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More noise, less news

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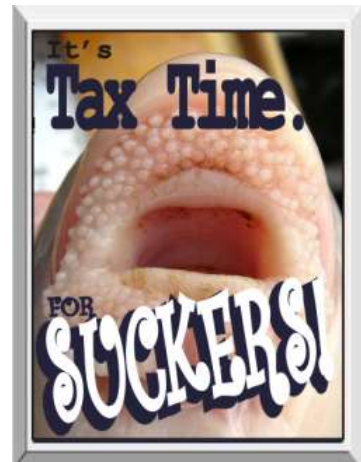
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Tom's Tidbits

More noise, less news



Greetings!

Despite the humiliation of the letter from the 47 Senators last month, and hopefully with or without the US; Russia, China, France, the UK, Germany, and Iran will continue moving towards a peaceful deal on Iran's nuclear future. Bibi Netanyahu wants to escalate the stranglehold on the Iranian economy and our own Republicans are pushing for permanent war. Their unified voices cry that the deal is a sellout that will lead to mushroom clouds across the Middle East, while others are already polishing Obama's second Nobel Peace Prize. When the details of the agreement are finalized maybe the American press will actually report information direct from the parties involved and not just amplify the banter of the angry bystanders.

We live with more sources of information than ever before, but a sea of propaganda, half-truths, spin and lies permeate them. Most people accept mainstream media as fact, but even the people who know better may not always make an effort to dig deeper. The drone of talking heads, headlines and articles never read, oblique satire news quips, they all form a background static that unconsciously helps help form our opinions.

Perceptions of the Palestinian-Israeli hostilities are a good example why we all could stand a much clearer lens and the time to focus. US media tells the story of a fragile, inoffensive Israel beset on every border by zealots driven to destroy them. However, the history of the region and the facts on the ground are a far more complex matter than are being presented by the [6 corporations](#) that control 90% of our news.

Sadly, in a system where real journalism can quickly end a lucrative career in a mainstream media organization, we are getting more and more noise but less and less news. If you have some time and want some information that might have you cogitating, I would like to share two links and a documentary recommendation. These seem to flow together in an intricate way and are definitely worth your time if you are able.

[5 Broken Cameras](#). You may be familiar with the award winning documentary created by a Palestinian farmer; a view of his village's struggle to maintain their land and their humanity.

["Goliath; life and loathing in greater Israel"](#) A discussion with Max Blumenthal about his book.

[Noam Chomsky](#) gives us a history lesson as only he can.

These recommendations of course should be assumed to be propaganda and spin to be consumed carefully and digested thoroughly before passing and allowing them to influence you in any way. But then again, that's a warning that should precede all media.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

Our April check in with Keith Tucker



TPP → INVESTOR STATE DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

IMAGINE IF THE U.S. WERE TO BAN A TOXIC CHEMICAL...

YEYYYYY!



BUT... THE FOREIGN COMPANY THAT MAKES THE CHEMICAL OPPOSES THE BAN AND GOES BEFORE AN INTERNATIONAL PANEL OF ARBITRATORS...

THEIR LAW MADE ME LOSE MONEY!



YOU'RE RIGHT! YOU WIN!

...THE ARBITRATION PANEL AWARDS THE CHEMICAL MAKER BILLIONS IN DAMAGES THAT U.S. TAXPAYERS HAVE TO PAY!



THE RULING CAN'T BE CHALLENGED IN U.S. COURTS!

"WHAT NOW?!!!"

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Why are REAL blues fans excited?

The 4th Annual Inner City Blues Festival is THIS WEEKEND!



Every blues fan in the northwest knows about the Waterfront Blues Festival in July, but it has two big drawbacks. First, it's about three months away, and second, every blues fan in the northwest already knows about it! But Portlanders aren't waiting three months for blues, and they aren't dealing with the July crowds and expense. They're dressing up for a night on the town THIS WEEKEND, April 11th, at the [4th Annual Inner City Blues Festival benefitting Health Care for All Oregon \(www.hcao.org\)](#). The biggest names in northwest blues will all be there, and the crowds? Just big enough to make it a party instead of a show!

