



# ROSSMOOR NEWS

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## Republican Perspective

*By John Littig*

Resurrection

We Americans are a forgiving people.

Examples abound of public figures disgraced by their own behavior. When their crimes or shenanigans are discovered, there is usually a pattern of indignant denial followed by confession. There is condemnation and disgust expressed in the press and by the public, and then a period of punishment or at least exile.

Sometimes the behavior is so egregious or so embarrassing that you would think the sinner would forever remove himself from the stage. Instead, the offender often re-emerges and gets a second chance from the public.

Let's look at some recent examples.

- Michael Vick: In 2007 the Atlanta Falcons quarterback pleaded guilty to federal charges for his part in running a dog-fighting ring. The heartbreaking conditions under which the dogs lived and died drew outrage from dog lovers and from the general public. Vick was indefinitely suspended by NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell and consensus was that he would never play another down in the NFL. He served almost two years in prison. But shortly after the end of his confinement, he was playing the 2009 season for the Philadelphia Eagles. He has established charitable foundations and lobbied for federal legislation to criminalize the viewing of organized dog fighting. Vick has managed to put his crime behind him, and the public has too.
- Tiger Woods: In late 2009 Woods was accused in the press of marital infidelities of truly epic proportion. More than a dozen women came forward. After the usual public denials, Woods confessed and withdrew indefinitely from golf tournaments. Most of his sponsors dumped him. He entered a rehab program. But by April of 2010 he was back on the PGA circuit. He even got an endorsement of sorts in 2013 by playing golf with the president. So his bad behavior is behind him and largely forgotten - except, probably, by his now ex-wife Elin Nordegren.
- Eliot Spitzer: In March 2008 it became public that Spitzer had, during his term as governor and previously as attorney general of New York, regularly patronized a high-priced prostitution agency - a crime for which he had prosecuted others. Under threat of

impeachment, he resigned his office. Then, Spitzer quickly set about refurbishing his reputation. He landed speaking engagements, wrote columns for prestigious publications, hosted a show on CNN, and even joined a university faculty. In 2013 he attempted a political comeback, running for New York City comptroller. He asked the voters to forgive him, and narrowly lost to his opponent in the primary election. But Spitzer will likely be back.

- Mark Sanford: In mid-2009, when he was governor of South Carolina and rising star and potential presidential contender, Sanford secretly flew to Argentina for a tryst with his mistress. Upon returning to the United States, and confronted with exposure, he made a series of emotional public confessions. He resigned his position as chairman of the Republican Governors Association. But he weathered an impeachment effort launched in the legislature by members of his own party, and served out his term as governor. His wife and children left him. Except for occasional commentary on TV, he dropped from the political scene. Then, a series of events left open the congressional seat he had held years before, and Sanford ran for the position. He easily defeated all challengers in the primary and handily won the runoff. Then he trounced his general election opponent - the sister of TV personality Stephen Colbert.

- U.S. Congressman Anthony Weiner: In mid-2011, Weiner was accused of sending unsolicited sexually explicit photographs of himself to women via Twitter. After several vehement denials, and faced with accusations from a growing list of women, he confessed and resigned from his congressional seat. In 2013 he decided to attempt a political comeback, entering the race for mayor of New York. He asked the people of New York to give him a second chance. Then it came out that, using the alias "Carlos Danger," he had continued to send sexual images of himself for two years after his resignation-in-disgrace! Caught in this second (or maybe ongoing) scandal, and blessed with a uniquely obnoxious personality, Weiner collected less than 5 percent of the vote in his mayoral comeback attempt. He gave "the finger" to reporters who asked his future plans.

The American people will apparently forgive almost anything if they feel you are sincere. Maybe even if they suspect your sincerity is feigned. But if you have contempt for the public, don't let on. Don't be obnoxious about your right to a comeback. Even in New York.

Americans tend to forgive a crook or a sinner. Unless he gives us the finger.

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