

Your Car Matters

Tom Dwyer Automotive Services
April 2013 Newsletter

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Don't hire me because I'm beautiful

Love thy neighbor as thyself...
oh, nevermind

Healthcare Blues Festival

Get "In The Groove Of Love"
to support single payer health
care in Oregon!



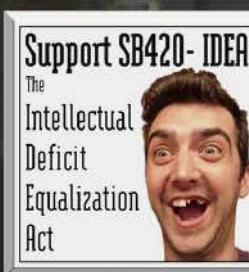
Labor Pains

Bad engineering can affect
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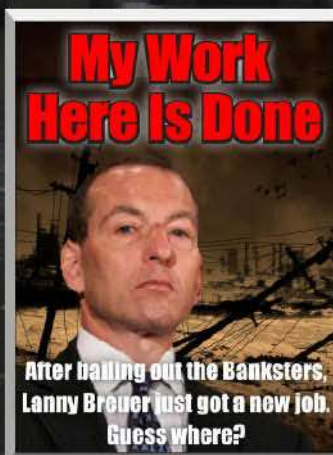
A Very Good IDEA

SB420, the Intellectual Deficit
Equalization Act could fix big
problems



News To Make You FURIOUS

Unemployment isn't
a problem for Lanny
Breuer





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Our Feature Articles



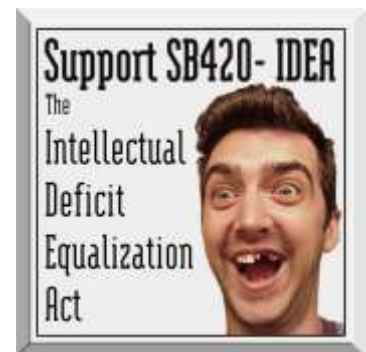
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- Don't hire me because I'm beautiful
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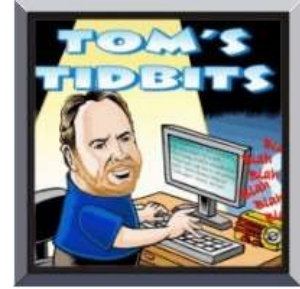
News To Make You Furious

Unemployment isn't a problem for Lanny Breuer



Tom's Tidbits

Please help us cater to YOUR schedule



Greetings!

Welcome to spring in Portland! Back East the weather has been bad enough that Punxsutawney Phil, the Groundhog's groundhog, was sued over his prediction of an early spring, but here the flowers and trees are blooming and the weather is warming up. Everyone gets a little anxious because of the good weather, so starting April with April Fool's Day was probably one of the best ideas anyone ever came up with. We look forward to participating every year, so I hope you enjoy the slightly fraudulent articles we've hidden in this month's newsletter (and other venues).

One of this month's articles that's not a joke is our Shop Talk column! You'll learn about Free Car Wash Season, but the more important part may be the advice to schedule NOW before you need your vehicle for the summer. I try to emphasize this every year for YOUR convenience. Spring and summer are the busiest seasons for our shop, and at the height of the season our schedule can sometimes be booked for a week or more in advance. I hate that some clients think we are "*always so busy*" that we must not need new clients, especially after a week where we were standing around wondering where everyone was! People tend to bunch up together and all want service at the same time, a roller coaster effect that can cause problems for us and for our clients. I hate it when we get busy and have to tell a client calling for elective service that we may not be able to get them in immediately (although we can almost always squeeze in emergency service.) Please, please, consider having your vehicle serviced NOW instead of waiting! Scheduling now ensures that you'll get the service you want on the schedule you need, and can drive worry-free throughout the summer.

On another topic, there's a proposal in the Senate that has received absolutely NO media attention, but I think would be a long overdue correction to a fundamental problem. You probably know that not all states get as much back from the Federal government as they contribute in taxes. You may not know that 84% of the states receiving more than they get (the Moocher States) are Red States, while most of the states giving more than they receive are Blue States. SB420, The Intellectual Deficit Equalization Act, offers an innovative way to correct this inequity. We've written an article this month that gives you all the details. I hope you can find time to write your Senator and encourage them to vote for this act.

So settle back, enjoy the sun, enjoy this newsletter, and we hope to see you soon!

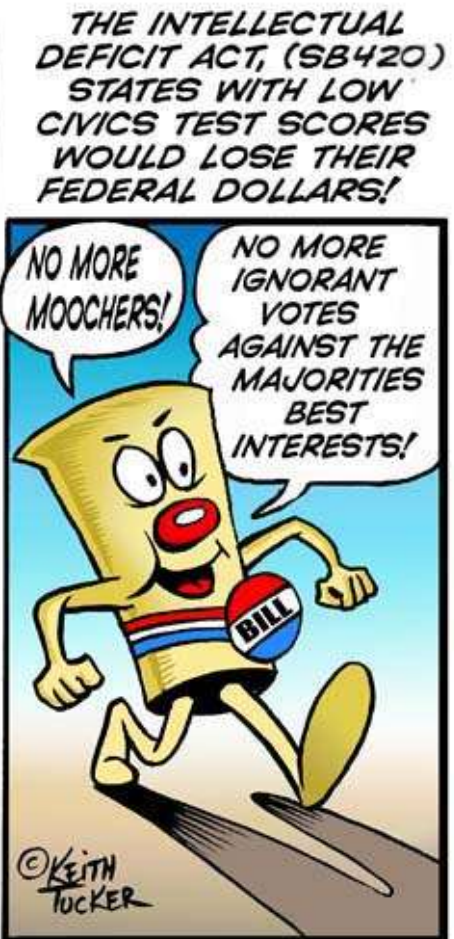
Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

See it FIRST in Your Car Matters!



THE BIGGEST WHINERS ABOUT GOVERNMENT SPENDING ARE THE RED STATES!



Inner City Blues Festival

Getting “In The Groove Of Love” supports single payer health care!

Are you singing the Health Care blues? You're not alone. Millions of uninsured and underinsured Americans have been singing for years. But other people are singing as well... Norman Sylvester is singing, and so is the DK Stewart Band. LaRhonda Steel, Chata Addy, and Steve Cheseborough are all singing, and for just one night it might be a good thing. The [Inner City Blues Festival “In The Groove Of Love” show](#), benefitting [Health Care for All Oregon](#), (www.hcao.org) is coming to the [Melody Ballroom](#) on Saturday, April 13th, and you can be there too...