This is the fourth year for the resurrected Inner City Blues Festival, which ran as an annual event by the Portland Rainbow Coalition from 1988 to 2003. [Norman Sylvester](#), Northwest Boogie Cat and blues legend, will head the bill as he has every year since the Festival reconstituted in 2012. Celebrity emcees [Paul Knauls](#) and [Renee Mitchell](#) will present this year's slate of powerhouse musicians including [Andy Stokes](#), [Bill Rhoades](#), [LaRhonda Steele](#), [King Louis & Friends](#), [The Strange Tones with The Volcano Vixens](#), [Tevis Hodge Jr](#), [Steve Cheseborough](#), [Bloco Alegria](#), [Richard Arnold](#), [Sarah Billings](#), [Jay "Bird" Koder](#), [Newell Briggs](#), and [The Mad As Hell Doctors](#).

The Inner City Blues Festival's roots in the socially conscious Rainbow Coalition continue to bear blooms today, because the Festival is about more than just music. It's also about [Health Care for All Oregon \(hcao.org\)](#), the group supporting single payer healthcare in the Beaver State and beyond. Musicians may have been helped by Obamacare but as "independent contractors" they've long faced difficulty obtaining stable health insurance. This year's show will recognize Janice Scroggins, Mel Solomon, Linda Hornbuckle, Jim Miller, Lucinda Tate and Geneva Knauls, all community and music ambassadors who have passed in the last year and all of whom had horror stories to tell about corporate health care before they died. It's only appropriate that musicians take such a leading role in supporting single payer healthcare, and on behalf of the entire Inner City Blues Festival we hope you reach beyond the music to remember the reason for the party.

The 4th Annual Inner City Blues Festival Benefitting [Health Care For All Oregon](#) is Saturday, April 11. Doors open at 5:30 pm, the show starts at 6:00 pm and the party goes until midnight. The location this year is the [North Portland Eagles Lodge](#), 7611 N Exeter & Lombard. Admission is \$20.00 and if you hurry you can still buy advance tickets at [TicketTomato.com](#), [Music Millenium](#), [Geneva's Shear Perfection](#), or the [American Federation of Musicians Local 99](#). Any remaining tickets will be available at the door, but this event usually sells out... don't wait for the last minute!

Proceeds from the concert will go to support the work of Health Care for All-Oregon. For more information about the Inner City Blues Festival and Health Care for All-Oregon go to: [www.hcao.org](#) or [www.facebook.com/healingthehealthcareblues](#).

The Inner City Blues Festival is co-sponsored by the Cascade Blues Association, KBOO Community Radio 90.7 FM, and almost one hundred other businesses, groups, and individuals like Portland Jobs with Justice, Cascade Blues Association, KBOO Community Radio 90.7 FM, American Federation of Musicians Local 99, Hollywood Impress Printing, Music Millennium, Rusty Truck Brewing, Bipartisan Café, Art Heads Custom Framing, Geneva's Shear Perfection, Portland Observer, Tom Dwyer Automotive Services, Main Street Alliance, Hawthorne Auto Clinic, Morel Ink, May Wallace Design and more. Please go out of your way to thank them for their support!

You Don't Have To Wait For Our Services

Planning ahead makes things easy



Susan R. posted a review of our services on AngiesList this month. On behalf of everyone here at the shop, we'd like to thank the clients who share their opinions on review or social media sites across the Intertubes. Your reviews matter and they help keep our doors open! Susan was mostly positive about us, but she thought it took too long to schedule an appointment; pretty disheartening considering we have not been booked to capacity recently!

