all right if we make a mistake, but not if you make the same kind of mistake.

I might add that several countries had credible sources regarding Iraq and weapons of mass destruction.

Jon Sexson
Lafayette

Paper goes after a scapegoat

I am writing in response to your column, "How the papers got it wrong in W.Va." (To Our Readers, Jan. 5). I was able to comprehend how a mistake like this could have happened, however, should it have happened? No! Until the miners were out and safe (or not), the story should have remained speculative regarding their condition.

The kicker of the article was at the end, which in my opinion, changed the title from "How the papers got it wrong ...," to "Well, we really didn't get it wrong, you see, it was the poor devastated family members of the miners who apparently are unreliable sources."

Let's keep in mind, shall we, that they have been on an unimaginable, emotional roller coaster, praying for a miracle, holding out for a miracle, searching for a glimpse of hope, and you have the audacity to pour lemon juice in their open wounds by calling them unreliable sources. Not only that, but the mere drama of your statement that "if they aren't reliable sources, there may not be such a thing anymore" is yet another excuse.

What started out as an article admitting, and accepting, personal responsibility for a mistake ended with a scapegoat (which happens to include 12 families grieving the loss of a loved one and one holding out hope for the survival of their son). OK, so now I get it, the real victims here are the members of the media.

Sandi Falloon
Lafayette

Why must we blame media?

As I read a Jan. 5 letter blaming the media on the West Virginia mine story, I wonder why the media is to blame? If you were watching CNN during the entire course of the night, you would have seen at the bottom of the screen, in large letters, "Reported." This means reported, not confirmed, and at no time during the night did they say confirmed. Anderson Cooper kept saying the words, "It has been reported that ...," and that means exactly what it looks like. A lot of people are quick to blame the media for everything that happens, but if the media was not there covering the story, then everyone would blame the media for not getting the story out. As the governor of West Virginia said, let's not put the blame on anyone, let us thank the Lord for saving at least one life.

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