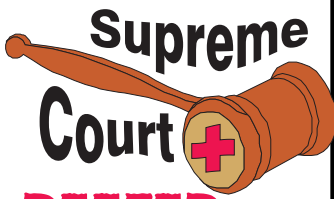


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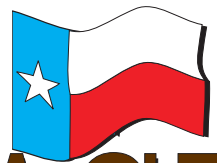
COVER PHOTO

TREE TRUNKS hold up the ceiling of this uranium mine in Cove, Arizona. The Diné mined more than 13 million tons of uranium ore from their land for the U.S. between 1945-1988, according to Jaime Chavez, organizer for the Water Information Network.

— Photo By Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (NAMLRP).



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Energy Wars: Return of the Navajo

Navajo Nation Bans Mining, Processing Of Uranium On Navajo Land

'S hiprock is sort of like in a bowl, and the pollution just hangs there. The asthma and upper respiratory problems are sky high. They're taking the healthcare monies and giving it to the corporations to poison us to death.' — Lori Goodman

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Memogate Hearings Scheduled For Tomorrow

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of House Judiciary Committee, and other Democratic members will hold on Thursday, June 16, a Democratic hearing to hear testimony concerning the Downing Street Minutes and the efforts to cook the books on pre-war intelligence.

On May 1, a SUNDAY LONDON TIMES article disclosed the details of a classified memo, also known as the Downing Street Minutes, recounting the minutes of a July 2002 meeting of Prime Minister Tony Blair that describes an American President already committed to going to war in the summer of 2002, despite contrary assertions to the public and the Congress. The minutes also describe apparent efforts by the Administration to manipulate intelligence data to justify the war.

The June 16 hearing will attempt to answer the serious constitutional questions raised by these revelations and will further investigate the Administration's actions in the lead up to war with new documents that further corroborate the Downing Street memo.

Those expected to testify include Joe Wilson, Former Ambassador and WMD Expert; Ray McGovern, 27-year CIA analyst who prepared regular Presidential briefings during the Reagan administration; Cindy Sheehan, mother of a fallen American soldier; and John Bonifaz, renowned constitutional lawyer and co-founder of AfterDowningStreet.org.

Directly following the hearing, Rep. Conyers, members of Congress, and concerned citizens plan to hand deliver to the White House the petition and signatures of over a half million Americans that have joined Rep. Conyers in demanding that President Bush answer questions about his secret plan for the Iraq war.

AfterDowningStreet.org is a rapidly growing coalition of veterans' groups, peace groups, and political activist groups, which launched on May 26, a campaign to urge the U.S. Congress to begin a formal investigation into whether President Bush has committed impeachable offenses in connection with the Iraq war.

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Energy Wars: Return of the Navajo

**Navajo Nation
Bans Mining,
Processing
Of Uranium
On Navajo
Land**

By NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — Indians still exist, but more importantly, they're flexing their muscles.

The U.S. energy industry suffered a blow in late April when Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr. signed the Diné Natural Resources Protection Act which bans the mining and processing of uranium on Navajo land as well as re-enforces the sovereignty of the Navajo people.

The DNRPA is designed to protect the water resources of the Navajo Nation, as well as the health of its citizens, 15,000 of whom are residents in the Church Rock-Crownpoint region of New Mexico.

"I don't want to subject any more of my people to exposure to uranium and the cancers that it causes," Shirley said during the signing ceremony before about 50 people who had gathered in the Crownpoint Chapter House.

"As long as there are no answers to cancer, we shouldn't have uranium mining on the Navajo Nation," he added. "I believe the powers that be committed genocide on Navajo land by allowing uranium."

President Shirley was referring to over half a century of unexplained cancers and other health effects due to his people mining the radioactive ore on their land for the energy industry, as well as for U.S. government's nuclear weapons arsenal.

Despite the few Navajo who stood to gain income from the mining of their land allotments where ore is located, the reservation has overwhelmingly supported the Act. The Navajo Tribal Council, in fact, voted 63-19 on April 19 to approve the prohibition, sponsored by George Arthur (Burnham/San Juan/Nenahnezad), chairman of the Resources Committee.

"Members of these communities have already given enough lives to the uranium industry. New mining, whether it be conventional or ISL, would likely devastate a new generation of Navajo citizens," said New Mexico Environmental Law Center Staff Attorney Eric Jantz in a written statement.

"Dozens of communities have passed resolutions declaring their opposition to new uranium mining, and thousands of Navajo have signed petitions against new mines," he continued. "We and our clients applaud the Navajo Tribal Council for exercising its inherent sovereignty to protect its valuable resources and the health of its citizens."

Officials for Hydro Resources Inc. cried unfair for not receiving as much face-time as the Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining to explain the



TO BE RECLAIMED ON NAVAJO LAND are over 1,000 uranium mines, not unlike this open pit uranium mine within Cameron, Arizona. The Navajo Nation recently banned the mining and processing of uranium on Navajo land.

— Photo By Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (NAMLRP).

mining process with the Council. However, HRI has tried to gain federal permits for the last decade to begin in-situ leach uranium mining southwest and east of Crownpoint and uranium processing north of the defunct United Nuclear Corporation's uranium mill.

Activists said that saving the quality of their drinking water and air is more important than the price of uranium, which has more than doubled over the past two years, from less than \$10 per pound to over \$23 per pound. HCI is a subsidiary of Dallas-based Uranium Resources Inc.

The Law Center added that this victory is significant because earlier this year the Nuclear Regulatory Commission okayed HRI's license for the first of its four proposed mine sites around Church Rock and Crownpoint.

That being said, HCI might still challenge in federal court the right to mine on allotments on the grounds of the defi-

niton and scope of what constitutes Navajo land.

Human Experimentation

The Navajo ban of uranium mining has both important social and historical significance as well, because for over 80 years, Navajo miners and their communities have suffered the effects of radiation poisoning under close watch of the U.S. government.

Since 1920, the tribe prior to exposure to uranium radiation was also exposed to radium from mining the ore on their reservation. Four inactive uranium mill sites and over 1,200 abandoned uranium mines are on the reservation. Most of these mines are unreclaimed.

The largest quantities of uranium were mined in the Four Corners area where New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and Utah converge. The Navajo reservation itself is equal to the size of West Virginia and home to 275,000 of the 350,000 people scattered around the

world.

According to Diné (the name of the Navajo people use for themselves) linguists, uranium is known as "leetso" — meaning yellow brown or yellow dirt. From this dirt, the first atomic bombs were developed at the secret Manhattan project in Los Alamos, N.M., and tested at the Trinity Site at Alamogordo, N.M. The Diné mined more than 13 million tons of uranium ore from their land to the U.S. between 1945-1988, according to Jaime Chavez, organizer for the Water Information Network.

"During the 1940s-80s, there were a lot of open pit uranium mines and a huge flux of cancers happening. The widows were coming together saying, 'What's going on?' They made the connection that all the husbands had worked in the uranium mine, and sure enough, they were," said Lori Goodman, treasurer of the nonprofit, activist group Diné Citi

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zens Against Ruining Our Environment (CARE).

As more and more miners came forward with their stories, Goodman said, the U.S. Congress passed the Radiation Compensation Act in 1990. Under this Act, the U.S. government was supposed to compensate individuals with diseases from exposure to radiation connected with the federal government's nuclear weapons testing program. The Act was also designed to compensate the medical costs attributed to the lung cancers of Navajo uranium miners exposed to radiation on the job in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, or Wyoming from 1947 to 1971. <www.eh.doe.gov/ohre/>

"We all thought it was taken care of, but we were also seeing that our elders who were never uranium miners were also dying of the same cancers as the uranium miners. They lived off the land. We were asking questions of the public health officials. We were going into communities, and what came out was that the uranium miners were supposed to get compensated, and they weren't. At that point, politics took over," said Goodman.

The Act, it was found, discriminated against the very people it was trying to help. For instance, Goodman said, "laws said that you have to have a marriage certificate in order to be eligible to receive this compensation, and our people back then had traditional marriages. They didn't have marriage licenses. They were being eliminated right there, and there were questions of cultural significance to smoking. The government officials would ask them, 'Do you smoke?' And without the proper interpretation, it was taken as they were smoking cigarettes when in fact the miners were talking about ceremonial smoke that you don't inhale. It's done once or three times a month. So they were automatically eliminated, put off the record."

As a result of community activism, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) introduced an amendment of 1990 RECA, S.1515, in 2000, that added the mill workers who processed the ore to the qualification list; expanded the diseases, which were mostly cancer and respiratory illnesses; and expanded the geographic coverage for "downwinder claims." The bill also lowered the radiation exposure thresholds for eligibility for more individuals on the reservation.

Unfortunately, the RECA 2000 bill President Clinton signed was an unfunded mandate. Uranium miners were given IOUs, the RECA Trust Fund was empty, and RECA regulations were not written on time. No one so far has been compensated under 2000 RECA, even after a lawsuit was filed against U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft which charged that the Department of Justice failed its obligation to implement RECA regulations within 180 days of the amendment's enactment.

Shockwaves ran through the Navajo reservation again when in February 1995, the Department of Energy's Office of Human Radiation Experiments published *Human Radiation Experiments: The Department of Energy Roadmap to the Story and Records*. The *Roadmap* exposed the U.S. government's role in conducting and sponsoring Cold War human radiation



GATEWAY TO DOOM — Uranium is known as "leetso" — meaning yellow brown or yellow dirt. From this dirt, the first atomic bombs were developed at the secret Manhattan project in Los Alamos, N. M., and tested at the Trinity Site at Alamogordo, N.M. This dirt is also used in sand painting by tribal elders and medicine people. Pictured is an open portal of a uranium mine within Cove, Arizona.

— Photo By Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (NAMLRP).

experiments, some of which included Navajo uranium miners.

"They would find out how long it would take these miners to get cancer and then from that point in time find out long they would die," said Goodman, referring to the U.S. government. "At the same time the government was telling us that they didn't know that radiation was harmful, so they were blameless was what they were trying to say."

2005 Energy Bill

"As soon as President Bush came into power, he wanted to start uranium mines again, and in fact with his first energy bill, he had \$30 million for energy companies to start uranium mining again. It's in this one again," said Goodman referring to latest energy bill drafted by House Energy Committee Chairman Joe Barton (R-Texas).

Goodman referred to the House energy bill as the "dark side" version, "with every tax credit for industry, every restriction on environmental protection, every means possible to make it possible to extract energy resources — no matter what the people think or what the impacts might be."

