

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Citizens to Elect Stacey Brugeman
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National journalist and candidate for public office corrects inaccurate personal information listed in federal lawsuit

LELAND, Mich. – Stacey Brugeman, national journalist, author of Leelanau County's *Township Tuesdays* newsletter, and Independent candidate for Leland Township Trustee corrects inaccurate personal information listed in federal lawsuit. The complaint, filed in the United States District Court for the Western District of Michigan on Monday August 10, erroneously claims that Brugeman sent an email to Youth for Christ from ilovethepistons32@yahoo.com. "I have no affiliation with that email address," Brugeman said. "I have never sent an email to, received an email from, nor sent any communication as ilovethepistons32@yahoo.com," she continued. "In fact, in the 30-some years since the advent of email, I've never had a Yahoo email address at all."

Page 31 of the complaint reads:

"(p) Stacy [sic] Brugeman from ilovethepistons32@yahoo.com sent a message to Youth for Christ Club stating, 'You can't claim to be for Christ and also have a Trump loving attorney. You cannot serve God and money. NOBODY WANTS YOU IN LELAND. If you were actually Christian, you'd operate anywhere and stop terrorizing a small town. You're trying to indoctrinate children, you creeps. Leave our towns alone.' (Emphasis in original.) Stacy [sic] Brugeman apparently loves the Pistons but hates Christians."

"Not only is this not my email address, but these sentiments do not reflect my views," Brugeman, a baptized Christian, said. "Last fall, I met with families whose minors participate in Youth for Christ programming in Leland, I spent more than two hours sitting down with Jim VanSteenhouse in person, I talked at length with Liz VanSteenhouse, and I attended an open house where I met youth ministers Micah and Kya Cramer," Brugeman noted. "As they well know, I feel no such things. Quite to the contrary, I worked hard to understand their goals and mission for working with youth in our area, with the hopes of working collaboratively to find a location that wasn't so concerning to the small-business owners of Leland's unique tourism-driven economy," Brugeman said.

On Tuesday, community members were quick to express concern for Brugeman's inclusion in the document. One individual whose children are members of this youth group, went so far as to look into the email address in question themselves, reporting

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that the email address belongs to someone from Interlochen with a shared first name, but a different last name.

Brugeman reached out to the VanSteehouses and the Cramers, plaintiffs in this case, and their attorney, Thor Hearne, noting the clerical error. On Wednesday morning Hearne assured Brugeman that a correction will be made with the court promptly.

As a candidate for Township Trustee, Brugeman has heard from numerous citizens who have expressed concern that they are also misquoted or misrepresented in the 169-page complaint. "I started my journalism career as a fact-checker in New York City," Brugeman stated. "Facts matter. Always—but especially when working with minors and small communities," said Brugeman. "Leland may be a small community," Brugeman added, "but we are as resilient as any town I know. We will get through this trying season by loving thy neighbor, not by mischaracterizing them."

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