The Inner City Blues Festival has deep roots in Portland. It started as the “Jam for Jesse”, a fundraiser for Jesse Jackson’s 1988 run for president. The first venue was the Royal Esquire Club on NE Alberta, and for the next 15 years the Festival hit the hottest blues venues in Portland... Texas II, Shango’s, Crystal Ballroom, Melody Ballroom and more. And the players! Blues enthusiasts could savor the sounds of Jim Mesji, Lloyd Jones, Norman Sylvester, Paulette Davis, Linda Hornbuckle, Duffy Bishop, Lilly Wilde, Janice Scroggins... the royalty of Northwest Blues turned out year after year to support a range of community causes. But time takes its toll on even the best events, and the Inner City Blues Festival closed its doors in 2003. Last year, after a 9-year hiatus, the Inner City Blues Fest returned as a benefit for Single Payer Healthcare in Oregon with over 800 people enjoying the show. The 2013 Inner City Blues Festival “Healing The Healthcare Blues”--(In The Groove Of Love) will continue the fun and benefit Health Care for All-Oregon.

If there’s a bright side to the national health care debate it’s that it has inspired people to take action on behalf of single payer health care. It certainly struck a chord with the blues community in Portland. Writing for the Jazz Society of Oregon, Lynn Darroch explains “Musicians are used to playing benefits for colleagues with medical needs and no health insurance. But this time, they’re being proactive — they’re playing a benefit concert for a movement that’s designed to get them all covered. If the campaign for single payer health care in Oregon succeeds, musicians should never have to play a fund-raiser for an ailing colleague again.” Norman Sylvester, also speaking to the Jazz Society, said “It’s a humanitarian movement to advocate for change. Musicians basically try to stay neutral as far as politics go, but health care is a humanitarian thing. Everybody has to have a health care program. Where is the money for health care going to come from for a musician who has to haul his equipment across town, play four hours, and gets \$300 for the whole band? Health care is this astronomical iceberg, and we’re on the Titanic now.” Norman’s putting his music where his mouth is with a [theme song he wrote for the movement called “HealthCare Blues”](#), and of course he’ll be headlining the show in April.

Norman Sylvester has carried many a show by himself, but he’d not alone in supporting Single Payer and he’s not alone in this show. You can also enjoy:

- **Richard Arnold** “Tribute to the Crooners”
- **LaRhonda Steele & Andy Stokes** “Motown Songbook”
- **Norman Sylvester Band with Ben Rice** “Blues Stains on my Hands”
- **DK Stewart Band** “Tribute to Etta James”
- **Lloyd Allen Band** “Portland Blues Legend”
- **Chata Addy & Friends African Drum Procession** “Honoring the late Obo Addy”
- **Shoehorn** “Tap Dancing Sax Man”
- **Mad as Hell Doctors** “Mad Minutes”
- **Steve Cheseborough** “Acoustic Blues”

Celebrity Masters of Ceremonies for the evening are **Paul Knauls**, a NE Portland businessman and former owner of legendary blues/jazz clubs Geneva’s and the Cotton Club & **Renee Mitchell**, former columnist for the Oregonian.

“In The Groove Of Love”, a 21-and-over event, hits the stage Saturday, April 13, from 7:00pm to midnight at the Melody Ballroom. Aside from the best music you’ll hear anywhere, there’ll be food and drink for sale with a no-host bar. There’ll also be a Community Village with raffles, and where you can meet the people who are bringing the Groove Of Love to you. Proceeds from your \$15 ticket will go to [Health Care for All Oregon](#), and you can pick up tickets for you and all your friends at [TicketTomato](#), [Music Millennium](#), [Geneva’s Shear Perfection](#), and [Musicians Union Local 99](#).

Single payer benefits everyone, and it needs everyone’s help to work. The people and companies have stepped up to bring you an unforgettable night of blues... what will *you* do?

Cascade Blues Association
 KBOO Community Radio 90.7 FM
 Portland Jobs with Justice
 American Federation of Musicians Local 99
 Northwest Labor Press
 Hollywood Impress Printing
 Music Millennium, Geneva’s Shear Perfection
 Portland Observer, Positively Entertainment
 Tom Dwyer Automotive Services
 Hollywood Burger Bar
 Main Street Alliance
 Hawthorne Auto Clinic
 Michael Munk
 Clear Path Hypnotherapy
 Rebecca Evans Photography
 Backs on Broadway
 Art Heads Custom Framing
 Beaterville Café & Bar
 North Portland Acupuncture Clinic
 Trade Roots
 Our United Villages
 Show Dogs Grooming & Boutique
 Tee Bee Enterprises

Nicholas Lebanese Restaurant
 Backs on Broadway Chiropractic & Massage
 Glisan Burger Barn and Grill
 Alice Muccio and Bob Gross
 Bart Day, Bipartisan Café
 Christopher Hamann
 Dave Goldman
 Gorgeous Deserts
 Khalsa Pain Clinic
 Lewis Hess at Atlas Tattoo
 Mad as Hell Doctors
 Mirador Community Store
 Mississippi Pizza
 Neil Kelly Company
 No Limits Stickers
 Paloma Clothing
 Snyder Equity Foundation
 Working Class Acupuncture
 Geneva’s Shear Perfection
 Nurses for Single Payer
 Porque No? Taqueria
 May Wallace Design
 ...and many more!

Labor Pains

Bad engineering can affect your bottom line

You've been there. You're standing at the Service Counter looking at the bill for repairs. There's a long list of line-items, but looking closer you see that the parts expense was only a few dollars and most of the bill is labor costs. How can it possibly cost that much to replace an inexpensive part? Frequently, the answer lies in diagnostic complexity and/or how automobiles are engineered and assembled. Vehicles are always a compromise between production expense, driving functionality and long-term reliability. Ease of repair is not on the radar for the engineers, and difficult repairs mean expensive repairs. There are many common repairs and vehicles that are classics in this arena...



Your quirky vehicle

Many, many vehicles have individual design quirks that make certain repairs difficult on those models that would be easy on other vehicles. Calvin Hamilton, one of our ASE-Certified techs, ran into one of these situations working on his own car, a Toyota MR2. "They warned me about this when I bought the car" he said. "They said it WOULD need to be replaced, and they called it the 'hose from hell'". More accurately it's called a water transfer hose, and it's a 4" long hose that's a common failure part on the MR2. "I bought the part for \$10 and got to work."

The hose lives between the engine and firewall, down toward the bottom of the engine. It isn't even visible, so patience, dexterity, small hands and the ability to work by braille is required. It requires the technician to squeeze an arm, hand and tools into tiny spaces, and then blindly manipulate cumbersome tools to remove the hardware and hose then awkwardly fiddle the new hose and fasteners into place; all done blindly and in contorted physical posture. Six hours later, the repair was complete. "I just couldn't believe something that is known to fail so often would be placed so inconveniently. A

little care in the engineering and it would have been a simple fix." Although Cal ended his story there, we still occasionally hear him grumble about the Hose from Hell.

