



## Tom Dwyer Automotive Services Monthly Newsletter for July, 2016

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Angies has our good reviews, but read our BAD reviews too!



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THE Oregon Summer Camp

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# Tom's Tidbits

## What's happening to the Rule of Law?



Greetings!

The Rule of Law, the quaint idea that societies should be governed by objective laws instead of the whims of individuals, dates back at least to the Code of Hammurabi in 1750 BC and predates democracy by about 1200 years. In America we like to believe that even if our laws aren't perfect they at least apply to everyone, but it seems there's little reason to believe that's true anymore, if it was ever true at all...

The Rule of Law took root in western civilization when the Magna Carta, for the first time in history, placed even Kings under the yoke of Law. The progress of government over the next 800 years could be seen as constant refinements to ensure the protections and punishments of the Law apply to everyone. America's 240 years have shown mixed results in this area. Ask the slaves, women, religious minorities, or Native Americans of 1776 how protected they felt, or consider how often colonial politicians and plantation owners were punished. But when the Founders wrote "all men were created equal" they meant "equal before the Law", and that has been enough to build on. Today most rational people believe that everyone really does mean everyone; that The Law must apply to us all or it's a sham. America's still not perfect, but we're improving.

Except where we're not. We may believe the Law should apply to everyone, but we see every day that it doesn't. The list is long and depressing, from politicians and political groups who flout the law with impunity, to unpunished bankers, killer cops, polluting companies, and more. Pick your favorite, but the common denominator to them all is summed up by the appalling words of Attorney General Eric Holder who, when discussing the proven, intentional, long-term, and serious crimes of HSBC, told the Senate Judiciary Committee it was "too difficult to prosecute some institutions that could impact the national, even the world, economy" because it would "inhibit the ability to bring more appropriate resolutions". That's not the Rule of Law.

As we watch the powerful escape the Law we also see the powerless persecuted by it. Mindless pursuit of small crimes like broken taillights or selling single cigarettes leads to fear and distrust of the police. When these toxic situations lead to death the person who videotapes an atrocity may be punished more than the officer who commits it. Poor communities stagger under a judicial system that traps them into cycles of jail and court fines they can never escape. Whistleblowers exposing criminality are hounded and jailed while the criminals go free and the crimes continue. Again, that's not the Rule of Law.

How do we restore faith in this most basic building block of our society? We probably can't look back to punish the unpunished, no matter how richly they deserve it. Our solution lies, as it has since 1776, in looking forward and making continual improvements. To support the Rule of Law we must elect leaders of integrity who support it. We need to create law that is responsive to the dignity and daily life of the common people and protects them from the predations of the elites. The Rule of Law means nothing unless people at every level feel its protections and are willing to live by its constraints. Unless we restore and maintain the fair implementation of the Rule of Law, the fabric of our society will continue to unravel.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tom'.



# What NOW?!! Toons

Our June check in with Keith Tucker



# **A Peek Behind the Curtains**

There's ONE thing we do for EVERY vehicle at our shop...



Clients will specifically ask for services like checking their tire pressures, replacing burned out bulbs, and filling their washer fluid. Of course we gladly say yes, and we say yes so very easily because all these services are already included in our Post-Service Checkout, which we do for EVERY vehicle we service. Whether you're in for major work like a timing belt or just a minor interval service, there are always basics that we monitor as a matter of course. But if some clients don't know we're already doing these things

then it may be time to give everyone a peek behind the scenes at what happens in our Post-Service Checkout...

A major objective of our ASE-Certified and ASE-Master-Certified Technicians is delivering top-notch care for your vehicles, but as thorough as they are it never hurts to get a second set of eyes on their work. That's one of the quality control aspects of our Post-Service Checkout; we process each completed vehicle to ensure all the small but critical details are covered. We look for the obvious mistakes that would annoy any client if we let them slip; a tool or part accidentally left behind, a warning light still on, some new problem that's popped up, or some small leftover from a service. Our Technicians are good, but no one's perfect!

This double-check of our work is a valuable part of our Post-Service Check, but it's just the start. We also provide valuable and necessary services that few companies offer anymore; especially at no charge. We cover more than 20 important points to help insure your vehicle is operating at its best. The specifics may vary slightly depending on vehicle model, but our routine covers things like headlights, marker lights, turn signals, brake and reverse lights, tire condition and air pressures, fluid levels, windshield condition, front and rear wiper and washer functionality, even your vehicle's horn. Let's look at these points a little more closely...

- **Under-The-Hood Inspection**

We check and top off all fluid reservoirs including window washer, brake hydraulics, power steering, automatic transmission, engine oil, and engine coolant. If any of these systems are inexplicably low, we'll bring it to your attention as a possible symptom of a deeper problem. We make sure

everything is as it should be under the hood; no tools or loose wanderings, or that any problems present are documented.

- **Headlights and bulbs**

Lights and signals are a critical part of vehicle safety. Something as simple as a burned out headlight, turn signal, or marker bulb can cause real safety issues or lead to an encounter with law enforcement, but our post-service inspection helps insure you're covered. Some bulbs are difficult to replace and in those cases we call to have labor times authorized, but whenever possible we only charge for the bulbs.

- **Tire Pressures**

Manufacturers recommend different, specific tire pressures for each type of vehicle. Correct pressure is critical to safety in all weather conditions, and under- or over-inflating tires reduces traction and causes irregular tread wear. No one can just look at a tire and know when the pressures are correct; there's no substitute for physically checking each tire with an accurate pressure gauge.

- **Cleanliness**

We don't mean vacuuming your carpets or washing off years of accumulated dust, but removing the debris that can affect your vehicle's function. For example, we'll pull leaves and goo out of your cowl vents because clogged air intakes reduce air flow and inhibit climate control systems. Of course, if there's any residue left over from the services we performed we'll want to polish that up as well.

- **All the other little things**

There are important things that all vehicles have in common, but every vehicle also offers its own unique challenges. We help with little things like lubing squeaky door hinges or gravelly locks, cleaning smoke-covered windshields, setting clocks, or remounting a license plate that's ready to fall off.

Few people check all these details on their own vehicles, but they're the kind of details that can lead to problems if ignored. "PEACE OF MIND"... our Post-Service Checkout delivers! When you bring your vehicle to us you can rest assured that we're doing our best to care for your vehicles; from major systems to the smallest of details, helping to keep you on the road safely and confidently. Now that you have had a small peek behind the scenes, you can close the curtain and take comfort in knowing that we'll be doing all of this and much more every time you bring your vehicle to Tom Dwyer Automotive Services!

# AngiesList Goes FREE

AngiesList has our good reviews, but read our BAD reviews too!



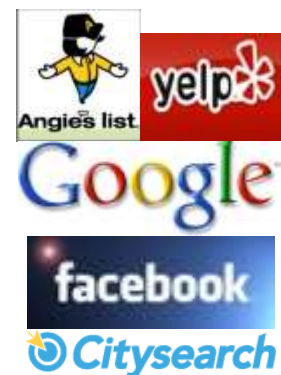
We heard some big news at the beginning of July... Angie's List has been set FREE! For years Angie's has been one of the premier review websites for service providers like painters, roofers, and (ahem) auto mechanics, but you had to be a paid member to see their reviews. No longer! Competition from Yelp, Google, and others has pushed them to open up to the rest of us. There's a link to the new FREE Angie's List in this article, but there's much more as well. Good reviews are important, but they make really boring reading... just click to read ALL of our BAD REVIEWS!

It's simple to check out Angie's List on your own for free... just go to [AngiesList.com](http://AngiesList.com). You'll be asked to create a member profile and you'll be asked if you want to pay for a silver or gold membership, but paying's up to you and once you're on the membership list you're in.

