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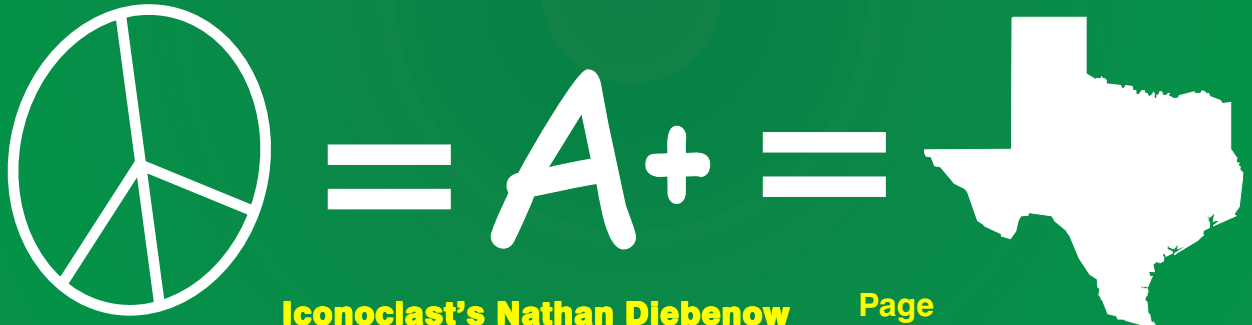
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Peacenik Training

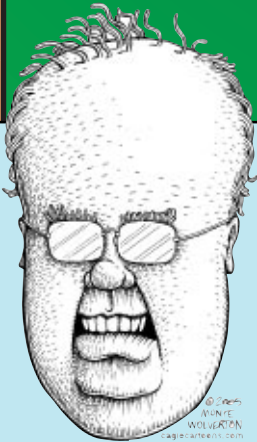
Conference To Focus On Non-Violence In Schools



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'Now there is a database of young people with their grades, their interests, their likes and dislikes, and their extracurricular activities, and presumably all this can be used for recruiting purposes. I see that as a giant invasion of privacy, and it's something much larger. The invasion of young people's lives by militarism is what we need to help put the breaks on.'

— Alyssa Burgin, Texans for Peace press liaison



'The political realignment in America is moving ahead...'

— Karl Rove

— Editorial —

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China Slams U.S. House Over Unocal Block

BEIJING — China's Foreign Ministry slammed the U.S. House of Representatives last week for politicizing a routine business deal when the U.S. representatives voted to review a Chinese energy company possibly purchasing a California-based oil producer.

By a 333-92 vote, the House voted approvingly to block the Bush administration from approving CNOOC's \$18.5 billion bid to buy Unocal Corp. Another resolution, this one nonbinding, also passed calling on the Bush administration to review the possible takeover on grounds of U.S. national security.

China criticized Congress for injecting politics into what it characterized as a standard business matter.

"We demand that the U.S. Congress correct its mistaken ways of politicizing economic and trade issues and stop

interfering in the normal commercial exchanges between enterprises of the two countries," the Foreign Ministry said in a written statement. "CNOOC's bid to take over the U.S. Unocal company is a normal commercial activity between enterprises and should not fall victim to political interference. The development of economic and trade cooperation between China and the United States conforms to the interests of both sides."

As of deadline, the White House has said little about the proposed transaction. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was scheduled to visit China this past weekend. Chinese President Hu Jintao is planning a visit to Washington this fall.

Chinese economists say that the attempted takeover reflects a new trend

in China's economic reach into the United States in order to gain new markets and materials for China's rapid-paced industrialization.

For years, China's central bank has bought dollars to maintain the value of its currency, and has gathered \$650 billion in foreign exchange reserves, money which has purchased U.S. Treasury bonds.

This takeover battle, however, is the first of its kind between a Chinese company and a U.S. firm, perhaps leading the way for future Chinese business investments in U.S.-based companies.

The oil giant Chevron Corp. has a deal to buy Unocal for \$16.5 billion, but CNOOC's bid is for \$18.5 billion. If CNOOC wins, the transaction would be the largest foreign takeover ever by a Chinese corporation.

Members of the U.S. Congress expressed fear that the possible purchase would threaten national security. They point to the fact that CNOOC Ltd. — one of China's three largest energy firms and top offshore oil producer — has the Chinese government as its largest shareholder.

China's criticism comes at a key time in Chinese-American relations. China has about a \$160 billion trade surplus with the United States. China has been accused of manipulating its currency to make Chinese goods cheaper. The decline of U.S. manufacturing is also being blamed on China, its government says.

With tensions over nuclear weapons manufacturing, North Korea, China's longtime ally, has also been a point of dispute between the two world powers, as well as the island-nation of Taiwan.

Maryland Congressman, President Bush Discusses 'Peak Oil'

WASHINGTON, D.C. — District 6 Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R - Maryland) met with President George W. Bush at the White House on June 29 for an extensive discussion about peak oil — the end of cheap oil. Congressman Bartlett declined to discuss or characterize any of his private conversation with the President, but said that he was very happy about the meeting.

"Peak oil is not the end of oil, but it is the end of cheap oil," said Congressman Bartlett.

Congressman Bartlett has discussed peak oil extensively in the past seven weeks in a series of Special Order speeches to the U.S. House of Representatives. Copies of text, charts, and video of peak oil speeches and presentations are posted on Congressman Bartlett's website at <www.bartlett.house.gov>.

American Shell Oil scientist M. King Hubbert identified peak oil in the mid-1950s. He discovered oil field production follows a bell curve. It rises to a maximum—or peak—and then declines. At the top or peak of the curve, about half of the oil is extracted. The second half is harder and takes more time and money to produce.

"M. King Hubbert predicted U.S. oil production would peak in 1970. Oil production in the U.S. did peak in 1970

and has declined every year since then. Alaska and Gulf of Mexico oil slowed, but haven't and can't change that trend," said Bartlett in a press release. "America's largest oil field, Prudhoe Bay in Alaska, peaked in 1987 and now produces 75 percent less oil. Energy experts agree that America can never produce enough oil domestically to meet our current or future demand."

Bartlett said Hubbert predicted global peak oil in 2000. "He could not have known about the Arab oil embargo or the worldwide recession in the 1970s. However, there is no reason to doubt global peak oil will occur," added the congressman.

Bartlett said that energy experts agree that global peak oil is fast approaching as China and India increase oil production and military construction projects could effect the world shipping trade. He added that these foreign companies, which produce 77 percent of the oil, are nationalized companies in countries with governments that are undemocratic, hostile, or unstable.

"Many of these companies' operations are not transparent or independently verifiable. That poses both a national security and economic security threat," said Bartlett. "Forty percent of the world's oil is shipped through the Straits of Hormuz in the

Persian Gulf that is vulnerable to terrorist attacks. China increased its oil imports 25 percent last year. China is investing in oil projects around the globe and quickly building a blue water navy to secure oil shipping lanes. They built or bought 10-11 subs last year compared to 1 by the U.S."

ExxonMobil projects that world energy demand will increase 50 percent by 2030 and that 80 percent of that increase will occur in the developing world, added the congressman. China is predicted to increase its consumption by 100 percent and India by 129 percent. World oil discoveries peaked in the 1960s.

"You can't pump what you haven't found," said Bartlett. "Where will that additional oil production come from and at what price? Oil is now at \$60/barrel, the highest since 1983 adjusted for inflation. Earlier this year, Goldman Sachs predicted it would rise to more than \$100/barrel. That would top the 1980 price peak in the U.S."

Oil imports are also a major factor in America's balance of trade deficit, he said and cited U.S. Census Bureau Foreign Trade Statistics:

- Since 2000, Venezuela has received \$76 billion more from trade with the U.S., with a projected 19 percent increase in the trade deficit in 2005.

- Since 1995, Saudi Arabia has received \$61 billion more from trade

with the U.S., with a projected 8 percent increase in the trade deficit in 2005.

- Since the U.S. started importing more than exporting with Iran in 2000, they have received \$569 million more from trade with the U.S., with a projected 35 percent increase in the trade deficit in 2005.

Congressman Bartlett called for a national energy policy and a program on a scale of the Manhattan Project that developed the atomic bomb during World War II to prevent or mitigate the consequences of global peak oil.

"To avoid a really bumpy ride, what we need to do is dramatically reduce our consumption," he said. "The cheapest oil is oil we don't use. Second, we need to invest in greater energy efficiency. Third, we have to invest our limited resources of time and current energy sources to make rapid advances in the development of alternative, renewable sources of energy."

Congressman Bartlett urged the U.S. government to institute this policy now. "Doing nothing or doing too little too late will lead to a global economic and geopolitical tsunami with potentially devastating ramifications," he said. "I'm confident about the ability and ingenuity of Americans to overcome the national security and economic security challenges of global peak oil."