Goodman noted that the Senate energy bill, which hit the floor this Monday, is "less destructive than the House version;" however, both the Senate and House bills, she said, contain similar so-called "Indian energy" sections. "They try to encourage energy production on Indian lands by getting the tribal governments to develop their own sets of rules. Then the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) can just rubber stamp approval of individual projects that are developed under those rules. It will make it harder for communities, groups or individuals to challenge decisions under federal environmental and cultural protection laws."

As one lawyer used by Diné CARE noted in an email to THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST, "In addition, Title V of H.R. 6 could remove the application of federal laws, such as NEPA and the Na-

tional Historic Preservation Act, from energy development decisions on tribal lands.

"The bill affects land both on and off reservation. It provides that once the Secretary of the Interior approves a tribal energy resource agreement providing a process for making energy development decisions, individual energy projects would proceed without federal approval," he continues. "Since no federal action would occur, the existing guarantees of environmental review and public participation under NEPA would be lost. Concerned tribal community members and communities adjacent to the project would lose the mechanism that they have now to make their voices heard."

In other words, the Bush Administration is moving lock-step with the philosophies of globalization and the free market by removing any and all governmental regulations and safeguards that protect the community interests, agreed Goodman. When asked if she thought it would be fair to compare the plight of the Navajo with its uranium mines to the Venezuelans with their oil reserves with regard to U.S. foreign policy, Goodman said, "That is very accurate. We all remember how U.S. removed (President Hugo) Chavez. But the community united brought Chavez back."

Goodman added that a few tax credits for building renewable energy production are included in the House bill, but both versions fail "to emphasize energy conservation as a way to increase our 'security' or 'energy independence.' Everything is focused on producing more energy."

Joan Claybrook, Public Citizen President, responding to the House Energy and Commerce Committee's draft energy legislation in a statement, said, "(This bill) offers more of the same failed proposals that have doomed energy legislation in the past two Congresses. It showers nuclear and oil companies with subsidies, gives pollut-

ers a break from protecting the environment and promotes further electricity deregulation while doing nothing to protect consumers from high energy prices."

Claybrook noted that oil prices continue to soar despite Congress passing a billion-dollar subsidy in October 2004 to encourage more domestic energy production and its March 16 budget vote to open Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling. "You would think that such a radical change in federal oil production policy (the successful Senate vote represented the first time in 24 years that the Senate has approved the measure) would send a clear signal to oil traders in New York," she said. "But the prices of oil and gasoline have only skyrocketed since the vote, raising doubts about the claim by the Bush administration and Congress that giving energy producers what they want will somehow lower prices for consumers."

Coal Plants

There will be a potluck and rally on this Saturday, June 18, at Shiprock Park in Shiprock to help stop the proposed Desert Rock Power Plant in the Four Corners area.

According to Diné CARE in a letter to the editor of THE ALBUQUERQUE TRIBUNE, three Navajo chapters (Burnham, Sanostee and Two Grey Hills) have passed community resolutions directly opposing the plant. Other chapters (Newcomb and Sheep Springs) are making motions to officially oppose it as well, the letter said, jointly written by Anna Marie Frazier, Diné CARE Coordinator, and Sarah Jane White, Dooda (No) Desert Rock Committee President (Burnham/Sanostee Chapters).

"All but one of the local communities oppose the power plant. Our people living in this area suffer rates of asthma, reproductive disorders, cancer and other illnesses that are far in excess of national averages," said the letter. "Do you really imagine the communities are going to vote for more pollution and its associated destruction?"

Proposed by Sithe Global, LCC, of Houston, Desert Rock is a coal-fired plant that would emit 3,400 tons of mercury and ozone into the air. The plant is planned to use a hybrid dry cooled coal-fired electric power-generating technology, south of Farmington in northwestern New Mexico. The project development agreement was entered into with Diné Power Authority (DPA), an enterprise of the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo, however, are expected to not see one watt of energy from this plant due to the agreement, although 80 percent of the tribal revenue comes from coal royalties and tax. About one billion ton of coal reserves are within the tribal lands. Two coal fired power plants (Four Corners and Page) and three mines (Peabody, BHP, and PNM). Total permitted for mining is 95,724 acres and total disturbed is 16,767 acres.

Goodman said that probably 30 percent of Navajo don't even have electricity. Their primary source is wood and also some use coal. The Navajo people are not so reliant on these plants for jobs either, she said.

"I wouldn't say very much. I mean, I have nine brothers and sisters. None of them work for any energy company on

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Navajo land. There aren't that many jobs. Peabody Coal Company has 50 employees," she said. "When you factor in how much is the community benefiting. Are we getting any return? When you factor those in, those 50 people that work there, that's nothing because all the energy goes off the reservation.

There are two other power plants already in the area from which the Navajo people have received negative health consequences. Goodman said that 40 years ago when the Four Corners Power Plant, which is one of the biggest polluters, Peabody failed to live up to its promises to make life easier for the people.

"They were saying that if you move, we'll build you a new house. 'We'll make sure you have electricity and water in your homes,' Goodman said. "Well, 40 years later, they are still living the same way they did, and so the community is saying, 'Hey, we're not going to be fooled the second time around.'"

Goodman added that the landscape is a bit ironic: the Navajo homes, many of which use solar power panels, are located right next to the transmission lines leading from the plant. "It's really quite the picture — families with no electricity and no running water, and they have just one panel of solar that they use and in the background are these huge shovels and drag lines coming toward their homes. That's the picture," she said.

A draft of the environmental statement has yet to be released, probably at the end of the summer or the fall, said Goodman. "They are planning that it will all go through, and they'll start to build in 2006, and the plant will be in operation in 2008."

In The Name Of Sovereignty

When asked of the other challenges facing the Navajo people, Goodman said, "It's funny you should ask. It's like an energy war happening here now. With Bush and with Chaney's secret meeting with the energy cartel, they've sliced up Indian lands here. It's very interesting in who all is investing in these projects."

The U.S. government under the Bush administration, as well as the U.S. energy industry, has changed its tactics and language to compel the Navajo and other Native Americans to secure natural resources from their native lands. "Now they are talking about giving in the name of sovereignty: 'We want the Indian people to decide for themselves. We want them to make their own environmental laws,' said Goodman. "It is like they only recognize our sovereignty when they put toxic waste on our lands,



ON THE ROAD TO RECLAMATION is one of three open portals of uranium mines, within Cove, Arizona. Thousands of Navajo miners, however, have perished because of radiation poisoning from working unprotected in the mines. Thousands more who lived in dwellings made from the uranium ore were also affected with bad health.

— Photo By Navajo Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Program (NAMLRP).

and then when we go out to fish and hunt for ourselves then our sovereignty is not recognized. In the name of sovereignty they put in the Four Corners Power Plant."

"Once you turn it over to the Indian people, then the federal government can't come in," she added. "It allows the energy companies to come in and just wreck the place, and we can't make them clean up. They won't clean up. It's not in the name of self-determination. It really is termination. They don't want to be responsible and at the same time, the time is right for the companies to come in and rape the land with no legal recourse. They are not responsible."

Goodman said that the healthcare costs for treating the symptoms of air and water pollution are "killing us." In Shiprock, N.M., there are two power plants nearby. "Shiprock is sort of like in a bowl, and the pollution just hangs there. The asthma and upper respiratory problems are sky high," she said. "They're taking the healthcare monies and giving it to the corporations to poison us to death," she said.

This past March, the Republicans defeated \$1 billion for Indian health, housing and education, Goodman said. The Navajo Nation's Indian Health Service

is currently 55 percent funded and the vacancy rate of doctors and nurses is 20 percent, she added.

"We live in scary times, just because for an administration that really harps on Christian values that's certainly not reserved for all people, they have no knowledge of history — nuclear testing again — and that is scary," she said.

Goodman said she doesn't know if the tribal government can stand up to the multinational corporations or the U.S. government because "they have to be thinking about not pissing them off." However, she still has hope.

"It's going to take citizen activism to fight off the energy companies, and people have done that before and they are ready to do it again. It has to be done because what we learned from doing the RECA, it's only shame in the eyes of the world is what makes them back off, so there's a need to be as public as possible for what's taken place," she said.

"We had some major projects that we've accomplished that gives me hope. What it really is is that they don't really know what we're going to do. They're so set in what people with money do to protect themselves that they don't know what people without money do."

Goodman said that Diné CARE is con-

tinuing to build coalitions working on similar issues with Anglo activists like the San Juan Citizens Alliance. "We understand that race is always used to divide us," she said.

"We've learned something from working in the uranium mines. Right now we have asthma. We're not willing to project all that garbage on our children. No way. It's the stand people are making right now," she added.

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Take Action To Keep Municipal Broadband Services In U.S.

CRAWFORD — U.S. Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Texas), a former telephone company executive, has introduced a bill (HR 2726) that would let cable and telecom companies shut down municipal and community efforts to offer broadband services.

The act, called the "Preserving Innovation in Telecom Act of 2005," take away the right of cities and towns across the country to provide citizens with universal, low-cost Internet access.

"Giant cable and telephone companies don't want any competition — which might actually force them to offer lower prices, higher speeds and service to rural and urban areas," said a statement released by Free Press.

Companies like SBC, Verizon and Comcast have been introducing laws state by state that would prohibit municipal broadband, undercut local control and prevent competition. "But we've been fighting back — and winning," said Josh Silver, executive director of Free Press.

An alliance of public interest groups, local officials, high-tech innovators and organized citizens have defeated anti-municipal broadband measures in nine of the 13 states where they've been introduced this year.

What the industry couldn't pass in the states, they're trying to push through in Washington. Sessions' bill — the "Preserving Innovation in Telecom Act" — would prevent state and local governments from providing "any telecommunications service, information service or cable service" anywhere a corporation offers a similar service.

Congressman Sessions worked for telephone giant SBC for 16 years, and his wife currently serves as a director of Cingular Wireless, an SBC subsidiary. SBC and its employees have been Sessions' second-biggest career patron, pouring more than \$75,000 into his campaign coffers.

"We can stop this legislation and send a clear message to Congress that local communities — not the giant telephone and cable companies — should determine their own communications needs. But you must act now," said Silver.

To take action by sending a letter to Rep. Sessions, visit the Free Press website.

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Texas Republicans Turn Horse Thief, Too

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Horses may be noble, but hogs are more filling."

My granddaddy always told me that "Republican" is synonymous with "horse thief."

I always thought that was some kind of allegory.

Until now.

The U.S. House voted to close horse-killing plants in the U.S.

American consumers do not eat horses.

Well, not that we know of.

Back during the Reagan Disaster we

shut down so many packing house inspections that we could be eating 'possum, as far as anybody knows.