If you decide to check us out on Angie's or any of the other sites, we're proud to say our clients have been very complimentary on all of them. Right now we have reviews posted on Angie's List, Yelp, Google, CitySearch, Tribe, and Facebook. Here's the Cliff Notes of all our reviews...

- [Angie's List](#)- We're **A-rated** on Angie's with 129 reviews; 125 A's, 4 B's and C's, and NO D's or F's. We've earned Angie's Super Service Award every year since 2009.
- [Yelp](#)- We have a **4.5 star rating** with 84 reviews; 74 5-stars, 3 4-stars, 2 3-stars, 2 2-stars, and 3 1-stars. There are 44 more reviews buried behind Yelp's firewall and not factored into the scores.
- [Google](#)- We have 18 reviews on Google and a **5-star rating**. Calculating the average was pretty easy to do... all 18 reviews are 5-stars.
- [CitySearch](#)- Our most recent review on CitySearch was from over a year ago, but we have a **100% rating** from 5 reviews. One of our bad reviews below comes from CitySearch but it's no longer posted; possibly because it has gotten too old to be relevant.
- [Tribe](#)- Tribe has gone out of business, but when they were up we had **6 reviews**- 4 5-stars and 1 each 2- and 1-stars. You'll see those bad reviews below.
- [Facebook](#)- Facebook is a new review platform to us, but we're doing pretty good so far. There are 10 reviews, **all 5-stars**.

We're grateful for the many thoughtful and generous reviews across the Web, but sometimes enough is never enough. If you'd like to write a review of your experiences with Tom Dwyer Automotive we'd like to encourage you to do so! Just click here to go to [AngiesList](#), [Yelp](#), [Google](#), [CitySearch](#), or [Facebook](#)! (Sorry, Tribe!)





Good reviews are what we strive for, and seeing them can be reassuring if you're considering using our services for the first time. But there's a saying that "good vacations make bad stories", and it's the same with business reviews. Good reviews may be important but they make really boring reading. The most interesting (and possibly educational) reviews are the BAD reviews, so settle into this article we wrote in 2013, in which we collected all our BAD reviews together in one place! Let the Schaudenfest begin!



## Read our BAD Reviews

*Originally published Jun 2013*

Independent businesses live and die by their online reviews. It used to be word of mouth that could kill you, but in the days before the InterTubes it took a while for that word of mouth to spread. And, there was always a fresh supply of people who would never get the chance to hear the rumors, so an unethical business could sleaze along for years before the bad word got out. Now the buzz (good or bad) is online

instantly, lives forever, and can be easily compared to your competitors.

We've worked very hard to build our online reputation, and we have stacks of great reviews to back it up. But, no one's perfect and we do get bad reviews occasionally. We don't look at this as a bad thing, though, we look at it as the most direct possible form of communication with our clients. Whether it's an [online review](#) or a comment on one of our [post-service feedback cards](#), we take it as an opportunity to improve. We first try to identify the person who had the problem (sometimes this is easy, sometimes it's impossible) and contact them to resolve their issue. Whatever the result with the person, we take their review back into our weekly Service Advisor meetings, examine our processes, and make changes to ensure that, if possible, that particular complaint never happens again.

No matter how good you are things can go wrong, there can be misunderstandings, and even (very rarely) people come in who just don't want to be happy. When things go wrong for us we do our ABSOLUTE BEST to make it right, but we don't always succeed. The good reviews may be what we strive for, but you know the dirty little secret... the bad reviews make the best reading. Here are all the bad reviews we could find on all the rating sites, along with comments from us where appropriate. Time to exercise those schadenfreude muscles and enjoy our BAD REVIEWS!

Ed. Note— As we wrote this article, it got a little confusing trying to figure out who was saying what. To make things easier to read, we put each type of response in a different font. Hope it's helpful.

- The reviews themselves are in black regular print
- *The response we made at the time (if any) is in black italics.*
- *New comments specifically for this article are in blue italics.*

One other thing... if you'd like to check out any of the reviews below in their natural habitat, just click on any of these links...



And now let's get started with the first review in our Bad Review Rogue's Gallery...

### **CitySearch- “BD195172”, 2/7/2011 review- “Recommends”**

“Great Service Model. Someone once said, ‘It’s not the fact that a mistake is made, it’s how you deal with it that counts.’ Steve at Tom Dwyer has made me a believer in customer service excellence. I had a negative experience and he listened to my grievance, understood the challenges, and gave me viable solutions to resolve the situation. Such customer awareness and excellence deserves five stars! Thanks Steve!”

*(7/30/2012- Like he says, we all know things go wrong, so it’s important to be prepared when they inevitably do. We’re actually very proud of this review... one of our newest clients came in because of it! And thanks to BD for being willing to work with us to make things right.)*

### **Yelp- “Megan I.”, 7/30/2010 review- “2 Stars (out of 5)”**

“I came to this auto shop specifically because of the great ratings on Yelp, and I was incredibly disappointed in the service. I was having problems with my power steering and my brakes were screeching (they were so bad people on the street were turning to stare at me when I drove by!) Based on the reviews here I was expecting really friendly service, fair pricing, someone to clearly explain the problems with my car to me and to drive away with the car fixed. Unfortunately, I experienced none of these things.

They weren’t rude per-se, but the folks in the office were really stand-offish. My power steering problem was straightforward so I understood that, but I didn’t understand what they were saying was wrong with the brakes. Rather than explain it, the guy in the office acted like I was a moron and was really annoyed to have to explain it to me.

I HATE this attitude at auto shops and avoiding it was the reason I ultimately chose this shop. It was really frustrating to be treated this way. After I got my car back — (\$1600 later....) the power steering worked great so two stars for that, but the brakes were still screeching. I took the car back for them to figure out why their expensive repair didn’t fix the problem but they couldn’t. Instead they just told me over and over that there was nothing wrong with the brakes. I expect to pay a lot for major repairs, so that wasn’t a surprise, but I also expect to be treated with respect and for the problem to actually be fixed after I fork over almost 2 grand. Again, really frustrating since I know brakes aren’t supposed to screech like that. I’ll be taking my business elsewhere for a second opinion on the brakes and wouldn’t recommend this second rate auto shop to anyone.”

*(7/30/2012- We weren’t able to find out who this person was or what went wrong on her visit, so we were never able to reply to her Yelp review. The only thing we could say is that we tried our best then, and if she came back now we’d still try to make things right for her.)*

### **Yelp- “Chris E.”, 6/18/2012 review- “2 Stars (out of 5)”**

“Really not sure what rating to give these guys. Would have loved to have given them a try, but they are only servicing vehicles that are 1998 or newer. Never heard of that with any reputable garage. Guess I’ll take my ’94 Toyota somewhere else. To their credit, they were professional and friendly and did give me some recommendations for other garages, but what a shame that they aren’t interesting in assisting any of us with older vehicles.”