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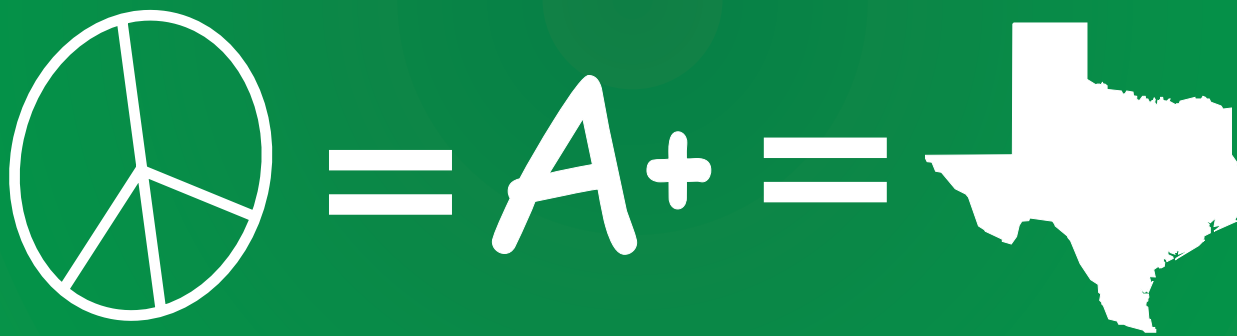
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Peacenik Training

Conference To Focus On Non-Violence In Schools



By NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — Texans may have a rich, dark history of war and violence, but one Texas-based activist group is doing a lot more than stuffing dandelions down gun-barrels to not only change the Lone Star State's reputation but also the mindset of its citizens. In fact, Texans for Peace is banking on the people's sense of pride, free spiritedness, and trust to create a more inhabitable social environment here.

"We're all for rugged individualism," said Alyssa Burgin, Texans for Peace press liaison. "I'm a fifth generation Texan. I descend from people who fought to make Texas free, but at the same time, things have changed in this country. Things have changed in this world. People don't need to be running around with guns to fight off their neighbors. It's a very different world. We have to evolve with it."

Texans for Peace, founded by sixth-generation Texan Charlie Jackson, will be holding its first Teaching Peace in Texas Conference on Friday, Aug. 5, at the Wyndham Hotel in Arlington. Travel details are available on TFP's website: <www.texansforpeace.org/Conference2005.htm>.

The goal of the conference is to teach educators from around Texas about new strategies and find materials for building more peaceful and violence-free Texas schools. A few workshop titles include "Creating a Culture of Peace," "Personal Peace," "Nonviolence Curriculum," "Teaching Strategies," and "Alternative Options for Youth."

Even though the conference focuses on professional educators, parents and other education officials can still find a spot there. The cost is \$55 per person, but seats are going fast for this one-day

event.

Burgin, who has worked in political campaigns since she was a teenager in the late 1970s, recently spoke with the LONE STAR ICONOCLAST'S Nathan Diebenow about the importance of the teaching non-violence tactics, the social-climate children will face in the future, and the ways Texans for Peace is thinking outside the box to connect the different parts of Texas with the peace movement.

.....
ICONOCLAST: Why are we having this conference?

ALYSSA BURGIN: We are having this conference because we feel there are several problems going on in our society that could be addressed by teaching nonviolence starting at an early age. This runs the gamut from gang violence, which seems to be on the increase at least in Texas, to problems as children age into adulthood and lack some of the skills that would get them through life, like empathy and conflict resolution. We feel that if we can reach educators, teachers from the elementary and secondary grades, we can help them understand how to give children these tools so they can help them throughout their lives.

I think right now in our society and in the world, this type of thing is more important than ever. I think that the young people of today are going to face an onslaught of changes and the accompanying choices they are going to have to make in their lives. It's as though life had proceeded at 33.3 rpm and someone is going to speed it up to 78, if I can use a very old analogy. I think that the kind of thing we're doing here is giving young people the knowledge and foresight to make those choices in our evolving society.

ICONOCLAST: I can totally relate to

that because when I was younger, I remember cute and fuzzy video games like Pac-Man and Dig Dug. Now we have these violent, military-style video games like Halo and James Bond: GoldenEye.

BURGIN: It's a lot to counter. Violence has crept into our society in so many ways. I mean, look at the contrast between our nation and other first world nations, like England or France. They don't have the problems we have with violence. They don't have problems we have with gun deaths or knife wounds or any other ills you find every Saturday night in the emergency rooms.

We need to find a way in this society to not get drawn into that. We have to start thinking about how. The atmosphere for violence breeds violence, and it's difficult to draw the line and say, "This violence is good, and that violence is bad." When you give young people the message that violence is okay in some circumstances, it's difficult to draw the line later. That's what we want to address more than anything.

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, and our indoctrination systems — I guess you'd call them — seem to be getting increasingly sophisticated and tied together every day over here. I mean, there's a lot more cross-marketing of these violent video games with other forms of media like movies, music, and cartoons.

BURGIN: There's more cross-marketing of video games and militarism because a lot of the tools recruiters use are not that different from what is used in video games. We're concerned about all of that. We're into young people knowing the difference between real violence and the type of violence in video games. We don't want recruiters to take advantage of that sort of thing, so we're really trying to help everyone maintain an eye on that.

We're aware of all the efforts right now in schools to inform parents, for example, of the No Child Left Behind Act, and we're aware of the efforts to have children opt out of the records keeping that the military hired someone to do. The military itself was told to not keep those records on young people, so they hired an agency to do it, and they felt that that was okay. Now there is a database of young people with their grades, their interests, their likes and dislikes, and their extracurricular activities, and presumably all this can be used for recruiting purposes. I see that as a giant invasion of privacy, and it's something much larger. The invasion of young people's lives by militarism is what we need to help put the breaks on.

This is a very tiny step, and we know we're not going to change history in one conference.

ICONOCLAST: It doesn't seem like a partisan issue. It's a family issue.

BURGIN: It's a privacy issue. Let me make my own decisions for my own children, not letting someone else try to come in to try to tell me what my children should be doing, especially when they're not 18 yet. It is a problem.

ICONOCLAST: It's like this is worse than getting spam in your email or credit card applications in the mail. Now you've got something to worry about.

BURGIN: Exactly.

ICONOCLAST: Well, who all is involved in putting this conference together?

BURGIN: It was Charlie Jackson's idea. Charlie, a sixth generation Texan, is the founder of Texans for Peace, which was founded about 11 years ago. I'm the outreach director and press secretary, and I had already discussed with him having some kind of conference that would deal with some of the issues like counter recruiting, the military recruitment portions of No Child Left Behind, etc. and we had thought we might address that in a conference, but frankly, he has such a background in education — he served as an advisor to several school boards on the implementation of Internet program that most secondary schools in Texas use now. He felt we could address much larger issues before an audience of educators, and I can see his point!

We have some committees composed of volunteers: Brenda Hardt, Peace Fellowship of the United Methodist Church, Brenham, has been assisting us, and Jim Crosby who teaches at St. Stephen's Episcopal church, Austin; Tomas Heikkala and Susan Van Haitsma of Non-Military Options for Youth, Austin; Dick Underhill, Veterans for Peace, chair, Austin chapter. So a lot of thoughts from many different sources is going into this.

ICONOCLAST: I'm glad to see there are persons with a religious background volunteering. Who do we have speaking or giving workshops at the conference?

BURGIN: We don't have all the work
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shops completely signed up yet, but here are some examples. We have Larry Brown of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. He's going to be presenting "Creating a Culture of Peace" series that FOR does, except he's going to do it in a way that makes it in a palatable form for students. He's going to show the educators how they can create that in their own schools.

We do have someone from the Interfaith Spirituality Center, The Reverend Auriana Judie Arkow, and she is presenting "Creating Kids that Care." That's a program specifically oriented to awaken the empathy and sympathy that lies at the heart of everybody. She's going to be addressing that with educators and I found just from talking to people that everyone is anxious to hear what she has to say.

Then, we have Gene and Peggy Helmick-Richardson. They are from the Dallas area and they are very well-known storytellers. They participate in Texas storytelling conferences. There's quite a culture in this. They want to present a seminar "Spreading the Word for Peace using Storytelling to Teach Peace Children. That more than anything else we'll be presented that will be geared to younger children rather than just talking to secondary-age children.

The Robert Muller School of Dallas, one of its coordinators is going to be presenting a workshop on the United Nations as a global model for conflict resolution. She's going to teach people on how to introduce that concept to children, the idea of working together to solve problems.

We hope to have a woman who is renowned for getting anti-gang initiatives through in San Antonio years ago, which has been responsible for a de-

crease in gang activity in San Antonio.

I just confirmed Arlene Inouye as our keynote speaker. She's also going to be speaking at the Veterans for Peace conference which will be going on in the Dallas area at the same time. Arlene is probably the best known educator against recruiting in schools and militarism in schools.

Several other workshops are in the works. They don't have titles yet, or they just haven't decided how best to approach this for each group. We have several different aspects of the peace community as well as conflict resolution and negotiation.

Some of the people who signed up, in fact, aren't even educators. Some of the people who will be attending are actually conflict negotiators or some sort of resolution dispute counselors, so they are going to be attending thinking that this will give them tips on how to work

in their professions.

ICONOCLAST: Great. Has the response been positive so far?

BURGIN: The response has been pretty good. We're aiming at a target at about 150, and we believe we'll make that.

ICONOCLAST: Has there been other such conferences like this around the country?

BURGIN: Yes, there have, and there are several educators and writers that deal with these areas, especially in regard to the introduction of nonviolence curricula. But I don't think they have been specifically geared to educators. I could be wrong, but most of the ones I've seen have been towards the community at large.