We rarely have to schedule more than one or two business days in advance and **we always take in tow-ins or emergency situations immediately**. We do our best to keep *all* our client's needs met; those who have scheduled in advance *and* those with surprise needs. Our workload and client's needs change unpredictably and the roller coaster of demand creates special problems for us. We want to maintain the very best professionals here, and at a staffing level that works year-round. We need enough seasoned staff to provide impeccable service when it's busy, but not so many that we need to let them go when it's slow. Aside from the fact that we just don't like treating people like pawns, our staff is the best there is and they can't easily be replaced.

Many shops have service advisors on pure commission and technicians on flat rate; but we're serious about not letting that happen here. Things run differently in that environment... and not in way that you as a client would appreciate. When people are paid solely for sales or production, having excess bodies standing around is free to the business. When work is available there *will* be sales and production, and when there is no work it gets pretty lean for the staff and attrition sets in. The best of the staff will either be given special division of available work or move on.

We can't deliver our quality service with a revolving door of workers, so instead we try to maintain a sustainable staffing level. As result we may not be as able to keep up with the peaks, but we aren't cutting people lose in the valleys either. Sometimes it's busy but often it's slow, and we hope our clients can be understanding on the occasions when lack of planning or an emergency strikes.

Those peaks and valleys in work flow are very real, but there are ways to reduce even the possibility of inconvenience. Scheduling well in advance for routine things like planned maintenance or your pre-vacation once-over will insure timely service. We do try to keep some excess capacity for those inevitable surprise needs, but we can unexpectedly have no-shows or cancellations that turn “excess capacity” into “not enough work to keep busy”. Scheduling is one of the most challenging aspects of our business and we do the best we can to strike the right balance, but there is always unpredictability that defies prediction or perfection.

Our free Courtesy Shuttle or our access to rental cars can help change a scheduling conflict into an easier experience.

We hope our special offer this month will make it easy for you to think about servicing your vehicles now rather than waiting until our busier summer months. We're **offering our Comprehensive Inspection (normally \$150) at half price, or free with a minimum purchase of \$150. Not only that, but we will also take 20% off labor (up to \$200).** Find out the exact mechanical condition of your vehicles and save money on needed service! **Schedule your vehicle for service before May 15, 2015.**

We do appreciate the flexibility and patience of our clients and while we can't promise next day appointments, we do promise this... we will produce the best possible outcomes in the shortest possible time frame!

Additions are coming to Tacoma Street

New Multnomah County initiative will help Sellwood businesses



The worker stepped off the ladder, pushed back his hard hat, and surveyed his handiwork. The new Tenino Street Exit sign was in place ahead of schedule... just the first of many such signs recognizing Sellwood businesses coming to Tacoma Street!

Usual Multnomah County spokesman Mike Pullen was unavailable, but temporary spokesman Norm De Guerre was glad to tell us about the project. "The plan is for a whole series of signs along Tacoma Street between the

Sellwood Bridge and McLoughlin Boulevard. There'll be one at each cross street, marking each street and giving directions to local businesses."



A worker puts the finishing touches on the new Tenino Street Exit sign.

This is just the latest effort of Multnomah County to blunt the economic impact of the Sellwood Bridge project on the Sellwood-Westmoreland area. "Although we're well past the 50% completion point, there's still just over a year left" said Norm. "This project will help the mostly small, independently-owned businesses throughout Sellwood that have been hurt so bad these last couple years by the construction."

Tom Dwyer, owner of the Tom Dwyer Automotive Services mentioned on the sign, was obviously pleased with this new outreach. "This is a great program, and we know we'll be only the first of the many businesses to benefit. We have new clients all the time who have lived in the neighborhood for years yet never knew we were here! We expect this to be a welcome boost for our business!"



This sign at the East End of the Sellwood Bridge is the first of many signs planned along Tacoma Avenue

Asked what the world should know about the Bridge construction, Dwyer was quick to answer... "It's sad that people think the construction is a hassle. Sure, there are some slowdowns, but the County has been fantastic about keeping traffic moving. I just want everyone to know that the Bridge is safe, open, and flowing smoothly!"