Protect yourself against rising labor rates

The labor rate for shops in Portland ranges from \$91 to \$117 (source *RepairPal.com*). Our rate of \$97.35 for most work is on the low-to-middle end of that range. Although we've maintained that rate since 2004, one day it's bound to rise. There's a way to protect yourself against the inevitable... sign up for our [Labor Lock Program](#), one of four programs we created to help save your hard-earned money. It's free- just tell your Service Advisor next time you're in!

A graphic for the Labor Lock Program. It features a blue and white color scheme. On the left, there is a small logo for 'Tom Dluger Automotive Services' with contact information: 503.230.2369, Tom@Dluger.com, 530 SE Tenino St, Portland, Oregon. The main text reads 'Labor Lock Program' in large blue letters, followed by 'Pay today's prices for the rest of your life!' in smaller blue text. Below that, it says 'If you opt-in to this program and come in for service twice a year (minimum \$250), you'll maintain the labor rate you started with as our labor rates increase.' At the bottom, a white box with a blue border contains the text '1998 and newer vehicles only, please'.

It doesn't take much searching to come up with several other engineer-inflicted punishments; and repairs that punish Technicians will also cause pain to the vehicle's owner. Dave Gettmann, another ASE-Certified tech with over 39 years' experience, had a Nissan Altima on his rack recently. "This is just ridiculous", he said. "I'm replacing the motor mounts. They're responsible for holding the motor and isolating engine vibration from the chassis and the driver. On most vehicles they're accessible from beneath the car and may take an hour or less per mount. It's usually a straightforward repair, but not on Altimas! On these, you have to drain the fluids and manipulate things so the technician can LIFT THE ENGINE in order to get to the mount bolts FROM THE TOP of the vehicle! If the manufacturer moved the connection points less than an inch, this wouldn't be a problem at all. This tiny little difference doubles the labor time on the repair."

Every vehicle we work on goes through our Post-Service Check, where we check fluids, tires, and drive lights. On most vehicles if we find a burnt-out bulb we replace it for just the cost of the bulb. It's an inexpensive part, a quick repair, and we know you'll be happier and safer if we do it. However, Matt McKenzie, the ASE-Certified tech who handles our Post-Service, says that the Toyota Prius and Sienna are different stories. "How many techs does it take to change a Prius license plate bulb? Just one, but it takes some time! On most cars, the bulb lens unscrews and you pop in the bulb. On these cars, there is no easy access. You have to remove the interior panel on the rear hatch, including all the easily-breakable plastic retaining clips, to get to the bulb. Then, you have the time and effort of putting it together again." Yet another example of an automobile design that wasn't thought out very well.

The core of the problem

This classic example of a "high labor to parts ratio" repair doesn't revolve around any particular vehicle make. In many vehicles replacing the heater core is a real pain. The heater core is a small radiator-like object responsible for bringing engine heat into the passenger cabin for climate control. The heater core is located under the dash, usually behind the glove box. When it goes bad, antifreeze may leak into the cabin, your windshield can fog, and your car might smell like antifreeze. When heater cores fail they need to be replaced; there aren't many effective band-aids available. The heater core, normally a \$150 to \$375 part, usually requires the dash to be removed for replacement which requires as much as 10 hours and often more of labor. It's hard to even recognize your vehicle when the dash and much of the interior is removed... take a look at these pictures of a heater core replacement in a Jeep Grand Cherokee. You can see why this "simple" repair can take a day or longer.



Making labor work for you

In most cases there's nothing to be done about the labor in a job. Wherever we can, though, we make sure you get any possible advantage from over-lapping labor processes. (These are situations where labor from one operation covers or partially covers labor for another). A timing belt replacement is a good example. The timing belt is a critical component of your engine, coordinating the operation of all main engine components; if it fails your engine stops and in some cases the engine can be damaged. We've written a [very detailed article about the role parts and labor play in timing belt replacement](#), but here's the short story: The timing belt is buried under components and covers on the front of the engine and can only be accessed by removing these things in a process that takes several hours. Once the timing belt is exposed, replacing the part is straightforward. However, belt tensioners, idlers, oil seals, hoses, valve covers, water pump, oil pump and thermostat etc. are also exposed while the belt is uncovered. These are all parts that wear and can fail (possibly compromising that new timing belt) requiring serious labor to be replaced later. It makes sense in most cases to preventatively replace suspect worn parts "as long as you're in there". Any one of these parts would take expensive labor hours to replace if it failed later. This is smart insurance!

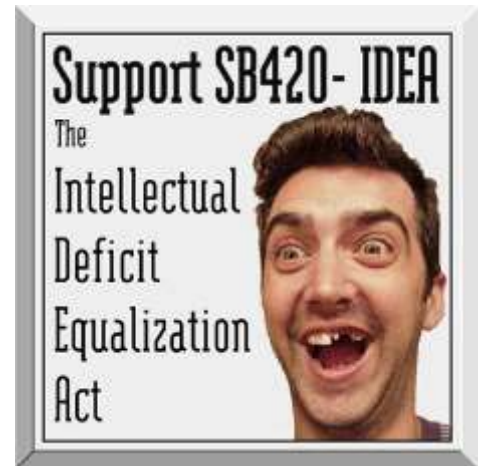
Knowledge is power

We've written before on how [shops calculate estimates](#), how [Technician's pay structures can affect their work](#), how [Service Advisor's pay can affect their repairs they recommend](#), and other issues regarding the cost of repairs. All that makes sense, but it's still surprising to see a \$50 part that generates a \$600 bill. We hope these examples shed some light on the subject. Whether you're dealing with our shop or someone else, make sure you understand the recommended repairs. Make sure you know if the labor estimate is fixed or if the repair is a time-and-materials estimate. That way, even if it's unpleasant, you at least won't be surprised by the final bill.

A Very Good IDEA

Intellectual Deficit Equalization Act could fix big problems

When it comes to federal spending, all states are not created equal. Some states receive far more federal money than they've paid in federal taxes. A whopping 84 percent of the states that **get back more than they pay in taxes** are Red states. Year after year, the people in these states elect Republican candidates who bash the "moochers" in our country, never realizing that they're suckling off the Blue teats themselves. But now, finally, there may be a way to correct this imbalance...



It hasn't gotten the attention it deserves, but then the best ideas never do. Senate Bill 420, the "Intellectual Deficit Equalization Act" (IDEA) is the product of a unique coalition of Progressive Democrats and the few remaining Centrist Republicans. IDEA would require every citizen to take a civics test and the results would be tabulated by state. A tax would be imposed on the states whose citizens don't score high enough. Those states would then lose federal dollars and also their electoral votes until their taxes were paid in full.