But Europeans do eat Trigger.

Evidently, a lot of Triggers.

And Champs, and Diablos, and even ol' Ringeyes.

(You gotta be educated on your singing cowboys, to keep up with the humor here.)

The U.S. killed more than 600,000 horses last year and swapped them for

Euros.

Now the House has voted to stop inspecting horsemeat.

All but six Texas Republicans voted against it.

So what does that have to do with horse thievery?

Everything.

I once tracked down the products of horse killing plants, and found that about a third of the animals killed were stolen.

Horses are easy to steal, as a rule, because horses are beasts of burden. As such, they are stupid.

Oh, really?

You once had a horse who could count and do tricks?

I saw a guy at the Dallas Fair who had a chicken that could spell.

Chickens still do not edit newspapers.

Maybe we should try it, but I doubt anyone will.

If horses were smart, you couldn't ride them.

How much sense does it take to roll over? That little trick would plumb ruin your dressage.

And the rodeo would be over pretty quickly.

Horses are so stupid they trust human beings.

Cockroaches have got better sense.

It's fairly easy to walk up to a horse with a bucket of feed and lead him anywhere, including to a slaughterhouse.

Before the law can track you down,

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



the evidence has been flushed down a toilet in Belgium.

Cattle, and even hogs, are somewhat reluctant to amble off in the middle of the night with some redneck who is obviously too stupid to grow dope or cook speed.

Yet horses somehow believe they can find kindred souls in Republicans and such reprobates.

So it was surprising that so many Republicans voted against selling horses to starving Frenchmen.

Until you consider the dope trade.

It's supply and demand with the addition of a risk factor and creation of artificial inflation.

To hell with supply side economics.

Make horsemeat illegal, and it'll be like Czech cocaine!

We'll form horsemeat cartels, establish the HEA, fund "Just say Whoa!" campaigns, build new prisons to house all the H dealers.

Then privatize the whole thing and create a federal gold mine where once there was only glue and soap.

I tell you, boys, there's money in horse hockey!



Little Joe y La Familia To Headline Brazos Nights This Friday, June 17

WACO — The City of Waco's annual Brazos Nights concert series continues this Friday, June 17, with performances from Little Joe y La Familia and Pride and Joy.

The performances will start at 7:30 p.m. All Brazos Nights concerts are free and take place at Indian Spring Park in

downtown Waco. Concessions will be available.

Little Joe is on a tour through Texas this June: KC Hall, Mercedes, June 18; Santa Cruz Catholic Church, Buda, June 25; Club Suavecito, Pecos, June 30.

Upcoming Brazos Nights concerts include Django Walker and Deryl Dodd, June 24, and Bugs Henderson, Sandusky Classic Rock, Waco Community Band, July 4.

The 17th annual Brazos Nights is organized by the City of Waco Parks and Recreation Department and supported by community businesses. Indian Spring Park, located at 101 University Parks Dr., features a riverfront amphitheater, a riverwalk, shade trees and scenic views of the Suspension Bridge.

For event information, visit the website or contact the City of Waco Parks and Recreation Department.

Crawford Student Named To WBU Dean's List

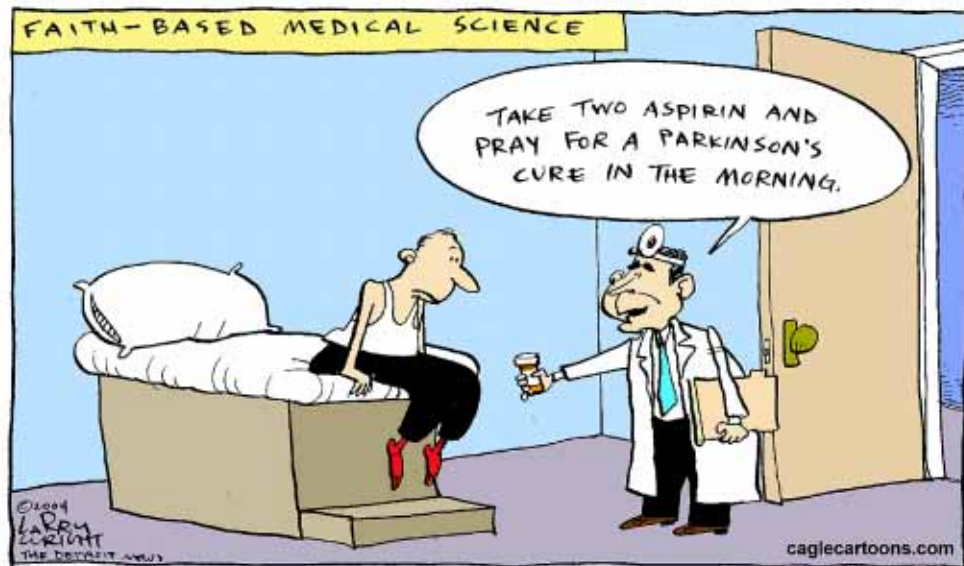
PLAINVIEW — A student from Crawford received recognition for academic work in the classroom during the spring 2005 semester at Wayland Baptist University.

Jason Broussard was named to the Dean's List. Students must maintain a 4.0 grade point average for the semester to make the President's List and a GPA of 3.5 or better to be named to the Dean's List.

Jason is the son of Steve and Elizabeth Broussard of Waco.

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Editorial

Opinion - Columns - Letters

OP/ED

— Editorial —

Supreme Court Plays HMO With Medical Marijuana

Forget the use of an effective drug to relieve suffering.

Forget that it was prescribed by a medical doctor.
Forget the agony of a patient.

Forget science.

Forget common sense.

Politics, commerce, and an evolutionary venture back into the trees are more important, at least to President Bush and his cronies in Washington.

The Supreme Court, at Bush's bidding, last week ruled that Federal authorities may prosecute sick people who smoke

marijuana on doctors' orders to alleviate pain. The Court concluded that 10 states' medical marijuana laws do not protect users from a Federal ban on the drug, even though the drug's distribution does not involve interstate commerce that crosses state borders.

At issue was an appeal by the Bush Administration on whether California's medical marijuana law, passed by voters in 1996, that allows people to grow, smoke, or obtain marijuana for medical needs with a doctor's recommendation, would hold water on a Federal level.

Several states have laws similar to California's, including Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Maine, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington state, where patients with serious illnesses can be prescribed marijuana for ease of pain.

The Court ruled that, although some states allow it, the Federal government deems it a Federal crime to grow small amounts of marijuana in one's own home for one's own medical use. The reasoning behind the ruling was that it interferes with the Controlled Substances Act that prevents the cultivation and possession of marijuana, even for medicinal use.

The case was established after the Drug Enforcement Agency in 2001 began raids against patients using the drug in California. Among those arrested was Angel Raich, who has brain cancer, and Diane Monson, who has chronic back pain. They were authorized to use limited amounts of the drug to relieve suffering. The case focused on them.

Although a Federal appeals court decided that the use of

medical marijuana was non-commercial, lawyers for the U.S. Justice Department disagreed, saying that homegrown marijuana represented interstate commerce, as the homegrown variety would affect "overall production," since much is imported across American borders.

"The trafficking of drugs finances the work of terror, sustaining terrorists," said President Bush in 2001.

Of course, pharmaceutical corporations do not make a penny off drugs raised in one's patio garden, nor do they profit on many natural health foods. Is there a hidden agenda here?

The anti-drug laws are big business. We spend billions on

prison construction, law enforcement, anti-drug propaganda, interdiction, judges, lawyers and courts. The drug trade itself makes billions for our allies. The new Afghan government, for example, would collapse without the heroin trade. A realistic approach to drug use and abuse in this country would cost the rank-and-file of the Mexican government its largest source of revenue: bribery.

If the concern that some of the marijuana might end up in the hands of those who are not medical patients is an issue with the Supreme Court, then why not just go ahead and outlaw all drugs, for that might happen with any of them.

And for that matter, why not go ahead and outlaw food, for you never know when someone might eat one hamburger too many and get fat.

While you are at it, let's outlaw water. You never know for sure what's in it.

The bottom line is that Bush is spending his "electoral collateral" to buy America away from the people and give it to the international corporate machines. With his anti-Christian, anti-ethical philosophies, public trusts are vanishing, as are rights. And, overall, many citizens simply do "not see" what's happening to them...yet.

THE ICONOCLAST suggests that Congress take up the issue of medical marijuana so that victims of disease are not forced to suffer unnecessarily for the sake of Bush's political games and fascist piracy.

— Written By W. Leon Smith and Don M. Fisher



Bush Approval Rating Drops To New Low

WASHINGTON — People in America are not pleased with their leadership at the White House or in Congress, according to a recent poll conducted by the Associated Press by Ipsos.

According to the poll, Bush's approval rating is at 43 percent, with Congress at 31 percent, "the lowest levels yet for the survey that started in December 2003."

The AP poll also showed that only about a third of adults (35 percent) thought the country was heading in the right direction, with 41 percent saying they supported Bush's handling of the war in Iraq, the lowest ranking yet.

Bush's handling of domestic issues also ranked low, in the high 30s and low 40s, according to the poll which was taken June 6-8.

Public approval of President Bush's handling of the conflict in Iraq has dropped to its lowest point with growing fears that the United States is bogged down and rising criticism of Bush's handling of the prison abuse scandal, according to the latest Washington Post-ABC News Poll.

Army Recruitment Goals Down For 4th Straight Month

WASHINGTON — Army boot camps are just 46 percent full, according to the Pentagon, as the number of new recruits continues to be sluggish. Recruitment goals have not been met for four consecutive months, but the Army hopes the military manpower crisis will improve this summer.

To improve the odds at reaching the sought-after 10,000 recruits a month this summer, the Army has added 500 active-duty recruiters and is pondering asking Congress to increase the enlistment bonus from \$20,000 to \$40,000, while also raising the age limit for active-duty service from 35 to 40.

So far this fiscal year, the shortfall of recruits is 8,321. The goal for the year is 80,000 enlistees, with 40,964 having signed on in eight months.

U.S. PATRIOT Act Hearing Gets Dirty As GOP Chairman Walks Out

WASHINGTON — President Bush's push to have certain segments of the U.S. PATRIOT Act renewed was met with heated debate Friday, resulting in House Judiciary Committee Chairman Rep. James Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.)

abruptly ending the meeting and walking out.

The co-author of the Act, which has segments poised to expire in September, departed during a protest by Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), who raised his

voice after his microphone went off.

"We are not besmirching the honor of the United States. We are trying to uphold it," commented Nadler, who noted that Sensenbrenner was rude, "cutting everybody off in mid-sentence

with an attitude of total hostility."