*(7/30/2012- The following is our response to Chris on Yelp, 6/19/2012. He didn’t revise his rating, but this answer is still there for anyone else who is disappointed in our ‘1998 and newer’ policy)*

*I’m sorry you’re disappointed at our older vehicle policy, but it’s nothing personal...it’s been our policy for many years not to start NEW service relationships with clients with older vehicles; currently 1998 or older. We clearly post this on our website, but not everyone sees the website before they call. If we were actually able to service your vehicle I’m sure you would have given us*



*more than two stars... please let me try to explain why we have this policy, and when you understand why we believe it's in your interest maybe you'll revise your rating...*

*We have many longstanding clients with older vehicles, and we plan to keep them happy for years to come! We started maintaining those vehicles when they were newer and continued servicing them as they aged. We have relationships with the clients, and everyone is aware of the vehicle's ongoing needs and condition. We'll continue to service these vehicles, but experience has taught us not to start new client relationships based around older, often challenged vehicles.*

*There are good reasons for this. First, we constantly update our training and equipment to match the technology of more recent vehicles. Second, older vehicles can be "houses of cards" due to age, service history, or condition, which can lead to questions if there are problems with the service. Most importantly, our service is built around trusting, long-term relationships with our clients, and that depends on the quality and condition of the vehicle being serviced. Most older vehicles are what we call "economically totaled", needing so much work to make them safe or reliable that the cost of repairs exceeds the value of the vehicle. It doesn't make sense for us to prioritize repairs on vehicles in this situation. Once we've built a service relationship with a client, they listen to us if there's a glitch, or trust us when we tell them it's time to stop spending on repairs and move on to a different vehicle. It's impossible to build that kind of relationship around a vehicle that is already worn out.*

*Coherent maintenance can extend the life of vehicles, but it's rarely worth playing "catch up" to get an older, poorly maintained vehicle running safely and reliably. We hate saying "no" to potential new clients, but we don't believe in relationships that are not mutually beneficial. Vehicles will come and go, but a service relationship can last for generations.*

*If there are folks out there with a vehicle older than 1998, you think it's in good condition, and you just won't part with it, there are options. For slightly older, good model vehicles with less than 150,000 miles we can do our Comprehensive Inspection (\$150.00) to determine the actual needs and conditions of the vehicle. If the vehicle is in a condition we can support then we'll gladly do it. If not, we'll recommend you to one of the places we trust to handle older vehicles, but we hope you remember us when you trade up to your next vehicle.*

### **Yelp- "Ron Z.", 10/18/2009 review- "3 stars (out of 5)"**

"I called Tom Dwyer regarding my 1994 Ford Ranger clutch problem and in the end was informed they only work on 1996 or newer vehicles and wouldn't be able to work on my truck. I have since learned they only take easier work that has little chance of damaging their perfect rating. Seems true. It sure would be nice to have that on their website instead of wasting my time on the phone and asking me all about the problem and then declining the job."

*(7/30/2012- Ron and Chris had the same problem... our '1998 and newer' policy. About the only thing we have to add to what we wrote for Chris' review is to point out the way Ron says we dealt with him ... we kept him "on the phone asking all about his problem" to give him good directions to a mechanic that could help him even when we knew he wouldn't be our client. If you call us, you'll always get the same courtesy and respect.)*

### **Yelp- "Curtis I.", 11/21/2011 review- "3 stars (out of 5)"**

"This is an edit to my review from November 2011. I originally gave Tom Dwyer a less than stellar rating because of some problems we had in November after service they performed. Tom yelped a reasonable response to my review, and we later discussed these issues over the phone. Tom offered to resolve the issues, and we came to a fair agreement. I commend Tom for being willing to discuss the issues, and make

a fair offer of resolution. This is well beyond what most service centers would have done. My updated rating is 3 stars, for a less than stellar beginning that was made right in the end. Things do not always work out perfectly, but at least Tom will work with you towards a fair end."

*(7/30/2012- Here's another bad review we're very proud of. Even when things go bad we don't want you going home unhappy. Dealing with people as reasonable as Curtis and BD (above) makes it much easier to work out solutions that are satisfactory to everyone involved.)*

### **Angie's List- 9/11/2009 review**

**Work Completed Date:** March 11, 2009    **Hire Again:** No    **Approximate Cost:** \$250.00

**Description Of Work:** They replaced the transmission fluid in my car.

**Member Comments:** *(Transcribed from a telephone interview)*

I went to them because it was conveniently located and they had a good rating on Angieslist. I felt that they redid the work that had already been done recently by the auto repair shop that I usually go to. I was not satisfied with their service.

#### *Company Response:*

*We were sorry and surprised to find that this client had a problem with our service. We do everything we can to protect our 99.7% satisfaction rating, and no one leaves unhappy if we are given the chance to work things out.*

*Although this work was performed over 7 months ago, we were able to search our records and check into the matter. We started by doing a 90-point inspection of the client's 2002 Jeep. The ASE-Master-Certified Jeep Specialist who did the inspection found dirty transmission fluid that needed to be replaced. We told the client, she authorized the work, we did it, and as far as we knew the client was happy.*

*There are two points in this review that we take issue with. First, the client mentioned in the review (although not to us) that "...the work had already been done recently by the auto repair shop that I usually go to." We checked the transmission fluid and documented that it needed replacement. Perhaps the issue was not with the work we did, but that the transmission fluid had been extremely dirty again or may have not been thoroughly flushed by the previous shop. There are several systems available today to flush automatic transmissions and some do work better than others. We don't sell unnecessary work!*

*Second, this review could mistakenly lead people to believe that we charged \$250 for a transmission flush. Actually, it was \$76 in parts and \$97.35 in labor of a bill that also included the 90-point inspection, pre-service road test, a minor interval service, oil change and lube, resetting the "maintenance required" light, repairing a broken brake light, and a full post-service check and test drive.*

*Again, there is nothing more important to us than our client's satisfaction. No one leaves unhappy or stays unhappy if we are given the chance to work things out, but we can't fix problems we don't know about. If this client had told us there was a problem and asked for some adjustment, we would have done everything requested to make it right for her. And, even after 7 months, we still will.*

*For some reason, the folks at Tribe.net don't like us. We have six reviews; four of them are five-stars but two of them aren't, as you can see below. All the spelling and grammar mistakes were in the original reviews.*

### **Tribe.net- “Phil”, 4/17/2008 review- “2 stars (out of 5)”**

I read the tribe ratings after hearing several advertisements on KPOJ, and decided that I would go to Tom Dwier, for an inspection and an oil change. What I left the shop with was much more — a spooky encounter with a service manager, who recommended that I not go on long trips, unless I pay more than \$2500 for additional repairs, and an \$800 whole in my wallet.

I was seduced by Tom Dwier Automotive’s website and progressive radio message. When I arrived I was awestruck by all the technical certifications and employee photos on the wall. The place looked humble, and the people were very friendly at 7 am. I dropped the car off and took the shuttle back to work, without incident.

A few hours later I get a message to call them, the inspection had been completed. Turns out that my suspension is totally shit struck, I had a bald tire, and I needed a break job, because a caliper is broken and dragging. Now I’m no mechanic, heck, I couldn’t pick a break caliper out of a lineup, but that sounded pretty serious, so I had them fix it.

I was then told they had the parts in stock and I could get it done by the end of the day, they would call me. At this time I was also “sold up” on additional services like a break system flush, a cleaning and adjustment on the rear brakes, and a transmission fluid change. My \$99.50 inspection and \$37.22 oil change had skyrocketed up to \$800! They called me two hours before closing, and then told me that something wasn’t fitting right and that they would have to keep the car overnight. I was upset, but what could I do?

I got dropped off by my girlfriend, to pick up the car, and told her I that I would pay and be meet her at a local pub in a couple of minutes. It seems that I underestimated their respect for a customer’s time when I told my girlfriend to go on ahead of me and order me a beer, because I, with credit card in hand, could not simply pay and leave without a lecture in vehicle safety, and a hard sell on the urgency of restoring my entire suspension system to original factory specs (I have a lowered ride), FOR OVER \$2000!