Delaware Democrat Gary Barratry was the one of the initial drafters of the bill. "I just finally got tired of hearing those yahoos whine about the money the Federal Government bleeds from them.

They whine about the welfare queens when they're the cream of royalty. Disability payments, welfare, Medicare, Medicaid, all the rest, they just keep taking. Who do these people think pays for the military bases in their states? Canada? It's our Federal Government! And if they can't make the ante it's time they stopped playing the game."

Red State Socialism

- FACTS:
- Of the 32 states which receive more than they contribute, 27 states (84%) are REPUBLICAN
 - Of the 18 states which contribute more than they receive, 14 states (78%) are DEMOCRATIC
 - Source of tax data is: taxfoundation.org/research/stow/266.html based on 2005 data
 - Election data is from CNN.com, based on 2004 Presidential election
- Research: Jesse Ertman | Design: Michael Pinto

States that GET more than they GIVE

State	Federal Spending per Dollar of Federal Taxes	Rank
New Mexico	\$2.03	1
Mississippi	\$2.02	2
Alaska	\$1.84	3
Louisiana	\$1.78	4
West Virginia	\$1.76	5
North Dakota	\$1.68	6
Alabama	\$1.66	7
South Dakota	\$1.53	8
Kentucky	\$1.51	9
Virginia	\$1.51	10
Montana	\$1.47	11
Hawaii	\$1.44	12
Maine	\$1.41	13
Arkansas	\$1.41	14
Oklahoma	\$1.36	15
South Carolina	\$1.35	16
Missouri	\$1.32	17
Maryland	\$1.30	18
Tennessee	\$1.27	19
Idaho	\$1.21	20
Arizona	\$1.19	21
Kansas	\$1.12	22
Wyoming	\$1.11	23
Iowa	\$1.10	24
Nebraska	\$1.10	25
Vermont	\$1.08	26
North Carolina	\$1.08	27
Pennsylvania	\$1.07	28
Utah	\$1.07	29
Indiana	\$1.05	30
Ohio	\$1.05	31
Georgia	\$1.03	32

States that GIVE more than they GET

State	Federal Spending per Dollar of Federal Taxes	Rank
Rhode Island	\$1.00	33
Florida	\$0.97	34
Texas	\$0.94	35
Oregon	\$0.93	36
Michigan	\$0.92	37
Washington	\$0.88	38
Wisconsin	\$0.86	39
Massachusetts	\$0.82	40
Colorado	\$0.81	41
New York	\$0.79	42
California	\$0.78	43
Delaware	\$0.77	44
Illinois	\$0.75	45
Minnesota	\$0.72	46
New Hampshire	\$0.71	47
Connecticut	\$0.69	48
Nevada	\$0.65	49
New Jersey	\$0.61	50

the black hole in our country is. I couldn't live with the shame anymore. I know we're bitter, greedy sponges; we have been since Reagan took office. This bill is basically an attempt to let me, and any principle-driven Conservative, sleep at night."

Indiana Republican Houston Fourberie is Barratry's unlikely co-sponsor. "When you run the numbers it's pretty obvious where

But how would the IDEA equalize the funding imbalance? "Houston and I were sitting in a D.C. bar about 3am and trying to do a little bi-partisan conferencing. We looked around for anything good that comes from the Red states. Florida's got some nice beaches and Texas has Austin, but aside

from that the little they produce is already taxed. We couldn't find any way to really derive value from anything run by Republicans. But then Houston hit on the answer. He slurred it a little at first, but finally got the word out."

"Stupidity," said Fourberie. "Stupidity is the one thing these states produce in abundance. God, man, I lived in Alabama for a couple years. I don't know of anything else that comes from that state in such a reliable stream. But you gotta admit, it's hard to derive any value from stupidity. That stumped us for a while longer."

But both Fourberie and Barratry had decades of inside-the-beltway experience to fall back on. Barratry was involved in drafting Obamacare, which eliminated any possibility for rational healthcare while still seeming attractive to Liberals. Fourberie cut his political teeth on cap-and-trade, the carbon emission reduction scheme that appears to work without actually being effective at all, but still allows profit to flow to energy companies. If anyone could wring value from stupidity it was these guys. But, after many more nights of inebriated conferencing they had to admit they were beaten.

That's when Barratry had his breakthrough... "It occurred to me that if we couldn't get the Reddies to carry their own weight, at least we could cut the weight the Bluesies were carrying. We can't have a poll tax or test for individuals because of that pesky Constitution, but on a state level? It could work."

Fourberie was immediately on board. "These Red Staters see themselves as educated on political issues, so they're sure they'd pass the test and never have to pay the tax. But if there's one constant in RepublicanLand it's stupidity. We'd never have to carry that load again."

SB420 has garnered almost no media recognition on any platform. Usually it's hard to find evidence of direct suppression of a story, but not in this case. Bernard Fustian, an Associate Vice President at one of the six companies that controls our nation's media (it doesn't really matter which one, does it?) gave a short but full explanation. "We've relied on the stupidity of the Red States, and most of the Blue ones, for years. It's our business model. We don't want anything that in could in any way lead to the realization that the American public is dumb as a bag of hammers. I don't care what the cost to the country is, this is our pocketbook we're talking about."

Without any media exposure, the fate of this SB420 is in your hands. Tell your friends, talk about it at work. And most importantly, get involved. This link is a good place to start. And with our help, in spite of the forces arrayed against it, maybe we can get this good IDEA into reality.

Drew's Kitchen

Shiitake Mushroom Extravaganza



Drew's makes his recipes simple and easy so you can spend your time enjoying the result instead of sweating the prep. This month he's bringing his philosophy of simplicity to the food itself by demystifying something you may think is too complex to deal with- growing your own mushrooms.



 **Growing Shiitake Mushrooms**
from Green Renaissance 1001 | www.greengr.com

The fresh, light, nutty taste of mushrooms is great in everything from appetizers and salads to exotic meat dishes, but mushrooms can be expensive as a dietary staple. Suppose you had your own "mushroom garden" that gave you a new crop every two weeks? Here's a short [video](#) that shows you how easy it is to do. All you need is a log and a little shade.

Once you have your fresh 'shrooms, try this recipe Drew adapted from Turback's Restaurant for Garlic Sauteed Shiitakes. And really, is there any other recipe you need for mushrooms?