Immediately after Sensenbrenner's departure, James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, said, "I'm troubled about what kind of lesson this gives" to the rest of the world.

What Are The Supremes Smokin'?

I was never a big fan of The Supremes. It had nothing to do with color or race. The only "soul" about Diana Ross and her unhappy backup singers was their record label. I much preferred Smoky Robinson and The Miracles. And Aretha.

One thing I had vowed to avoid in this family newspaper was my opinion on that dreaded weed, the Devil's number one tool — Marijuana.

But the recent decision of the Supremes, by a six-to-three majority, to deny the chronically ill relief from pain and suffering really lit me up.

Such a compassionate Corpocracy we have invested with deciding exactly what's good for each and every American citizen — because we're too stupid to figure it out for ourselves, individually and collectively. ("Corpocracy" is a word I wish that I had come up with, but actually it came from a WASHINGTON POST article written by Steven Pearlstein, June 3, 2005.)

At first, I was really fired up. How could these old fogies come up with such a cold-hearted decision based upon convoluted logic? In striking down laws voted in by residents of 11 states, Justice John Paul Stevens expressed his personal concern that he was troubled individuals would be without relief they could not get elsewhere.

However, he parroted the crystal ball mysticism of the Bush Regime, which could see into the future that "unscrupulous doctors" would overextend prescriptions to supply the general populace with reefer. Huh?

When study after study has proven that Cannabis is the least likely of all drugs humans can become addicted to, yet millions of Americans are overmedicated and dependent upon "clinically safe" drugs, approved by the FDA and manufactured by the big drug cartels, who's zoomin' who about "unscrupulous doctors?" Next time you're in a doctor's office, count all the pamphlets from drug companies!

And the FDA's track record hasn't been all that reliable lately either, now has it.

Why did Hemp/Cannabis/Marijuana become demonized in the first place?

Harry J. Anslinger.
Who?

Hey, don't feel bad. I just heard about the schmo for the first time a few weeks ago myself, and that was purely incidental.

Anslinger has the dubious honor of being nicknamed, "The Father of the Drug War."

It should also be known that he was a greedy, lying, racist creep.

In 1930, Treasury Secretary Andrew W. Mellon (yes, of the Mellon Bank and founder of Gulf Oil Corporation) appointed Anslinger head of the new Federal Bureau of Narcotics. Harry got the job because he was engaged to Mellon's niece.

Mellon Bank just happened to be a financial backer of a little chemical company owned by the DuPont family.

Coincidentally, Anslinger was known to one William Randolph Hearst, the publishing giant who swayed American opinion with whatever his "news" papers decided to print — truth be damned.

Hemp had been a major crop in the original 13 Colonies. Growers included George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. They were but two of many early Americans who realized the many uses of this rich fibrous plant. A 1794 quote from Washington goes, "Make the most you can of the Indian Hemp Seed and sow it everywhere."

If around today, these two original Patriots and countless other Founding Fathers would be Bubbas' sweethearts while rotting in prisons for felony crimes of growing pot.

In the late 1960s a counterculture radio



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

humor show called "The Firesign Theatre" arose in Southern California. This theatre-of-the-mind brainchild of Philip Austin; Peter Bergman; David Ossman; and, Philip Proctor, expanded to records, video and live performances. We couldn't get enough of them, listening in barracks and college dorms.

One of their more popular albums is "Everything You Know Is Wrong," which debunks pretty much everything we've ever been taught growing up in America. One bit is a parody of those awful black-and-white 16mm educational films we were shown in the 1950s. You know, the ones with little or no truth as depicted by hammy re-enactment actors.

Anyway, this "film" depicts our Forefathers gathering at Ye Olde Hashfire Inn where they "got smoked like Boston scrod." They had figured out some of the ulterior benefits of hemp, it was a hot summer, and they weren't gonna take any more garbage from the King. So they decided to start a revolution.

Much as their Hippie beneficiaries tried 200 years later.

By the way, the four Firesign guys are still around today, often on PBS, the network the Republicans would like to censor completely off the air. And my son loves their stuff.

It was long known that many items, such as rope, textiles, linens, damask tablecloths, canvas (actually derived from the word cannabis) — literally thousands of everyday items — could be made from hemp fiber. One estimate is 25,000 common products! The benefits from hemp fibers and stalks included superior paper and wood products, as well as a variety of oils for myriad uses from cooking (with high protein yield) to mechanical applications.

I'm not even remotely qualified to attempt to breach the plethora of medicinal uses for cannabis.

From what I've read, one acre of hemp will produce as much fiber as two to three acres of cotton, and it's stronger and softer. Hemp is frost tolerant, thus it will grow in any state, not just the warmer South.

It would take two to four acres of trees for paper to grow an equivalent amount of hemp on one acre; trees take years to grow, hemp takes months.

The fact is, hemp was a completely legal cash crop in the United States until the Anslinger/Hearst/DuPont Triumvirate of Greed and Racism came along.

A number of events came together in the early 1930s to give these three putzes the opening they needed to destroy an entire industry just as it was about to make major advances — while wholly demonizing a medicinally viable plant and agreeably safer substitute for alcoholic consumables.

First, there was a large influx of Mexican and Filipino workers. They actually smoked the hemp, because they knew what portion of the plant was potent. Before these people came along, nobody was familiar with the term "marijuana."

Then, there was the increasing popularity, especially among the teens and young adults, of jazz music. In what part of the population were jazz musicians predominantly found? Negroes. And word was that jazz musicians could not play that

"debil" music without being doped up on marijuana first.

Here's the simplified version of the Demonization of Cannabis:

When Anslinger took control of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, there weren't a lot of narcotics to be bureaucratic about. William Randolph Hearst not only owned the newspapers, he also owned the forests. And Willie detested Mexicans because he had lost a huge chunk of forestland to a foray by Pancho Villa in the early part of the 20th Century.

So, Anslinger and Willie put together stories that had no basis in fact and ran them in Hearst papers across the country. (Legend has it they personally wrote the preponderance of these fictitious exposés, but that would be difficult to prove.)

Anslinger was the first person to really make "marijuana" part of the American lexicon. In doing so, he was able to give hemp that Satanic vilification that was necessary to make it dreaded throughout middle America. The Anslinger/Hearst fables were filled with unsubstantiated tales of woe: Young girls turned to prostitution for marijuana; teen boys gone insane after just one joint; church-going youths committing armed robberies and murder to get their marijuana fixes; suicides caused by marijuana withdrawal; hopped up young white women consorting with Negro men; the destruction of all American values caused by the Devil's weed.

With surreptitious backing from unnamed sources, sensationalistic movies such as "Marijuana: Weed With Roots in Hell," "Assassin of Youth," and "Tell Your Children" (known today infamously as "Reefer Madness") purported to tell the true story of marijuana abuse. In reality, there was nary a shred of truth in any of these films.

This was a well-orchestrated campaign to obliterate the hemp industry by repeated headlines in Hearst papers about the "powerful narcotic" and its direct line to "MURDER! INSANITY! DEATH!"

Herr Karl Rove and George W. Bush must have studied up on this technique. On May 24 Dubya was touting his Social Security scam for the ultra rich big biz types to get richer in front of a typically hand-selected, blindly allegiant audience. While his handlers weren't near enough to shut him up and the cameras were rolling, Dubya actually said, "See, in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult to propaganda."

Dubya snorted his arrogant frat-boy snicker as he said that, like look at what a good BS artist I am. And the true believers actually applauded him! I'm sure Der Karl and Miz Laura were neither smiling nor applauding. Never veer from the script, Georgie...

Back to the 1930s... The DuPont Chemical Corporation fit into the mix as the big bully in the newly emerging industry of being able to fabricate all sorts of neat stuff from literally nothing. They already held patents worth billions on synthetic petrochemicals, wood pulp paper, lead gasoline additives, synthetic fibers, and plastics — all materials that could be made naturally using hemp.

DuPont wanted no competition from a fibrous plant of limitless versatility that can be grown virtually anywhere, by practically anyone, at essentially no cost, using nothing but sun and water.

Around 1935 Anslinger began a two-year effort contriving a bill and tax law to run through Congress. In 1937, new technologies came to the fore to make harvesting hemp a more practical and profitable venture, as noted in a POPULAR MECHANICS MAGA-

ZINE article, "New Billion-Dollar Crop."

Anslinger countered with an article he co-authored in THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE (July, 1937), a diatribe of tales of the evil results of marijuana addiction, completely lacking in factual detail, names, dates, or any specific witness or court records.

In 1937, with the assistance of oil tycoon, and former Spindletop oil field business partner of Mellon, Joseph Guffey, a member of one of the Congressional subcommittees, Anslinger brought his "findings" to Capitol Hill. Here are some of the comments he made to sway Congress at what amounted to secret hearings:

"How many murders, suicides, robberies, criminal assaults, holdups, burglaries and deeds of maniacal insanity it causes each year, especially among the young, can only be conjectured... No one knows, when he places a marijuana cigarette to his lips, whether he will become a joyous reveler in a musical heaven, a mad insensate, a calm philosopher, or a murderer..." The operative word here is *conjectured*, because all Anslinger ever did was *guess* at what someone smoking reefer might do; the same way the Bush Regime and the Supremes conjectured that "unscrupulous doctors" would pass out pot prescriptions like candy.

"There are 100,000 total marijuana smokers in the U.S., and most are Negroes, Hispanics, Filipinos, and entertainers. Their Satanic music, jazz, and swing, result from marijuana use. This marijuana causes white women to seek sexual relations with Negroes, entertainers, and any others."

"...the primary reason to outlaw marijuana is its effect on the degenerate races."

"Marijuana is taken by... musicians. And I'm not speaking about good musicians, but the jazz type..."

"Marijuana is an addictive drug which produces in its users insanity, criminality and death."

"You smoke a joint and you're likely to kill your brother."

"Marijuana is the most violence-causing drug in the history of mankind."

Any knowledgeable person or interested organization that would have denounced Anslinger's comments was not notified of the hearings. The American Medical Association was only given two days' notice, hardly enough time to prepare, and its opposition went unheeded. In fact, one of Anslinger's staff said the AMA was okay with his findings, the lie capping off all the other lies.

Considering Anslinger to be an expert on marijuana, which he indeed was not, Congress passed The Marijuana Stamp Tax Act of 1937 after a mere half hour of floor debate, and it went into effect that October 1. I've attempted to read the Act, but it's impossible to be understood by a human being.