They did this as a sales tactic, because once I had my keys I would stop listening and be able to just say “no thanks” while walking toward the door, but I was forced in to justifying my desire to drive a lowered vehicle and given ominous warnings about going elsewhere to get service. All I wanted to do was pay and lick my wounds in a pub with happy hour beer. Thanks to that wind bag I missed happy hour, but still got to pay \$800, yea!

The next day I went to Les Schwab, to get a replacement tire, and told the service guy, that I had just come from Tom Dwier Automotive and I was told I needed a new tire and suspension, he said he was glad to do the tire and asked to take a look at the car’s suspension. Naturally I approved, and his diagnosis was the same as Tom Dwier Automotive’s I needed new front struts, shocks, and springs. The difference was about \$900! Not only that he gave me a quote on a break job, and it too was half as much as I paid!

The take-home message here is: if you are a blue-collar guy on a tight budget, avoid this place like the plague, If you are a latte-sipping sipping YUPPE Tom will happily relive you of your burdensome cash. I have to give up my vacation plans this year. I had planned on going to the great American Beer Festival for the first time this year, had I gone to Les Schwab, I could have at least gone camping.

*(7/30/12- We really weren’t sure what to do with Phil’s review. We don’t “upsell” anybody, and the “sales trick” about holding someone until they are mad was news to us. Anyone who knows us knows that we don’t do things like this at all, but we still reviewed Phil’s comments in our weekly meeting to make sure our Service Advisors knew how their advice was being interpreted by clients.*

*We'll finish out this walk down the potholes of Memory Lane with one of our oldest and worst reviews, which still stands out as a favorite. "J's" Tribe review is below, with Tom's response immediately after.)*

### **Tribe.net- "J", 12/31/2005 review- "1 star (out of 5)"**

#### **These hacks are liars.. dont trust them!**

Let me tell you about me and myself first, I am a mechanic with over 20yrs experience, that said.. I had a car for sale and my prospect wanted a pre-purchase inspection done. Ok no problem so he chose this place. 2 weeks prior to me selling the car I had just got done putting a brand new clutch in. So this place keeps the car for a few hrs and tells me right to my face the car passed, I am thinking great! My prospect calls me an hr later with what the shop told him. The shop said the brakes were shot, the clutch was going out and the trans was bad, all lies and they wanted something to the tune of \$1,200 for "future" repairs. This was all bold face lies because another prospect took the same car to a different shop in LO and they passed it with flying colors. Hacks at Tom Dwyer, yes dont go there, there filthy liars! – J , posted 12/31/05

#### ***We protect our customers from unethical car dealers***

*A real customer alerted us to the rating posted by "J". Thank you for the heads up. "J" is not one of our customers! Never has been never will be. I looked at his bio etc. What a guy! "J" Sells used cars for a living and after reading his information I'm hoping that others will see the truth in this story. After inspecting "J's" vehicle for sale (for profit), we advised our customer to decline purchasing his vehicle. We ruined "J's" car sale to the "prospect" he had in his sights. SORRY "J", oh and by the way do you have a dealer's license? I assure you that the inspection was accurate. Our job is to protect our customers from buying used vehicles that will not deliver good service and economy. I would like to know what shop in LO passed it with flying colors (don't have your pre-purchase inspections done there!). Many details don't add up in "J's" rating. You don't get a clutch, transmission and brakes for \$1200.00. We don't give estimates to our customers for repairs on cars that fail pre-purchase inspections. "J" states in his bio that he is 30 years old (bio picture looks even younger). He claims to have 20 years' experience "working on cars". At the age of thirty I'd like to know how you get 20 years of experience "working on" cars, unless riding in cars counts. "Working on cars" and being a professional ASE master technician are not equivalent. We don't employ any 10 year old technicians at my shop. I'm hoping "REAL" Tom Dwyer customers will post feedback to wash "J's" out. Talk to a real Tom Dwyer Automotive client and you will find that we have been delivering impeccable service for 25 years and have a 99.8% customer satisfaction rate. Take Care and play nice!*

### **STOP THE PRESSES! STOP THE PRESSES! STOP THE PRESSES!**

*(8/13/12- As we were putting the finishing touches on this article, one more bad review hit the e-streets. He doesn't seem like a client so we won't be able to contact him and we won't be changing our political outspokenness based on one review, so there's probably not much we'll be able to do with this one. We also won't be able to respond before the newsletter goes out, so you'll just have to check Yelp to see what we say.)*

### **Yelp- "Jim C.", 8/13/2012 review- "1 star (out of 5)"**

Political agenda has no place in your business. Go elsewhere.

*UPDATE 7/26/16-*

*Yelp pulled Jim C.'s review as "inappropriate" before we could respond to it, but this seems like the ideal venue to do so. Our response would be...*

*It's the duty of every citizen in a democracy to participate; not just to pay taxes and vote occasionally but to discuss the problems, benefits, and possibilities of the country with other concerned citizens. We respect people or companies that choose to keep politics and business*



*separate, but politics in business is nothing new. It seems that virtually every auto shop we've ever seen has Rush Limbaugh or FAUX News in their waiting room, so a shop with political books and bumper stickers from the loyal opposition is only a small beginning at a balance. And if Jim is concerned about politics creeping in to an independently-owned small business, perhaps he should consider the political activeness of more powerful people and businesses like the Koch Brothers, or Exxon, or Phillip Morris, or Monsanto, or the thousands of others who don't bother with trying to convince people of their agenda... they can afford to bypass democracy by simply buying politicians to enact it. We don't have political tests for employees or clients, but neither are we ashamed of the views we hold. Talk to our Techs and you'll get a range of political views; talk to our clients and the range is even wider. But if you look closely at the positions we advocate or the causes we support, you won't find blind ideological partisanship. You'll find support for broad principles of general benefit and respect, principles we proudly support no matter which political party is pushing back against them. At some level, every person and company has a "political agenda" of some type; we're just very up-front about ours. Beware of the ones who DON'T share theirs with you!*

# Westwind

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## THE Oregon Summer Camp



What do you think of when you think of Summer Camp? The quiet joy of sitting by a campfire, making friendships that last a summer or a lifetime, feeling the confidence that comes from new skills and new accomplishments? There are hundreds of summer camps across our beautiful Oregon, but Westwind is one of the most glorious. Situated on the Oregon Coast with pristine nature all around, it's everything kids dream about in the whole camping experience. We're grateful to our client Anne S. for introducing us to Westwind, so we'd like to pass on the favor and tell you how you can help make this camping dream come true for Oregon kids now and into the future...

Westwind's mission is to give "all children access to wild and undeveloped landscapes, and allow them to discover the interconnection, complexity and splendor of living in balance with natural systems," and they are uniquely situated to succeed. Oregon exemplifies the ideals they champion, and Camp Westwind itself is a set in 529 acres of farm and wilderness in the middle of the Cascade Head UN Biosphere Reserve in Oregon. The summer camp is the spine of their programs, but they also host the Northwest Outdoor Science School, workshops, events, volunteer programs, and more. Westwind was a YWCA Summer camp for 70 years and has a continuous history of use since 1937, except for a short break for World War II.



The setting for Westwind is isolated and undeveloped; in fact for many years the site could only be reached by rowboat. Today a road allows for supplies to be brought in, but the campers themselves still arrive by boat across the Salmon river. Long before Harry Potter did the same, Westwind was using boat arrival as a solemn crossing into a magical world. Harry's world of fictional magic has nothing on the natural magic of Westwind! Campers can see thousands of species of birds and surf dwellers on the beach, and the woods teem with wildlife including deer, bear, elk, and cougar.