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 6 ounces large shiitake mushrooms, stems removed
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley

Directions

- Prep time 10 minutes; yield 2 servings
- Combine butter and garlic in saute pan. Heat until butter is melted and garlic starts to sizzle, about 30 seconds. Do not let garlic brown.
- Add mushrooms and saute 3 to 4 minutes, turning until lightly browned. Season to taste with salt and pepper, sprinkle with parsley and serve.

OK, if you have your own mushroom farm it could get tedious eating even garlic sautéed mushrooms every day. Click this link for [19 more Shiitake recipes](#) from Mississippi Natural Products, a rural farmer's cooperative that grows Shiitakes in south central Mississippi.

Shop Talk

Free Car Wash Season is coming back



The weather's finally starting to dry up, and it's almost time to say goodbye to the rain for another few months. The auto business is cyclical, and the good weather means we're about to enter our busiest time of the year. This means a couple important things for you...

- As the shop gets busier it can be harder to schedule vehicle repairs (especially large ones) on short notice. If you are planning to get your car in shape for summer driving, try to plan ahead. Please call well before you'll need your vehicle to insure that you'll get the repairs and maintenance you need on the schedule that suits you. For more details, you may like this article we wrote on [why scheduling in advance is so important to meet YOUR needs](#).
- **FREE CARWASH SEASON is on the way!** The return of good weather also means the return of dust to our parking lot. To help keep your vehicle clean and happy when it leaves our shop, from May 15 to September 15 we offer our clients coupons for a FREE CAR WASH at WashMan. We can't do it for every purchase so you won't get one for just an oil change, but for most things beyond that you can have your vehicle washed on us. Why don't we do this year-round? That's one of the most common questions we're asked, so [we wrote an article explaining the whole thing here](#).
- One final thing for this month... sometimes it can be hard to find the proper part or tool for your vehicle. We run into this problem occasionally, and it can be a real hurdle for folks trying to do do-it-yourself work on their own vehicles. We thought we'd pass on this link to [Kale Auto, your source for "rare, unusual, and hard-to-find auto parts"](#). Whether you need seasonal air for your tires, sharpeners for your wiper blades, the "710 cap" for your crankcase, or even a new set of sky hooks for your home automotive shop, you can start your search here.

Health Notes

Bacteria may be 20% as effective as bariatric weight loss surgery



Studies show bacteria in the Intestines May Help Tip the Bathroom Scale



The smaller mouse, right, lost weight after gastric bypass surgery, while the heavier ones, left, had “sham” operations.- Philip Davis/Massachusetts General Hospital

The bacterial makeup of the intestines may help determine whether people gain weight or lose it, according to two new studies, one in humans and one in mice.

The research also suggests that a popular weight-loss operation, gastric bypass, which shrinks the stomach and rearranges the intestines, seems to work in part by

shifting the balance of bacteria in the digestive tract. People who have the surgery generally lose 65 percent to 75 percent of their excess weight, but scientists have not fully understood why. Now, the researchers are saying that bacterial changes may account for 20 percent of the weight loss.

The findings mean that eventually, treatments that adjust the microbe levels, or “microbiota,” in the gut may be developed to help people lose weight without surgery, said Dr. Lee M. Kaplan, director of the [obesity](#), metabolism and nutrition institute at the [Massachusetts General Hospital](#), and an author of a study published Wednesday in [Science Translational Medicine](#).

Not everyone who hopes to lose weight wants or needs surgery to do it, he said. About 80 million people in the United States are obese, but only 200,000 a year have bariatric operations.

“There is a need for other therapies,” Dr. Kaplan said. “In no way is manipulating the microbiota going to mimic all the myriad effects of gastric bypass. But if this could produce 20 percent of the effects of surgery, it will still be valuable.”

In people, microbial cells outnumber human ones, and the new studies reflect a growing awareness of the crucial role played by the trillions of bacteria and other microorganisms that live in their own ecosystem in the gut. Perturbations there can have profound and sometimes devastating effects.

One example is infection with a bacterium called *C. difficile*, which sometimes takes hold in people receiving [antibiotics](#) for other illnesses. The drugs can wipe out other organisms that would normally keep *C. difficile* in check. Severe cases can be life-threatening, and the medical profession is gradually coming to accept the somewhat startling idea that sometimes the best therapy is a fecal transplant — from a healthy person to the one who is sick, to replenish the population of “good germs.”

Dr. Kaplan said his group’s experiments were the first to try to find out if microbial changes could account for some of the weight loss after gastric bypass. Earlier studies had shown that the microbiota of an obese person changed significantly after the surgery, becoming more like that of someone who was thin. But was the change from the surgery itself, or from the weight loss that followed the operation? And did the microbial change have any effects of its own?

Because it would be difficult and time-consuming to study these questions in people, the researchers used mice, which they had fattened up with a rich diet. One group had gastric bypass operations, and two other groups had “sham” operations in which the animals’ intestines were severed and sewn back together. The point was to find out whether just being cut open, without having the bypass, would have an effect on weight or gut bacteria. One sham group was kept on the rich food, while the other was put on a weight-loss diet.

In the bypass mice, the microbial populations quickly changed, and the mice lost weight. In the sham group, the microbiota did not change much — even in those on the weight-loss diet.

Next, the researchers transferred intestinal contents from each of the groups into other mice, which lacked their own intestinal bacteria. The animals that received material from the bypass mice rapidly lost weight; stool from mice that had the sham operations had no effect.

Exactly how the altered intestinal bacteria might cause weight loss is not yet known, the researchers said. But somehow the microbes seem to rev up metabolism so that the animals burn off more energy.

A next step, Dr. Kaplan said, may be to take stool from people who have had gastric bypass and implant it into mice to see if causes them to lose weight. Then the same thing could be tried from person to person.

“In addition, we’ve identified four subsets of bacteria that seem to be most specifically enhanced by the bypass,” Dr. Kaplan said. “Another approach would be to see if any or all of those individual bacteria could mediate the effects, rather than having to transfer stool.”

A second study by a different group found that overweight people may be more likely to harbor a certain type of intestinal microbe. The microbes may contribute to weight gain by helping other organisms to digest certain nutrients, making more calories available. That study was published Tuesday in the [Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism](#).

The study involved 792 people who had their breath analyzed to help diagnose digestive disorders. They agreed to let researchers measure the levels of hydrogen and methane; elevated levels indicate the presence of a microbe called *Methanobrevibacter smithii*. The people with the highest

readings on the breath test were more likely to be heavier and have more body fat, and the researchers suspect that the microbes may be at least partly responsible for their obesity.

This type of organism may have been useful thousands of years ago, when people ate more [roughage](#) and needed all the help they could get to squeeze every last calorie out of their food. But modern diets are much richer, said an author of the study, Dr. Ruchi Mathur, director of the [diabetes](#) outpatient clinic at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.