The tax is ridiculously small, from \$1 per sale to no more than \$24 per year. The tax stamp law makes it illegal to trade in hemp/cannabis/marijuana without the stamp, but one must possess the product in order to purchase the stamp. However, one must have the stamp to get the product. It's a Catch-22, a circle with no beginning. The government has never issued any stamps.

Are you ready for this? Anslinger headed the FBN until 1962, and nobody even knew who he was.

Fast forward to 1970. When Congress passed the Controlled Substances Act that year, marijuana was labeled as a Schedule I substance, but there was no proof that it should have been categorized with heroin, et al. So Richard "Tricky Dick" Nixon (don't you just love Republicans?) put "law

Continued On Next Page

COMMENTARY — Toll Roads: A Brief Review

By PETER STERN
DRIFTWOOD, TEXAS

There is so much going on right now with toll legislation, proposals, back-door legislation and “behind the scenes” activities and power-plays.

Gov. Perry WANTS toll roads, in particular his dream of a Texas Toll Corridor originating from Oklahoma to Mexico, but then beyond to include Canada in the north to Central America down south. The governor is being “romanced” by special interests to proceed “full guns” on ensur-

• TENUTO

Continued From Previous Page

and order drug warrior” Raymond Shafer, former Pennsylvania Governor, in charge of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. What Nixon didn’t count on was Shafer’s scruples.

Despite their best efforts, this commission couldn’t find any reason to make pot illegal – at all.

Tricky Dick lost it, as was his way. Just as the Commission was ready to release its report recommending decriminalization – and un-demonizing marijuana – Nixon ordered an “all out war” on drugs, focusing on pot. He blamed marijuana use, like so many other things, on the Jews. He added that it was the Commies and left-wingers pushing it to the college kids to undermine American values. Never mind that the Trickster himself was undermining everything American all by himself!

Due to Nixon’s paranoia, pot arrests went up by 128,000 in 1972, the year of the Watergate break-in. Since then, more people have been guests of our Federal and various state penal systems (over 15,000,000) than for violent and serious crimes.

Then, in 1990, we get Los Angeles Police Chief Darryl Gates testifying in front of a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee with this little pleasantry, “Casual drug users should be taken out and shot.”

Which brings me back to the Supremes and their decision based upon fortune telling. I thought courts were supposed to decide on laws, not what might happen. If a police officer entered a suspect’s home to look for an illegal gun because that person might use it to commit a crime, the court would admonish the officer.

When the residents of the Great State of California said it’s okay with them for sick people to smoke pot, the Feds should have nothing to say about it. The Supremes honored States’ Rights in the Terri Schiavo case, why not now? What, are they going to pick and choose which case is a States’ Rights case.

I’m smokin’ mad!

I really don’t see where the damned Supremes had any business sticking their gavels in this. I do know where six of them should have stuck those gavels, the same places their heads are stuck. Up where it’s awfully dark.

Do you think the six who took away the one bit of relief from these sick and dying people had any idea that the laws against marijuana were all passed based upon lies and prejudices? Do you think they care?

Do you think they even know that not one death has ever been directly attributed to marijuana use?

One last thought:

“The prestige of government has undoubtedly been lowered considerably by the prohibition law. For nothing is more destructive of respect for the government and the law of the land than passing laws that cannot be enforced.”

—Albert Einstein,

My First Impression of the USA, 1921

ing toll roadways throughout Texas. Toll road plans reinforce for the GOP the issue of “NO new taxes”; however, what are tolls if not taxes?

In order to fulfill this mission, Perry has “Yes-man” Speaker Tom Craddick heading the house who is also “gung-ho” toll roads and anything else Perry wants. Craddick ensured house compliance and pro-toll direction by selecting Mike Krusee as the Chair of the Transportation Committee. Krusee has been the most influential member and prime-mover of the house in promoting toll roads to the legislature and big business. Krusee also sits on the board of CAMPO and persuaded the house and senate to approve and implement the bill for the Regional Mobility Authorities (RMA) — several —, which determine future roadway plans in various counties. Currently Krusee is trying to ensure a stable long-term pro-toll RMA by getting his bill passed that will give RMA members a longer term of six years. Under the guise of maintaining “experienced” members, it will ensure a stable pro-toll membership and state agenda for at least the next six years.

Furthermore, the Central Texas RMA is comprised mostly of Williamson County residents/special interests who are determining the toll future of Travis and surrounding counties — meanwhile, they are bypassing most of their own county with their future toll plans. Krusee is the representative of Williamson County and had no real opposition when he was recently reelected several months ago — only write-in candidate Karen Felthausen — Krusee got more than 90-percent of the votes.

As the key point, Krusee is one of the main reasons that the toll road issue has become such a force here in Texas. He voraciously has ensured, along with Perry and Craddick, that the gasoline tax has remained the same for the past decade, which has inhibited the amount of taxes available to build and maintain roads throughout the state. In addition, TxDOT has been sitting on vast amount of pre-paid tax dollars by holding up on various transportation projects. Furthermore, TxDOT was “advised” by the governor to come up with “creative methods” for quickly building and maintaining roadways — hence, pushing the governor’s toll road plans.

Krusee helped to increase the authoritative power of CAMPO, TxDOT and the RMA while not mandating their accountability to the people of Texas, as may be seen by the CAMPO and TxDOT request for public input on tolls and then CAMPO voting anyway for tolls after more than 90-percent of the response was anti-toll.

Recently, many individuals and groups successfully demanded that the crossover bridge on S. MOPAC above William Cannon Drive be taken-off as a tollway, the reason being that the project was already paid for by gasoline taxes. Thanks to on-going public involvement and mounting pressure, that piece of completed highway now is free to drivers. If not for this effort, we’d be paying a toll on that stretch of MOPAC at this very moment.

Currently, there are similar toll issues prevalent. One is the proposal to toll Highways 290 and 71 near the “Y” in Oak Hill. These roads were built and paid for with gasoline taxes. Now TxDOT, CAMPO and the RMA want to charge tolls for enlarging the scope of those roadways. Point of fact is that the state cannot charge tolls on already paid for thorough-fares — but with the help of Krusee and these three committees they are trying to do so. There is a move by TxDOT to build an above-

ground section of highway over the existing road, which it then defines as a new road, thereby attempting to circumvent the law against tolling already paid for existing roadways. We are all fighting this as we did with the S. MOPAC overpass project. So far, the “Y” area is projected still as a toll project.

Up in part of north Travis County toll booths have already been set up and the plan is to build a toll way on existing roads. Public groups are still fighting this for the same reason as mentioned with the two previously mentioned toll projects. These are existing roadways.

To expedite toll projects, special interests e.g., CINTRA, the world-wide toll maven, has agreed to pay the state \$7.5 billion dollars for its consideration as the primary toll building and management company for Texas toll road projects. One of my complaints to the Office of the District Attorney is the illegal nature of such a maneuver and obvious conflicts of interest.

There was a measure in the legislature to place a moratorium of two years on the building of any and all toll roads — until an independent investigation is completed to learn whether toll roads are the only and/or most viable means of building and maintaining Texas roadways. Instead, the legislature passed a bill that included providing TxDOT with more leeway in determining what roads may be considered toll roads.

Basically, toll roads are more than a 90-percent certainty unless the public vocalizes its anger and disagreement with the state’s special interest drive for toll roads. While there are other alternatives to tollways, few have been or are being reviewed. One of the reasons that tollways are being pushed so vehemently is that TxDOT has “frightened” counties and legislators with the prospect of losing millions of state and federal dollars if toll roads were not voted for before a miniscule period of time. Consequently, this premeditated “persuasion” was very effective and instrumental in getting boards, committees and legislators to become proactive for tollways, and why the vote by CAMPO succeeded within such a short span of time.

Because of this “persuasive” tactic, I and others have complained formally to the Travis County DA, Ronnie Earle, to investigate the actions and motives of those pushing for toll roads. Those I named in the formal complaint range from the governor and house speaker to Krusee and TxDOT. The investigation is being performed as I write this synopsis, and hopefully, it will uncover some illegal activities and conflicts of interest prevalent in this massive push for tollways.

There is much more going on at this time, but that’s a VERY brief summary of the toll road status within the state. Definitely there is a toll road “conspiracy” afoot. If we all sit back and watch, our children’s children will be paying toll taxes forever. We need to communicate more vigorously to elected officials, demanding alternatives to toll roads throughout the state. Austin is the Texas toll frontier. If it happens here, it happens everywhere.

People must quickly comprehend what this means. Many are being misinformed by the Office of the Governor and by legislators who tell them that state law requires that there be alternate comparable roadways to every toll project; however, that is a sham. Many people believe they have an option whether or not to pay the tolls. THEY DON’T!!!

They may have the option whether or

not to go on the toll roads; however, EVERYONE in Texas will pay a toll tax at the “cash register” when they buy goods and services. Businesses will pass along their toll costs to the consumer. In this manner it is estimated that EVERY Texan could pay a yearly total toll TAX of up to \$6,000!!! People need to hear this, because those in charge do NOT admit to it.

Furthermore, it is historical fact that once toll roads are built they remain forever — even when the roads have been fully paid for with tax dollars. Only once in my lifetime do I recall a toll road system being removed. That one in the late 1970’s was the toll system for the Southern State Parkway in New York; however, there were some “behind the scenes” political reasons for that, which I won’t go into here.

I have written the governor and legislators MANY times regarding the toll issue and NONE admit to prevailing agendas and negative impact on the community, even though it is a REALITY.

Feel free to contact me with any further question on toll roads. I am dead set against them. I have lived in areas that have extensive toll systems and have seen first-hand that they do NOT work. In fact, for a brief period of time I worked for the Transportation Dept. in NYC and have recognized that tollways are ineffective and inefficient. While people are told that they will free-up traffic congestion and decrease air pollution, that is contrary to what actually occurs. In addition, there is an increase of noise pollution and frequently extensive ecological and physical destruction occurs to the immediate environment. Toll roadways change the entire lifestyle of a community and overburden its residents. Toll roads are NOT cost-effective, are a bad idea and should be considered ONLY as a very last resort.

So, what can we do?

Communicate the above facts to EVERYONE! We must educate the entire community. That includes store owners, residents, and even legislators who know almost as little as everyone else.

Only by an ongoing commitment to communicate our disagreement to lawmakers, do we stand a good chance of eliminating the “toll-road-it is” that has become a contagion among elected officials. The people must be in control of their transportation fate. We must present alternative options to toll roads. Even raising the gas tax is an option, though the governor doesn’t admit that.