If you're waiting for the construction to be finished before you visit Sellwood, DON'T! Spend the day eating, shopping, or relaxing in one of our many parks. And if you're in the mood to try the new Tenino Street exit, maybe you can even drop your car off with Tom!

Drew's Kitchen

Garlic-Butter Burgers



Drew's smelled grills firing up all around town, so grilling season is obviously a little early this year. Knowing this spin on a regular burger now will set yours apart on grills throughout the summer.

Garlic Butter Burgers

Serves 4

Nutrition Information (per serving)- Calories-716; fat 48g (sat 21g); Protein 46g; Carb 22g; Fiber 1g; Chol 183mg; Sodium 953mg.

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup (4 tbsp) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 2 lbs ground beef
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 4 hamburger buns, split and toasted
- Tomato slices, onion slices, and/or lettuce leaves for garnish

Preparation:

- Prepare grill for medium direct heat or preheat broiler.
- In a small bowl, mash together the butter, parsley, garlic, and lemon zest. Form the mixture into a log, wrap in plastic wrap, and chill in the freezer for 10 minutes
- In a large bowl, mix together the beef, salt, and pepper. Form into 4 patties about 1 inch thick; place on a rimmed baking sheet. Cut a slit ½ inch deep into the side of each burger. Cut the butter log into 8 slices; tuck 1 slice into the slit in each burger, pressing it deep into the burger. Pinch the slits closed so the meat totally covers the butter.
- Grill or broil the burgers for 7 to 9 minutes for medium rare, turning once. Top burgers with remaining butter slices and place in the toasted buns. If desired, top with tomato, onion, and lettuce.

Shop Talk

Great deal on our on Comprehensive Inspection



Looking for our special discount offers?

We publish our special offers or discounts in this Shop Talk column, but you don't have to wait for our newsletter. We created a page on our website with all our current offers in one spot so you'll always know

[Click here for all our current discount offers!](#)

where to find them, and we'll update the page whenever the offers change.

[Bookmark this page now](#), and you'll always be a click away from savings! In the meantime, here's one discount we have right now...

Discount on Comprehensive Inspection PLUS 20% Off Labor

We're offering our Comprehensive Inspection (normally \$150) for just \$75, or FREE with a minimum purchase of \$150. Not only that, but we will also take 20% off labor (up to \$200).

Find out the exact mechanical condition of your vehicles and save money on needed service!

[Schedule your vehicle for service before May 15, 2015.](#)

Our Referral Reward program...

We started our Referral Reward Program as a way to say "thanks" for the loyal support of our clients. We used to send certificates for service, but that could lead to conflicts of interest in referrals... we don't want people referring their friends in hopes of getting an oil change coupon! This seemed to be a good way to express how grateful we are and help deserving people at the same time.

When last we checked in on our Referral Program, we had donated over \$5,600 dollars to non-profit groups of all types. With the close of March, our total has passed \$6100 and the program remains popular with all our clients. Here are the groups who have benefitted in March...

[Oregon Food Bank](#)
[Q Center](#)

[Bark](#)
[KBOO](#)
[Friends of Trees](#)

[Little Sisters of the Poor](#)
[Zenger Farm](#)

There's still plenty of time for YOU to take part, and it's pretty simple... every time someone comes in and says they were referred by you, we'll write a check to the non-profit group of your choice (up to \$50) and your group will be automatically eligible for the quarterly and yearly awards as well. Refer a friend today!



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

Our newest reporter's eggshell calcium recipe



The *Your Car Matters* newsroom grew by one this month as [Sarah Heidler](#), Service Advisor extraordinaire, joined the team. You may have talked with Sarah about your car, but you probably don't know that she's quite a buff on health and nutrition. While no one here at the shop can figure out why she's never sick, Sarah insists it has something to do with avoiding toxins, eating nutritious, home-made food, and riding her bike to work each day. Be that as it may, Sarah's come on board to share her own take on a healthy lifestyle with you, and we think it's advice you'll appreciate. Welcome aboard, Sarah!