“Our external environment is changing faster than our internal one,” Dr. Mathur said. Studies are under way, she said, to find out whether getting rid of this particular microbe will help people lose weight.

Sellwood Bridge Update

Steady and mostly quiet



In response to many inquiries we've received, here's the most important update we can give you...



The bridge is safe! It's open! Traffic is flowing! Come on down!

Aside from that construction on the new bridge is continuing steadily and, for the most part, quietly. The underground explosives breaking up rock along Highway 43 are the non-quiet part, but that's planned to wrap up this week. The big changes right now are taking part on the south side of the bridge where crews are building access platforms out from the shore to provide access to the bridge for construction. The construction of these platforms mostly involves work from the shore or in the water, so traffic flow on the actual bridge isn't impeded at all.

Below you'll find a couple pictures from recent construction, as well as the latest construction updates from Multnomah County. Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project, www.sellwoodbridge.org. Construction and closure alerts, archived information, and other resources are all available 24/7 for your convenience. Their two constantly updated live webcams of the bridge cams are available [here](#). If you're looking for something that's not on the website, you can contact Mike Pullen (mike.j.pullen@multco.us, 503-209-4111) or visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.



Construction staging on the southeast bank of the bridge



View of construction platforms from the northeast bank

TRAFFIC ALERTS

Hwy. 43 Work: Late next week the traffic signal at Riverview Cemetery south of the bridge will be turned off while the contractor digs a trench across the highway to replace a culvert. (A Traffic Alert email will be sent out when the schedule is confirmed.) Flaggers will direct traffic during this work, which is expected to take place during the day. Highway users south of the bridge should expect delays during this work and consider alternate routes.

Day: The outside southbound lane of Hwy. 43 is closed from 7 am to 4 pm weekdays between SW Taylors Ferry Road and the bridge while the contractor excavates the hillside west of the highway.

For safety, we urge bridge users not to cut through the narrow residential streets in the Sellwood area to dodge commute traffic.

West Side Work

Retaining Walls – Excavation of the hillside west of the highway continues. The contractor continues to test drill for rock south of the bridge. Night blasting is expected to resume south of the bridge the week of April 7. After excavation, the contractor will start building retaining walls to hold back the slope.

Landslide Team Hits Milestone – The team installing mitigation to stop the landslide reached a major milestone this week: installation of the last shear pile rebar cage. Forty shear pile columns have been installed since August 2012. The team had to install these massive structures underground without damaging the old bridge, the detour bridge, or impacting an active landslide.

Each steel cage is six feet in diameter and 75 - 96 feet long (see photo below). Each cage weighed 38,000 – 56,000 pounds before being filled with concrete. The team safely built and installed these giant structures in a very constrained work area without an accident or lost time injury. Ground anchor cables and top caps still need to be installed over the next month, but the majority of the landslide work has been completed.

Although their work is buried underground and out of view, the landslide team deserves our thanks for protecting the detour bridge and the new bridge from the geologic forces that damaged the old bridge.

In coming months, work in this area will shift from stopping the landslide to constructing the work bridge from the west bank and digging foundations for the approach columns for the new bridge.

One of this week's photos shows a sunrise from the landslide work zone.

East Side Work

Work Bridge – The east work bridge is taking shape, as our [south web cam](#) view shows. Deck sections now stretch out into the river. The east and west work bridges will be used as platforms to build the new bridge.

New Bridge – Preparation for drilling the deep shafts for new bridge foundations on the east side continues next week. The shafts will be installed from east to west, starting with the one near the Springwater Trail. The trail will remain open during the work.

River Work

Old River Pier Removal – A subcontractor is installing access in preparation for the removal of the concrete river piers of the old bridge this spring. Most of the piers will be removed to make room for construction of the new bridge foundations. The new bridge will only have two in-water piers, compared to five for the old bridge.

Construction Work Hours

Normal weekday work hours are 7 am to 6 pm. No weekend or night work is scheduled next week.

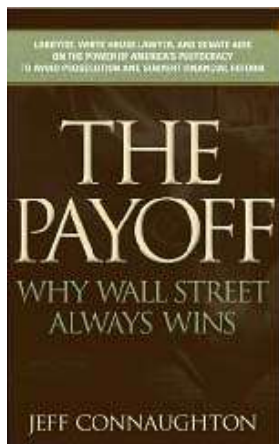
Book Spotlight

“The Payoff” by Jeff Connaughton



Last month’s “News To Make You Furious” was about For-Profit Prisons, and we recommended a book on “Kids For Cash” scandal in Pennsylvania. We have another link-up for you this month. In the wake of Lanny Breuer’s titular job change we have this book for you explaining why it’s naïve to expect anything better. Just click the link to go to the Powell’s Books website and learn more about...

“The Payoff- Why Wall Street Always Wins”



THE PAYOFF examines a culture of power elites in our nation’s capital that is slouching toward plutocracy, an alarming tale of reformers with the best of intentions running headlong into institutional failure and influence-peddling politics. It’s the story of a twenty-month struggle to hold Wall Street executives accountable for securities fraud, to stop stock manipulation by high-frequency traders, and to break up too-big-to-fail megabanks. In this book, we experience a U.S. senator’s vigorous crusade against Wall Street’s irresponsible risk-taking that destabilized the American economy. Through times of triumph and disheartening defeats, rarely witnessed from within our country’s legislative body, we encounter inertia, behind-the-scenes maneuvering, and outright reluctance by the Obama administration, the Justice Department, and the Securities and Exchange Commission to treat Wall Street crimes with the urgency they deserve. Even Robert Khuzami, director of the SEC’s enforcement division, when asked about federal judges rebuking the SEC for levying paltry fines, said to Kaufman: “I’m not losing any sleep over it.” Meanwhile, the Republican Party remains staunchly opposed to significant financial reform, primarily to wring fundraising dollars from the same Wall Street players who’d raised millions to elect Barack Obama president.

Connaughton, a former lawyer in the Clinton White House, illuminates the pivotal moments and key decisions in the fight for financial reform that have gone largely unreported. His take-no-prisoners, nonpartisan account chronicles the reasons why Wall Street’s worst offenses were left unpunished, why Obamas Financial Fraud Enforcement Task Force was merely window dressing, why our stock markets are broken, and why its likely the 2008 Wall Street–driven debacle will happen again.

