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# The Lone Star ICONOCLAST

\$1.50 Per Copy www.iconoclast-texas.com • CRAWFORD, TEXAS • Vol. 6, No. 4 — Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2005

## Sad Sam

Leslie Sweetnam of Woodstock, Connecticut — dressed as Uncle Sam for the day — protests the merriment of the Inauguration festivities at an anti-war rally in Meridian Hill Park in Washington, D.C.



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Patrick Mulvaney

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# Rice Confirmation Expected This Week

WASHINGTON, D.C. — By a 16-2 vote, Condoleezza Rice won the endorsement as secretary of state from a Senate panel last Wednesday, bringing her one step closer to be the first black woman to hold the post, if confirmed by the full Senate, as expected.

Confirmation will probably happen this week, due to Democrats saying they wanted more time to debate her qualifications.

Rice would succeed Colin Powell at the State Department after serving four years as Bush's White House national security adviser and closest foreign policy confidante. Powell said goodbye to State Department employees recently but will stay until Rice is confirmed.

Former presidential candidate John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), voted against Rice, while the other Democrats on the committee said they voted for her with reservations because she was not forthcoming with criticism of the administration's record on Iraq, dodging questions about the U.S. stance on torture and blueprints for strategy against the nuclear aspirations of Iran.

"I'm going to vote for Dr. Rice, but I

pray to the Lord that she's at least telling the president, 'Hey, boss, it's not going that well,'" said Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), the senior Democrat on the committee.

## Gonzales Appointment

Led by Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy, a prominent Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Democrats have delayed a Senate committee vote on Alberto Gonzales' nomination to be U.S. attorney general until this week. The full Senate is still expected to confirm Gonzales, the current White House counsel.

Sen. Kennedy called for the two week delay because Gonzales had been evasive during his confirmation hearing about questions concerning memos about White House policy with regard to torture. Gonzales, however, rejected abuse of terror suspects held at U.S.-run prison facilities in Guantanamo Bay Cuba, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Senator Arlen Specter, the panel's Republican chairman, had hoped for a full Senate vote on the Gonzales nomination before President George W. Bush's inauguration last Thursday, when several other White House cabi-

net nominees were to be confirmed.

## Two Confirmations

The first two new members of President Bush's Cabinet, Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns and Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, were

confirmed last Thursday.

Carlos Gutierrez, the nominee for commerce secretary, is expected to be confirmed Monday.

President Bush's State of the Union speech is scheduled for Feb. 2.

## Rumsfeld Scraps Visit To Germany Over Abu Ghraib War Crimes Probe

MUNICH — Due to Germany's refusal to halt a law suit against him, United States Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said he will not take part at the Munich Security Conference in Munich, Germany, in February, according to EXPATICA.

The lawsuit, filed by the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights in December with the Federal German Prosecutor's Office, accuses Rumsfeld of war crimes and torture in connection with detainee abuses at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.

The organization alleges violations of German legislation, which outlaws war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide independent of the place of crime or origin of the accused.

With The Center for Constitutional Rights, four Iraqis tortured in U.S. custody filed the complaint against Rumsfeld, former CIA director George Tenet, and eight other senior military and civilian officials over abuses at Abu Ghraib and in Iraq.

The organization said it had turned to German prosecutors "as a court of last resort" because the U.S. government "is unwilling to open an independent investigation" and had "refused to join the International Criminal Court," according to EXPATICA.

## Texas Libertarian Party Opposes Amendment Banning Gay Marriage

AUSTIN — The Libertarian Party of Texas condemns a proposed state constitutional amendment against gay marriage as government interference in personal relationships and religion, according to state party chairman Patrick Dixon.

"Texas state government needs to focus on its constitutional responsibilities instead of re-defining itself to intrude on the responsibilities of churches and families," said Dixon in a statement given Jan. 19.

House Joint Resolution 6, sponsored by Republican state representative Warren Chisum, would prohibit all forms of marriage except that between one man and one woman. It has provoked opposition from several groups, including Democratic Party of Texas chair Charles Soechting and the organization Practice What You Preach.

"I join Charles Soechting and Practice What You Preach in opposition to this constitutional amendment. The purpose of a constitution is to limit the power and scope of government. In a time of ever growing government control, we need to reverse the trend. Marriage is the domain of churches and families, not government."

Dixon noted that government intru-

sion into marriage began when the first marriage licenses were issued after the Civil War to prevent inter-racial marriage. "The founder of our country, George Washington, did not have a marriage license. He did not need government to define marriage for him. Does that make his marriage to Martha any less valid without the government stamp of approval?"

The Libertarian Party regards prohibitions against same-sex marriage as the government establishment of religious tenets as law, in violation of the First Amendment.

"As a Christian, I do not look to Ted Kennedy, Tom Delay, or Bill Clinton for my moral guidance," said Dixon. "I will not have politicians dictate my religious beliefs."

## INFO

www.PracticeWhatYouPreach.org

## The Lone Star Iconoclast

P.O. Box 420, Crawford, TX 76638

The Lone Star Iconoclast is published weekly, on Wednesdays, by Smith Media, Inc., P.O. Box 420, Crawford, TX 76638 and P.O. Box 353, Clifton, TX 76634

Application to Mail at Periodicals Postage Rates is Pending at Clifton, TX 76634.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: McLennan & Bosque Counties, one year: \$40; Elsewhere, one year: \$45. Give old address when requesting change of address.

POSTMASTER: Please send address change to:  
The Lone Star Iconoclast, P.O. Box 353, Clifton, TX 76634.

DEADLINES: 5 p.m. Fridays.

Telephone (All Departments) — (254) 675-3336 • Toll-Free 1-800-241-5504

Fax No. — (254) 675-4090 • Email: office@iconoclast-texas.com

Web Newspaper: iconoclast-texas.com

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# INAUGURATION 2005

## Celebration, Dissent & Big-Money Politics

BY PATRICK MULVANEY  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Inauguration Day, 2005.

10:30 a.m.

### Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial

The charming Emma Nentodomaine stepped to the podium with an air of confidence and political force. She had with her two items ripe for the auction block: a social program without a penny for Wall Street and a wildlife refuge atop a hearty supply of oil. And she had scores of corporate power brokers in the audience — all bidding to secure a piece of the action.

As the event, hosted by a theatre troupe called Billionaires for Bush, wore on, several guests flexed their political muscle with commentary on the issues of the day. “Finally we can actually profit from Social Security,” yelled one billionaire from the crowd, “and starve that beastly program at the same time!”

The Billionaires’ auction, at which two lucky bidders purchased deeds to Social Security and the National Arctic Wildlife Refuge, ended shortly before noon. But in the evening, nine similar gatherings took place throughout Washington, D.C. Those, however, were not performances, but Inaugural balls, just some of the many events covered in large part by the \$40 million contributed to the weekend’s festivities.

In all, the Presidential Inaugural Committee enticed 200 major contributors to ante up at least \$20,000 apiece. The maximum gift, as set on a voluntary basis, was \$250,000, and 53 corporations paid top dollar. In fact, some put up even more than the limit: Marriott International, for example, gave the full \$250,000, as did two of its subsidiaries, Marriott Vacation Club International and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company.

Of course, these corporations were not, by any means, throwing money away. For their support, they gained V.I.P. access to a wide range of events, including the swearing-in ceremony at The Capitol, the Inaugural Parade, and yes, any number of the receptions, dinners, and balls that brought policy makers and high-rolling contributors face-to-face throughout the weekend.

“The motivation [to contribute to the Inauguration] is to enhance the donors’ access and their influence with the administration and Congress,” said Steve Weiss, a spokesman for the Center for Responsive Politics, an organization that tracks money in the political process. “They all have agendas for Congress and the White House,” he added, “and they want to be consulted and considered” when issues that affect them arise.

Weiss’s observation, of course, applies not just to high-profile events like Inaugural balls and gatherings with the President, but also scores of smaller gatherings. As the Associated Press reported, Lockheed Martin, an aerospace contractor, coordinated a reception Thursday morning for Senator Trent Lott and the Mississippi congressional delegation, which was billed as “Magnolias and Mimosas: A Mississippi Brunch.” The fact that Lott chairs the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation subcommittee on aviation barely raised an eyebrow — a telling sign that the Inauguration marked a full-blown free-for-all with regard to special interest activity and the buying of political influence.

Paul F. Boller, a history professor at Texas Christian University and the author of “Presidential Inaugurations,” said of the festivities: “These inaugurations are getting out of hand. They’re too big. They just provide good opportunities for rich people and wealthy corporations to give a lot of money and make friends in the White House and the federal government.” Boller added that the lavish celebration in the capital this year was particularly insensitive, given the circumstances in Iraq. “In 1945, Franklin



**BILLIONAIRES FOR BUSH** — Just outside the main entrance to the FDR Memorial, Ivan Tital of Billionaires for Bush, a street theatre troupe, discusses politics and policy with fellow political power brokers.

Roosevelt cut the Inauguration down to a very simple affair,” he said. “He felt that the country ought to observe wartime austerity, and I think that a lot of people feel that way this time around.”

Indeed, violence in Iraq has escalated dramatically in recent weeks, providing further cause for concern regarding the merriment of the Inauguration. THE NEW YORK TIMES reported last Sunday that at least 202 people — including U.S., coalition and Iraqi soldiers, Iraqi police officers and Iraqi civilians — were killed as a result of the insurgency in the first 14 days of January alone. And as the Iraqi elections draw near, kidnappings, beheadings, and bombings continue from Baghdad to Falluja.