To be honest with you, we do not want to reach just the same people over and over again, which is a tendency all the time. You get what we call "The Choir."

We're looking for some people who are from the non-choir in this case and from the response we've gotten so far, from the people we've never heard of. I think that's going to happen.

ICONOCLAST: And these are from the educational community around Texas.

BURGIN: Right.

ICONOCLAST: That seems like a smart, thinking outside the box strategy.

BURGIN: That's exactly what we're trying to do because we'll never spread the word, so to speak, until we can reach people outside of our own circle. We're trying to think of every innovative working system that can get us outside our own circle. We just completed a 1,500 total person mailing. Part of that was to Catholic educators, and part of that was to Dallas teachers at their home addresses. We hope to be getting a terrific

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response from those because in the Dallas teachers case, they are in the vicinity and in the Catholic educators case. It's something that is a little different and it might catch their eye. We anticipate a good response from both of those.

ICONOCLAST: So the folks signing up so far, are they primarily teachers?

BURGIN: Yes, they are primarily teachers. A couple of parents are so interested in this issue that they would like to come as well, and we are certainly not going to discourage anyone. Then, as I said, dispute resolution counselors and negotiators who do this professionally just feel they will be learning from people to whom they have not been exposed.

ICONOCLAST: And it's a one-day conference.

BURGIN: It's bumping up to when school starts and we didn't think we could take a whole weekend out of people's lives.

ICONOCLAST: Has there been any discussion about this conference taking place next year?

BURGIN: We're in some degree planning it. We have been contacted by groups in San Antonio who want it in San Antonio next year.

ICONOCLAST: How did you personally become involved in Texans for Peace, which, of course, has led you to organizing this conference?

BURGIN: I have a partisan political background, working in local, state, and presidential campaigns, primarily in a press advance type of position.

I, too, wanted to think outside the box and I felt that perhaps more attention should be paid to causes, utilizing the same skills that came from campaigning in terms of marketing and press relations and field work. I've been working for Texans for Peace for 2½ years, and I feel that we've made a tremendous amount of progress at networking and picking up alliances all over the state.

I'm not saying that I'm entirely responsible for that, of course. Mr. Jackson is very charismatic and people really enjoy listening and talking with him, but I have been able to do some groundwork for the organization that

has put it a little bit higher in people's minds. He does most of the work on the website. He does a spectacular job. I maintain databases. We have an e-mailing list of well over 10,000 people.

We have outreach as far as El Paso where we visited fairly recently and Corpus Christi. We have a very active affiliate organization in Corpus Christi. We've also made connections in Houston, Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio. So we've been reaching out to all over the state. We plan on not only maintaining that but also upping the ante. We want to affiliate with more and more organizations and to help them learn what's out there, what's available for resources, and who can come out to speak with them and really tie the peace community in Texas together so that people don't feel quite as isolated.

ICONOCLAST: Can you give me some examples of how Texans for Peace is connecting the peace community together?

BURGIN: We've been entering into affiliate agreements. It's not technically an agreement, but an association that states that we would provide them various kinds of assistance. For example, a lot of peace groups are somewhat loosely formed, and perhaps they might need websites, and Charlie Jackson is superb with websites, so he will go build one for them. Or perhaps they need someone who knows something about maintaining press releases, and my particular area of specialization is press relations, so I write press releases for them and show them how to approach their local broadcasters.

So we've tried to be a resource for many peace organizations throughout the state, and we've helped them in ways such as organizing conferences and getting good speakers to actually show up and do presentations. That's been very welcomed, especially by some of the groups that are far out, like for example the El Paso peace group. They sometimes feel like they are on the other end of the Earth, like they aren't even a part of Texas. We spent a total of a week out there with the El Paso peace group, so we could get them back into the fabric of the peace movement. We've

been in contact with them ever since. We've had a good relationship with them.

I hope that we have taken this huge state and made it a little smaller in terms of peace movements, with understanding that they can work with other peace movements, that they are not alone, and that there are resources for all of them.

ICONOCLAST: Have there been any specific coordination efforts worked through Texans for Peace? In other words, does El Paso have any specific problems that the people face in terms of working for peace? Also is there any efforts coordinated between them for one big push or event for that highlights a peace issue like a protest or any other planned activity?

BURGIN: We have been able to organize specific rallies that did pull in members. The March 20 protest last year in Crawford is an example of that, and the Oct. 2 rally in Austin was an example of that. Our friends and associates came from all over the state, and we helped them get there. We're really proud of that. They felt so good joining with other peace activists.

At the same time, speaking of regional problems, it's interesting. For example, in El Paso, there's a situation very similar to San Antonio and at the same time very similar to Corpus Christi. They live in the shadow of a very large military installation, Fort Bliss, and of course, San Antonio is ringed by military bases. Corpus Christi has the naval stations. In all those communities, they feel that there's a pressure to be patriotic and support the troops, and if you're not supporting the troops, then there's something wrong with you.

All of these groups, El Paso, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, have worked together to some degree through us to get ideas about how to make it clear to the public that they are supporting the individuals who are the troops but at the same time not supporting the administration's foreign policy. That was something that has been talked about among these groups and talked about on these listservs, and we've been able to borrow ideas from one group and

hand them off to another. That has kept a constant flow of ideas.

Also, it's not a regional thing, but the thing that is becoming a current trend with all the groups is that we're trying to get information for a push for a counter-militarization and help in a counter-recruiting capacity. That's something that we hope to network some more with some of these groups, San Antonio, Austin, Corpus Christi, trying to get those rare resources that are available for these areas into Corpus Christi because the parents need to be armed with that information in the schools, and in San Antonio where they are just becoming really serious about it.

Frankly we're borrowing a lot of these ideas from people in Austin; but, once again, if we didn't exist, if we didn't have these types of information, our friends in Corpus Christi wouldn't know about it. San Antonio wouldn't know about it. It's amazing. You'd think that since the Internet is out there, and there's so much technology — certainly, everybody knows about Non-Military Options For Youth, a wonderful organization in Austin. But, still, I introduce that topic to our affiliates in Corpus Christi and San Antonio, and they have never heard of these organizations. Now they do, and they are making plans for us and working with Dick Underhill with Veterans for Peace to put on seminars and teach people about the rules and regulations on how to get into schools and how to work in an effective counter-recruiting program.

That's the kind of things we're about. We're trying to spread information through this large network.

ICONOCLAST: These specific regions you're talking about are nesting grounds for militarism, like you were saying before violence breeds violence, right? The peace movement is, of course, trying to inform potential soldiers — aka children — about the seduction of the military. That makes perfect sense.

BURGIN: Well, I think what's happening is in those three areas I named is that they have a large minorities, and

Continued On Next Page

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• PEACENIK TRAINING ... Continued From Page 5

socio-economically, they have many who are not prospering in today's economic reality. A lot of the children of those put-upon parents don't think they can go to college. They don't see the options. They see the recruiters come in constantly, and they think, "Wow, that could get me out of here. I could go to this country or that country. I could see the world, and I could get money for college." The whole idea about Non-Military Options for Youth is to show what the other options are.

A lot of kids in Corpus Christi, El Paso, San Antonio are on the down side of today's particular economy which, let's face it, is opening, if anything else, class warfare. A lot of kids are in the lower income bracket and in years past, those have been the areas most picked off by recruiters. That's where they target. Let's face it. There probably aren't that many successful recruiters in Alamo Heights High School which is the upper end high school in San Antonio or West Lake High School in Austin. They're not going to be successful in those areas because those kids think they know what their futures are. They're going off to college. Soon, they'll become white collar professionals. Kids in the barrios on the west side of San Antonio or the many poverty-stricken areas of El Paso, or some of the lower socio-economic areas of Corpus Christi, those kids think they don't have a future, of course, because they have role models right in front of them on those military bases. They see there's a way to presumably prosper. There's a way to get money for school. There's a way to advance in life. They see it right in front of them.

ICONOCLAST: It's great that Texans for Peace is out there coordinating for all these groups to share this kind of

information with everyone in Texas.

BURGIN: There's no reason for activists to keep re-inventing the wheel, if it's already been on the road for several years. We hope to prevent that kind of waste in manpower. We want to make it a little less difficult to export activism around the state. I talk to people all the time in various towns, and they just don't know there's a Veterans for Peace or they just don't know Veterans Against the War is still around. It's part of the old Vietnam-era organizations, or they just didn't know there were peoples trying to do something about recruitment. I see that all the time, and in on way it's very discouraging. I think, "My gosh, there's just too much news out there and people can't possibly absorb it all."

But at the same time, after visiting town after town, the one thing I do hear when I get groups together to talk about things and in some cases talk about organizing, I hear people say over and over again, "I thought I was the only person who felt that way." And it's a very powerful moment to be in a room where you've got 12 or 15 of those people, and they all get that enlightened look at the same time and realize they're not alone and they are part of something much larger. That kind of empowerment is probably the reason why I came to help because I love seeing people together learning that they are part of something bigger than themselves and that there are common human goals. As long as I keep seeing that, I cannot stop. I cannot tell you how many times that has happened in the last three years. It's just music to my ears.

