



Open Letter to Readers of The Sacramento Valley Mirror

You've been lucky to have Tim Crews in your community, and his legacy lives on.

Tim knew that a journalist's job was to comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable, and he took that to heart. Those words have never been more apt than during this pandemic-ravaged year in which Tim happened to pass away.

Many of us at the First Amendment Coalition knew and loved Tim, and we're grateful we had the chance to work with him in battling for a free press. We helped him when the Willows Unified School District tried to put him out of business for having the temerity to seek public records from the school district, and when Tim got a precedent-setting appellate court ruling which stopped the school district in its tracks. We helped him when Tim went to jail for refusing to disclose

confidential news sources.

This is a really tough time to be in the newspaper business. First the Internet and now the pandemic have made it very hard for independent newspapers to survive. Now many of the bigger newspapers are owned by hedge funds, and very few are locally owned. There aren't too many owned by 77-year-old Vietnam War vets who have their old computer on their desk, their wife at their side, and a dog on the floor.

We hope Donna, Doug and Larry and the rest of *The Valley Mirror* staff will carry on, and we hope the readers of *The Valley Mirror* know how lucky they've been to have Tim Crews, a legendary fighter for a free press and the public's right to know.

R.I.P. Tim, from your friends at the First Amendment Coalition.