Leslie Sweetnam, an anti-war activist from Woodstock, Connecticut, called the atmosphere at the Inauguration an “outrageous miscarriage of justice.” Sweetnam, who spent the day dressed as Uncle Sam, also criticized the Bush Administration’s attempt to “honor” the soldiers at events in Washington, D.C. while neglecting those in service in Iraq. “The theme of the day is to try to honor the soldiers,” he said. “They have about a thousand soldiers that they’re giving the caviar and champagne treatment to while the rest of them still don’t have armor for their Humvees. I think this \$40 million would be much better spent giving some respect to the soldiers.”

6:00 a.m.

### The National Mall

With the Archives and Smithsonian Metro stops closed, more than 100 blocks around The Mall open only to pedestrian traffic, and security checkpoints complete with airport-style metal detectors, Washington, D.C. looked as much like a fortress as it did a city. There were roughly 6,000 security officials from federal agencies and police departments across the country on duty, including snipers, weapons experts and emergency responders.

Long before the herds of people who converged on the city had even left their hometowns, the Department of Homeland Security had designated the day a National Special Security Event, with the Secret Service coordinating the massive security operation. And not surprisingly, with hundreds of thousands of people in and around the blockaded areas and most of the nation’s high-ranking political leaders in attendance, security officials left nothing to chance.

In fact, at some security checkpoints, including those along Constitution Avenue and on the northwest side of The Capitol, lines lasted for up to three hours; this precluded thousands of people, including some ticket holders, from seeing the swearing-in ceremony. And with regard to the parade, for which security officials had formed separate checkpoints along Pennsylvania Avenue, lines 20 people across stretched for hundreds of



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# Celebration, Dissent & Big-Money Politics

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yards on the streets.

Overall, the security forces assembled for the event appeared to succeed in protecting the city and its guests. And on a day packed with heated political confrontations, lively demonstrations, and no-holds-barred efforts to catch a glimpse of the President by spirited Republicans, that was not an easy task.

There were, however, scattered complaints concerning civil liberties violations, some relating to the dozen or so protesters that were arrested throughout the day and others regarding the use of pepper spray by police officers along the parade route. And although those complaints seemed, at least in the immediate aftermath of the Inauguration, less pervasive than at other major events in the recent past, they rekindled broader arguments concerning the government's approach to free speech rights in the post-Sept. 11 world.

Aside from the safety and First Amendment issues, there was one more interesting item — a major blemish, in fact — with regard to the Inauguration Day security effort: the federal government saddled Washington, D.C. with a security bill for roughly \$17.3 million. In years past, the city received full reimbursement for Inauguration security costs, so this development marked a dramatic shift in the event's financial burden, which was not only a political slap in the face for D.C., but also a source of anger and contentious debate for its people.

Kevin Kiger, a spokesman for D.C. Vote, a group working to procure representation in Congress for the city and a fair shake for its residents with regard to decisions by the federal government, said the shift was completely unjustifiable. "This is money being spent for the President and his entourage," he said, "and the bill is being put on the shoulders of the residents of the District of Columbia." Kiger's point is especially poignant when flushed out further: this is a city in which more than 20 percent of the population lives in poverty, a number eight percentage points higher than the national average.

In the week leading up to Inauguration Day, the fight over this \$17.3 heated up in D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams spoke out against the federal government, only to be rebuffed by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, who instructed the city to use its own federal homeland security grant money to cover the extra cost. That recommendation, however, ignored the fact that



**THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE** wait in line at a security checkpoint on 12th Street, hoping to pass through in time to catch part of the Inaugural Parade.



**CHECK POINT** — Military officials at the security and ticketing checkpoint on Constitution Avenue near 7th Street stand guard, admitting only those with special seating for the swearing-in ceremony.

the money had an original purpose. As D.C. Councilman Adrian Fenty of Ward 4 said, the \$17.3 was "already allocated, which means that local taxpayers are paying these Inauguration costs."

Broken down, \$5.4 million came from the city's Emergency Planning and Security Cost Fund, which is generally held for less predictable events such as the Reagan funeral, and the other \$11.9 — the part most infuriating to local political leaders — came from the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Fund, which otherwise would have gone toward programs and projects beneficial to the city's people. "This is diverting money from a city that is obviously a target for acts of terror," said Kiger, of D.C. Vote. "This money was supposed to be spent on hospital systems, rapid-response teams, and better facilities for people in the District who might be harmed by such acts."

Amidst the firestorm, Councilman Fenty called on Mayor Williams to take a hard stand against the federal government, advice Williams chose not to heed. As the Inauguration approached, Fenty reiterated his position: "I think the mayor should have said, 'Look, if you're not going to reimburse us, we're not going to put the police on the streets to protect you.'"

Sharon Gang, a spokeswoman for Mayor Williams, acknowledged the widespread frustration over the \$17.3 million, but said the situation left D.C. with little choice. "The mayor feels very strongly that the city should be reimbursed for those funds," she said the day before the Inauguration. "But we don't have a choice. We're not going to not put on the Inauguration. We're not going to not protect people."

And so it went. The Bush Administration forced Washington, D.C., one of the poorest major cities in the United States, to spend its taxpayers' money on an Inaugural celebration headlined by nine black-tie galas in a single night.

**2:30 p.m.**

## **Pennsylvania Avenue**

In keeping with tradition, the Inaugural Parade — complete with the President, several U.S. senators, color guards, freedom floats, and military, college and high schools marching bands — followed the swearing-in ceremony and the President's formal lunch at the Capitol. The parade began at 4th Street on Pennsylvania Avenue and made its way out to 17th Street, passing in its wake crowds of spectators, supporters and protesters.

Inspired by the President's speech just a few hours earlier, Republican loyalists decked themselves out in celebratory gear, from "W" pins to shirts, hats and banners converted into capes. Stephanie Shearer, a high

## Inauguration 2005

school junior from Pittsburgh and one of countless students in D.C. for the day, held a Bush-Cheney sign with two classmates and commented on the event's massive, and seemingly ever-growing, crowd. "It's just a cool thing to see," she said. "There are so many people here."

Michael Holcomb, a member of the Crawford High School Band, said the event was even more exciting on the inside. "It was much better being in the parade," said Holcomb, who attended the Inauguration as an eighth grader in 2001, but had to stand on the sidelines. "Everyone out there supported Texas," he added.

The parade also drew a large number of ordinary spectators, there simply to enjoy the day and its representation of the peaceful transition of leadership in the U.S. government. "I'm not here because I support Bush," said Carla Barnes, a resident of Northern Virginia, "I just think this day is a celebration of democ-



**SHORTLY AFTER PERFORMING** in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., Crawford High School band members (from left) Andrew Judy, Michael Prim, Michael Holcolm, and Austin Dixon pose for a photo in their nearby hotel.

racy." In a slight whisper, she added with a smile, "I actually voted for Kerry."

Others attended the parade to show their opposition to the Bush Administration's policies, and many engaged in acts of protest. Sarah Kauffman, an organizer with the grassroots group Turn Your Back on Bush, estimated that roughly 5,000 people turned around as the President's motorcade passed in a statement of nonviolent dissent. "Some people were there to see the President," Kauffman later said, "and we wanted to be seen by the President." The protesters at the parade were largely in clusters, mainly toward the beginning of the route and heavily concentrated in an area for which International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and End Racism) had secured a permit.

There were a number of complaints concerning spectator access to the parade, as large bleachers lined most of the 13-block route, obstructing views from many of the standing sections. The bleacher seats, of course, were ticketed, with seats not exactly selling for small change. The Partnership for Civil Justice mounted a challenge to the arrangement in a U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C. earlier in the week, and street-side at Pennsylvania Avenue, it was painfully obvious what the fuss was all about. The Partnership lost, though, and the bleachers remained. And the bands played on.

**12:00 Noon**

## **The Capitol, West Lawn**

President Bush took the oath of office for the second time shortly after noon, as thousands of people strained their necks to see from The Mall. Chief Justice William Rehnquist kept his promise, and despite his illness and recent absence from the Supreme Court's bench during arguments, he administered the

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## President Takes Oath

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oath to the President, just as he did in 2001.

In his Inaugural Address shortly thereafter, President Bush drew on the broad theme of freedom, steering far clear of specifics and policy proposals. Spectators standing far back on The Mall and even beyond ticketing and security checkpoints to the north and south could hear parts of the speech, and some could see it on the large television screens erected for the event. Mostly comprised of Bush supporters, the crowd on hand for the speech cheered with his proclamations and jeered at his political opponents, most notably when the cameras focused on Senator John Kerry.

"The great objective of ending tyranny is the concentrated work of generations," Bush said early on in his address. "The difficulty of the task is no excuse for avoiding it. America's influence is not unlimited. But fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable, and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause." Despite the freedom rhetoric, however, he made no explicit mention of the U.S. military's involvement in Iraq, which was once known almost exclusively as Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Bush supporters exiting The Mall shortly after the address viewed the President's performance as confident and inspirational. "I especially like that he knows where he's going and he's very decisive," said Lynn Hedrick, an elementary school principal from St. Louis. "And he showed that in his speech." In a similar vein, Mary Solberg, a real estate broker from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, offered this reaction: "I liked the speech. I know what drives this man. You could see what his template is for running the country."

Of course, it came as no surprise that President Bush scored well with statements of certainty and conviction on Inauguration Day. After all, his most crowd-pleasing line at the Republican National Convention in New York last summer was this: "In the last four years, you and I have come to know each other. Even when we don't agree, at least you know what I believe and where I stand."