My mother always said if something looks too good to be true, it probably is. This came to mind while looking at the vitamin offerings at a chain drug store. Just \$9.49 and I could have a buy-one-get-one-free multivitamin supplement that promised me "100% daily value of 10 essential vitamins. Support heart health with vitamins B, C, and E, plus folic acid.* Supports eye health with vitamins A, C and E. Promotes physical energy with B vitamins, including thiamin, riboflavin and niacin, to help convert food to energy." Amid the widespread supplement fraud targeted by New York Attorney General's office, this is a claim I'm resistant to believe to say the least. I always wondered what could possibly be in those types of supplements for so very little money. As it turns out, The New York Attorney General's office has discovered many supplements that didn't even contain any of what they claimed to contain, but are just full of fillers.

I've been a firm believer in getting as close to the food as possible for supplements. So, recently instead of taking a tablet that's been purchased for calcium, I've been eating eggshells. Eating eggshells? Well, not exactly munching them into my eggs, but taking about a ¼ tsp of ground eggshells in my morning smoothie. Here's the recipe if you'd like to try it yourself...

Eggshell Calcium Recipe:

- Save a few dozen used eggshells, rinse them very well.
- Cook them at 300 degrees for about 20-25 minutes to dry them out, and kill any possible pathogens. Be forewarned – eggshells smell BAD when they are baked. Another way to do this is to use eggshells that come off of your boiled eggs – they will already be sanitized and you can just bake them a little bit to dry them out completely.
- Let cool for 30-60 minutes.
- Blend in a coffee grinder or high speed blender (or I use a coffee grinder) until you get a very fine powdered consistency (very important!) After you grind it, leave it sit for a few minutes – you really don't want to breathe in the fine eggshell dust.
- Consume about 1/8-1/4* tsp with a little water or juice 1-3x per day or as needed to meet your individual health needs 1tsp eggshell calcium equals about 800 mg calcium. I see no need to consume a teaspoon of it a day, I am, after all eating which is where I get most of my calcium.

My sister actually started me on this idea of making my own eggshell calcium supplements and it appeals to my frugal nature and desire to make everything that I put into my body as natural as possible. She started having powdered eggshells in her morning juice and has seen a marked increase in the thickness of her nails in just a few weeks. (She's always been jealous of my thick and long nails!) As we women age, it becomes even more important to get a good amount of calcium. The current US RDA for Calcium is an average of 1000mg a day, or you can look up the recommendations for your specific age [here](#). Read a study about eggshell calcium and the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis [here](#).

Sellwood Bridge Update

Falling concrete and rising arches



There were two big stories swirling around the Sellwood Bridge this month. The first was an issue that seemed to be big but turned out to be nothing much at all, and the second was a major milestone toward the bridge's completion.

Chunks of concrete falling from the Sellwood Bridge is nothing new, in fact it was one of the obvious drivers of the replacement project. But that was then. Now that the project is underway, most people expect the new concrete to stay where it's put but passersby noticed that wasn't the case. Big chunks were falling from the newly poured concrete on one of the new supports. At first blush that would seem to be a problem, but it turns out that molded concrete frequently leaves bubbles or voids that have to be cleaned up before it can be called finished. [There's more detail in the KOIN story at right](#), but the important thing is that the worry was misplaced.



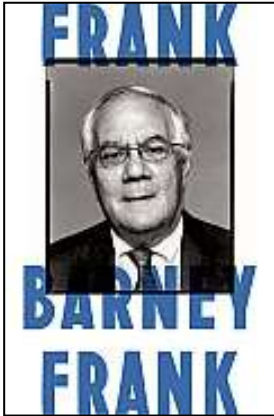
The second big thing was the connection of the gigantic steel arches that span the river. In the [video at right](#), Multnomah County Spokesman Mike Pullen describes why this milestone is so important and what we can expect next. There's not much for us to add to Mike, but there is a lot more to see and Randy Rasmussen at the Oregonian captured it all. Here are two of his pictures, but his [full gallery of pictures is well worth a look](#).