Of course, for the kids who tire of nature and hiking they can take advantage of the camps canoeing, kayaking, paddle-boarding, archery, challenge course, arts and crafts, disc golf, beach games, and more. Gathering around the nighttime campfires is essential, and cozy and inviting cabins await the campers at the end of the day. No two days at Westwind are ever alike!

Oregon values of respect and stewardship for nature are central to the experience of Westwind, as are the values of diversity and inclusion that are trained into the staff. The ideas of sustainability that kids learn follow them to affect their daily lives at home. Campers benefit from meeting other campers from a wide variety of ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds. Westwind has had camping programs with YWCA, Impact NW, Oregon Foster Care, Tucker-Maxon School, and CASA among many others. One of the unique programs of Westwind is a series of Family Camp sessions including Mother/Child, Father/Child, and LGBTQ Family.



The cost of Westwind is \$750 for 6 days of camping, including bus travel from Portland. Sometimes this money also has to stretch to cover the costs of a sleeping bag or some basic camping equipment for kids who can't afford it. That's one of those basic Oregon values that drive the Westwind organization; the idea that money shouldn't be a barrier to nature or growth. Last year they were able to offer almost \$80,000 in "camperships" to deserving youth through donations and grants. That's a perfect opportunity to tell you that Westwind is always looking for

people who share their values to share their burden as well... this year they are working to provide 20% of their campers with financial aid at a cost of \$114,000. If you'd like to help you can always [donate by going to their webpage](#), but you may also be interested in their "[Abundant Westwind](#)" event in October. It's going to be an elegant Northwest affair at the Laurelhurst Club in Portland with a happy hour followed by a meal of salmon, elk, mushrooms and other fare harvested or foraged from the Pacific Northwest. There'll be an auction, stories from Westwind campers, and you'll have an opportunity to win weekends at Westwind or other exclusive packages available only at the fundraiser.



Westwind is one of the iconic Oregon experiences, set in lush beauty, bursting with wildlife, and thriving on the Oregon values that helped create it. Those values and the generosity of we Oregonians ourselves will help sustain it now and grow it into the future, providing a life-shaping experiences for generations of children. Help if you can, send your children if you can, visit if you can, but even if you can't... you can still rest easy knowing this Oregon treasure is right in our own backyard.



# Drew's Kitchen

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## Perfect Picnic Menu... and more



Ahh, Summer. It's Portland's secret weapon to make it through the rainy season. We can tolerate the gray only because we know from June through September we'll all be living in paradise. Drew's not immune to this perfection, and it's showing in his recipe selection this month. Instead of just one recipe (delicious as it might be) he's got a full menu for you... a menu for a perfect picnic. But that's not all! We loaned Drew the *Your Car Matters* research staff to put together a range of perfect picnic spots all over the City. So run out to BiMart for a portable grill, small cooler, and big blanket, pick your perfect picnic spot, and load up with this Perfect Picnic Menu for your Perfect Picnic evening. Enjoy!

### Drew's Personal Picnic Burgers

#### Ingredients:

- ½ pound 80% Lean hamburger or turkey burger
- ¼ cup chopped red onions
- ½ cup chopped mushrooms
- ¾ cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 Tbsp Yoshida's Marinade or Favorite Liquid Marinade
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp pepper

#### Preparation:

- Mix all ingredients in the hamburger in a bowl
- Make 2 thick patties
- Place on grill. Cook 4-5 minutes per side

### Dilled Cucumber Salad

#### Ingredients:

- 1 large cucumber, thinly sliced
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 pint sour cream
- 1/3 cup vinegar
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- ½ tsp seasoned salt
- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 1 tsp pepper
- 4 tsp chopped fresh dill weed

#### Preparation:

- Place cucumber and red onion in shallow bowl. In another bowl, stir together vinegar, sour cream, vegetable oil, seasoned salt, sugar and pepper, stirring until all of the sugar dissolves. Pour over cucumbers and onions; stir in dill weed and toss gently. Let sit at room temperature for an hour.



## Roasted Potato Salad

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups quartered unpeeled small red potatoes
- 1 cup Miracle Whip dressing
- 4 slices bacon, chopped, crisply cooked
- 2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

### Preparation:

- Heat oven to 425°
- Place potatoes on a 15x10x1 inch baking pan sprayed with no-stick cooking spray.
- Bake 30 to 35 minutes, or until potatoes are tender and golden brown, stirring once.
- Mix dressing, bacon, eggs, onions, salt and pepper in large bowl.
- Add potatoes; mix lightly. Serve warm or chilled.
- Makes 6 servings.

## Yogurt Fruit Bowl

### Ingredients:

- 1 6-oz lemon yogurt
- Watermelon
- Banana
- Red and/or green grapes
- Cantaloupe
- Berries
- Other fruits as you see fit; chunked or sliced

### Preparation:

- Mix all fruit in bowl with yogurt. Refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

## Perfect Picnic Spots

[Sellwood Park Concerts](#)

[Portland Park Summer Free-For-All](#)

[14 Best Places In Oregon To Go On An Unforgettable Picnic](#)

[The 10 Best Picnic Spots in Portland and Beyond](#)

[Yelp's Picks for Picnic Spots in Portland](#)

[The 15 Best Places for Picnics in Portland](#)

[Six Best Swimming Spots in the Columbia River from Portland to Hood River](#)

[Six Bite-Sized Chunks of the Pacific Crest Trail](#)

[Something to Do Every Single Day This Summer in Portland](#)

[The Ultimate Bucket List of Essential Oregon Coast Experiences](#)

**NOW GET OUT AND HAVE FUN!**

# Shop Talk

One insider trick you MUST have for the Sellwood Park Concerts!



## The Sellwood Summer Concerts are rocking again!



Three down and two to go... you don't have many opportunities left to enjoy the Sellwood Summer Concerts! They're part of a [city-wide program by Portland Parks and Recreation](#) bringing free movies, concerts, and events to parks around Portland. Our particular concerts happen in Sellwood Riverfront Park where you can relax on the grass, enjoy a picnic, listen to music, and watch the sunset. Make sure you drop by the Tom Dwyer booth to say hi and enter to win an office chair mat made from the late lamented PDX Airport carpet. If that's not enough, we'll have more contests and giveaways for your kids while you chat with us about your vehicle. And here's a trick that only readers of this newsletter will know- parking can get cramped at the show itself, so feel free to park at the Tom Dwyer Shop and use the Springwater Trail to walk to the show! Music, food, prizes and fun, and EASY PARKING... don't miss the FINAL TWO 2016 Sellwood Park Concerts!

### You've missed these already...

July 11—Keegan Smith (original urban Americana)

July 18—Pete Krebs & the Portland Playboys (old school western swing & honky tonk)

July 25—Edna Vasquez (velvety Latin pop rock with folklore roots)

### But there's two more left to enjoy!

Aug 1- Karen Lovely (award winning contemporary blues)

Aug 8- Quarterflash (energetic 80's rock)



Check out the progress of the Sellwood Bridge from your front-row seat in Riverfront Park... it's almost, almost, ALMOST done!



Future engineers and artists working on their designs for the "Car of the Future" at the Tom Dwyer booth. We'll show you what they came up with in our next newsletter.

## Referral Reward Program



Summer is our busiest time of the year, which is great for our Referral Reward Program and great for the groups we're helping. The Referral Reward Program is our way of saying "thanks" for your generous referrals without even the appearance of impropriety... there's no possibility that your referral to your friend could be tainted by a free oil change or discount for yourself! It's absolutely simple... **whenever a new client comes in because of your referral, we call you and donate to the non-profit group of your choice.** Donations are based on the new client's initial purchases, and vary from \$10 to \$50. In July we were able to make **12 donations**

**totaling \$513 to these groups...**

[American Diabetes Association](#) by Jerry B.