INFO

Burgin, aburgin@texansforpeace.org
www.texansforpeace.org/Conference2005.htm

Top Bush Advisor Rove Connected In Plame/CIA Case

NEW YORK — Top White House advisor Karl Rove's lawyer confirmed recently that Rove's name was in the notes of a reporter accused of leaking the name of an undercover CIA agent. Democrats have urged President Bush to remove his advisor from his place of power.

Rove has refused requests for interviews about his role in the case.

That two reporters refusing to reveal their sources in connection with the outing of a CIA agent.

Reporter Judith Miller of THE NEW YORK TIMES was ordered to jail this week for refusing before a federal grand jury to reveal her sources in connection with the outing of a CIA agent. Another reporter, Matt Cooper, has indicated that he will reveal his source.

Rove's lawyer insists that his client was not the key source who revealed

Plame's identity as a CIA agent. Critics imply that Rove could be charged with perjury if he lied to a grand jury.

MSNBC analyst Lawrence O'Donnell broke the Rove/Cooper link before Independence Day.

Valerie E. (Plame) Wilson, the ousted undercover agent, is the wife of Joseph C. Wilson IV, an outspoken critic of the Bush administration. Her name was mentioned in THE WASHINGTON POST, in a syndicated column by Robert Novak on July 14, 2003.

Plame, as she is known, has returned to the CIA after a year's unpaid leave in a role officials would not describe. Novak is not facing jail time.

The disclosure of a CIA officer's employment undercover, which started the current leak investigation, is a violation of the Intelligence Identities Protection Act of 1982.

Hussein's Top Lawyer Quits Defense Team

AMMAN, Jordan — The chief lawyer on Saddam Hussein's legal team, Ziad al-Khasawneh, quit last week, citing differences with some of the team's American members who he claimed were attempting to tone down his expressions of support for Iraqi resistance against the U.S.-led presence in Iraq.

Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark is one of the Americans on the Jordan-based legal team, which also includes 1,500 volunteers and at least 22 lead lawyers who come from several countries, including the United States, France, Jordan, Iraq, and Libya.

Hussein's trial has not been set.

He was captured by U.S. troops in December 2003.

Al-Khasawneh took Mohammed al-Rashdan's place as top lawyer on the team last November, after the dictator's family dismissed him. A prominent Jordanian lawyer, al-Rashdan was accused of seeking fame for participating in the case.

GOP Senator Asks Big Pharma To Temporarily Stop New Drug Ads

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.) last week called on the pharmaceutical industry to curtail the multibillion-dollar advertising campaigns used to peddle prescription drugs directly to consumers.

The GOP senator, who is a non-practicing heart and lung transplant surgeon, says that the drug advertisements add to the nation's rising health care costs. He not only wants a two-year

moratorium on advertising for new drugs but also a government audit to determine how drug ads have affected the way Americans are treated for illness.

The U.S. government made television ads possible in 1997, and since then, ads have increased to the tune of drug companies spending \$4.1 billion in advertisements last year.

Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association promised to develop a code of conduct for advertising. Head of this industry group former representative Billy Tauzin (R-La.) called this a "free-speech issue" adding, though, that these ads need to be adjusted.

Frist, who might retire from the Senate at the end of 2006, has not ruled out a run for the White House in 2008.

Corrections, Clarifications

DBI Plant Clarification

CRAWFORD — In the June 22, 2005, edition of the LONE STAR ICONOCLAST, an error was made in the article "Exporting Jobs: Delta Brands, Inc. Says Ex-Im Bank-U.S. Ignores Small Companies."

The reference to a plant currently being constructed in Brownsville, Texas using the BESTRIP process should have read "A site for the construction of a plant using the BESTRIP process in Brownsville, Texas is presently being negotiated."

This clarification was verified on Tuesday, July 5.

The Iconoclast apologises for any confusion or harm from these misstatements



So, how exactly did Bruce Wayne become Batman? After accidentally falling into an empty well as a child and being attacked by bats, and then witnessing the murder of both of his parents when he was approximately 10-years-old, young master Bruce is a psychological wreck. Upon reaching adulthood, he explores the outer reaches of the criminal mind by traveling to Asia where he encounters a taskmaster and spiritual guru who teaches him how to conquer his fears, achieve justice and become legend. Bruce returns to the states a very changed man, intent on cleaning up the crime in Gotham. He does so by altering his persona with the help of his trusty butler Alfred and a high-tech expert employed at his father's old company.

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Climate Control, London Bombings, Live Aid Concert Rock G-8 Summit

GLENEAGLES, Scotland — A coordinated bombing that hit London last week temporarily overshadowed this year's Group of Eight nations economic summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, where the United States and the other seven nations disagreed on global warming issues but agreed to deliver aid to rid Africa of poverty and achieve peace in Palestine.

A double-decker bus in central London was blown up last Thursday during the morning rush hour; within a minutes of three other bombs detonating in London subways. As a result, hundreds of people were injured, and on Friday, 49 people were reported dead.

A U.K Cabinet minister said that a "strong possibility" existed that al-Qaida or terrorist sympathizers were responsible. Current and former American counterterrorism experts, however, pointed to an Internet claim by "The Secret Organization of al-Qaida in Europe." Local law enforcement says that although it has yet to make an arrest in the case, it has many leads and found that the bombs weighed less than 10-pounds each and were made from easy-to-get plastic explosives.

In light of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, the summit of eight countries — the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Ger-

many, Italy, Japan, and Russia — was already under strict security.

Unrelated to the London bombings, protest violence broke out last Wednesday near Gleneagles, which later caused police in riot gear to shut in some 5,000 activists at a camp several miles from the world leaders' meeting.

Undaunted, the G-8 leaders announced a \$50 billion in aid for Africa, as well as renewed the commitment of keeping a peace-force there and endorsed the cancellation of debt in 18 of the world's poorest nations. Earmarked separately was about \$9 billion to help sustain peace between the Palestinians and Israelis.

These plans pleased the organizers of the Live 8 concerts held the weekend prior in various points all over the world. The purpose of the concerts, organized by Nobel Peace Prize nominee Bob Geldof, were to raise public awareness of poverty in Africa.

President Bush announced the week prior that plans to double Africa aid to more than \$8.6 billion by 2010. Critics say, though, that Bush's promise included current pledges which are about \$6 billion less of the amount needed to reach the U.S. share of the \$50 billion.

Bush said that he wants to cut export subsidies that wealthy nations allocate



baglecartoons.com

to their farmers which depress agriculture exports of poorer nations as a path to help these impoverished nations.

As summit host, Prime Minister Tony Blair failed to persuade the United States and the other countries to implement reductions of greenhouse gases, more than a few scientists think attribute to global warming. The United States has refused to ratify an international agreement that took effect February, outlining tar-

gets for reducing greenhouse gases.

President Bush said that following the Kyoto treaty would not only be bad for the U.S. economy but also disregards developing nations. Bush vowed to continue to support a reduction in U.S. emissions by roughly 18 percent. The world's second-leading greenhouse polluter is China.

The G-8 leaders also pledged universal access to AIDS treatment.

Veterans Group Issues 'Declaration of Impeachment'

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A national veterans' organization early last week issued a "Declaration of Impeachment" and announced it is beginning an online petition to remove President Bush from office for crimes committed during the invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Using the same language as the original "Declaration of Independence," Veterans For Peace cited many of the same reasons to remove George Bush that Thomas Jefferson cited to separate from King George of England. And in a modern version of the signing of the Declaration, VFP announced the posting of its online impeachment petition.

The veterans' Declaration of Impeachment came to the same conclusion as Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, when it declared "— it is the Right of the People — it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security."

Veterans For Peace is a national organization founded in 1985, with 123 chapters across the country.

To sign the online petition, or to read the "Declaration of Impeachment" and VFP's documented case for removing George Bush, go to its website.

INFO
www.VeteransForPeace.org

Senate Green Lights Nuclear Bomb Study

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Senate recently okayed the Energy Department to study a "bunker buster" nuclear bomb the Bush administration wants to explore that would destroy underground enemy targets.

Senate Democrats said the study would encourage other countries to create similar new age nukes.

By the Pentagon's estimate, 70 countries are attempting to protect their own military assets from airborne threats with deeper bunkers.

Negotiations are expected between the House and Senate because the House version of the bill does not contain funds to study the "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator."

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Those Crazy Survivors

Challenges, immunity, rewards.

The show is Survivor. Who will be the last man (or woman) standing. Who will win \$1 million?

A slew of Gilligans are placed on an island or in a forest and each week someone is voted off. The rest survive with the bare necessities...until there is but one left. Reality TV that's unreal.

Everytime I've seen this show, I can't help but think of my grandfather and one of the first things that Smith Media attempted to market many years ago: plans illustrating how to build an old timey version of a humane bird or small animal trap — one that uses sticks put together as a "trigger," that when nudged causes a box or other cover to

drop around the animal.

It's sort of like the old stick-and-string contraption, but you don't have to monitor the trap to pull the string at just the right moment. You just set the trap and leave.

On Survivor, the campers moan, groan, and whine because they are starving, not realizing that they usually have on hand the tools and materials needed to build one of these crude but efficient traps.