As always, 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. 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.



“Frank” By Barney Frank



“Frank”

By Congressman Barney Frank

Barney Frank, once referred to as “America's only left-handed, gay, Jewish congressman”, is out with a new political memoir. He has been in congress for 35 years in some of the most crucial battles of modern political history. This, combined with his caustic yet engaging style promises a great read, but that’s not why he’s in our Spotlight this month. We chose to focus on Barney this month because of one story in his book, a story that tells too much about the way our broken political system works. Here’s a summary from [David Dayen at Salon...](#)

“Nobody has focused on Frank’s allegation that Barack Obama refused to extract foreclosure relief from the nation’s largest banks, as a condition for their receipt of hundreds of billions of dollars in bailout money.

The anecdote comes on page 295 of “Frank,” a title that the former chair of the House Financial Services Committee holds true to throughout the book. The TARP legislation included specific instructions to use a section of the funds to prevent foreclosures. Without that language, TARP would not have passed; Democratic lawmakers who helped defeat TARP on its first vote cited the foreclosure mitigation piece as key to their eventual reconsideration.

TARP was doled out in two tranches of \$350 billion each. The Bush administration, still in charge during TARP’s passage in October 2008, used none of the first tranche on mortgage relief, nor did Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson use any leverage over firms receiving the money to persuade them to lower mortgage balances and prevent foreclosures. Frank made his anger clear over this ignoring of Congress’ intentions at a hearing with Paulson that November. Paulson argued in his defense, “the imminent threat of financial collapse required him to focus single-

mindedly on the immediate survival of financial institutions, no matter how worthy other goals were.”

Whether or not you believe that sky-is-falling narrative, Frank kept pushing for action on foreclosures, which by the end of 2008 threatened one in 10 homes in America. With the first tranche of TARP funds running out by the end of the year, Frank writes, “Paulson agreed to include homeowner relief in his upcoming request for a second tranche of TARP funding. But there was one condition: He would only do it if the President-elect asked him to.”

Frank goes on to explain that Obama rejected the request, saying “we have only one president at a time.” Frank writes, “my frustrated response was that he had overstated the number of presidents currently on duty,” which equally angered both the outgoing and incoming officeholders.

In the end, the Obama transition wrote a letter promising to get to the foreclosure relief later, if Congress would only pass the second tranche of TARP funds. Congress fulfilled its obligation, and the Administration didn’t. The promised foreclosure mitigation efforts failed to help, and in many cases abjectly hurt homeowners.”

Humorousness

Steve's finds the fun in the courtroom



For his second turn behind the Humorousness newsdesk, Steve Bergdorf takes us all to court. All of these exchanges are, theoretically, from actual courtroom records. Really. Well, just enjoy...

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: Are you sexually active?

WITNESS: No, I just lie there.

ATTORNEY: What is your date of birth?

WITNESS: July 18th.

ATTORNEY: What year?

WITNESS: Every year.

ATTORNEY: How old is your son, the one living with you?

WITNESS: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

ATTORNEY: How long has he lived with you?

WITNESS: Forty-five years.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget..

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: He's 20, much like your IQ.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Are you kidding me?

ATTORNEY: So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And what were you doing at that time?

WITNESS: Getting laid

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, I think I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death..

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town I'm going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral...

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 PM

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Are you qualified to give a urine sample?

WITNESS: Are you qualified to ask that question?

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

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!

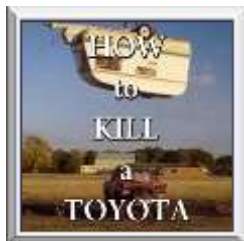


TSA's secret Terrorist Behavior Checklist!