[Friends of Tryon Creek](#) by Jake P.

[Oregon Humane Society](#) by Jimmy H. and Amy B.

[KBOO Radio](#) by Lynn S.

[JOIN PDX](#) by Stacy Y. and Chuck F.

[Special Olympics Oregon](#) by Steven M.

[Community Music](#) by Jennifer P.

[Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest](#) by Christine S.

[Boy Scouts of America](#) by Grigsby C.

[Baby Blues Connection](#) by Hans M.

That's July's individual monthly donations, but these groups are also eligible for Quarterly and Yearly Awards as well. Up till now we've been picking these awards in-house, but no longer... we're expanding democracy in our own little way so starting next month YOU'LL have the chance to vote for our Quarterly Award Winner! Stay tuned to Shop Talk for the details!

## Current Discount Offers



One of the most frequent services we supply during this peak Summer driving season isn't a repair at all... our clients line up to get their vehicles checked before they go out on their big Summer adventures. You may pack a lot of things

for your vacation, but the Peace of Mind you get from knowing you're driving a safe and reliable vehicle is way more important than a spare toothbrush!

**Get our 90-point Inspection at NO CHARGE!**

OR

**Get our most in-depth Comprehensive Inspection (normally \$150) for just \$75 or FREE (with \$250 minimum purchase)**

Don't wait for the last minute to take advantage of this offer! Since we are so busy in the Summer our appointment schedule fills up very quickly, so plan to come in as far before your trip as possible. Not only will you be more likely to get the appointment you want, but you'll have a chance to test-drive any repairs locally before you hit the road. Call us now to make us part of your summer plans!

*Offer expires Aug 31, 2016*



It's not bad yet, but the coming heat will soon turn our parking lot into a dust factory. We can't wash all the vehicles we service, so we created Carwash Coupon Season from May through September to make up for it.

**Get a coupon for a FREE WashMan car wash (with minimum purchase)**

CarWash Coupon Season only goes through Sep 15, so act now to get the sparkly vehicle you'll love. Sorry, but we only give coupons for services exceeding \$125 and not for oil changes or other minor services. So why don't we just wash your car here? It's one of the most common questions we get, so click here and we'll let Tom himself tell you why...

*(offer expires Sep 30, 2016)*

## Your reviews and referrals matter



We are constantly grateful for the supportive and loyal clients we have developed over the years. Your comments and appreciation keep us on the right road to providing the superior automotive service you deserve. Your reviews and referrals are not only the highest compliments we can receive, but they're the lifeblood of our new business. If you like what you've found at Tom Dwyer Automotive Services, please tell a friend or take a minute to write a review on [Yelp](#), [Angieslist](#), [Google](#), or the review site of your choice. Thank you!

## Latest Automotive Recalls



Automobiles are just like any other product; occasional flaws in manufacture or design can cause problems once they leave the factory. When an issue is identified the manufacturers and government work hard to bring the vehicles back in for refit or repair, but not all recalls make the front pages. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration maintains a [constantly updated list of recalls from every manufacturer](#). The last month's recalls are below, but clicking the button at right will take you to the full list at the NHTSA website.



# Health Notes

## A new prescription for chronic pain



An epidemic of opioid use, abuse, and addiction is sweeping our country as people try to deal with chronic and debilitating pain. Patients avoid opioids for fear of addiction and doctors are hesitant to prescribe them even when needed. But opioids aren't the only answer to pain...

### Psychological Nutrition: A New Prescription for Chronic Pain

Shoba Sreenivasan, Ph.D., and Linda E. Weinberger, Ph.D.

A patient in chronic pain wants their pain gone. Perhaps this is easier said than done. Pain management is complex and has no certain or easy solutions. Surgery may not improve, or may even exacerbate, the pain (e.g., as in low back pain). Non-opioid pharmacological treatments may also prove less than satisfactory. Chronic pain causes emotional pain; which, ironically, can result in heightening the patient's sensitivity to their physical pain. The debilitating effects of chronic pain span across physical, emotional, social, and occupational functioning. In its 2014 report, The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Disease Prevention estimated that chronic pain impacted one-third, or 100 million Americans. It has a high cost: via lost work and medical expenses. The dollar cost was estimated by NIH at \$560 to \$630 billion a year.

The use of opioids may lessen pain in the short-term, but long-term use remains problematic. For example, it may produce a chronic pain state, may potentiate abuse, and may deepen depression. Moreover, the side-effects of opioids alone, or in combination with other drugs (prescribed or illicit), or if misused by persons with co-morbid conditions (e.g., sleep apnea), can range anywhere from sedation to respiratory suppression to liver damage to death.

Thus, alternate strategies to opioids for pain management have been developed. These include approaches focusing on psychosocial factors, including psychotherapy (such as cognitive-behavioral treatments to address distorted thinking, mindfulness treatment to reframe pain, acceptance commitment therapy to augment psychological flexibility) meditation, yoga, aromatherapy, and acupuncture. These modalities have gained prominence as complementary to traditional medical interventions. These methods have support in the form of small to moderate effect sizes in meta-analytic studies.

Despite the negative effect of chronic opioid use, they remain widely used in the management of pain. In part, this may be because discussing non-pharmacological interventions may not be met with receptivity by a patient in pain. Recommending non-opioid treatment may: 1) signal to the patient that their condition is hopeless; 2) worsen their emotional distress; 3) suggest that their physician believes they are abusing opioids; and/or 4) suggest that the severity of their pain is doubted by the physician.

Is there a way that a medical provider can begin the discussion of alternate treatments that avoid a defensive reaction by the patient? Reframing pain management as the management of emotional, or psychological nutrition may be one such method.

### **Psychological Nutrition**

This is a concept we developed and is readily accessible and intuitive as it adopts terminology and concepts that patients are familiar with: nutritional labels on foods, but applies them to emotions. Psychological reactions are conceptualized from the unique perspective that emotions are ingredients one consumes.

Today, many people are concerned about eating a healthy diet. They may examine the ingredients of the food they eat to find out whether it's high or low in fat, sodium, calories, fiber, etc., before they buy or eat it. Yet, people are not as attuned to assessing whether their interactions with certain people or their experiences with certain situations may be emotionally nutritious for them. Consequently, many unthinkingly consume a diet of unhealthy emotions.

A diet that is high in fat (full of negative emotions) is not healthy. It can be energy draining and lead to feelings of anger, bitterness, fear, depression, and hopelessness. Whereas a low fat emotional diet is energy augmenting and reinforces a positive sense of self. Just as there is junk food, there are junk emotions.

### **Why would understanding one's emotional nutritional intake help manage pain?**

Chronic pain is associated with the activation of brain centers related to the interpretation of pain (pre-frontal cortex) and emotion (limbic system); thereby, providing the "why" of how emotional reactivity and cognitive mindsets can change one's perception of pain. Indeed, "pain literacy;" that is, having knowledge about how and why the pain is caused and what to expect regarding duration and intensity can also reduce pain.

Self-management strategies where the individual reframes their thoughts and feelings about pain, may actually bring about changes in neural activity (such as reducing activity in the amygdala linked to

anxiety/stress responses) that in turn help decrease the perception of pain. Understanding how negative emotional states heighten pain is another aspect of pain literacy and a self-management strategy. These three concepts provide the basis of psychological nutrition:

- High fat (or negative) emotions are draining; they can heighten the perception of pain.
- Low fat (or positive) emotions are energizing; they can decrease the perception of pain.
- High stress-low reward experiences lead to a diet heavy in high fat (negative emotions) and lead to psychological malnourishment; low stress-high reward diets are rich with positive emotions and lead to a psychologically nourished state.