Ah, to dine on rat caviar and possom gizzards. What bliss!

You'd think that with the brain power that exists among residents of the two Survivor tribes, someone would be able to figure out how to whittle one of the mechanisms that trigger such a trap, and, *voila!*...food.

We called our instruction sheet "Granddaddy Smith's Bird Traps," which

The Trenchwalker

By W. Leon Smith



relates to a device he was taught to build as a boy living in rural Central Texas. It was a technique handed down generation to generation, perhaps from his great-great-grandfather Abner, to his great-grandfather Newman, to his grandfather John Henry, to his father, Mel, then to him, Jessie James Smith, and on down.

Anyway, in the event you are next chosen to appear on Survivor, let me pass on to you the plans, which, of course, can be modified to fit the size of the box or other enclosure you use to entrap the varmint.

It's really quite simple to build.

Think of the number "4" since this is what the trigger portion looks like when set up.

The mechanism consists of three sticks of wood. I have them labeled in the accompanying illustrations as the "trigger," the "post," and the "spring," which is somewhat descriptive of what they do.

The three pieces of wood, after being whittled to the correct dimensions, are balanced into a shape resembling the number "4," with the bait either placed onto the free end of the longer piece or on the ground directly beneath it. The edge of the box rests on the top edge of the "spring," which cocks the device for action.

Whenever a bird or small animal arrives at the scene and slightly moves the free end of the longer piece — by bumping against it, moving it while taking bait from it, or perching on it — the mechanism collapses, freeing the box to fall and entrap the bird or small animal.

Enjoy!

To Set It Up:

STEP 1

Take the "post" in your left hand and position it on level ground in a vertical (90-degree) position.

STEP 2

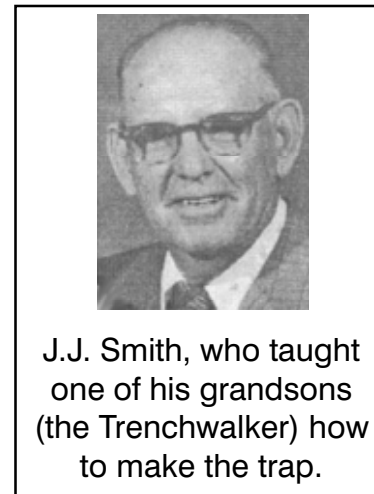
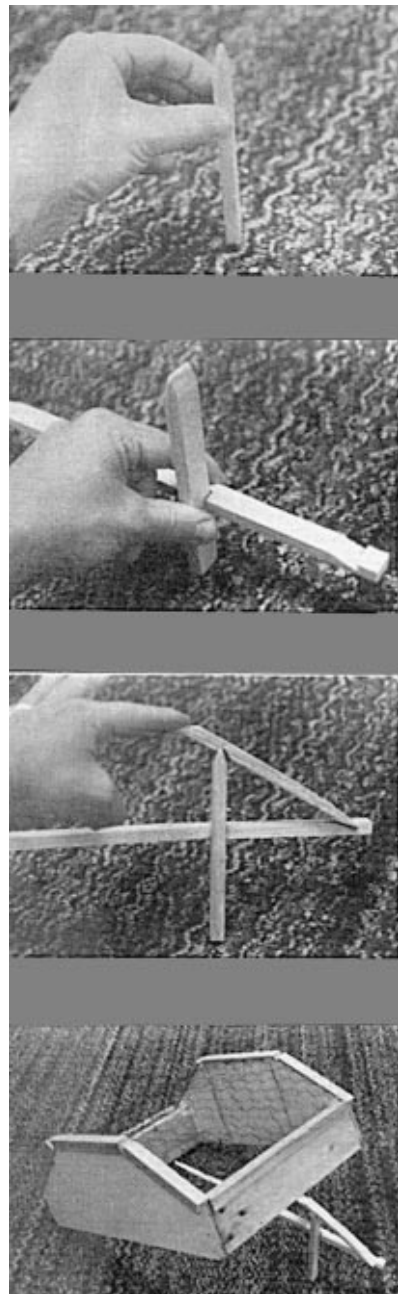
Position the "trigger" horizontally to the "post," as pictured at left. Note that the "side notch" on the "trigger" slides onto the "post" about mid-way, and the "top-side notch" on the end of the "trigger" is on the right, with the pointed end to the left.

STEP 3

Insert the pointed end of the "spring" (in which both sides are angled to a point) into the "top-side notch" on the "trigger." The notched side of the "spring" should be in the "down" position. Now, place the notch on the "spring" over the pointed end of the "post" and secure in place, putting downward pressure on the highest point of the "spring."

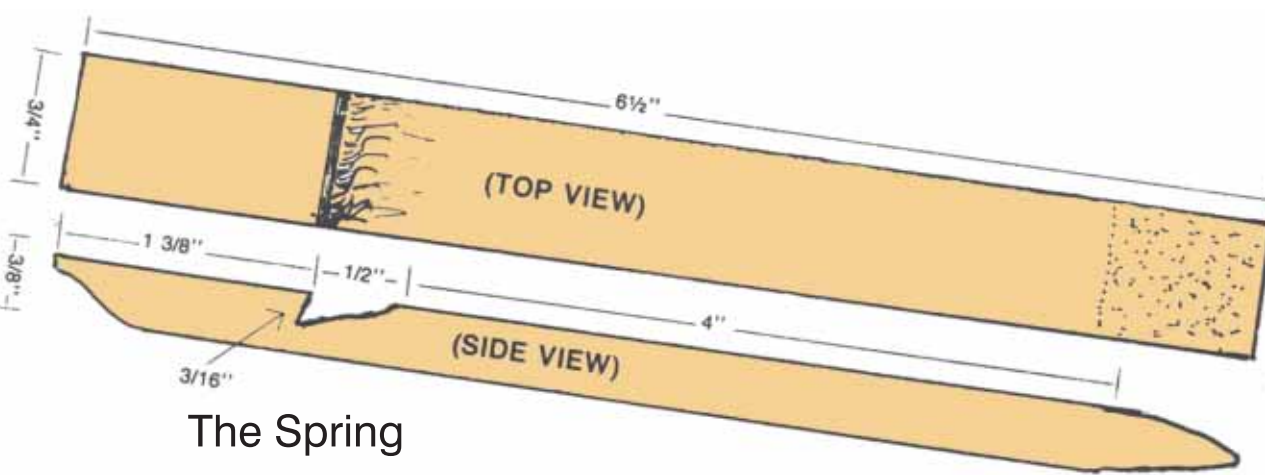
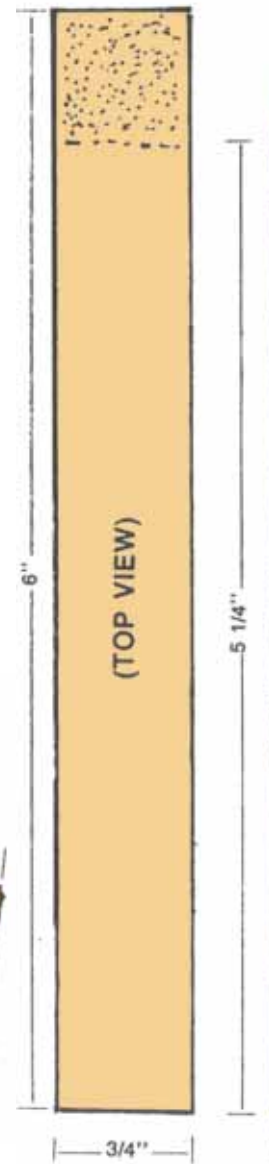
STEP 4

As you keep downward pressure on the highest point of the "spring," carefully place the edge of the box onto the pressure point, centering it to hold it in balance. Now, carefully edge the "post" and "trigger" notch connection (step 2 photo) apart, so that the trigger mechanism remains in place but is barely being held that way. The "trigger" and "spring" notch connection (right-most point, third photo) can also be slightly placed askew to make an even finer hair-trigger, so that the smallest movement on the long pointed end of the "trigger" will cause the mechanism to collapse

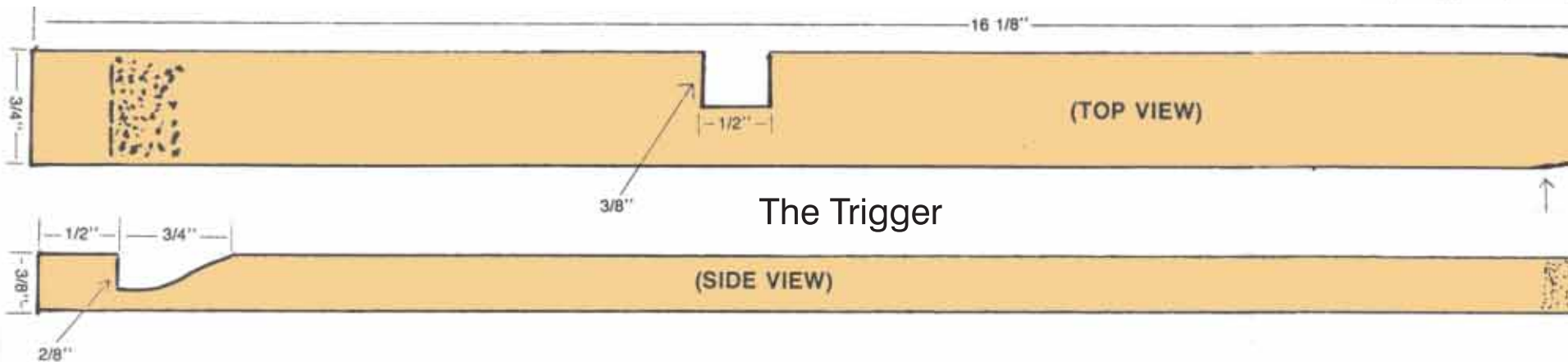


J.J. Smith, who taught one of his grandsons (the Trenchwalker) how to make the trap.