### 9:00 a.m. Meridian Hill Park

The upper level of the park, dusted with a light coating of snow, served as the starting point for protesters gathering for the D.C. Anti-War Network's demonstration, just one of several counter-inaugural events in the morning. From there, activists opposed to the Bush Administration's military philosophy marched down 16th Street toward the White House and eventually merged with other groups of demonstrators — some speaking out against the war, others on a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues.

Throughout the day, several groups used powerful imagery and direct action to amplify their messages, while others subtly registered their dissent by walking with the crowds. Volunteers with One Thousand Coffins carried hundreds of coffins through the streets of D.C., some draped in U.S. flags, others with plain, black shrouds. Organizer Jenna Hunt said the effort formed as a result of the Bush Administration's policy of banning the photos of U.S. soldiers returning in coffins. "I think the image speaks for itself," Hunt said. "The truth of the war is that people are dying." She added that "the black shrouds represent Iraqi civilians and the U.S. flags represent our service men and women, and the idea is that they're side by side."

At the A.N.S.W.E.R. protest along Pennsylvania Av-



ON A SCHOOL TRIP from Pittsburgh, (from left) Rachel Enck, Stephanie Shearer, and Nickole Smith hold a Bush-Cheney sign from the 2004 campaign.

enue, demonstrators stood in front of a giant banner with the words, "Iraq is Bush's Vietnam, Bring the Troops Home Now." Organizers proudly noted that their section, near 4th Street, was at the very beginning of the Inaugural Parade, giving their banner, and their overall message, additional resonance.

Another group, Critical Mass — comprised of bicyclists riding to push alternative means of transportation and decreased reliance on foreign oil, among other things — ran several trips through the city, and many of the cyclists viewed the rides as acts of Inauguration Day protest. "I think [what Critical Mass does] ties into a lot of Bush's foreign policy," said Zack Pesavento, a Georgetown University freshman and Critical Mass cyclist. "His policy is consume more, drive more and burn more fuel, and we're trying to offer an alternative form of transportation."

And of course, other protestors engaged in somber discussions about the horrors of war, while still more stretched their vocal chords by shouting toward the White House. Sweetnam, the demonstrator dressed as Uncle Sam, said quietly as he pointed to the folded flag in his hand, "I have a couple of dear, close friends that have sons over there, and I'm afraid that one of these is going to end up in the hands of one my friends instead of a son."

Inaugurations, it turns out, didn't always come with demonstrations of opposition. According to Boller, the TCU historian, there was only one major Inauguration Day protest prior to the Vietnam War: 1916, when advocates for women's suffrage marched around the White House and tried to get in to see Woodrow Wil-

son. (Wilson refused; he thought suffrage should be left to the states, and wanted no part of their push for a constitutional amendment.)

But in 1969 and 1973, anti-war demonstrators began viewing the Inauguration as an ideal protesting opportunity, and tens of thousands turned up in Washington, D.C. in those years to speak out against U.S. foreign policy. Steve McClure, who attended President Richard Nixon's second inauguration as a high school senior in 1973, said that on many fronts, times have changed since then. But echoing a familiar theme of protesters this year, he said of both eras, "The majority of us are excluded from any meaningful participation in the political process."

### 7:00 p.m. Union Station

With the sun set on Washington, D.C. and the Capitol glowing in the distance, the celebration and dissent of Inauguration Day continued. And of course, so did the big-money politics. As Bush supporters made their way to the west entrance of Union Station for the Freedom Ball, they received an exuberant, song-like welcome from a small group of anti-war demonstrators: "Bush Lied, People Died!"

The President made an appearance at that particular black-tie event just a few hours later, as he and his surrogates made the rounds from table to table and gala to gala. Perhaps one Freedom Ball V.I.P. said to Bush what Ivan Tital, the D.C. chair of Billionaires for Bush, said to his gathering of friends earlier in the day: "We paid for the campaign. We paid for this Inauguration. We paid for these parties. We better get something in return."

## Australian Exhibit To Show UTA Professor's Film Through Feb. 13

ARLINGTON — University of Texas - Arlington Art Professor Andy Anderson's film *Drive-by Shooting* is being shown through Feb. 13, along with work of other artists including independent filmmaker Stan Brakhage, in the Australian Center for the Moving Image.

The exhibit, "Proof: The Art of Seeing with One's Own Eyes," focuses on how people negotiate reality through the moving image.

Anderson's work has also been exhibited at the

Museum of Modern Art (part of the permanent collection), The Carnegie Museum of Art, San Francisco International Independent Film Festival (Award), Sundance Film Festival (permanent collection), the Dallas Museum of Art, Moscow Film Festival, Ann Arbor Film Festival (Grand Award), Houston Film Festival (Grand Award), Kansas City Film Jubilee, The Film Society of Lincoln Center, Center for Photographic Studies, Film in the Cities, Filmex, The Kitchen, PS1 and on every major network and PPV cable channel.

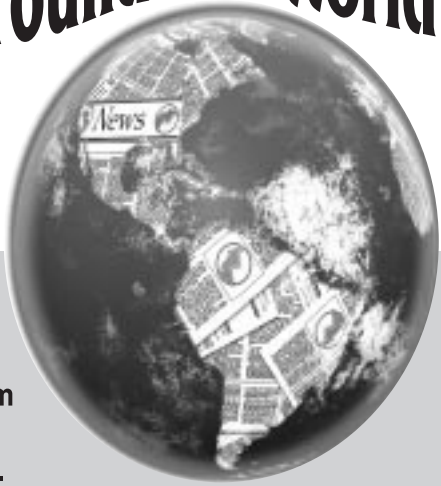
His work has been the recipient of three National Endowment for the Arts and SW Alternate Media Project production grants. He has written for Universal, Paramount Pictures, Hyperion Pictures, and Eddie Murphy Productions, as well as writing and directing four independent feature films. His photography and installation works have been widely exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art, The California Center for Photography, Camerawork, and others.

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Cree Proverb  
Patricia Morrison, Sulphur Springs  
w2

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# UT Student's Satellite Headed To Space After Competition Win

AUSTIN — Small, plasma-fueled satellites designed by aerospace engineering students at The University of Texas at Austin are headed to space after winning a national flight competition.

A University of Texas at Austin team of about 25 multidisciplinary graduate and undergraduate students competed against 12 other university teams in a satellite-building program sponsored by the U.S. Air Force, NASA and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. As winners they will receive \$100,000 to ready their satellites for flight and a free launch into space in 2006.

Created to encourage smaller, less expensive satellite designs, the contest required entries weigh less than 70 lbs. and cost less than \$100,000.

The University of Texas at Austin team, supervised by aerospace engineering faculty Drs. Glenn Lightsey, Wallace Fowler and Laximinaravan Raja, began building their satellites two years ago after the sponsors selected their proposal along with those of 12 other universities from an open application process.

The judges said the winning satellites appeared to be the most flight-ready, said Lightsey. The university team had traveled to numerous testing sites in the past few months to confirm their design was viable. When responding to judges' concerns about the strength or

reliability of different features, the students could share test results that assured the features worked.

The future of satellites, said Lightsey, is the use of groups of small satellites that work together instead of a single large one. This offers many advantages: researchers can gradually build a project by sending additional satellites with the same goal. Budgets can be lowered because the probability of mission failure reduces—if one satellite breaks an automatic backup remains in flight.

The University of Texas at Austin team chose to build two smaller satellites that work together to perform their mission. Their project seeks to demonstrate new technology to support these "formation flying satellites."

They created global positioning satellite (GPS) receivers that allowed the two satellites to communicate with each other in orbit, a new advance in GPS technology. The receivers are used to determine the vehicles' position and pointing direction. These receivers have been built previously, but using much larger budgets.

They also built a new plasma fuel device. A small satellite has little room for fuel. To address this need, the group developed a device that channels superheated gas through a microscopic nozzle, heating it to a plasma state and creating an efficient method of propelling the satellites and keeping them in orbit.

Finally, they set up a collaboration with other ground stations at Santa Clara University in California and Leeward Community College in Pearl City, Hawaii, in addition to their own station

in Austin, Texas, to track the satellites. Using multiple ground tracking sites is unusual, but the satellites will drift apart over time and make them impossible to track from a single site. Using the Internet, the flight team has access to each site and can track the satellites

more frequently.

For more information, including a list of participating students, visit the FASTRAC Web site.

## INFO

fastrac.ae.utexas.edu/our\_project/overview.php

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## Africa Program: Thousands Of Books Sent To Sierra Leone

ARLINGTON — Director Alustine Jalloh announced that UT-Arlington's Africa Program, in collaboration with Books for Africa, a non-profit organization in Minnesota, and the Sierra Leone Library Board, has just completed a year-long initiative to ship 18,473 new higher-education books to public libraries in Sierra Leone.

These books, with an estimated value of \$500,000, were donated by a number of U.S. publishers, including the major donor, McGraw Hill. Sierra Leone has just emerged from a decade-long civil war that resulted in widespread destruction of the country's infrastructure.

Funding for the book shipment was provided by Dallas-Fort Worth-based non-profit Sierra Leonean organizations, Arlington-based African American churches, and private individuals in the U.S.

## Lavender Conference Set Feb. 4-5 In Austin

AUSTIN — Southwest Lavender Conference, sponsored by Gabriel Valley Farms and the Texas Herb Growers & Marketers Association, will be held Feb. 4 - 5. The event will help the public learn from experts about growing, harvesting, distilling, cooking and marketing lavender. For information or to register, contact the office or visit the Gabriel Valley Farms' website.