About the Author

Jeff Connaughton holds an MBA with honors from the University of Chicago and a JD from Stanford Law School. He worked for four years as an investment banker, first at Smith Barney and then at E. F. Hutton. In 1987, he joined Joe Biden’s presidential campaign as Deputy National Finance Director and thereafter became his Special Assistant when Biden chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee. After graduating from Stanford, he clerked for Chief Judge Abner Mikva of the United States Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit, then followed Mikva as his Special Assistant when Mikva was appointed Counsel to President Bill Clinton. In 2000, along with Jack Quinn and Ed Gillespie, Connaughton founded Quinn Gillespie and Associates, one of DCs premier lobbying firms. Now retired from politics, he lives in Savannah, Georgia.

Humorousness

100 (or 300) Bizarre FaceBook Pages



Some people say FaceBook might have reached the peak of its popularity, but at least it's obvious that all the good names for pages are taken. Here are 100 (supposedly) real pages that couldn't come up with anything better. We haven't checked every page so we can't vouch for the content, but each name should be a link to the actual page. Click it... if you dare.

Another 100 Funny Facebook 'Like' Pages *(We tried to find the author's name so we could credit them for this, but were unable. Sorry!)*

These are another 100 Facebook 'like' pages that I find funny *(click on any page's name and it will take you to that Facebook page)*

1. My mum thinks 'lol' means 'Lots of Love'. She texted me: 'Our dog died LOL'
2. "We now live in a society where pizza gets to your house before the police"
3. Last year 4,153,237 ppl got married but shouldn't that be an even number?
4. Harry Potter's a little unrealistic, I mean a ginger kid with 2 friends?!?!
5. A computer once beat me at chess, but it was no match for me at kick boxing
6. Dear Mr undercover police car, i like your 5 extra antennas 😊
7. Dear algebra, stop making me find your X! She's not coming back...
8. Dear Iceberg, heard about global warming, karma's a bitch. from Titanic
9. Looking at someones claimed doppleganger and thinking "you wish".
10. on a scale of 1 to Spencer Pratt, how crazy was that?
11. When i die don't write "R.I.P" on my grave... write "B.R.B"
12. neighbours are ok unless they have passwords on thier wireless internet
13. saying "You Had to be There" when you realize your story really isn't funny
14. Mario is actively encouraging children to take psychotropic mushrooms.
15. No wonder Justin Bieber's so pale, there's no sun in the closet
16. Stroking my beard while pondering the mysteries of the universe
17. Friends are like potatoes... If you eat them, they die
18. The awkwardness when a woman doesn't choose the iron in a game of monopoly
19. What do you call a man who joins pages about girls making sandwiches? Single.
20. I Put The Wrong Date On Papers So My Teachers Dont Know I Did It Last Night
21. I'd kill for the download speed the girl on the piracy advert gets
22. Saying random numbers when someone is counting to make them lose count
23. "We can still be friends" is like saying "Hey, the dog died but we can keep it"
24. "What Does IDK Stand For" "I Don't Know" "OMG Nobody Knows"
25. 'Hey, what time is it?' 'Time to get a watch' 'Time to get a better joke'
26. Naming your car and referring to it as a person
27. I just realized immature spells I'm mature.
28. seeing an old pic of urself & wondering why i was let out of the house
29. Of all the fishes in the sea, you had to pick a whale..? :\
30. University – Working hard 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, 2 weeks a year
31. THE WALK OF SHAME when u throw a paper at the garbage can and miss. . .

32. Using a window as a mirror then realising there's someone on the other side
33. WHEN I READ CAPITALS, THERE IS A SHOUTING VOICE IN MY HEAD
34. Dear Buffy. We have a new assignment for you. His name is Edward.
35. I love it when someone's laugh is funnier than the joke
36. theres a fine line between tan, and looking like you rolled in doritos
37. That one friend that walks into your house like its their home
38. I've Always Wanted to Spin Round in a Chair & Say "I've Been Expecting You.
39. TO A.L.C.O.H.O.L. THE CAUSE OF--AND SOLUTION TO ALL OF LIFE'S PROBLEMS
40. Who ever invented the "copy and paste" has saved many hours of my life.
41. you only live once, LOL jks, I'm a cat.
42. HAPPY BIRTHDAY QUEEN! lol jks.. thanks for the day off
43. Imma let you finish.. LOL jks, I'm Kanye West
44. Here's a gift of a wooden horse, LOL jks, im going to destroy your city
45. This LOL jks thing has gone way too far..... LOL Jk, its just beginning
46. SHARK!! everyone get out the water! LOL JKS.
47. COD is the best game in the world, lol jks ever played mathletics?
48. ewwww its a dead zebra...LOL JK I'm Bear Grylls gobblegobblegobble
49. HAPPY BIRTHDAY!...aww you remembered?...ofcourse!, LOL JK Facebook told me.
50. IM RIDING SOLOOO, LOL jks my mums driving us.
51. "Hi, Can I help you?" "No, I just waited in line for 15 minutes to say hi."
52. the point where it is too late to ask what someones name is
53. As a child I always wondered if the light in the fridge ever turned off.
54. Dear Noah, We could have sworn you said the ark wasn't leaving till 5. Sincerely, Unicorns.
55. I intend to live forever. So far, so good.
56. My mind was blown when i found out "lol" looks like a drowning man!!
57. I Never Finish My Eraser Because It Is Either Stolen,Lost,or Cut In Half
58. You never see an Asian hobo.
59. I'm pretty sure i paid for a bag of chips, not half a bag of air
60. I hate it when I cant figure out which side of the blanket is the long side
61. At a movie theater which arm rest is yours?
62. 'How old are you McLovin?' 'Old enough..' 'Old enough for what?' 'To party'
63. the awkward moment when your unsure if someone is a girl or a boy
64. Dear Voldemort, they screwed up your nose too? Sincerely, Michael Jackson
65. Let's yahoo it. LOL jk google that sh*t! : D
66. The awkward moment created when you go for a hug and they go for a kiss.
67. The awkward moment when you yell "Slut" and every girl looks
68. The awkward moment when you realize your girlfriend is doing Movember too
69. That awkward moment when you get in the van and there's no candy.
70. The awkward moment when an emo kid orders a Happy Meal from maccas
71. The awkward moment when you know more than the sex ed teacher
72. "The awkward moment when you yell out COD during sex instead of her name"
73. I wonder if Tom (the Myspace guy) has a facebook?!
74. I don't care if your son is 3, I'm not giving up this swing. Thanks.
75. When I Play Fighting Games I Press Random Buttons And Hope For The Best
76. Dear Encyclopedia, Hahahahahahaha. Sincerely, Wikipedia
77. I run away when I press a toy at a store and realize it wont stop making a noise
78. Wouldn't it be ironic if you choked on a life saver
79. If you say gullible REALLY SLOWLY, it sounds like oranges