Back in 2012 we told you about the [FBI's CAT Program](#), which taught us that terrorists were lurking in beauty shops and scuba shops, or doing suspicious things like protecting their computer passwords. Well, they've been passing on their wisdom to the TSA, who [just issued a their own list of innocent behavior that means you have a deep down desire to blow up planes](#). Last time you were at the airport, did you yawn, stare, whistle, or rub your hands? Did you complain about the intrusive and useless airport screening process? THEN YOU MAY BE A TERRORIST! No, seriously, these are just a few of the things on the list!

Why do we recommend Toyotas?



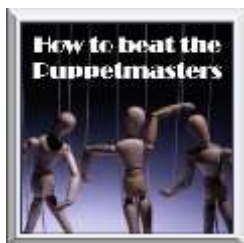
When it comes time for our clients to buy a new vehicle they often ask for our advice. We recommend Toyotas and Hondas far above any other models because we feel they are the best balance of value, dependability, price, safety, comfort, and environmental impact available on the market today. Toyota trucks in particular are legendary for their indestructibility, and [one of our techs passed along this graphic demonstration of why](#). [The British TV show "Top Gear" tried to destroy a typical Toyota truck and recorded the results](#). SPOILER ALERT: The truck survives falling into the ocean and being set on fire, among other things. But does it survive a 23-story drop in a building implosion? [Check out the video...](#)

Can you DRIVE from New York to London?



You may be proud of your road trip from Portland to San Francisco. Your college road trip to Juarez may be the stuff of legend. But this may be the ultimate road trip... DRIVING west from New York, all the way to London! Russian Railways president Vladimir Yakunin recently proposed a plan for a multi-nation, [multi-continental project to build a highway that would start in New York, go through Alaska and across a to-be-built Bering Straits crossing, through Russia and into Moscow, and from there across Europe and into London](#). Total trip? Slightly under 13,000 miles.

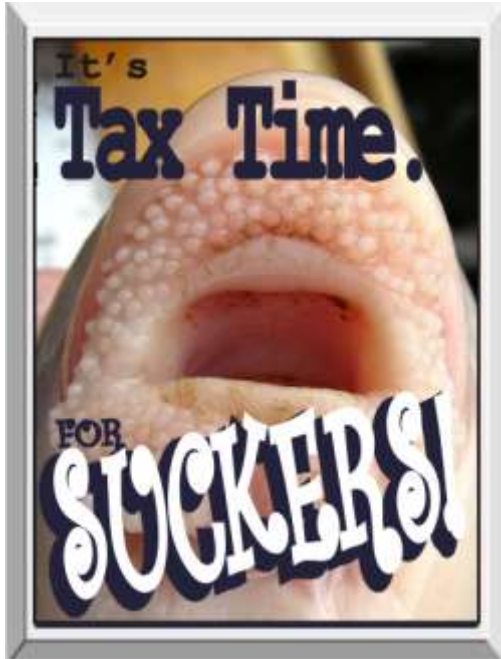
Hidden tricks of powerful persuasion



Are we all just puppets on a string? Most people would like to assume that they are free agents, that their fate lies in their own hands... but they'd be wrong. Often, we are as helpless as a marionette, being jerked about by someone else's subtle influence. We do their bidding yet believe it was our idea all along. "We're finding more and more in psychology that lots of the decisions we make are influenced by things we are not aware of," says Jay Olson at McGill University in Quebec, Canada – who [recently created an ingenious experiment showing just how easily we are manipulated by the gentlest persuasion](#). The question is, can we learn to spot those tricks, and how can we use them to our own advantage?

News To Make You Furious

It's Tax Time... for SUCKERS!