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KRISTIE WILKINSON (23) passes the ball around a Bruceville-Eddy Lady Eagle in the Lady Pirate win, 71-22, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook



JULIE HELLER (21) fends off a couple of Lady Eagles in the Lady Pirate win, 71-22, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook



KRISTEN CAMPBELL scores against the Bruceville-Eddy Lady Eagles in the Lady Pirate win, 71-22, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook



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DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	TEAMS	TIME
Friday	Jan. 28	Clifton	Crawford	JV, V, 9	5:00, 6:30, 8:00
Tuesday	Feb. 1	at Troy	Troy	JV, V, 9	5:00, 6:30, 8:00
Friday	Feb. 4	at McGregor	McGregor	JV, V, 9	5:00, 6:30, 8:00
Tuesday	Feb. 8	Bruceville-Eddy	Crawford	JV, V, 9	5:00, 6:30, 8:00

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# Pirate Nets Heat Up As District Starts

DATELINE:  
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Hometown of the President of the United States



LEE MURPHY works his way around a Bruceville-Eddy Eagle, in the Pirate win, 58-33, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook



B.J. CHRISTIAN saves the ball from going out of bounds against the Bruceville-Eddy Eagles, in Crawford's win, 58-33, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook

## McGregor Chamber Banquet Tickets Currently On Sale

MCGREGOR—Tickets are currently on sale for the McGregor Chamber of Commerce Banquet to be held on Thursday, Feb. 17, in the McGregor High School Commons.

The deadline to purchase tickets is Wednesday, Feb. 9; there will be no sales at the door. The public is invited to attend. Western attire is encouraged.

Tickets are available at the Chamber office (254) 840-2292 or from any Board member. The cost is \$20 per ticket and includes entry into a drawing for a \$500 travel gift certificate.

A reception, given by Extraco Bank of McGregor, will begin at 6:15 p.m.

Catered by Curtis Wiethorn, dinner will begin at 7 p.m. The menu will feature barbecue beef brisket, smoked sausage, and all the trimmings.

Nationally and Internationally known John Wayne impersonator, Dr. Gene Howard, will present selections from his album, "What Made America Great," in full old-time cowboy regalia.

"He will make you want to wave a flag, and salute the men and women that kept our country free," said a chamber spokesman.

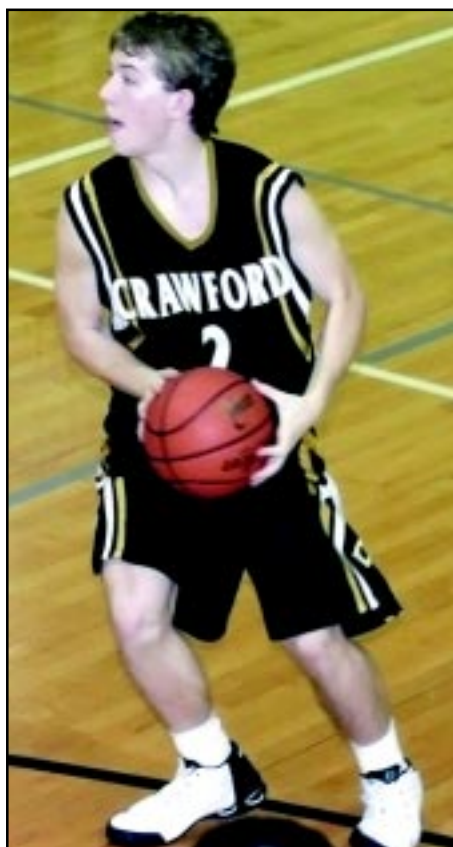
As always, the Citizen of the Year, Farmer of the Year, and special awards will be announced during the evening.

There will be a silent auction for the honor of sitting with Dr. Howard at the Banquet. For a small fee, attendees can also have their picture taken with Dr. Howard.

Dr. Howard is not associated with the John Wayne family or estate, said a

chamber spokesperson.

**INFO** Office, (254) 840-2292



VANCE GOHLKE scored nine points, including a three pointer against the Bruceville-Eddy Eagles, in the Pirate win, 58-33, on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook



LEE WARD (22) and Bobby Patterson (12) contest for a loose ball on Friday, Jan. 21. — Photo By Stephen Cook

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# Bush-GOP Energy Bill Draws Line For Battle

WASHINGTON, D.C. — When Congress begins its new session this week, the Republican leadership is expected to quickly re-introduce essentially the same energy bill it passed in 2003 and 2004.

And on Jan. 24, Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM) will convene a hearing of his Energy and Natural Resources Committee to focus on the problem of natural gas (limited supply, high price).

As always, the two chambers will have to reconcile their versions of the bill, which is likely to take several months.

The two previous bills were both defeated in the Senate.

The House bill, H.R. 6, will again be hotly opposed by environmental and energy conservation groups.

“The energy bill is a classic example of a legislative stocking stuffer, where Congress slipped in billions of dollars in targeted subsidies for the coal, nuclear, oil, and gas industries,” U.S. PIRG energy analyst Navin Nyak told BushGreenwatch, an environmental watchdog group.

“Investing in clean energy policies would create thousands of new jobs, save consumers, and businesses billions of dollars, and significantly reduce air pollution from power plants,” added Nyak. “Instead of embracing this win-win-win situa-

tion, the Bush administration and Congress crafted an energy bill that weakens environmental protections, fails to protect consumers and throws more than \$35 billion taxpayers dollars at polluting industries.”

Besides the fact that the bill provides huge subsidies to the fossil fuel (greenhouse gas) industries closely tied to the Bush administration, while doing almost nothing for alternative energy or energy conservation, environmental experts oppose a laundry list of other harmful provisions likely to be carried over from last year. Among other things, the bill would:

Exempt all oil and gas construction activities — including roads, drill pads, pipeline corridors and refineries — from having to obtain a permit controlling polluted stormwater runoff caused by construction activities, as is currently required under the Clean Water Act.

Dramatically increase air pollution and global warming with its huge new incentives for burning coal, oil, and gas.

Threaten drinking water sources by exempting from Safe Drinking Water Act regulation the underground injection of chemicals during oil and gas development.

Allow more smog pollution for longer than the current Clean Air Act authorizes.

Establish an “Office of Federal Project Coordination” within the White House to expedite the permitting and completion of energy projects on federal lands and override environmental safeguards.

Continue to promote development of all Outer Continental Shelf lands — including sensitive moratoria protected lands and, potentially, national marine sanctuaries — through two poorly defined studies.

Repeal the Public Utility Holding Company Act, the main law protecting consumers from market manipulation, fraud, and abuse in the electricity sector, even while evidence of corrupt industry behavior is front page news and ratepayers are owed billions to compensate for the

Mandate the siting of a high volt-

age electricity transmission line through the Cleveland National Forest in southern California and other

public lands, overriding a decision by the State of California rejecting such siting.

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# New Jobs for the Military — There's Plenty To Do

I wrote last time of beating a hasty retreat from the war in Iraq. If we can't fight as dirty as they do, we have no business fighting over there. It isn't that we don't play by the same rules, it's that they have no rules.

If the military needs work to do, I've come up with a few suggestions and new programs that might help. You may think I'm kidding, but I'm not, well, not entirely. I realize there will be details to work out, but I leave that for the experts, to divvy it all up fairly. Will some big government honcho please take this and run with it?

We have huge areas in Texas (and probably in other states) that need to be cleared of cedar, mesquite, and other brush. These trash trees are sucking our land dry, impeding the success of native grasses and water flow. Instead of government programs for farmers and ranchers offering matching funds to clear the land and reseed, perhaps instead, the military could use the same type of equipment to come in and clear the land for free. This would help everyone.

Our roads and highways are always in need of work. We can't keep up with all the demand. Send in the military to do the work they do during war on foreign soil. Let them help to build and maintain our transportation network here.

Let them work on our dams. Let them use their resources to assist in reclamation attempts in this country instead of in others.

Let them dig stock tanks for farmers and ranchers who would otherwise never be able to afford them. Let them dig water wells, gas wells, oil wells. Let them do these things after

## Rustic Ramblings

By Gene Ellis



*Gene Ellis, Ed.D. is a Bosque County resident who returned to the family farm after years of living in New Orleans, New York and Florida. She is an artist who holds a doctoral degree from New York University and is writing a book about the minor catastrophes of life.*

the private contractors have acquired all the contracts they can reasonably honor. Let them keep the costs down and the people honest.

Let the military prepare and deliver meals on wheels to our needy and our elderly. Let them paint their homes and mow their lawns, work in hospitals and nursing homes as nurses and orderlies where there is a need for more help. Let military doctors treat those who cannot afford adequate medical insurance or medical care.

Let them cultivate fields for those who are no longer able or cannot afford the huge and expensive equipment. Allow these proud Americans to keep and live out their lives on their family farms. Let the military shoe horses and bale hay, help rebuild factories and retool so goods can be manufactured more economically on our own soil.

Let them go into inner cities and help keep order in a way that is acceptable to the local law enforcement officials. There are never enough policemen. Violence is everywhere. They could use the help. And I like the idea of checks and balances of the two factions. It might keep more

people honest.

Let the military attorneys also work for those civilians who cannot pay for adequate legal advice. Let the military do any work that would keep down the exorbitant costs that are eating up our system. Flood the market with military workers so that no private company can take advantage of our citizens.

Let the military go in and help people in THIS country rebuild after natural disasters, after floods, mudslides, earthquakes. Mother Nature provides endless opportunities. I don't mean to let them help only in the initial stages (like the National Guard), but to stay and work. There are never enough private contractors to fill the needs when needs are urgent.