80. Hi I'm Troy McClure. You're reading this in my voice
81. 111 111 111 x 111 111 111 = 12345678987654321 ...Mind. Blown.
82. We only need 5,000,000 guys to join to vote Justin Bieber out of our gender
83. Move out of the way children I've been waiting 11 years to see Toy Story 3
84. I was owning on mario cart, then i realised i wasnt the top screen....
85. When the old peoples' items on antiques roadshow are worth nothing
86. That awkward moment when santa has the same wrapping paper as your mum
87. A man is dying of Cancer. His son asked him: "Dad, why do you keep telling people you are dying of AIDS?" Dad: "So when I'm dead, no one will dare touch your mom"
88. Spazzing when you press play on your ip0d not knowing its on full volume
89. Being Unsure If You Should Believe The Answer Some One Wrote In The Book...
90. That one friend we all have who will get naked for no reason
91. "I can't believe it's not butter!" ... It's not? What the hell is it then?
92. I Have Also Slept With Tiger Woods
93. People who investigate strange noises in horror movies deserve to die
94. Coughing in front of smokers to make them feel guilty
95. When we were little, Why were we so scared of our parents counting to three?
96. My mother never saw the irony in calling me a son-of-a-bitch
97. The irony of not being able to open a pack of much-needed scissors.
98. The police never think it's as funny as you do.
99. Loading ██████████ 99% ... Failed . OMG . >: (
And finally,
100. I like too many pages because their title makes me go, "That's so true!"

Whoever the person was who put this together, they've wasted much more time than it took for this one list. Here are 200 more FaceBook pages that tickled their fancy...

My first list of '100 Funny Facebook Pages to 'Like' can be found here:

<http://somerandomstuff1.wordpress.com/2010/05/03/100-funny-facebook-pages-to-like/>

My third and final list of 100 funny Facebook pages can be found here:

<http://somerandomstuff1.wordpress.com/2011/07/13/a-final-100-funny-facebook-pages-to-%e2%80%98like%e2%80%99/>

Popcorn Shorts

Cool stuff that's too small for a big article



Just like it says, Popcorn Shorts is about the kind of things we think are really interesting, but don't really need a large article to explain them. From the sublime to the ridiculous, check in here for crunchy bits of info you'll love to munch. Bet you can't eat just one!

4 Tea-Party myths about the Founders



There's no shortage of people comparing themselves to the Founders, but the Tea Partiers are way out front of the pack. True, they're both groups of flabby white men living in the 18th century who occasionally wear wigs, but the Tea Partiers see a philosophical resemblance as well. We hope you enjoy this quick list of four of the most pervasive myths along with a little truthiness to set them straight. Here's a little game to play... before you click the link, try to think of at least one myth and the reality behind it. Bet you get at least one right!

Even green energy can bring agonizing decisions



Here are two stories that only make sense in combination. We recently heard a [report that Kenya, desperate to supply power to its 42 million people, is investing in geothermal](#) rather than building coal or nuke plants. This clean energy source could completely supply their energy needs within just a few years. But then there's the other side of the coin. Some of [the best geothermal sites are located at Hell's Gate Park](#), and development could easily destroy the park. An agonizing decision... what price are we willing to pay for energy, even the greenest of energy?

Don't hire me because I'm beautiful



It seems like beautiful people get all the breaks. For example, in the job world studies have shown that beautiful people are more likely to be promoted than "plainer" colleagues. But it turns out that beauty can kill when it comes to job *hunting*, and the effect is gender dependent. A recent study at Ariel University in Israel examined what happened when job hunters included pictures with their resumes. They created fictional resumes for real-life jobs, then sent resumes with and without pictures. You'll just have to click the link to find out the results!

Love Thy Neighbor As Thy Self... oh, nevermind



With the Supremes considering marriage equality last week, this story seemed more appropriate than ever... No matter how you've tried to scrub it out of your mind you're probably aware of the Westboro Baptist Church, the fine folks who protest military funerals with their famous "God Hates Fags" chant. Well, they just got a new neighbor. A group called "Planting Peace" bought the house across the street from the WBC, painted it with a rainbow flag, and named it the Equality House. We can't wait for the report from the first neighborhood picnic!

News To Make You Furious

Unemployment isn't a problem for Lanny Breuer



Who, you may ask, is Lanny Breuer? If you've been following News To Make You Furious lately then you know, but it's hardly a household name. It should be, though. Few people have had as big an effect on the justice system, economy, and national future as the inimitable Mr. Breuer.

Lanny, until recently, was the Assistant Attorney General and head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. Along with his bosses Attorney General Eric Holder and President Barack Obama, he was responsible for investigating and prosecuting people and companies involved in the apocalyptic 2008 banking collapse.

Mr. Breuer, before his stint for the government, worked for Covington & Burling, a law firm specializing in corporate criminal defense. His experience keeping accused criminals out of jail was somehow thought to qualify him to put them into jail. But, surprising everyone except the people who picked him for the job, Lanny's years of "effort" have resulted in NO PROSECUTIONS. Instead, he helped make "too big to jail" quasi-official policy.

With the economy destroyed and the plunderers able to relax, Mr. Breuer is ready to move on. Although most Americans face a job hunt of about 8 months, Lanny's already managed to scrape something together. Starting July 1, he'll be back at Covington as Vice-Chairman of the firm, (a position created especially for him), making a reported \$4 million per year, defending the same people he was supposed to be putting in jail while he was at Justice.

And he doesn't even have the class to be embarrassed.

Want more details? You're a glutton for punishment, but we're here to help...

[Breuer Reflects on Prosecutions That Were, and Weren't](#)

An Exit Interview with Lanny Breuer by Ben Protesse on DealBook

[Why I let Wall Street Walk](#)

by David Dayen on Salon.com, response to the Dealbook interview

[Why I let Wall Street Walk](#)

Wall Street Job Report, responding to the Dealbook interview

[Lanny Breuer Cashes in After Not Prosecuting Wall Street Execs, Will Receive Approximate Salary of 4 Million Dollars](#)

by Mark Karlin on BuzzFlash

[Lanny Breuer Back at Covington & Burling](#)

JDJournal, a legal-industry professional journal

[Lanny Breuer and the Immorality of Our Morality](#)

by Michael Tomasky on The Daily Beast

And we've had a couple things to say ourselves about Lanny Breuer. You may want to catch up on these, if you're not Furious enough already...

News To Make You Furious...

[Where are the Wall Street prosecutions?](#)

With Liberty and Justice for those who can afford it

Radio Spots...

[Chasing JP Morgan](#) ((3/27/13)

[Not Just A Bad Idea... It's Policy!](#) (3/18/13)

[Just Us](#) (2/5/2013)

[HSBC](#) (1/24/2013)