Developing a "snapshot" of one's day: ratio of high fat to low fat emotions will provide the patient with an understanding whether one is in an emotionally nourished or malnourished state.

Pain causes emotional distress and in turn emotional distress heightens the perception of pain which then heightens the suffering. Therefore, understanding the cyclical nature of how one's emotional responses impact their perceptions of pain is important. For example, the more we focus on the pain, the greater the sensation. This in turn leads to psychologically non-nutritious (high fat) emotions, such as stress, fear, frustration, helplessness, and depression. Consequently, the patient is less motivated to follow the prescribed treatment, and so the pain and medical condition can worsen. But, if the patient consumes a diet of low fat emotions (such as optimism, calmness, confidence, joy), their sensations of pain could be relieved and less apparent to them, and thus making them more inclined to follow their medical regimen.

## **Psychological Nutritional Prescription for Pain Reduction**

The initial step consists of a quality of life assessment. This helps the patient and doctor better understand what events and people contribute to the patient's psychological nutrition or malnutrition. Once they understand this, the patient will be better prepared for the following:

- In an easily understood manner, provide the patient with education and information about their medical condition and the nature of the pain to be experienced. Lack of information can be highly anxiety-arousing.
- Encourage the patient to develop self-efficacy that they can exert control over their pain. Just as people can control their nutritional intake of food, patients can control their psychological nutritional intake of emotions.
- Help the patient recognize their negative emotional reactions (high fat) to pain (such as fear and depression) and how they can be regulated if they focus less on them and increase their intake of positive emotions (low fat, such as spending more time on and being more preoccupied with thoughts and

activities that do not center on pain, engaging in fun or spiritual activities).

- Emphasize stress management, coping skills, and relaxation. If the pain cannot be reduced entirely, its sensation can be diminished if the patient learns better adaptation strategies.
- Just as there are support groups to help people modify their diet and lose weight, the patient should be encouraged to attend pain support groups. Sharing with people who have similar problems may feel more authentic for the patient and can help modify their emotional amplification of the pain.

Periodically, the patient should reassess their quality of life and level of psychological nutrition. As their emotional diet improves, so should their experience and reaction to pain. Psychological nourishment means living a meaningful life, one that places pain in the background rather than the foreground.

*Dr. Shoba Sreenivasan and Dr. Linda E. Weinberger are authors of the new book **Psychological Nutrition**, which encourages women to live happier and healthier lives by monitoring emotions that are consumed on a daily basis.*

# Sellwood Bridge Update

## Why did the Bridge close last week?



This month we'd like to Update you on some recent closures to the Bridge. One closure happened just a couple weeks ago, and the other will be happening the last weekend of July. Inconvenient as they are, they're usually very brief and they indicate another major step to getting the whole project finished.

These closures are necessary to patch in a gap in the Bridge caused by the use of the old Bridge as the temporary traffic bridge during construction. Traffic needed to flow from Tacoma Street onto the old Bridge in its alignment while the new Bridge was being built, so a small "jump bridge" was built that couldn't be disturbed until the new Bridge was ready. Now that traffic is flowing on the new Bridge, crews could get in to fix the gap. The first closure happened so the concrete in the supports could cure; the second will happen so they can pave the finished structure. When they're done, the twisted East End will drive much more smoothly.



In the meantime, almost all of the old Bridge steel is gone. The only parts remaining are the pieces on directly on top of the supports, and these will disappear in the next few weeks. Check out this picture of the view from Sellwood Riverfront Park, or better yet come down and see it for yourself at the Sellwood Concerts!



As always, Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project, [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://www.sellwoodbridge.org). Construction and closure alerts, archived information, and other resources are all available 24/7 for your convenience. If you're looking for something that's not on the website, you can contact Mike Pullen ([mike.j.pullen@multco.us](mailto:mike.j.pullen@multco.us), 503-209-4111) or visit [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://www.sellwoodbridge.org)



# Book Spotlight

## Unmasking our own internal biases



The political conventions are in the bag, and now America is faced with a choice between the two most reviled and unpopular candidates ever to run for President. In November we'll have to make the best choice we can so we might as well start now, and the place to start may not be with the distortions of political campaigns. It may be to look inside ourselves. Understanding how we make decisions and realizing the biases we each bring to the table will help us all make the best decision possible in this election, and there's an awful lot hanging on the quality of America's decision this year.

This month's Book Spotlight shines on five books and one article that, we hope, will be useful to us all in the coming months...

[We're All Biased, but That Doesn't Keep Us from Making Valid Decisions](#), article by Emily Rosenzweig in Scientific American, Jul 2016



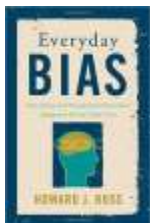
### [Self-Deception Unmasked](#) by Alfred Mele

Self-deception raises complex questions about the nature of belief and the structure of the human mind. In this book, Alfred Mele addresses four of the most critical of these questions: What is it to deceive oneself? How do we deceive ourselves? Why do we deceive ourselves? Is self-deception really possible?



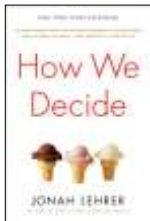
### [Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People](#) by Mahzarin Banaji

"Blindspot" is the authors' metaphor for the portion of the mind that houses hidden biases. Writing with simplicity and verve, Banaji and Greenwald question the extent to which our perceptions of social groups—without our awareness or conscious control—shape our likes and dislikes and our judgments about people's character, abilities, and potential.



### [Everyday Bias- Identifying and Navigating Unconscious Judgments in Our Daily Lives](#), by Howard Ross

If you are human, you are biased. From this fundamental truth, diversity expert Howard Ross explores the biases we each carry within us. Most people do not see themselves as biased towards people of different races or different genders. And yet in virtually every area of modern life disparities remain. Even in corporate America, which has for the most part embraced the idea of diversity as a mainstream idea, patterns of disparity remain rampant. Why? Breakthroughs in the cognitive and neurosciences give some idea why our results seem inconsistent with our intentions. Bias is natural to the human mind, a survival mechanism that is fundamental to our identity. And overwhelmingly it is unconscious.



### [Overcoming Bias: A Journalist's Guide to Culture & Context](#) by Sue Ellen Christian

Journalists go out of their way to avoid purposeful bias in the news. But there is a more pervasive set of internal biases and flaws in thinking that can lead to unintentional inaccuracies and distortions in news coverage. This engaging book offers a fresh take on reporting without bias, targeting the way that we categorize people, filter information and default to rehearsed ways of thinking.

Included throughout are stories and on-target advice from reporters and editors, providing real-world voices and experiences. This advice and guidance is coupled with practical exercises that give readers the chance to apply what they learn.



### [How We Decide](#) by Jonah Lehrer

Our best decisions are a finely tuned blend of both feeling and reason — and the precise mix depends on the situation. When buying a house, for example, it's best to let our unconscious mull over the many variables. But when we're picking a stock, intuition often leads us astray. The trick is to determine when to lean on which part of the brain, and to do this, we need to think harder (and smarter) about how we think. Jonah Lehrer arms us with the tools we need, drawing on cutting-edge research by Daniel Kahneman, Colin Camerer, and others, as well as the real-world experiences of a wide range of deciders — from airplane pilots and hedge fund investors to serial killers and poker players.