Let the military come in and rebuild homes on our own soil for people who ask, for people who cannot afford to do it on their own, for people who cannot afford insurance — sort of a military Habitat for Humanity.

Let them work with their own and private scientists and university architecture departments to produce homes with solar hot water heaters and other alternative energy solutions. Let them do work that needs to be done that is not getting done.

Let the military give food to people who need it in our own country. All branches of the service have great teaching expertise in a variety of fields. There is already a huge edu-

cation machine available, great resources to draw upon. I suggest they take over all problem students in public high schools, and indeed all the problem schools, give the kids who need it a solid military education, teach them respect (as they do to many of the same kids after they graduate from public high schools), and leave them with the ability to earn a living doing honest and necessary work; prepare them for college if they have the ability and the desire. Teach them skills they would be taught in regular military service.

Let these newly educated "military students" go out to end illiteracy, to teach others. Rev them up to change the world right here in their own backyards.

Oh, you think all this work by our military will take away from private contractors and public school teachers and administrators? No way. There is enough work for all. There are never enough resources to cover the needs in this country, and there never will be.

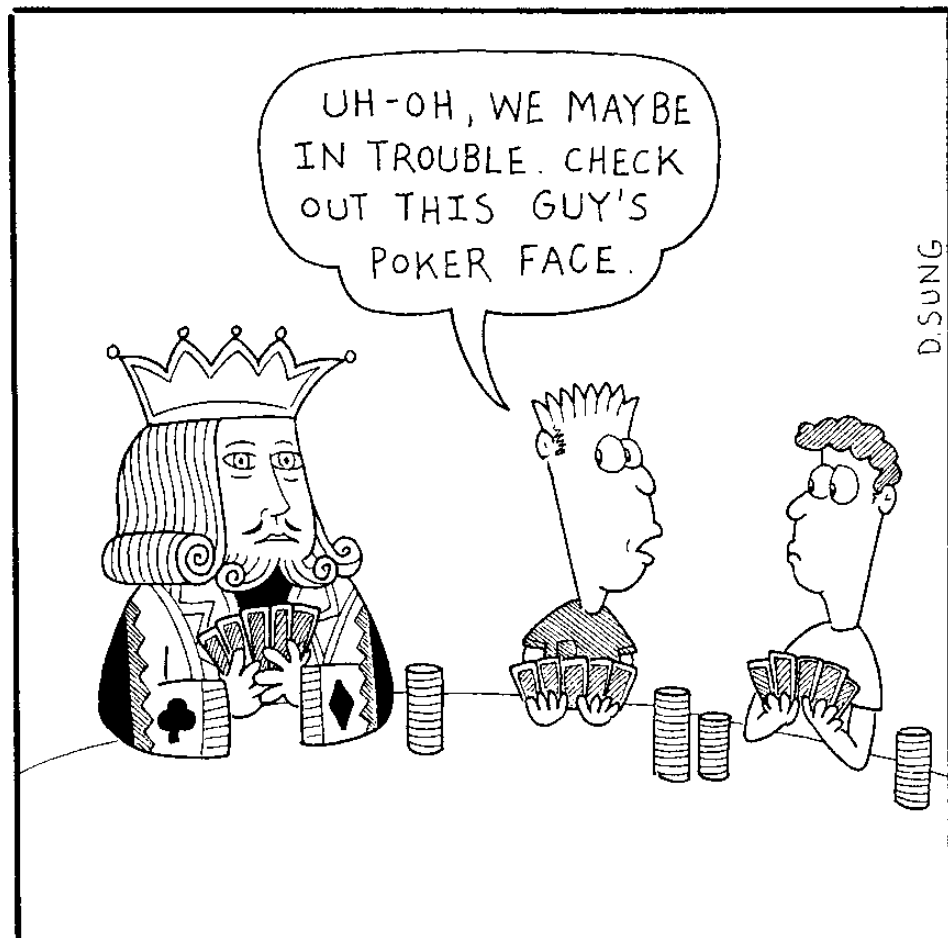
The possibilities are endless. And sometimes in even the zaniest plans, there is a kernel of an idea that can effect change for the better.

I have never been one to push welfare, but I would rather see the military helping those truly in need than dying overseas for a war no one wants or thinks will help fight the threat of terrorism.

Spend half the money we are spending abroad and fight instead for what we need right here in our own country.

## Aminals ©

By David Sung



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Strange how a bunch of people can waste a billion dollars to celebrate a man's first day back at work, then still call themselves "conservative."

Understand, it's just as loony for Democrats to spend millions on an inauguration as Republicans.

This is non-partisan gluttony, and it would be just as repulsive if John Kerry's worshipers were bowing at the ball.

Which they would have.

It's not even so much the price tag that should bother us, although millions of dollars worth of cops to protect a party ought to give us a clue that maybe we are not who we think we are.

No, it's the monarchy.

Our dirtiest secret in America is that we despise that which has made us what we are: democracy.

We want, and always have wanted, our king back.

Point of fact, we just don't trust ourselves.

We want George II to be wiser, craftier, more courageous and, yes, more mendacious than we. It is just too difficult to exercise our own initiatives; it makes a lousy sitcom.

That's why we love actors and PR guys as governors and presidents.

Neighbor Bush isn't the president. But he plays one on TV.

We should dump "Hail to the Chief" in favor of "Someone to Watch Over Me."

The "ownership society?"

We don't own a damn thing.

The bank does.

We don't save. We borrow.

The glitz and glitter attracts our interest, so we pay it.

His majesty King George will make it all right. We'll win all the wars. The Lords of Exxon and Dukes of Haliburton are out there making us all rich. Who cares if you just pass your paycheck from one hand to the next? You get to hold it for a couple of days and pretend it's yours. His Royal Highness will ensure the perpetual money machine keeps pumping out the hits.

You may only work for the credit card company, but just look at my new big screen TeeVee!

That's why it was so appropriate that the Neighbor Bush Show that aired

## Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



right before the gala parade featured the punch line: "I'm a democratic Republican!"

That's like saying you're a sausage-eating hog.

In a republic, the masses don't lead; they choose leaders.

In a democracy, the people are in the driver's seat.

So, when Neighbor Bush lets you run the locomotive, let me know.

Meanwhile, I'll be standing back here in the boxcar door ready to jump.

Why are we so anxious to crown a king, when we're supposed to be hiring a servant?

A public servant?

So go out in the rose garden, raise your right hand, take the oath, and get back in there and go to work.

This country is in a mess, in case you haven't noticed.

We are up to our stepladders in debt nationally and personally, we're in a war that we are fighting in hopes of a draw, a half-dozen foreign countries are telling us how to run our government, most of us can't pay the doctor bills for poisonous prescriptions, so many of our jobs are being done by people in countries where they eat bugs and rats that you can't buy a George Bush T-shirt that wasn't made in China and the American family income is so pitifully low children can't afford to move out of the house until they're in their 30s.

We don't have to worry about gay marriage. In a few years nobody will be able to afford a license or a ring!

Neighbor Bush and all his horses and all his men can't put that together again.

We have to do it.

We have to tell the president, any president, what to do.

Not the other way around.

Of course you can just sit back and enjoy the Inaugural Show. C'mon big money! Spend a billion dollars on a party instead of a veteran's hospital or a car that you don't need a 20-year bank loan to fill up.

It may turn out all right, some way or another.

Maybe it's like Robert Earl Keen says:

"The road goes on forever and the party never ends."



# Editorial

Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

## It's a Bird! It's a Plane! It's Super Fuels!

The United States government's current energy policy is Bizarro. Oil, coal, gas, and uranium are the equivalent of Kryptonite to us all. When we casually flip on a light switch, heat and cool our houses to the whims of the weather, pump gas before heading to the ballpark, or cook a Thanksgiving Day meal, our energy is drained. Poof! It's gone, and we suffer.

In fact, we might as well burn our money, pour Drano down our children's throats, and salt the earth for not using renewable energy. Now that would be a sound business investment, don't you think?

As Americans, we should harness the power of our yellow sun like Superman to build a stronger nation.

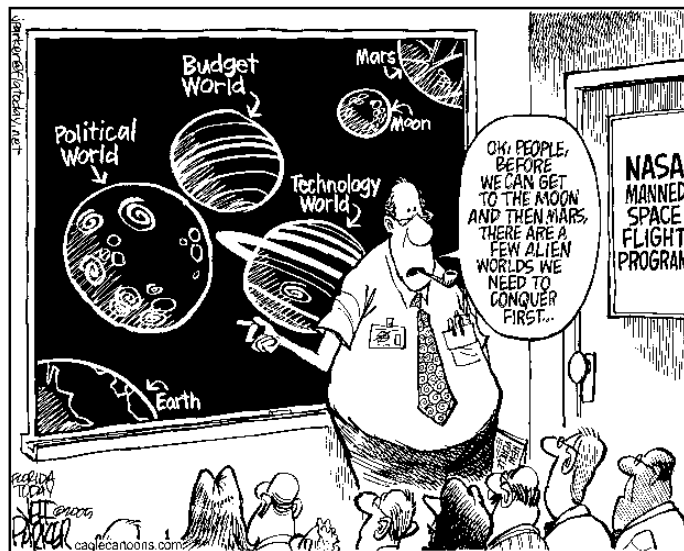
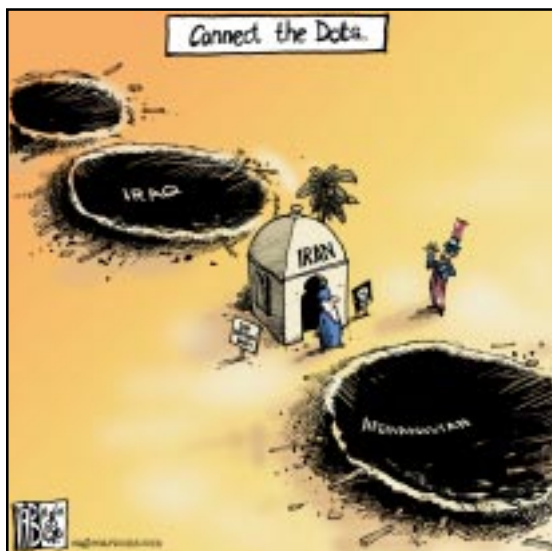
It doesn't take x-ray vision to see that in a moral economy, increased investment in renewable energy sources like wind, water, solar, biomass, biodiesel, geothermal, and hydrogen, is a responsible investment.