The Post



The Spring



The Trigger

DATELINE:
Crawford
Hometown of the President of the United States

'Cost of War' Documentary Showing Set July 19

Several Events Pending
At Crawford Peace House

WACO — The documentary The Cost of War is scheduled for Tuesday, July 19, at 6 p.m., at the Waco Central Library. Snacks will be served at 5:30.

This showing will benefit The Iraq Veterans Assistance Fund.

The Friends of Peace is having a house cleanup - garden clean-up/weeding/mulching day of fun at the Crawford Peace House on Saturday, July 9, beginning at 9 a.m.

"Bring your gloves and a dish to

share and join us," said a spokesman.

On July 16, the Crawford Peace House is expecting the Pastors for Peace Caravan as guests.

On Aug. 6, a Japanese survivor of Hiroshima will stop by for a short visit at the Crawford Peace House after speaking at the Veterans for Peace Convention in Dallas on that weekend. He will be en route to Austin to speak at the University of Texas. This is the 60-year anniversary of that infamous event.

For information on the Veterans for Peace Convention, visit <http://www.veteransforpeace.org/>.

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Rallies At Nuke Lab Mark Atomic Bomb Anniversary Aug. 6, 9

LIVERMORE — A rally and march is scheduled at the Livermore Nuclear Weapons Lab at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 6. Another non-violent action will follow on Tuesday, Aug. 9, at 8 a.m. Aug. 6 and 9, 2005 mark the 60th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States.

Thousands of people are expected to descend at four central U.S. nuclear weapons sites to call for an end to the development and production of nuclear warheads.

A Hibakusha, an atomic bomb survivor from Japan, will address the gathering. Drumming at the gates will be provided by Clan Dyken.

"Nonviolence has always been a core value of the anti-nuclear movement,"

said a spokesperson. "Details about the nonviolence guidelines and a complete list of sponsors and endorsers are available at <www.trivalleycares.org> and <www.wslfweb.org>."

The Bay Area's Livermore Lab is one of the three national laboratories that serve as the brain of the U.S. nuclear weapons complex, which today is modernizing and developing nuclear weapons to support U.S. wars of empire.

The lab is located at William Payne Park, 5800 Patterson Pass Rd., Livermore, Calif. BART shuttles will be provided by the Peace and Freedom Party.

For more information or to volunteer, call Tri-Valley CAREs; Western States Legal Foundation; and Livermore Conversion Project.



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Mind Over Matter

When we were spraying mesquite the other morning . . . should have gotten out earlier, but the closer to dawn I awoken, the more slowly I move. So the day was burning hotter by the minute. The big pump/spray bottle of diesel laced with poison was becoming heavier, and my shoulders were beginning to ache.

Chigger-phobic that I am, I was dressed in long pants and long sleeves, slathered with bug spray and old-fashioned sulphur. I had on very serious boots. Even the sun block on my face seemed to make the heat more oppressive. Special, heavy-duty rubber gloves protected me from the poison spray, and as I felt my hands and fingers growing damp, the cotton lining of the gloves became soggy, squishy even. Let me tell you, this was quite an exquisite sensation.

(If I'm not mistaken, I believe expensive spas convince people to pay good money for a similar treatment. If they don't already, they will certainly do so soon. But if you ask me, the hand sweat-

ing torture probably had more in common with the acquisition of fungus by soldiers in any number of different jungles in various parts of the world). The cap, sunglasses (for eye protection) and the bandana covering my mouth and nose (against noxious, wind-blown droplets of poison) only made my discomfort greater. Even in winter, I would have been toasty in this get-up!

—Just a little more to do, I thought, and pressed on. Zack, who always moves faster than I, was busy covering more than half the area we mapped out. The blue stain we added to the spray marked the trees we treated.

Suddenly, I announced, "What fun this is," hoping that saying it aloud would make it so. And indeed, with every difficult job, there truly is that wonderful moment to which one looks forward—when the chore is finished, when one can view the great accomplishment—and revel in it. So in each awful job, there is that time to which we look forward, when it will end and results will be seen. However, that

Independence Fizz

The Fourth of July has been over for over a week, and I'm still trying shake my sadness.

The Independence Day is like the only time practically all Americans come together as one party because of something other than a major national catastrophe, like a hurricane, terrorist attack, or the death of a president.

After the last parade float rolled down Main Street USA, partisanship takes over, and everyone goes back to their own corners for the rest of the year:

The Lefties return to advocating their independence from multinational corporations, and the Righties strive for their own brand of self-sufficiency.

But what if we could all sit down over a nice, cool drink that meets everybody's needs?

What if there was only a very simple recipe that we can agree on that helps us grow closer with our families and friends, as well?

Well, there is. The Collins Family Tree Farm and Sugarhouse of Vermont calls it the "Maple Milk Fizz," but I prefer calling it "Independence Fizz." Either way, it brings the best of the U.S. into a healthy liquid form that relies on a Star-Spangled natural resource and Red, White, and Blue ingenuity.

All you need is a 1/4 cup of organic maple syrup, one quart of milk, and a 12 oz. bottle of ginger ale. Add maple syrup to the milk, mix very well (perhaps use a blender). Pour into tall glasses (about 2/3 full), and fill the remainder with ginger ale. The recipe makes six 8-oz. glasses.

Environmentalists will like it because tapping into the source of the syrup, the sugar maple tree, does no permanent damage to the tree; only about 10 percent of the tree's sap is collected each year, and one tree may yield sap for 100 years or more. A much friendlier alternative to burning sugarcane fields wouldn't you say?

Nationalist-minded conservatives with a flare for capitalism will like it, too, because maple syrup is produced nowhere else on Earth, except north-

The Rubber Cement Index

By Nathan Diebenow



eastern North America. Low supply equals high demand for this source of national pride, right?

Family-values activists will like it because it's an easy recipe to teach children self-sufficiency and healthy, clean living:

Maple syrup has about the same calories as refined cane sugar, 50 calories per tablespoon. Yet pure maple syrup also contains significant amounts of potassium (35 mg. per T.), calcium (21 mg. per T.), small amounts of iron and phosphorus, and trace amounts of B-vitamins. Its sodium content is a low 2 mg. per tablespoon.

Milk also does a body good, or so I'm told. I prefer soy milk.

Culture jammers will like "The Fizz" because drinking this drink not only wards off "evil" soft drink manufacturers, but its main ingredient — pure maple syrup — is also a substitute for processed sugar in other everyday recipes.

For each cup of granulated sugar, substitute 1-1/2 cups of maple syrup, decrease the amount of liquid in the recipe by 2 to 4 T, add 1/4 to 1/2 tsp. of baking soda, and decrease the oven temperature by 25°F.

Martin and Jean Collins of Collins Tree Farm and Sugarhouse say, "Adding the baking soda helps neutralize the slight acidity of the syrup and allows the batter to rise properly. No need to add baking soda if the recipe calls for buttermilk, sour milk, or sour cream because they also act as neutralizers."

For a list of prices for the Collins' syrup, email them.

INFO

Collins Sugarhouse,
collins@sover.net
www.sover.net/~collins

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.

seeing of results moment would be delayed for weeks or months in this case, so instant gratification wasn't going to be the goal or the reward here. Mesquite is tortuously slow to die.

Still, we did feel we were doing a good thing for the land, sort of like Johnny Appleseed in reverse. He planted. We visited slow destruction. He was a visionary, a giver of sustenance. We were the grim reapers. And like Johnny, the fruits of our labors would be a long time coming. (Faith is a wonderful thing).

I even had Zack going along (or good-naturedly pretending to go along) with my Tom Sawyer approach to manual labor. He chimed in that it was indeed a beautiful day, blah, blah, blah, yada, yada, yada. Now that I think back on it, I am quite certain he was humoring me. (What could it hurt?) We were both buying into it as well as could be expected, for lack of other, better diversions. (It was an effort, but we are nothing if not tenacious). We were really doing well with this little pretense, but like I said at the beginning of this column, mind over matter can only go so far.

The well-constructed pretense began to shatter when I hit the bull nettles at full throttle. The poison barbs jabbed right through the fabric of my heavy jeans. I assumed I had been attacked by some sort of thorny thing because of the tall grass and weeds. I mean, with all the sticker-y stuff out here, what are the odds of NOT running into something bad? (As usual, I was grateful it didn't have fangs).

I don't recall seeing a swarm of ground wasps (like Zack found last year), although I might have missed them. I was moving fast and getting a little punchy from the heat. (Any fool who can convince herself that spraying mesquite in 90+ degree heat, dressed like she's fleeing a toxic explosion, has to be a little, ah, "touched").