The governor’s office states that people don’t have an option to pay the gas tax but will have the option to pay tolls. That is bogus. While everyone will have to pay a toll tax at the register, people do have an option to fill their gas tanks, to cut down on their driving, and to develop car pools to save money. The problem is that gas taxes have remained the same for almost one decade. It’s time they are updated and used properly to build and maintain roads.

Furthermore, legislators determined years ago that part of the gas tax goes to higher education. With the recent deregulation of higher education tuition, we need to divert that portion of the gas tax back to transportation alternatives. Special interests continue to keep all this as status-quo. We must voice our disagreement and demand realistic long-needed change.

Only when communities join together and demand things persistently in a unified manner will our elected officials listen and act accordingly.

“The squeaky wheel DOES get the oil!” — especially when there’s a lot of squeaking going on!

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.

A Word Of Advice

A word of advice to my wealthy friends and relatives:

I seem to be surrounded by both dear friends and relatives who have done quite well for themselves financially. Good for you! Some inherited it. Some married it. Some divorced it (and got half). And some worked very, very hard for it, and still are. (Well, in truth, maybe they all worked hard for it, in one way or another). Bless 'em all; I am delighted for them.

The funny thing is that, SOME of these folks who started poor or middle (and scraped their way up) seem to have forgotten what it's like not to have those nice deep pockets. Not all of them, mind you, but some. . . Plenty of these folks are as down to earth as anyone else. But for the rest of them, and all you other wealthy readers out there, here are some words to the wise.

Try to keep a check on reality, OK? When you're talking to someone who lives on a budget, please try to remember when it was NOT possible for you to go out and buy whatever you wanted whenever you wanted it. I'm talking the basics, not a new corporate jet. Try to remember that, for most of us, money is a finite instrument.

I had a dear friend say the other day that a piece of farm equipment I need is "cheap", ONLY \$3,000. It never occurred to him that such an amount was enormous to me. He wasn't being insensitive. He just hasn't been in the real world for a while, MY world. He deals in much, much larger numbers. I have cousins who are always doing this to me as well. "Oh, that truck is ONLY \$28K." Or, "That wonderful trip we took to Europe ONLY cost \$8,000." Only one of my very, very wealthy friends is still as frugal now as she was growing up in a Communist country, many years ago.

Everything is relative, I suppose. Three thousand dollar farm implements and \$28K trucks probably are good values, relatively speaking. Maybe my reactions just show my age. The world has passed me by, and I'm not even that old. I remind myself of my father, who, in his 90s, was always commenting on how pricey things had become. One of his favorite sayings was, "It's expensive to be civilized." Boy was he right. (I try to refrain from telling anyone that my first car only cost \$700 and had no A/C. That one REALLY makes me sound ancient. Next thing you know, I'll be talking about walking three miles to school, barefoot, in the snow).

It simply isn't possible for me to rush right out to make a \$3,000 purchase right now. There are certainly times I am in no position to borrow, either. (That's how a lot of landowners have lost their land, and I don't want to join those ranks). The thing about borrowing is that it must defi-

Deep Throat Disappointment

Ever since "Deep Throat's" identity was revealed, I've been feeling kind of disappointed. I don't mean just because the mystery figure is some guy I never heard of. I'm also disappointed that the secret is out and the mystery is over. I feel like someone who was amazed by a magic trick, only to learn that it's done with black thread. And let's face it, those mean older kids who told us all about Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy weren't necessarily doing us a favor.

For years, I viewed the mysterious figure of "Deep Throat" as romantic and heroic. Here was a person who was obviously at great personal risk, but was so appalled by the action of Nixon and his boys that he had to get the truth out. I always thought it would be fitting if it turned out that this secret person were an American icon — like Walter Cronkite, or maybe even Cher. But no, it's just some guy.

In fact, now that it's been revealed that the person who leaked all the information to Woodward and Bernstein was W. Mark Felt, the Number Two guy at the F.B.I., there are those who feel he wasn't a hero at all. They believe that if he knew about illegal acts, he should have reported them to the proper authorities instead of blabbing to the press. The only problem is that the "proper authorities" were among those committing the crimes.

But Felt was no perfect hero. He not only had feet of clay, he had a whole three-piece suit of clay. And a hat. At the time of Watergate, he had an axe to grind because he was passed over for the head of the FBI job. And years later, Felt himself was convicted of carrying on illegal searches and violating the civil rights of domestic dissidents in the Weather Underground movement. In other words, he was no mythical hero. He was an imperfect human.

My first thought after I heard the announcement was, "Why is he coming forward now?" Was he just tired of walking around all these years with the nickname "Deep Throat?" It's not exactly a dignified moniker for a 91-year-old man. Maybe his family had been teasing him about it

nately be paid back. Sometimes I think people forget that. (Ever heard of rampant, out of control credit card debt?)

Wealthy folks have plenty of collateral and know all the tricks of dealing with debt. For me, debt is a four-letter word that I fear like the plague. There aren't a few thousand shares of stock lurking around at the bottom of my portfolio to be liquidated, should the need arise. If I spend all my savings, there won't be any more falling from the sky. This is it. I'm not going to win the lottery. And that gas lease windfall everyone is so hot about probably won't happen in my lifetime, if ever. I just don't have that kind of luck. The bottom line really is this: I just don't know how to play the money game.

I'm still shell-shocked about gas being over a dollar a gallon, never mind more than two! You just KNOW the "powers that be" ran those gas prices up over \$2 and then dropped them down a few cents so we would suddenly think, "Wow, gas is under \$2. How CHEAP! Give me a break. This isn't cheap!

When a roll of good, barbed wire hit \$50, and T-posts prices rose correspondingly, I was horrified. How are ranchers supposed to keep up? Well, there's always the tax-free thing for AG use. Did you know that work gloves aren't considered AG use? Nor are rubber boots. What in the world else would I use them for? Neither are



Modern Times

By
Lloyd
Garver

all these years. "Please pass the salt, 'Deep Throat,'" or "Look at the bicycle Grandpa Deep Throat gave me" are the kind of comments that could drive anyone to finally saying, "Enough!"

But the reason turned out to be much more mundane. He and his family realized more and more people were going to figure out who he was soon, and they also thought maybe they could get a few bucks out of this

— in their words, "at least enough money to pay some bills."

In mythology, anonymous heroes don't step forward to reveal their identities so they can pay some bills. They do it to set an example for others who might be thinking of doing something courageous, but just need a little push. But again, he's not a mythic hero, he's just a guy.

No, he's not a legendary figure like Hercules or like the David who slew Goliath. He's just a human being. But in real life, as opposed to legend, flawed, regular people are often the ones who end up being heroes. So, maybe the revelation that Felt is the guy is a nice reminder to all of us that everybody has the potential to do something heroic.

Besides, there are still plenty of myths we can hold onto. I'm still not so sure about what those older kids told me about the Tooth Fairy. After all, those quarters under my pillow were real.

UPDATE: Last time, I told you about the empty police car that was parked on our neighborhood's main street in the hope of deterring bank robbers. The police recently removed the car from the street. The last spot it occupied was in front of one of the banks. Two days after the empty cop car was gone, the bank was robbed.

Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier" to "Home Improvement." He has also read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's Opinion page and can be reached at lloydgarver@yahoo.com

exactly fashion statements).

I worry about paying my health (and car and homeowners) insurance and prescription bills. And boy, am I glad I don't smoke cigarettes! How can people afford them these days? I worry that taxes might go up. I worry about paying them even if they don't rise. I try to keep the electric and water bills as low as possible each month, run around turning off fans and lights, avoiding the A/C as long as possible, into the heat of the summer. I make sure the toilet isn't running, one of its favorite tricks. I use coupons at the supermarket when I remember them. I shop the sales.

I'm a lot like a lot of people. There is no country club membership to cancel, no cleaning lady to fire. There are no farm hands except those I joke about, at the ends of our wrists. There are no exotic vacations to put on hold. We find the most reasonable prices in town for things we purchase on a regular basis. Even though we may be considered middle class, we work hard to make ends meet and are careful. We wonder if what we have will be enough — when we are too old to work so hard. It amazes me how much it takes each month just for the absolute necessities. It amazes me how much hay cows can eat.

(So . . . Our state legislators managed to make time to vote themselves a pay raise, but couldn't get around to getting the teachers' bonuses taken care of . . . or a lot of other things normal folks need. Don't get me started).

Having Internet access has become

a necessity for me, but cell phones and Dish Network are still luxuries, though even it sometimes seems everyone has them. We do allow ourselves those. (Cell phones are good for emergencies as well as convenient. —And the free long distance feature often makes them a better value than land based lines). Those are our big splurges, like an occasional dinner out. And we do enjoy "movie night" at the CLIFTEX as often as we are able. (Where else can you take in a show for such a reasonable ticket price?) We don't charge things on our credit cards that can't be paid off at the end of each month. (Heaven help me when my truck finally breaks down).

I'm not whining, and I'm not complaining. In fact, I've always considered myself pretty comfortable, all things considered. I am exceedingly grateful to have a roof over my head and enough to eat. There are plenty of others with less. Sometimes I just wonder when it happened that the average American had to start working so hard and so long to pay so much for so little. Of course, we are subsidizing a lot of welfare programs. But that would be a whole OTHER column.

So to all my wealthy friends and family and the rest of you out there (you lucky devils), who are so much better heeled than most of us: Next time you can't understand why I am not able to do this or that or to buy something or fly here or there. . . Please try to remember what it was like to regularly shop the cheap meat section at the supermarket.

MAILBAG ICONOCLAST

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi,

I just subscribed to your paper for two reasons. The first is the editorial endorsement of John Kerry last year, an act which demonstrated tremendous courage on your part. I am quite sure the repercussions were immediate and severe. The second was the awareness of your situation resulting from a thread on the Democratic Underground which encouraged us to support your paper.

I subscribed to the hard copy format so I would be able to pass the paper on when I was finished with it. Maybe we'll change a few more minds here in Austin.

Allen Brooks

To whom it may Concern,

I have recently read the interview with Leuren Moret, conducted by W. Leon Smith and Nathan Diebenow and feel I must comment. Please note that I am quite sympathetic with the general thrust of Ms. Moret's argument, that depleted Uranium weapons are extremely bad for the environment and all living creatures. I have long had an interest in radiological contamination and have for many years owned a computer-interface geiger counter myself. As I read the article I have reached the conclusion that Ms. Moret, "Geoscientist" is mentally unstable, as she makes many wild assertions that I know to be untrue. Sadly, this tends to discredit her entire argument. The notion that "the equivalent number of atoms to over 400,000 Nagasaki bombs has been released into the atmosphere" and that "almost all of the entire east coast" or that "anywhere within 100 miles of a nuclear power plant" is contaminated" are hysterical assertions unworthy of someone who claims to be a "scientist."