Not only should we stop "speeding bullets," like oil spills, black lung, mercury poisoning and nuclear meltdowns from hitting our children's environment, we should encourage our brother nations to "leap over tall buildings in a single bound" instead of passing through them with jumbo jets.

New Mexico "the Clean Energy state" is already leading the way, declared Gov. Bill Richardson recently, and is seeking to convert 10 percent of the state's overall energy production into renewable production by 2011.

The Lone Star State needs to extend its Fortress of Solitude beyond the City of Austin.

— By Nathan Diebenow



# Golfer Demaret Was The Life Of The Party

Jimmy Demaret trailed Dr. Cary Middlecoff by one stroke with five holes to go in the fourth and final round of the Thunderbird tournament at Palm Springs on Jan. 30, 1956.

Jimmie Newton Demaret was born the fourth of 10 children in 1910 in Houston. He was bitten by the golf bug at an early age, when an army officer asked the seven-year-old to lug his clubs around the military course at Camp Logan.

Demaret grew up caddying and playing on the public links in the Bayou City. He studied the swings of adult duffers, imitated the best, and developed into a promising young golfer. At 15 he dropped out of school to work as an assistant to Jack Burke, Sr. at the River Oaks Country Club.



Demaret started playing for money around the Lone Star State while in his teens. He was the resident pro at the municipal course in Galveston, when he finally came out on top winning the first of his five Texas Professional Golfers Association championships.

"Then as now," Demaret reminisced 40 years later, "I'd jump up on the stand and croon a ballad or two with the orchestra if given the slightest encouragement." "Yeah," chimed in lifelong pal and business partner Jack Burke, Jr., "and he'd always make certain one of his friends furnished the encouragement."

After belting out a couple of songs onstage at a Galveston nightclub in 1935, the struggling golf pro was propositioned by the bandleader. "Jimmy, how

would you like to sing for us full-time?" The offer was tempting, but he could not give up on his dream.

Demaret soon got his big chance courtesy of genial gangster Sam Maceo, who provided the financial backing for him to go on the PGA tour. He came into his own in the 1939-40 season with six major tournament victories and his first green jacket.

Sick as a dog from some bad shrimp he had eaten, Demaret began the third round of the 1940 Masters deadlocked with Lloyd Mangrum for first place. But sheer determination and an amazing wedge shot on the 15th hole put him a stroke up on the fellow Texan.

The final 18 was anticlimactic. Demaret crafted a one-under-par 71 to Mangrum's 74 to win the Augusta clas-

sic by four shots.

Demaret spent World War II in uniform and did not return to the professional golf circuit until 1946. But the long layoff had not hurt him one bit. In fact, as he soon showed, he was better than ever.

In 1947 Demaret was the king of the tour. He won seven tournaments, including his second Masters, the most money and the coveted Vardon Trophy with an average round of 69.9 strokes.

Demaret stayed at the top of his game through the rest of the 1940's and into the next decade. He consistently ranked among the top 10 money winners, played in four Ryder Cups without losing a match, and in 1950 became the first three-time winner of the Masters.

The Thunderbird in Palm Springs was one of Demaret's favorites. He won all the marbles at the desert tournament in 1953 with a birdie on the 17th hole and an eagle on the 18th to beat Ben Hogan.

Three years later at the Thunderbird, Demaret shared the lead with Cary Middlecoff halfway through the 72-hole event. The Texan shot a 67 on the third day, but the dentist responded with a 66 for a one-stroke advantage.

Demaret finally caught Middlecoff on the 14th hole of the decisive round. He put his approach shot two feet from the pin and sank the short putt for a birdie. Then he ended the suspense with a long birdie putt on the next green that put him ahead for good.

Even at a distance, Demaret was easy to spot. His colorful attire might include purple shoes, green slacks, and a three-tone cardigan sweater, but he always wore a big smile.

Today Demaret would be called a "party animal." He stayed up half the night drinking and swapping stories, often nursing a hangover through the front nine, but never regretted his wild ways. "I lost some sleep," he once said, "but I made thousands of friends."

As the sun started to set on his touring days, Demaret together with old friend Jack Burke, Jr. opened Champions Golf Club in 1958 on the northern outskirts of Houston. In the 1970s, he designed the Onion Creek course in Austin, site of the first seniors tournament known as The Legends of Golf.

Demaret was a natural for television, which brought golf into everybody's living rooms in the 1960s. As co-host of "Shell's Wonderful World of Golf," he entertained millions and even taught them a thing or two about the sport he loved.

In December 1983, Demaret died of a heart attack in his hometown of Houston. At the time of his death, he ranked ninth on the all-time tournament winners list with 35 titles.

Many remember Jimmy Demaret as the life of the party instead of a great golfer. "I'm sure his personality kept people from recognizing just how good he was," acknowledged Jack Burke, Jr. "He didn't have to practice as much as Hogan. He was a much more natural player than Ben. So he had more time for fun."

"Best of This Week in Texas History" Vol. V \$10.95 plus \$3.25 postage and handling from Bartee Haile, 1912 Meadow Creek Dr., Pearland, TX 77581

## This Week In Texas History

By Bartee Haile



# Reporting From Iraq...

Sometimes I don't know what I would do with out a computer or having my laptop close by. There have been many times when I have taken great comfort in turning it on and being able to read the local newspaper online.

For a short period of time I can forget where I am and read about a place that is so dear to my heart. I just want to say thank you.

There are times when home and family cross your mind, and there are times that you wish you could be with them, to be able to do the things that you used to do. The things that you used to fuss about doing would even be a welcomed change at times. But we are all here for a reason and each and every one of us here in Iraq has grown from this experience in one way or another.

Yes, our day will come to make the flight back home, and we are all looking forward to that day.

But one thing remains that we can-

## The World As I See It

By Ronald (Butch) Kettler



not change. There will be things that have caanged about us that we will bring back home, and there are things that we will leave behind in Iraq that will remain here forever.

### Just a Bottle of Water

It was back during the summer, when one of the local nationals who worked for me came and sat down beside me.

He has always been a quiet man and very seldom spoke unless he was spoken to and then he would just answer your question and nothing more.

But this time it was different; I could tell something was on his mind.

We sat for a few minutes and he began to speak.

"Mr. Ron, it has been days since we have had water in Baghdad and at night we have a hard time putting my baby girl to sleep because we have no water for formula. She wakes up in the night needing formula and we have nothing to give her. I feel so bad, but what can I do? My heart hurts for her," he said. "You have pallets of water here. Do you think that it would be all right if I took a liter bottle home this evening for my baby?"

I told him that I would check with my boss and see.

At quitting time that day I told him to come and go with me. We walked over to the container where we keep our water and I told him to get him some water to take home.

He was being as humble as he could and reached down and got a one-liter bottle of water.

"No, no," I said.

He looked back at me somewhat puzzled.

I then explained explained to him that he could have a whole case.

You would have thought that I just gave him a million dollars.

As he stood up with a case of water on his shoulder, tears came from his eyes. "Thank you, Mr. Ron, Thankyou!!"

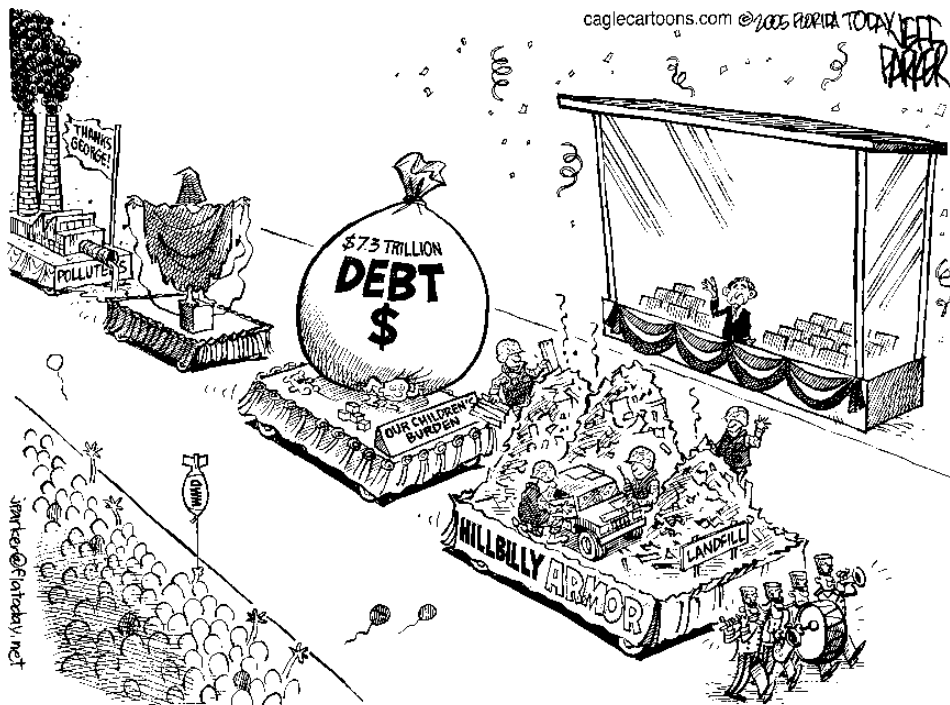
The next morning he came to work and said that his baby slept through the night and that it was a good night for the whole family.