At the first sting, I should have made a nosedive for the ammonia in the truck. But it wasn't that big a deal. I decided to treat it later. (Ammonia often will counteract an allergic reaction from insects and plants, if used rather quickly, I wonder if it would have made a difference this time?) However, I stayed on task.

Once you get into spraying mesquite, it's a little like picking pecans or pulling weeds. (I've done a bit of those in my time, too). You just don't want to quit. You keep looking for that next one, in some sort of repetitive task/ hypnotic trance. Like it's a challenge or a game. I think this is probably the mind's way to help you survive unpleasant jobs, to get you through them. So I ignored the stinging on my legs, didn't even mention it, much less whine and moan about it, to my credit. (I hope I get points for this. What's another scratch or puncture out here? Might as well "suck it up" and go on. Besides, when I complain, I often get teased and called "The Little Princess." I do not much like this). Before long, we finished spraying all the trees we could locate in that pasture. Well, the truth is that Zack had to finally insist I put the sprayer in the truck bed and look away—so I couldn't find "just one more".

By nightfall, when I finally had time to notice, the stinging in both legs had

turned to pain and itching, and the little stabs had grown to big, red-hot knots, dead ringers for wasp stings. I started to wonder if ground wasps had indeed attacked me while I wasn't looking. Perhaps they had been just below my radar range, what with the cap, glasses, bandana, etc. (I have been known to run into low, overhanging branches, sloping ceilings, hanging plants, etc. when wearing a cap with a bill. Even with all this experience, I have still not learned the intricacies of navigating the world with headgear).

I have had a few folks tell me that the Texas bull nettle can have the nasty effect I experienced. (In true Genie fashion, I have sometimes claimed I wished to experience many things in life. Now this. Gee, lucky me. I meant the GOOD THINGS. Well, supposedly that which does not kill us makes us stronger. Do you ever wonder who makes up these pithy sayings?)

It's amazing that a plant can produce such an absolutely lovely blossom and have such a grouchy disposition. (It reminds me of a handsome man or a beautiful woman who could eat nails for breakfast. We all know at least one of those). —Funny how nature protects some of its loveliest creations with the nastiest accompanying traits. Think of the rose. And what about that butterfly with the bitter taste? Birds learn to steer clear of it. Adaptation and survival of the fittest are amazing things. (Ain't nature grand?)

For 24 hours after my legs swelled up in knots, I used ice and kept a low level of antihistamine coursing through my bloodstream, despite the mind-numbing reaction I hate. (This was the first "day off" I have had in recent memory, and the meds left me too "out of it" to enjoy my leisure). Like a lot of folks, I don't do well with even the mildest over-the-counter drugs. I take something in desperation and then end up vowing never again to take antihistamine (or aspirin or whatever) again unless I really, really must. Then I take it again, the next time, and am always sorry.

The tiring effect of the meds wasn't noticeable, of course, when I slept, but I fought drowsiness and exhaustion all the next day. I was afraid not to take the pills, worried the allergic reaction might be even worse without them. Even on half a pill, I had to nap, simply had no choice. (The effects of the stings or bites might have had a deleterious effect as well). And the ironic thing was, the swelling didn't seem to go down much until it was good and ready, meds or no meds. The human body is an amazing thing. It will often cure itself of most things in seven to 10 days max, if we are patient. (Not always, so don't take this as medical advice). So as usual with me, the "cure" was probably worse than the "disease."

I tried my reality altering approach (Gee, this is a beautiful day, etc.) for the time the knots remained on my legs, but with only minimal success. The best I can say for myself was that I didn't whine an inordinate amount. (—As if it would have done me any good). It's hard to get sympathy from someone whose injuries are always worse than mine. Zack's reactions to seeing one of my "Little Princess" "boobos" is like Crocodile Dundee showing the thugs his huge knife. Zack's "boobos" are always bigger.

Like I said before, mind over matter only goes so far. You can try to trick yourself by attempting to create your own reality — if it helps— sort of like Tom Sawyer (although he did have ulterior motives and didn't really believe it himself). But it's OK with me if you whine and moan and complain about a bad job or during a bad day. I promise I will be supremely sympathetic.

Starving Children Make Lousy TV

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Wasn't for outlaws, all these lawmen would have to git jobs."

Terrorists seem to be Neighbor Bush's best friends.

Every time he sinks in the polls, they rise to the occasion.

With his popularity at its lowest point since . . . well, since just before the attack on the World Trade Center, destined to fall even lower after his pending Big Money scuttle of the G8 meeting in Scotland, suddenly there is an attack in London, obliging CNN and all the fascist networks to promote our WAR-TIME PRESIDENT.

Salute, you unpatriotic bastards! Never mind that he's losing the war. And that this president doesn't fight wars.

He has people who do that for him. Even back when he wore his daddy's uniform.

Go Guard. Just don't expect the deal that George Junior got.

If he were in the Air Guard now, he wouldn't be in Alabama (if he ever was.) He'd be on extended tour in Iraq.

But Neighbor Bush has lots of war-

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



rior friends.

Even if they are on the wrong side. The London bombings happened just in time to take the heat off a president who ignored our roasting planet.

He also stalled aid to Africa amounting to .7 percent of each country's economy by 2015. We currently give .16 percent, less than any other G8 country:

Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and us.

The U.S. also sunk debt forgiveness wherein money that could feed dying children goes to pay interest to banks and insurance companies, and an end to farm export subsidies, through which African nations literally pay to starve themselves.

He wants to work with the European Union to end farm subsidies by 2010.

European Union?

What European Union?

Would that be the one without a constitution or a governing body?

He also wants to work with John Wayne, but I doubt he can make that deal happen either.

Then there's debt forgiveness. Let's see . . . what would the son of a Midland banker have to say about debt forgiveness?

But we got wall-to-wall live color coverage of blown up people in a city we won't visit anymore, and lots of shoulders-up bureaucrats babbling about being suspicious of backpacks on all the mass transit that this administration opposes.

Buy a car if you're afraid to ride the train.

And some high-priced gasoline while

you're at it.

And now, back to our program: WERE-TERRORISTS OF LONDON! Starring Dick "Lon" Cheney, Don Rumsfeld and Condoleeza Rice as Hattie McDaniel.

This particular story couldn't have worked out better to serve the political fortunes of Neighbor Bush if it had been orchestrated by a closet queen propaganda minister who ought to be facing treason charges for outing an American undercover spy.

Meanwhile, regardless of the rock show cliché, a child in Africa dies of poverty every three seconds.

Twice as many in the next five minutes as were killed in London.

That is not to diminish the horror in London that we, the audience, found so aggrandizing for Neighbor Bush.

It's just that those African children don't make good TV.

Editorial OP/ED

Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

House Version Of School Finance Gives Tax Cuts To Wealthy

In keeping with the Republican mandate to foist additional taxes on the poor and middle classes while cutting taxes for the rich, the Texas House voted 70-69 last Thursday to join Governor Rick Perry's tax scam.

The result?

- Eighty percent of Texans would pay more in taxes.
- Those earning \$100,000 or more yearly would receive a tax break

This week is the Senate's turn.

The tax measure, on the surface, was to reduce school property taxes by raising sales and business taxes while adequately funding education in the state.

In reality it is a give-away to the rich and uses our children to do it.

The tax is actually business-regressive.

Raising the sales tax by a penny, to 7.25 percent, would put Texas with the highest sales tax rate in the nation. This goes against the grain of promoting commerce.

Business and tourists will stay away in droves.

Additional taxes are:

- Cigarettes (an additional \$1 in tax per pack).
- Cars and boats (an increase to 7.35 percent)
- Bottled water (subject to sales tax). Meanwhile the state has cut its funding for Texas cities to produce clean drinking water.

If the House of Representatives is indeed a reflection of the citizens of Texas, then Texans must want the haves to have more while robbing the have-nots.

Texans must want the middle class to continue to vanish among the poor.

Texans must think that unfair taxation is proper.

Texans must want the rich to get a free ride, while the poor pay the way for bigger business with less service.

Texans must believe in welfare for the rich.

Texans who believe that children are our infrastructure for the future must believe that the funding mechanism should remain incomplete in that the top economic echelon should not pay its part to finish the job.

Texans must believe that some children deserve better schools than others because of students' financial station in life

Do Texans believe this?

They do, if the measure is deciphered according to who they elect as legislators.

We contend that the House is not a reflection of the way most residents of this state think. If it is, then the future of education will remain in the shadows.

— W. Leon Smith



THE CHISHOLM TRAIL COWBOY CORNER



By Billy Cate

Come along, boys, and listen to my tale,
I'll tell you all my troubles on the ol' Chisholm Trail.
Come a-ti yi yippee yippee yea yippee yea
Come a-ti yi yippee yippee yea



& Jack Carlton

The Wild 'Moss Horn' Longhorn

Shanghai Pierce, owner of a million-acre ranch near Palacios, Texas, trailed 2,400 head of the wildest breed of the Texas Longhorn up the Chisholm Trail. In 1866, lightning caused a stampede in Southwestern Johnson County resulting in the loss of 200 beeves.