# Humorousness

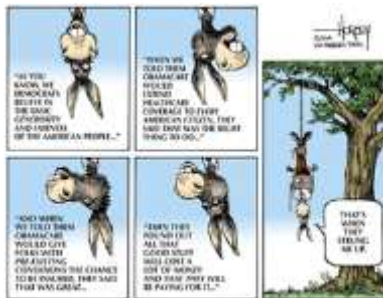
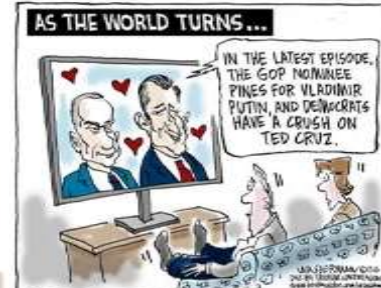
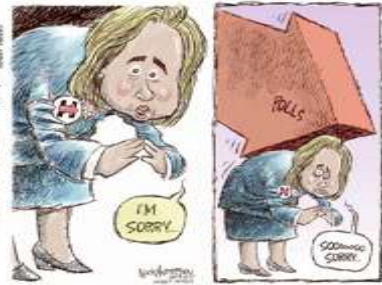
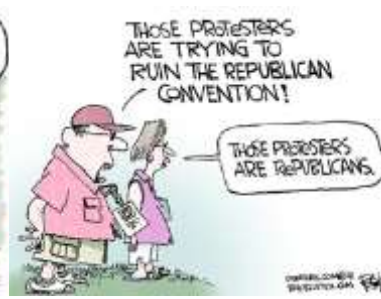
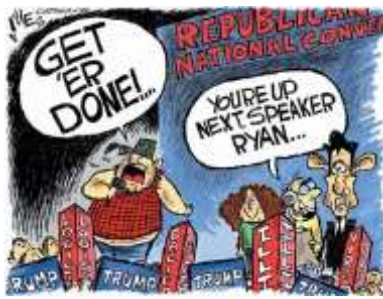
## The Conventions in Cartoons



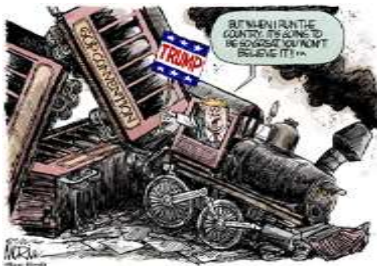
If you watched the Conventions the last two weeks, you'll know why we're choosing to cover them in our Humorousness column. They were grim humor, dark humor, gallows humor, but humor nevertheless. If the conventions themselves didn't bring a smile to your face then dig into this gallery of some of the best editorial cartoons about them and at least get a grin!













# 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. By the way, much (but not all) of our delicious Popcorn comes from articles we've posted on [our Facebook page](#). If you're on Facebook, please stop by and "Like" us and we'll keep a fairly-constant-but-not-frequent-enough-to-be-annoying stream of these coming to your virtual door!



## [Remembering Hiroshima](#)



Beautiful as it is, August is a solemn month as well. We'd like to tell you about the [Remembering Hiroshima/Nagasaki](#) event being held in Portland on Tuesday, August 9, at 6p at the Japanese American Historical Plaza in Waterfront Park. Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility and their partner organizations organize this event every year in remembrance of the atomic bombings that ended World War II. Even at this late date plans are still in progress, but one of the featured speakers will be Hideko Tamura Snider, a Hibakusha, or survivor of the atomic bombing.

## [Thor's Well is on the Oregon Coast](#)



One of our more popular Facebook posts this month was a video about an incredible natural feature, and it's right here in Oregon. Well, actually just off our coast. It's Thor's Well, and it's off Yachats just west of Eugene. In high tides or storms the surf washes over the edge of a circular hole, then drains out like God's Toilet being flushed. God's Bathroom is dangerous, though, so be careful... sharp rocks, sneaker waves, sea urchins, and other coastal threats can't be ignored. Thor's well is in Cape Perpetua among other natural attractions like the Devil's Churn and the Spouting Horn, and all within an easy day trip from Portland.

## [The Racist History of Portland, the Whitest City in America](#)



Usually when we're writing about Oregon it's with a strong sense of pride, but not this time. We sit cocooned in our progressive bubble, but there's a dark history behind us that still influences us today. [This article from The Atlantic](#) takes us from 1844, when the territory of Oregon both banned slavery and required that black people leave the territory, through the Vanport flood, and into the growth and gentrification of the North Portland neighborhoods today. It's a painful but eye-opening read, and will give you a new perspective on what's happening today and what's going to happen tomorrow... unless we choose otherwise.

## [The Revolution Fights On: Bernie Introduces the Sanders Institute](#)



Our BERNIEWATCH reporters have been feeling disillusioned and disappointed lately for some reason, but there's hope on the horizon. Bernie himself has repeatedly said that his candidacy was never about him and his grace and dignity during the Convention backed that up. The changes he brought about in the Democratic Party should be success enough already, but he's wisely creating a new think-tank to make sure these values and priorities grow into a future without him. [The Sanders Institute](#) will recruit and support Progressives in down-ballot races, and advocate for issues important to American citizens. Stay tuned, everyone... the Bern isn't out yet!

# News To Make You Furious

Bad is bad, but EXACTLY how bad is it?



For four months we've heard Bernie Sanders, one of the first in a growing chorus, decry the large and growing income inequality in our country. You're probably familiar with most of the marquis facts; the widest income gap since the 1920's, the top 1% owns more wealth than the bottom 90%, 58% of all new income since the 2008 crash has gone to the top 1%, blah, blah, blah.

Here's the thing, though... what does this mean to YOU? It's pretty abstract that the "bottom" 99% is being squeezed, so how much does financial malfeasance, predatory banking, vulture capitalism and all the rest add up to for YOU, in real dollars? Two economists crunched the numbers to find out. Get this: "We estimate that the financial system will impose an excess cost of as much as **\$22.7 trillion** between 1990 and 2023, **making finance in its current form a NET DRAG on the American economy.**" (emphasis unsurprisingly ours). That's about \$40K to \$70K for every man, woman, and child in the US over a 15-year period. The report itself goes into much more precise, much uglier detail which is just great for us! After all, this column IS

called News To Make You Furious...

Economists Gerald Epstein and Juan Antonio Montecino at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, were the number crunchers in this story. They gathered data for families, taxpayers, and businesses and how each are affected by now-common, once-illegal practices of the financial world. From IRA's to bank accounts, payday lenders to portfolio managers, they looked at each of the petty little ways we're nicked and dined into wage slavery.



To raise your rage this month we bring you the full 51-page Epstein and Montecino report. We also have a couple abstracts and analyses (including one from Epstein and Montecino themselves) that should magnify your madness quite nicely, as well as links to more broad-based descriptions of the problem. If your veins are popping a little too much when all that's done we even included a couple links to reassure you that there is somebody out there trying to do something about it. Now dig in for your monthly allotment of animosity, and enjoy!

[One page summary of "OverCharged, the High Cost of High Finance"](#) by Epstein and Montecino, Jul 2016

[Overcharged: The High Cost of High Finance](#), full report by by Epstein and Montecino, Jul 2016

[Income and Wealth Inequality](#), Bernie Sanders website

[How Much Do Shady Financial Practices Cost You, Exactly?](#) By Lynn Parramore at the Institute for New Economic Thinking, Jul 2016

[Inequality.org](#), a website of the Institute for Policy Studies, slices the inequality pie in every way you can imagine, and several you probably can't.

And here's the one link to give you some hope...

[Consumer Financial Protection Bureau](#), the organization started by Elizabeth Warren, which exists to "make sure banks, lenders, and other financial companies treat you fairly".