I am glad that we were able to help him and his family during these times, and yes, we gave him water until they got water back on in Baghdad.

He still works for us today and we have become good friends. He brings pictures of his family and shows them to me and he has a good heart.

Sometimes I watch him work and wish that the rest of Iraq could see this man and all take heed.

At Taji the average income is \$180 per year.



FLOATS YOU PROBABLY WON'T SEE IN THE INAUGURATION PARADE...

# MAILBAG

# ICONOCLAST

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Editor,

Your recent editorial, "Reclaim The American Dream" by Nathan Diebenow succinctly expressed all the reasons the government regulated corporations and businesses following the ceaseless avarice and endless worker abuse in the age of the robber-barons. Unfortunately, American students are not well schooled in American history. If they were they would easily recognize this unchecked, rampant greed and continuing destruction of any vestige of labor laws and worker protections, as the long-threatened rise of the antebellum South. The South's economy was built on slavery. Seems, those greedy bastards can't make enough and pay their workers a living wage. Were it not for the Thirteenth Amendment (soon to be abolished by some secret "Executive Order," no doubt) these soulless demons (and I think I just insulted soulless demons) would not pay their workers one red cent. An alarming trend has already begun to rear its ugly head: many companies "ask" their workers to "volunteer" their time (a la USA Air; Walmart (which doesn't so much "ask" as "force"). Of course, it IS voluntary, so naturally if a worker declines to donate their off time, it won't be held against them at raise time. Right.

Mr. Diebenow hits the nail on the head, neatly cataloguing all the reasons last century, rampant corporate looting was sharply curbed by the Fair Labor Standards Act; the FDIC was created to avoid the collapse of Wall Street and the ruination of millions of American pensions caused by Wall Street's collapse (Enron, anyone?); Social Security was created; and, the New Deal was necessary, but just and fair and an excellent use of public monies — for the public benefit.

Unfortunately, the Taft Hartley act rolled back a lot of advances for labor, but did not completely destroy it.

Bottom line: corporations, under the 14th amendment, are "persons" with constitutional rights. However, citizens of this country don't have unfettered "rights." All citizens, "natural" and "artificial" (e.g., corporations) are also charged with the concomitant responsibilities of citizenship. Any "natural person" who engaged in the type of rampant theft and moral corruption as many of our national and multinational corporations would be locked in jail. Consequently, regardless of any silly arguments about "free markets," the laws regulating business are there to curb corporate conduct and ensure that these "artificial persons" who eagerly and gladly exercise their rights of citizenship, also adhere to and fulfill their civic responsibilities as well. It is evident that left to their own devices (we have seen now two clear examples of this, last century and now) corporations will not regulate themselves and will always opt for the option that optimizes profit, even if the measure itself is anti-human.

Like any other irresponsible citizens, our corporations require regulation and supervision in order to ensure that they

observe the rules of civilized conduct and meet their obligations of citizenship.

One must wonder what compels the so-called "elected" leader of the United States to steer recklessly and headlong into economic collapse? The answer is simple: In addition to unbridled greed and contempt for human beings, the Bush family has a personal vendetta against FDR and his legacy, regardless of its cost to everyone else, including the American people, with whose welfare "dubya" is entrusted and for which he is responsible.

Now before you guffaw, just remember, "personal," as well as political, issues — most notably, those fueled by personal relationships — often have been the subject of, caused or marked, key events in history. Just check out your handy Bible (yes, the very one that the these fundies love to pound) — it's full of stories about how the course of human history was changed because of sibling rivalry, lust, greed, hatred, jealousy, betrayal, political treachery, and personal animus — all very human acts and reactions, passions and emotions. So, here is the background on the Bushies and FDR:

Preston Bush, "dubya's" grandfather, did business with the Nazis and FDR — specifically, he was Hitler's banker). Doing business with the Nazis during WW II was considered a big no no and FDR shut down the Bush bank. Think Preston Bush and his family had anything good to say about FDR and the New Deal? One can only imagine the rants that went on in that house... Oh, and of course, GW never heard about it and certainly didn't pass that contempt along to "dubya."

Hat's off to Mr. Diebenow and the ICONOCLAST for a great piece.

*P.S., California*

To The Editor:

Democrats need to unite in favor of a flat tax.

A flat tax structure in the United States is a way for Democrats to force the Republicans to put their money where their mouths are. A flat tax says nothing about how revenues are distributed. It is strictly about how you raise money for the government to do the work of its citizens.

A flat tax doesn't have to hit the poor the hardest. By simply saying something to the effect that a flat tax will be applied to all income — no matter its source — over \$25,000 (for example) alleviates the problem with hurting the poor. It also mitigates the issue that most have ignored in their discussions of a flat tax—the fact that most middle class people actually currently pay considerably less than the often-proposed flat tax rate of 18% to 19%.

A flat tax is a way to take a way an issue that the Republicans are using to beat up Democrats — tax fairness. The Republicans have been for years saying that a progressive tax system simply isn't fair. They have, of course, been doing so knowing full well that they don't actually want to get rid of the present tax system.

A flat tax is a way to take power away from big business. As everyone knows the process of doling out tax breaks enhances a politician's power and their ability to raise campaign bribes — I mean contributions. By moving to a flat tax system, the incentive to donate funds to influence taxes is removed.

It is important to remember that a flat tax system is spending neutral. A flat tax doesn't, in and of itself say that the government can't influence markets (those in the know understand that in reality there are no free markets). By removing all deductions — except for the before mentioned \$25 — the government hasn't given up its right to encourage spending — convoluted or not.

Let's look at the mortgage deduction. Obviously the ability to write off your mortgage influences people to buy houses by making it cheaper to do so. But wait a minute. Is the purpose of the deduction to help Bill Gates to buy a house or is it to help Mrs. Smith, the math teacher, at the local high school?

The answer is that Bill Gates doesn't need our help. Mrs. Smith does. How might the government continue to encourage Mrs. Smith to buy a house? Well ... if they really wanted to the government could, for example, always subsidize her interest rate. Remember, a flat tax system doesn't mean that the government doesn't use its spending power to influence behavior.

How about deductions for medical expense? Wouldn't getting rid of that deduction really hurt people just when they need help the most? Not necessarily. Not giving someone a deduction on their taxes doesn't mean that the government can't help them out in some other fashion.

Face it. You don't currently get to take the deduction unless your expenses are over 7% of your income. Let's briefly look at 2 cases.

A person who makes \$25,000 gets to start taking a deduction after they have spent \$1,750 on medical bills. Under our new flat tax system that exempts the first \$25,000 in income, there is no reason to give a deduction. They aren't paying any income tax anyway.

A person making \$60,000 gets to start taking a deduction in the current system after they have spent \$4,200 on medical bills. Assuming a 25% tax rate, the deduction might be worth \$1,050. Certainly nothing to sneeze at unless you remember that you have actually already reduced his tax bill by exempting the first \$25,000 in income.

Now... how might the government actually proactively help a person who is suddenly faced with a big medical expense? The choices are nearly endless. Universal health insurance is certainly an option worth evaluating.

A flat tax is a golden opportunity for the Democratic Party. Perhaps its biggest benefit is what can easily be deduced from the few short examples used above. It changes the discussion from who is deserving of tax breaks to who needs our help and how can we do so.

The added benefit that we all receive is that it makes the workings of our government that much more transparent. Today... no one

understands the tax code. If you pay a flat tax on all income over \$25,000, no matter its source, the complexity is gone. So also are the hours and hours needed to fill out the paperwork.

Call the Republicans on their bluff.  
A.P.

To The Editor:

Remember that one talking head was paid \$200,000 to push Bush's excrement. Because he supported Bush, he was not prosecuted.

Why should we believe any pundit? He has not been punished and just appeared in Prime time on CNN and said, in effect, "What's the big deal — I didn't know it was dishonest."

The first amendment is meant to protect political speech. Not pornography, slander, riot, etc. It is also not meant to protect misleading advertising or outright lies.

The problem, IS the media. Remember the payola scandal that is just now being investigated and only after the FCC was swamped by phone calls. Before that, the FCC read about in the papers but were unmoved to investigate the crime until it became very political.

There is no rule of law anymore. We are ruled by lawless thugs and murderers. The Chief of homeland [in]security advocates "creative legal thinking." That means make some obscure clause rule the way they want it to be. "I care not who is prime minister nor who passes the laws as long we interpret the laws" - (can't remember who said it - please write if you do).

One wonders how much Terrence Hunt might have been paid to write the puff piece?

Notice this part: "Our country has accepted obligations that are difficult to fulfill and would be dishonorable to abandon," the president declared in the first wartime inauguration in more than three decades.

I do not remember that on the ballot. Do you? Even 51 to 49 does add up to our country accepting his war without end. The media is proven guilty by the phrase "first wartime president in more than 30 years."

First, that is an outright lie. War has not been declared by congress. Second, we are in an occupation, no longer a war by any measure.

Third, the title is wrong. He is not the president. Bush is a tyrant who rigged the election and has illegally taken over the office.