These statements would lead the uninformed to conclude that our entire planet is now contaminated. She additionally states that the 9/11 crash site at the Pentagon was radioactive. I live about a mile from the Pentagon and have investigated this very matter with my own geiger counter. There is no radiation contamination at all. Just normal background radiation. In fact, the levels of background radiation have remained the same now for the last 14 years, both here and in Richmond, 100 miles to the South (both locations near the North Anna nuclear plant).

The subject of depleted Uranium contamination is indeed a crime against humanity and needs to be vigorously brought to the public's attention, but interviews with marginally sane "scientists" do little to advance this cause.

Sincerely,
William E. Benton

Dear Editor,

When are the people of Texas going to get fed up with their lawmakers and governor passing laws that aren't enforceable from the git go? Case in point: this new law that is going to punish young girls for not telling their parents when they're about to abort.

Everybody who's got a lick of sense knows that aborting is what a female body does when something's not right with an egg that's been fertilized. Like the sunrise, it's not something a person can control.

Now, if what the lawmakers actually intend is to prevent medical professionals from providing assistance to terminate pregnancies, that's what the law should state. Of course, that would mean that the legislators, most of whom are not

trained in the medical professions, are making laws about something they know nothing about. But at least they wouldn't be making promises they can't keep.

Sincerely,
Monica Smith, Durham, NH

To The Editor:

Three articles in Wednesday's Evansville IN Courier-Press are intimately connected, among them illustrating the current hazards to appropriate health and sexuality education in this country. One, the 'Community Comment' by Betty Cockrum, celebrated the 65th anniversary of Planned Parenthood in Indiana. Another displayed the bare bones of what has become escalating challenges to continued availability of family planning information, accurate and appropriate sexuality education, and access to medical choices for women, both in this country and around the world. And the third reports the unfortunate death of an infant born into a religious sect believing in the power of faith and prayer instead of appropriate and necessary medical care.

Together, these articles display the dark side of health programs endorsed by opponents of accurate medical, sexuality, and family planning information. These opponents, led by President Bush and his national advisors, are increasing their already overbearing pressure on every women's health agency in the country, trying to force abstinence-only policies as the only acceptable education program. If an agency advocates or provides any other sexuality program, even though supported by non-tax dollars, then this administration has eliminated any government funding altogether for that agency. This policy is being forced on other countries besides, putting Bush's America in the position of dictating health education for any other population receiving even the least of federal dollars.

This approach is short-sighted, regressive, oppressive, and does nothing whatsoever to provide the accurate information so critical to healthy medical choices. I respect every person's choice of religion and the use of prayer, and we all grieve for the loss of an infant; however, since faith and prayer seems to be all our government would wish to allow us, then we must brace ourselves for many, many more tragedies - not only infant deaths, but unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and deadly diseases, both at home and abroad.

I ask everyone to support availability of accurate, appropriate information regarding health and sexuality education, and to convey your support to representatives at all levels: local, school board, state and federal. This battle is vital: we either win fair access for all or we all will lose.

Tim Slack, Newburgh IN

To The Editor:

The Texas Funeral Service Commission (TFSC) investigated complaints about Service Corporation International (SCI) and assessed fines of \$450,000 for 244 violations by SCI in 1998, including using unlicensed embalmers, consumer fraud and failure to comply with subpoenas. Robert Waltrip, CEO of SCI was a major financial supporter of then-governor George W. Bush.

When Eliza May, executive director of TFSC, was fired she sued Bush stating that she had been wrongly terminated for persisting in the investigation. In 1999, to avoid deposition, Bush gave a written

statement under oath that he had not spoken to anyone or interfered with the TFSC investigation. However, Waltrip and an SCI attorney stated that they had talked to Bush about the investigation. Charles McNeil, a Bush appointee who had voted to fire May, stated in a deposition that Bush had spoken to him about the investigation, and that "we attempted to enforce the law and we got squished like a bug." In a news conference, August 1999, Bush said that May's lawsuit was frivolous, and that he had talked to Waltrip about the investigation, contradicting his sworn statement.

May charged Bush with obstruction of justice and lying under oath to conceal influence peddling. Although President Clinton was impeached on charges of lying under oath and obstruction of justice with much media attention, the media failed to notice the charges against Bush, a presidential candidate.

May also charged then-attorney general John Cornyn, who had previously worked with the law firm representing SCI, with influence peddling, stating that he had met with SCI officials and had personally intervened. To avoid deposition of himself and Bush by May's attorneys, Cornyn settled the lawsuit. Although there were warnings of a state budget shortfall, Cornyn found enough money in the treasury to pay off May.

Would voters have been as likely to vote for presidential-candidate Bush if they had known he had been charged with obstruction of justice and lying under oath and had apparently convicted himself? Would they have been as likely to vote for senate-candidate Cornyn if they knew he had been charged with influence peddling and had settled the matter out of court with their money but was unwilling to say how much they had paid, what they paid for or why they had to pay it? Why have the media buried this story?

Robert Flynn, San Antonio

To The Editor:

As a child of the military and an American, I am embarrassed to be a resident of Texas today. Governor Rick Perry's recent suggestion that gay veterans should leave the state of Texas is some of the most hateful and inappropriate rhetoric I have ever heard from a Texas politician. He should apologize and resign from office.

There are over 66,000 gay and lesbian veterans living in Texas, according to Servicemembers Legal Defense Network. These people protect and defend our nation with integrity and honor, despite a growing lack of human rights in the state of Texas. These veterans deserve our respect and gratitude, not a callous suggestion to leave their homes.

Texas is better off with diversity, not bigotry. Close mindedness and hate are not values that represent the majority of Texans.

Governor Rick Perry is an affront to human dignity and should not be allowed to remain in office.

Ken Seifert, Conroe

To The Editor:

The current executive branch of this government are traitors guilty of crimes punishable by death. We have been nothing but lied to by this administration since day one culminating with the MI-6 report that proves this administration, specifically George W. Bush, lied to the American public with fixed intelligence in order to go to war with Iraq. For this reason impeachment charges must be brought forward for the sake of democracy to last in this country.

The Iraq War can not be won because there is nothing to win. "Staying the course" will mean this country's downfall. We can literally not financially afford this war because it has no clear-cut objectives. Fighting a war for "freedom and democ-

racy" means nothing because its success or failure can never be gauged. One-hundred thousand people are dead because of an Orwellian euphemism and a bold face pack of lies about WMD's and a manufactured threat assessment. Much of "old Europe's" financial elite love this war and the overall "War on Terror" because it is giving them a strategic capital advantage over the dollar. The contrast of the Euro vs. Dollar conversion is for the most part directly due to this war. European Old-money is laughing all the way to the bank while we wave our flags and tie a yellow ribbon around the old Oak tree like a bunch of American idiots.

The end-game for Iraq is simple. Simply pull all of our troops out immediately and give some of the funds that we would use to sustain our engagement over to the democratically elected Iraqi government. While this is certainly no utopian solution it is the only plausible one to make, with all things being equal, given the current situation. Any negative consequences from this action will not be any worse than those that are going on anyway with our continued presence. A civil war will not break out if we leave and the Iraqis were able to start reconstruction by themselves. While there will undoubtedly be internal power struggles after we leave it would in no way exceed that which is already existent anyway and it could arguably be less because of a lessened animosity and increased national pride in having a foreign occupier cease and desist their operations in their homeland.

Of course one negative consequence for us, besides our hurt pride, would be our loss of capital in the funds that we would have to give the Iraqi government for rebuilding. But why should this matter if the true motivation for fighting this war was to secure "freedom and democracy"? If this were really true then the above actions are the only viable solution. I hate to be the bearer of truth and reality, but what I say is simply the only logical outcome of the disaster that is the Iraq War for this nation's survival let alone Iraq's. If my solution to this current quagmire is perceived to be unacceptable to certain persons here in America it is only because the true motivation for fighting this war was to secure its oil resources and to build a few air bases. My answer to those critics would be that if you think these goals could now be accomplished with what is going on in Iraq you are living in a fantasy world.

Because of the above I ask the good members of congress across both isles to bring impeachment charges towards this administration and allow a runoff election without the influence of paperless ballots compliments of Diebold. Anything less would be unpatriotic and the alternative to this solution will be much less civil. Either way the problem will be solved one way or the other. The only question at this point is to what extent are the criminals who currently hold power willing to pay for the continuation of them being in power. If they are willing to stand to the last then so be it. It will be their last!

I ask members of congress to please be brave and do the right thing. 9-11 was a horrible lie which amounted to nothing more than a modern age Reichstag fire. This was revealed to me in November of 2000 by a retired Army personnel and I will never be able to look at the world or this country in the same way again.

Never in the history of this country has it been at such a crossroads of which you people must play a vital role. I implore you to please bring an official charge of impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors against George W. Bush and DICK Cheney. The world is on your side. The majority of the American public is on your side and contrary to what you are made to believe the United States Military is also on your side. You have a duty to

Graduates: Don't Take That First Step Without Rollerblades

To this year's graduates:

As you cross the stage to receive your diploma, remember that you're crossing a brand new threshold in your young life. That's because, in most cases, your parents have already arranged for the contents of your room to be hauled onto the front lawn and sold, possibly during the graduation ceremony itself.

Or maybe even at the graduation ceremony itself:

"Before we call our next graduate, I'd like to turn your attention to the rollerblades I'm wearing. They, along with other items belonging to Jeffrey Schloppendorf, will be available for purchase after the ceremony in the courtyard."

That's right; by the time you get home, you'll be lucky if your room still has the same light switch. I know this may sound harsh, but it is something that parents do out of LOVE. It's about your parents helping you make that important transition into independence, even if it means turning your bedroom into patio space between the new hot tub and gazebo. I know it's hard to believe, but that's how much your parents are willing to sacrifice in order to help you find your place in the world — which, by the way, doesn't include living in the attic, basement or any of the utility closets. This means finding a job. Something that will allow you to apply the cumulative knowledge you've acquired through years of higher education. It means competing in today's tough job market against like-minded graduates.

It means, in many cases, a career in the food service industry.

For those who might be contemplating this opportunity (or who might be wearing a hair net at this very moment), keep in mind that some of the world's most successful business people got their start in the food service industry. And keep in mind that just because I can't think of any right now doesn't mean it's not true, because I'm pretty sure I read it somewhere. Really.

Okay.
So I'm a big fat liar.