Ahh, tax season! It's a time of some ambivalence, for as Arthur Godfrey said, "I'm proud to pay taxes in the United States; the only thing is, I could be just as proud for half the money." Taxes are a painful reality, and the only thing that makes it bearable is the society we get in return. Yes, if it weren't for the fact that our hard-earned money was intelligently collected and wisely invested by sober and rational people in an ongoing effort to improve the standard of living on behalf of all of us, taxes would be frustrating. If fact, if the truth was far from the ideal, it might be enough to make a taxpayer... well... furious.

How far is the truth from the ideal? Since the name of this column is "News To Make You Furious" we're glad you asked! Just in time for tax season we bring you a look at exactly where your tax dollars come from, where they go, and where they should go. And if by any chance you're Furious when you're done reading, we also include a couple links to help make a difference.

The best, most comprehensive, most objective analysis of Federal spending we could find anywhere was from the [National Priorities Project](#). They have all the nitty-gritty pie charts and geekery to tell you exactly where your money is going. There's far too much information to give you here, but if you want to know what's really going on then this is the place to start...

[National Priorities Project](#)

Federal Spending: Where Does the Money Go



(from their website) In fiscal year 2015, the federal government is projected to spend around \$3.9 trillion. These trillions of dollars make up a considerable chunk – around 21 percent – of the U.S. economy, as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP). That means that federal government spending makes up a sizable share of all money spent in the United States each year. So, where does all that money go...

Are facts not enough to get you Furious by themselves? Then here's a closer look at what those facts mean...

[Burning Our Bridges: Failing Infrastructure in the Age of Corporate Tax-Dodging](#)

President Obama and some members of Congress think the easiest way to fund infrastructure is by granting corporations a large tax cut on their untaxed offshore profits.

Sarah Anderson and Scott Klinger on CommonDreams, April, 2015

Positively Un-American Tax Dodges

Bigtime companies are moving their “headquarters” overseas to dodge billions in taxes ... that means the rest of us pay their share.

Allan Sloan in Fortune, July, 2014

The Misconceptions About Where Our Tax Dollars Go

Chad Stone in Economic Intelligence, April, 2012

With tax day fast approaching, it's worth remembering why we collect taxes. It's to pay for things we want government to do. Americans don't like government spending in the abstract; a Gallup poll shows that they think about half of all federal spending and over 40 percent of state spending is wasted. When it comes to specifics, however, most Americans oppose cuts in Social Security, Medicare, defense, education, and antipoverty programs while favoring cuts in foreign aid. These poll results show not only how schizophrenic Americans are about government spending, but also how little they know about where their taxes go. Those facts are laid out in two "policy basics" documents from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, one on where federal taxes go and one on where state taxes go...

Americans for Tax Fairness (Group)

Americans for Tax Fairness (ATF) is a diverse campaign of national, state and local organizations united in support of a tax system that works for all Americans. It has come together based on the belief that the country needs comprehensive, progressive tax reform that results in greater revenue to meet our growing needs. This requires big corporations and the wealthy to pay their fair share in taxes, not to live by their own set of rules.

United for a Fair Economy (Group)

A project of United for a Fair Economy and a partner of Responsible Wealth, the Tax Fairness Organizing Collaborative (TFOC) is a national network of state tax fairness organizations that use grassroots organizing to push for progressive state tax reform. TFOC groups often need business owners and other upper-income individuals to speak out in favor of progressive reforms at the state level. If you would like to support your state group, either financially or by using your voice, contact mlapham@responsiblewealth.org.

Citizens for Tax Justice (Group)

Citizens for Tax Justice, founded in 1979, is a 501(c)(4) public interest research and advocacy organization focusing on federal, state and local tax policies and their impact upon our nation. CTJ's mission is to give ordinary people a greater voice in the development of tax laws. Against the armies of special interest lobbyists for corporations and the wealthy, CTJ fights for:

- Tax fairness for middle and low-income families
- Requiring the wealthy to pay their fair share
- Closing corporate tax loopholes
- Adequately funding important government services
- Reducing the federal debt
- Taxation that minimizes distortion of economic markets