We must be non-violent! I know some of you are really upset. But if anyone is killed, especially Bush, it would be the absolute worst thing that could happen. There would be no more dialogue - just storm troops. His new clothes are disappearing; he is just a patsy. Do not give them the ammo they need.

J.W.

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MAILBAG

ICONOCLAST

LETTERS  
TO THE  
EDITOR

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### Texas Should Not Repeat Other States'

#### Workers' Compensation Mistakes

Dear Editor,

The Texas Legislature, after a year of intense study, is prepared to fix the broken system that cares for injured workers.

Nearly everyone agrees the current workers' compensation system is doing a poor job of serving injured workers and their employers. Many injured workers face long delays in receiving the care they need to return to work. Moreover, insurance companies have dramatically raised employers' premiums even though they are paying out less to cover workers' medical expenses.

In searching for solutions to these problems, legislator should not make the same mistakes other states have made when reforming their workers' compensation systems.

First, we must ensure workers have access to the most cost-effective treatment for their injuries.

A high percentage of on-the-job injuries involve the musculoskeletal system (Spinal joints, ligaments, discs, nerves and muscles), often in the lower back from lifting beyond the system's capability. Many studies have found that chiropractic care is the most cost-effective treatment for these injuries. And yet, there are some who want to the Legislature to reduce injured workers' access to chiropractic care by claiming this change would reduce costs.

One interest group is lobbying to prevent injured workers from seeing a chiropractor unless they get a referral from a medical doctor. If this change is implemented, Texas will see its workers' compensation costs grow.

Other states that have required workers to see a medical doctor first have experienced dramatic increases in costs as patients are diverted from chiropractic care to more expensive surgery and prescription drugs.

When Ohio restricted workers' access to chiropractic care, its workers' compensation program experienced a \$22 million increase in drug costs while reducing payments to chiropractors by only \$8 million.

The state of Florida made the same mistake a decade ago and paid out an estimated \$800 million in increased surgical and drug costs before it changed its law to once again allow injured workers direct access to chiropractic care.

Surgical costs in the Texas workers' compensation program already are among the highest in the nation, and recent revelations about the harmful effects of certain high cost drugs raise serious questions about increasing dependence upon pharmaceutical treatments and the resulting complications.

The fact is that chiropractic care is increasing throughout the country as more people seek alternatives to invasive surgery and expensive, sometime dangerous, drugs. In Texas, eight million people have chosen to have chiro-

practic care.

In recent years, the federal government has launched major initiatives to increase patient access to chiropractors in the Medicare program and the Veterans Administration health care system based on studies that projected significant cost savings. For decades, chiropractors have served as primary care providers in private pay, group health insurance, Medicare, and workers' compensation.

Chiropractors are not the cause of the soaring workers' compensation insurance premiums. Payments to chiropractors represent only six percent of the state's total workers' compensation costs.

So who's responsible for the higher costs? Last fall legislative committees discovered that insurance carriers increased premiums by 45 percent from 2000 to 2003, while their payments for medical care declined by 23 percent. Legislators should look at the pricing practices of the insurance industry before making any changes.

Continuing direct access to quality chiropractic care is part of the solution to reducing the costs of workers' compensation. Restricting patient access to chiropractors is not in the best interest of injured workers and will further increase costs to employers. Texas should learn from the experience of other states and avoid making the same costly mistakes here.

*Franz Klein, D.C.*

President of the Texas Chiropractic Association

Dear Editor,

Congress placed our nation in the World Trade Organization in 1994. Prior to the vote then Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich stated that passage of the measure would accomplish "transferring from the United States at a practical level significant authority to a new organization." He nevertheless favored passage, even calling the move "a very big transfer of power."

But the Constitution does not permit such a "transfer of power." According to its carefully written articles, only Congress has the power to "regulate commerce with foreign nations." And Congress was never given power to delegate its authority to any other division of our government or to any foreign entity such as the WTO.

Because of membership in this foreign-based trade organization, our nation has been forced to accept WTO rulings dealing with our tax laws, steel tariffs, oil importation, cotton subsidies, even the purchase of bananas. The major consequence of WTO membership actually has much more to do with our nation's ability to act independently than with trade matters. Congress should restore lost independence by voting to withdraw America from the WTO.

Sincerely,  
*Floyd T. Martin*

Continued On Next Page

To The Editor:

As the Crawford High School band "floated" by the inaugural reviewing stand with George & Laura smiling at them....I just burst out in tears.

I knew they were from a very small Texas town and what it meant.....for them to be there playing....."Texas Our Texas".....Nostalgia simply flooded over me. Maybe Locals would understand, as natives themselves. Knowing Laura was a native, and George a "naturalized" Texan....I felt a strange bond they would understand.

When we were transferred out to California....I felt we had "fallen off the world".....at least there was no Ice & snow to contend with, yet still a long way from my "roots," and then came the Ohio State Marching Band playing "Beautiful Ohio".....I felt a sympathy for "army brats" who had lived all over and may feel no place is home.

PREVAIL!

*Marcelle Moore Kipp*

Dear Texas Iconoclast:

Let me take this opportunity to commend your paper and your endeavours to speak the truth in spite of the fact that only 4 Texas Counties were carried in the last General Election by Senator John Kerry. Texas unfortunately, is Bush Country. That's what God wants say the "R's".

I live in about the "Reddest" section in this part of Texas save Turtle Creek and perhaps North Dallas. Where the Fat Cat Elite meet to eat as they used to say on Duffy's Tavern.

My track record is that of a 67 + year Middle Class Working RR Engineer. I've been a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers Union nearly half of my life. I was employed by the most "Profit Intensive" (Greedy in other words) Corporation in these here United States of America, the Union Pacific RR. As you've no doubt surmised I am a lifelong Yellow Dog Democrat.

My great grandfather who fought in the Battle of Stones River

(Murfeesboro, Tn) in the Civil War on down to me have always been Democrats. I have 5 children and 11 grandchildren and I'm having the billy beegobers scared out of me about their prospects under this Repugnican crowd in Washington City.

These folks have made it Job # 1 to enrich the pockets of the richest folk in the country. By their passing of Tax Cuts for individuals at the expense of the middle class. Their all out attack on Social Security. They hated the 70 year old program in 1934 and they despise it even more in 2004.

These people are waging a war against a country that had nothing to do with 9/11. These folks trumped up charges that Iraq and Hussein had WofMD. They said Iraq was trying to secure "Yellow Cake" from Niger in West Africa. Two of their "highly placed White House officials" outed the name of Valerie Plame, a CIA agent to Bob Novak.

And can they please just refrain from saying that Bush and Company have a "Mandate"?

Some 67 million Americans (or 49%) voted AGAINST G W Bush. A 2% difference a Mandate does not make. Puleeze!

Keep up the good work. We middle class working stiffs who do not believe Dubya is the Second Coming, is 10 foot tall and bullet proof, are pulling for, and supporting you.

I love your editorials.

Regards,

A.G.

To The Editor:

I am a doctor in Australia who has just read about the problems your paper has faced since your editorial endorsement of Kerry. Just writing a message of support for others who stand up for good principles. Don't let the backlash change how you feel about the world.

*J.H., Melbourne, Australia*

Continued On Next Page

## Texas Democratic Veterans

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MAILBAG  
**ICONOCLAST**  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued From Previous Page

Dear Editors:  
Condolezza Rice's promotion to Secretary of State puts me in mind of the Peter Principal. The Peter Principal basically states that people tend to be promoted to their highest level of incompetence. In government bureaucracies it is dif-

ficult to demote people to a lower rank which results in the highest levels of government being filled with incompetent people. Witness the current Republican administration.

It explains why Condolezza Rice, a former White House staffer, the woman who failed to read Richard Clark's memo clearly entitled "Bin Laden Plans to Attack the US" is now about to become Secretary of State. She couldn't do her staff job, so she gets promoted. Donald Rumsfeld, the Secretary of War, is badly losing the Iraq war. Due to his poor planning, our country is becoming bankrupt and the insurgency is growing stronger and more deadly per day. Yet George Bush fails to fire him.

George Bush awards medals to people who have clearly failed at their jobs - the Medal of Freedom was given to Paul Brenner, Tommy Franks and George Tenet. Consequently, the Medal of Freedom has become a pathetic joke. George Bush puts America into a unnecessary and unwinnable war with Iraq and many people "afraid to change horses mid-stream" re-elect him. Meanwhile, Bin Laden, the real perpetrator of 9/11, looking tan, rested and free, goes unpunished for his horrendous crimes. When the Washington Post asked why Bin Laden hadn't been captured yet, George Bush said "Because he's hiding." The Peter Principal - alive and well.

C.C.M., Atlantic Highlands, NJ  
P.S. I would also like to thank you for having the courage to print your endorsement of John Kerry during the election. You guys (I mean, ya'll) really inspire me to stand up and fight for what's right.

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Michael Keaton plays an architect whose peaceful existence is shattered by the unexplained disappearance and death of his wife. He is eventually contacted by a man who claims to be receiving messages from her via Electronic Voice Phenomenon (EVP), a process whereby the dead communicate with the living through household recording devices. Convinced the messages are valid, Keaton tries to contact her on his own. His explorations into EVP open a door to another world, allowing something uninvited into his life.

Rated PG-13 Runtime: 1 hour 40 min.

<b>Thurs.</b> <b>Jan. 27</b> 7 p.m. Adults Only	<b>Friday</b> <b>Jan. 28</b> 7 p.m.	<b>Sat.</b> <b>Jan. 29</b> 7 p.m.	<b>Sun.</b> <b>Jan. 30</b> 7 p.m.
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