By
Ned Hickson
Siuslaw News

It doesn't mean that working in fast food can't be rewarding. In fact, ask any journalist, and they will tell you that there's nothing more rewarding than being a fry cook. To prove it, I'm going to stop writing at this very moment and pose this question to each of my fellow journalists here in the newsroom.

You see?

Just as I expected. Every reporter I talked to agreed that there is nothing more rewarding than being a fry cook.

[Editor: Please note that you are surrounded by big fat liars.]

So, what does all of this mean exactly?

For you graduates, it means taking your first steps into the world on your own. As you do, I'd suggest you stop by that table in the courtyard.

You never know when a cheap pair of rollerblades might come in handy.

(You can write to Ned Hickson at nhickson@oregonfast.net, or at the Siuslaw News at P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439)

MAILBAG ICONOCLAST LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued From Previous Page

protect this government and its constitution from enemies both foreign AND DOMESTIC. If you or your families are intimidated by anybody for trying to bring these charges forward I would ask that you immediately give their names and/or personal information publicly over the internet and to every branch of the military as well as the FBI and the United Nations Humanitarian Watch. Any person who is caught trying to intimidate this natural progression of our democracy will be dealt with swiftly and severely.

This administration has gained its power only by keeping people in the dark and presenting themselves to be much mightier than they actually are. Every organization in this country in controlled from the top down. It is this type of a system dynamic that, while perfectly fine with the proper checks and balances, can enable scum like this administration to exist in the way they do by keeping different components of an organization in line through lying and intimidation when those checks and balances are lax. If you control the head of an organization and its information flow you control the organization. The problem with this tactic is that it can only work by distorting the perception of reality of any given organizational component to produce divisiveness between other organization components. It is the age-old method of divide and conquer that allows the minority to control the majority even though this select minority (in this case for the Iraq War and War on Terror read; Halliburton, Carlyle Group, PNAC, ect. ect.) doesn't have the majorities best interests in heart. But when the truth comes out though the power gained from such control falls like a house of cards.

Think of how the above dynamic played out with the bogus intelligence that led to the Iraq War. The Bush administration made our intelligence apparatus look like a bunch of fools. It only took a few bad apples in a few key places to allow the American public, myself included to some extent, to believe that Iraq had WMDs that were a threat to us and that these claims were backed up by our intelligence apparatus. Of course with hindsight this was obviously a cruel joke and no one really believed this who would have been privy to know such things but at the time it was just enough to capitalize off of the emotions of the masses to lead them to what turned out to be an illegal war. A similar organizational comparison of the above could also be made with the military chain of command but this too is starting to unravel. It is when the truth comes out in full view of everybody that such tactics cease to work for evil can't exist in the Light From Above. The lame duck emperor Bush is naked and everyone knows

it. The question now is what is going to be done about it. Impeachment is the most rational answer for the alternative will be much less humanitarian (Psalms 109:6-9).

Regards
Joe Hrevnack

To The Editor:

I believe it is quite clear that those of the conservative right have every intention of trying to transform the essential nature of our nation.

In spite of their supposed love of "democracy" they have nothing but contempt for it.

I don't know what the real nature of what the conservatives want America to be in the future. Some want it to be a free market heaven; others want it to be theocracy. I suppose it will become some variation of the above should they win out—it won't be the kind of America in which I care to live.

It is not enough for these folks that they have media outlets like FOX News, numerous radio talk show hosts on both the national and local levels, the WALL STREET JOURNAL and the others to push their agenda, they want to make certain that the few remaining "liberal" media outlets are silenced as well. The big three traditional broadcast media outlets (ABC, NBC and CBS) have largely rolled over and played dead by only offering their viewers little in the way of true journalism. They instead focus on celebrity criminal trials and the status of the relationships of celebrities.

Most of the major media outlets, both broadcast and print, have failed miserably in their role to inform the citizenry about the truth of what our government is up to.

Contemporary media instead contributes a notion that the most important function of Americans these days are to be consumers of the products created by corporations instead of informed citizens of a representative democracy.

These are sad times that we find ourselves and we have only ourselves to blame. As a long time "consumer" of the products created by PBS and NPR, I am going to let the folks at the CPB know that I am not happy about their move to reign in the "liberal tendencies" of these two forms of public broadcasting.

I hate to be cynical, but I doubt my comments will have any effect, but I have to do it anyway. Hopefully Hillary or some other Democrat will get elected to the Presidency in 2008. In 2009 or '10, when that individual puts in his/her slate of nominees before the Congress for consideration—I want to see what the Repubs have to say about the ability of a "liberal" Democratic president to have his or her nominees all get up or down votes by the Senate, similarly to the Bush nomination of judges.

N.M.

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U.S. Supports Undemocratic Regimes Worldwide

Guest Commentary From The Crawford Peace House

By HADI JAWAD
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

The U.S. has a funny way of dealing with undemocratic regimes around the world: it sells them guns. According to a study recently released by New York's World Policy Institute, more than half of the top 25 recipients of US arms deals in 2003 were defined as "undemocratic" by our own State Department. The criteria was that in these countries "citizens do not have the right to change their own government" or "that right was seriously abridged." We might be nurturing future Saddams right now!

Some of the top recipients of U.S. largesse? Saudi Arabia (\$1.1 billion), Egypt (\$1.0 billion), Kuwait (\$153 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$110 million) and Uzbekistan (\$33 million). No Saudi citizen dare challenge the rulers. Mubarak of Egypt is the sole contender in national elections. In Uzbekistan, a staunch U.S. ally in the "war on terror," state police recently killed in cold blood several hundred unarmed protesters in the capital, Andijan. President Karimov called the protesters "terrorists," but according to an Associated Press report they were ordinary civilians demanding free business activity and better living conditions, and complained about the stark poverty they've been forced to live in since the ex-Soviet republic became independent in 1991. A favorite method of dealing with Karimov's critics: Boiling. Very medieval, but highly efficient.

The World Policy Report also found that "when countries deemed to have poor human rights records or serious patterns of abuse by the State Department are factored in, 20 of the top 25 US

arms clients in the developing world in 2003 — a full 80 percent — were either undemocratic regimes or governments with records of major human rights abuses." The U.S. fans the flames of war around the world. As the worlds leading arms peddler the U.S. in 2003 supplied arms to 18 out of 25 active conflicts, sometimes to both sides.

The U.S. has a sordid history of dealing with terrorists also. Ronald Reagan once welcomed to the White House a group of fierce looking bearded warriors from Afghanistan he referred to as the "moral equivalent of America's Founding Fathers." The men belonged to a group of radicals who had been recruited by the U.S. for a program funded by the Saudis, and trained by Pakistans military strongman; Zia-ul-Haq to kick the Soviets out of Afghanistan. These men became known to the whole world later as the much hated Taliban. More recently, neocons in Bush's administration were attempting to restore the Mujaheddin e Khalq, a known terrorist group based in Eastern Iraq that is opposed to the current regime in Iran. The MeK, a well trained 4,000 member militia, the neocons are hoping will be used to topple the mullahs in Tehran much as the Northern Alliance was used in Afghanistan to bring down the Taliban.

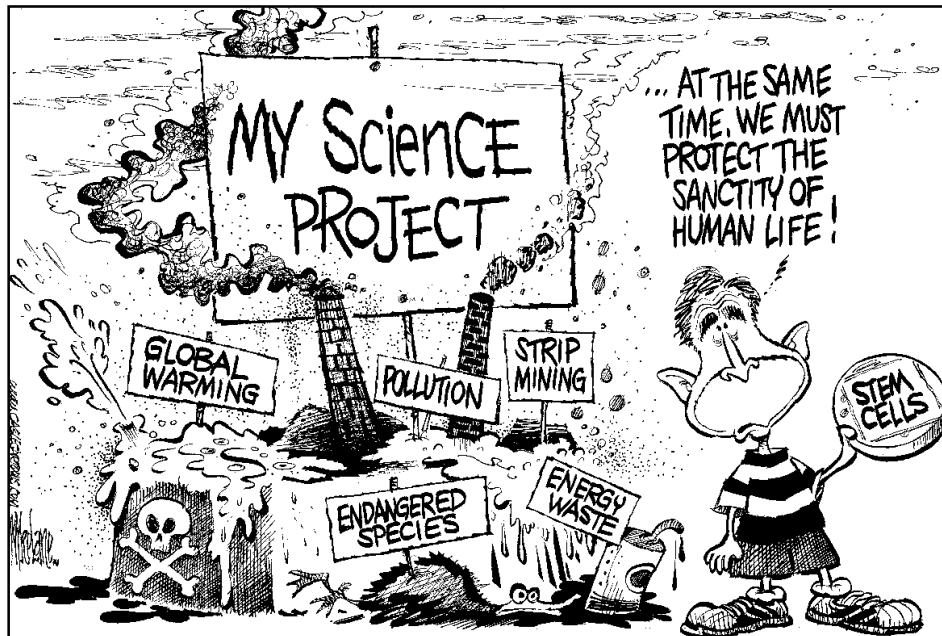
If you listen to our leaders in Washington, the United States is fearlessly fighting evil in the world by spreading freedom and democracy. The sad truth is the U.S. empowers ruthless dictators and corrupt authoritarian regimes globally, foments death and destruction by selling massive quantities of arms, sometimes to both sides in a conflict.

Rather than being a force for peace and stability in the world the U.S. is the cause for much misery and suffering

The United States has global strategic and geopolitical interests. The Bush administration callously pursues a policy of supporting regimes that help reach its policy goals. Nations that do not comply are sometimes ruthlessly

starved through sanctions, as in Iraq in the 90s or bombed back to the stone age, as in Afghanistan. Words like "spreading freedom and democracy" and "war on terror" are meaningless window dressing meant for a gullible citizenry and a defeated, unquestioning media, unwilling to do its job.

Hadi Jawad is a member of the board of directors at the Crawford Peace House.



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This movie focuses on four residents and "stars" of the Central Park Zoo in New York City: a lion (Stiller), a zebra (Rock), a giraffe (Schwimmer) and a pregnant hippo (Smith). When one of them goes missing, the other three break out of the zoo looking for him, and eventually all four are captured and put in boxes to ship them back to the continent their species are originally from: Africa. An accident at sea, however, strands them on the shore of Madagascar. Having had humans take care of them their entire life, the four know nothing of surviving in the wild, or that one of them, the lion, is genetically predisposed to eat his three best friends. The four friends soon meet the Malagasy locals (a type of lemur) and their carnivorous enemies, the fousas. The two sides try to use these four new, strange friends to their benefit.

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