The "Moss Horn" longhorn had been multiplying undisturbed for hundreds of years along the coastal regions of South Texas. Their name arose from a trait limited to this breed. When rounding them up for a drive to market, the drovers found thick layers of moss on their hides and horns. Most of these cattle had never seen man or crossed a stream, thus being wild and dan-

gerous.

With the lightning storm of June 1, 1866, the herd scattered uncontrolled, running headlong and over a high bluff near Camp Creek. After spending 3 days in the saddle, Pierce, lead drover George Duffield and the 13 hands settled the balance of the herd in a canyon and headed for Cleburne seeking a reprieve from their adventure.

Pierce and his "boys" celebrated through the night relieving their stress caused by the nightmarish event with the spirits of several saloons. The next day, City Aldermen passed an ordinance making it a misdemeanor to ride a horse on the sidewalks of Cleburne.

Rove Comes Out

Part Two: Karl Rove's Speech Autopsy

On the evening of June 22, 2005, Herr Karl Rove, Grand Puppeteer of George W. Bush and Schattenfuhrer of the Regime, surfaced from his West Wing cloister. What brought Der Karl into the open air was the bestowment upon him of the Charles Edison Memorial Award by the Conservative Party of New York State. Normally, this wouldn't have been too big a deal. However, Herr Rove turned the event into a feuersturm with his reckless attacks on Liberals, and generally exclusionary rhetoric.

The following is a short history of Mr. Bush's Brainmaster, and a critical look at just what the person nobody wants to admit is running the country had to say about his vision for our future.

Herr Karl Rove attended, unsuccessfully, at least three universities from the late-1960s until the early-1970s. He never completed a degree program. After quitting college in 1973, and although no longer a college student, he scammed his way into the leadership position of the College Republicans.

This wasn't his first public act of legerdemain. As a mere whelp of 19, he became a protégé of Watergate conspirator Donald Segretti. The Fascist Youth Rove broke into Illinois Democrat Alan Dixon's office and stole some letterhead stationery. He then made 1,000 flyers announcing a party with free music, beer, etc., and passed them out among hippies at concerts and homeless. Der Karl is still rather delighted with himself for this "youthful prank."

By one account Herr Rove was listed as the very first person hired on George H.W. Bush's Presidential election team. Another had him accusing the Democrats of bugging George W. Bush's gubernatorial campaign office, then damn near getting caught himself for setting it up.

Herr Rove has made millions getting his Conservative Republican candidates elected, many of whom should never have won, most of whom were not expected to win. And, they wouldn't have won were it not for Der Karl's whisper campaigns and out-and-out slur tactics. To insulate himself he plies layer upon layer of minions.

The most famous, and outrageous, of Herr Rove's whisper campaigns came during the 2000 Republican Primaries. Heading into South Carolina Sen. John McCain, the former POW war hero and honest politician, was some 30 points ahead of the field. Somehow it was slipped to the media that McCain had an out-of-wedlock Black child. She could be seen plain as day, because the McCains had adopted a Black girl years earlier, so it must be true. McCain lost South Carolina, and subsequently his bid for the nomination to the pampered frat boy who had never left the contiguous 48.

Der Karl pulled a similar stunt with the Swift Boat BS Artists who preferred an Air National Guard layabout to the decorated VietNam vet, Sen. John Kerry. After all, the ANG guy was far more friendly to their business interests than that filthy Liberal Kerry.

As for Herr Rove's Sermon to the Choir, it was a frightening pronouncement of the Conservatives' Entitlement



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

to Rule. This served as a precursor to the rehashed slate of generalities George W. Bush would put forth the following week, on June 28. There was a distinct purpose in the timing of Bush's prime-time address, which the major networks were not fooled into airing, and only viewed by 23 million Americans — the faithful.

Very early on, Der Karl twice referred to the Conservative Movement as the "dominant political creed" in America. He stated that it went from "a small, principled opposition to a broad, inclusive movement that is self-assured, optimistic, forward-leaning..."

The only dominant thing about conservatism is the people in charge have the big money handlers in their pockets, and vice versa. Looking over the agenda of the CPNY, as well as the current Republican leadership, I see nothing but myopia and an extension of the good old boy network, with a mindset to keep the status quo as is.

Herr Rove: "...we have seen the great rise of a great cause. Conservatives have achieved a tremendous amount in the past two-and-a-half decades — but there is more, much more, that remains to be done... The political realignment in America is moving ahead..."

Exactly WHAT remains to be done? The total obliteration of all opposition? Just read that last sentence a few times and let it sink in. What's being realigned, and to where is Rove taking it? He doesn't tell us!

Herr Rove: "...in 2004, we faced a united opposition which outspent our side by over 40 million dollars in a time of controversial war and a recovering, but not recovered economy."

Well, the Dems had more money because they got support from individual Americans; for the first time corporations and the disgustingly wealthy weren't allowed to throw tens of thousands of bucks apiece at the Republicans — and still they found ways to circumvent the law. We're at war because their guy wanted to be Commander in Chief, known as the "War President." When did we ever have a President who kept telling us he was either of these things? And Bush kept reminding us he was both.

I was fairly comfortable with the economy back in 2000, prior to the coup.

More Rove: "The 2004 election was a steep political mountain to climb, but the President scaled it — and he did so with energy, passion, decency, and an unwavering commitment to principle. What is significant about November's victory is not simply that the President won, but how he won."

Did you witness energy or passion during Bush's 2004 campaign? Whenever I caught him, he was reading the same tired speech, emotionlessly

phrase-by-phrase, in front of the same pre-selected audiences, with essentially the same set-up in each locale.

As to decency and unwavering commitment to principle, lying about your non-achievements; giving half-baked generalities of your non-plans for the next four years; and attacking your opponent's lifetime of public service (especially his war record when you have none) just don't make the grade.

Der Karl kind of got the last part right — what is significant is the way Bush did not win. Neither in 2000, nor in 2004. No matter that the exit polls indicated Bush would lose, pretty damn accurate in the past, Herr Rove kept his cool and a smile on his face throughout, singularly confident that his boy would "win" the Presidency.

Herr Karl Rove is the sham leader behind George W. Bush, the sham president.

Herr Rove then went on for a bit, lauding the achievements of George W. Bush. However, since Dubya has achieved nothing other than to cause destruction and disharmony, this rang as hollow as the pleas for forgiveness from a recidivist wife beater.

Of course, none of these policies are popular with the largest percentage of the American populace: His insistence on denying stem cell research money; the Social Security scam; ramming democracy down the throats of the rest of the world at gunpoint; the war without end.

Bush's "Architect," or "Turd Blossom" as Dubya likes to call Der Karl, spent a lot of time focusing on Dubya's masterful garnering of increased numbers not only in votes for himself, but in Senate and House seats for Conservatives (they are carefully and cautiously never referred to as Republicans). At this stage he went on and on at great length giving Dubya grand accolades about this glorious achievement.

Fact is, Georgie couldn't keep track of the Congressional candidates in a state with two House districts. Herr Rove was publicly vicariously patting himself on the back for stealing so many positions away from Democrats.

And while he was giving himself a, "Thattaboy, Mein junge Mann, Karl," Rove was laying the groundwork for the 2006 midterm elections.

The next boast was that the Conservatives "are seizing the Mantle of Idealism..." Well, it's no secret the upper echelon of the Republican Party is top-heavy with ideologues, but that doesn't mean they've come up with anything useful or new. A flag-burning amendment, 35 years after the Supreme Court said it was protected as a 1st Amendment expression? Com'on...

Bush is given broad stroke credit for "...the most spectacular growth of liberty in history." More liberty worldwide, yes; Bush bringing it on, not a chance.

"Free" elections in Afghanistan, the Ukraine, and Iraq, and among the Palestinians are cited by Herr Rove, suggesting that Georgie was the catalyst or cause. As we know, there were U.S.-controlled Afghani and Iraqi elections because Bush bombed both countries to submission, then U.S.-picked likely candidates.

The Palestinians held an election in the course of nature, not at Georgie's whim, following Yassir Arafat's death. The Ukrainian election was planned without Bush, but through Colin Powell's intervention fraud was discovered and Bush insisted a new vote be taken.

Gee, Bush didn't demand a new vote when vote fraud was suspected here...

The Bush Regime has reduced the Geneva Convention to a worthless document, suitable only as a museum piece. Our government insists prisoners be held without charges, representation, or bail. Never in the history of the United States of America have so many basic human rights been taken from its own citizens. The levels of secrecy and corruption within the White House cannot be measured, they run so deep, and Herr Rove is right at the top.

The Rove-led Bush White House keeps pointing fingers at the United Nations, whom they do not like and wish to disband, calling for a clean up at that organization. That's like the little boy, when he got caught eating cookies, blaming the cookie jar for having them in it. What they want is for everyone to play by their rules.

Herr Rove: "...our movement's growth has made us Agents of Reform. ...the President has said... we will bring the highest standards to our schools. We will build an ownership society by expanding the ownership of homes and businesses, retirement savings and health insurance, and preparing Americans for the challenges of life in a free society."

Quite frankly, I don't like the sound of any of that. "Agents of Reform?" Who put them in control of altering my life? Bush hasn't brought the highest standards to our schools. He's got a college drop-out calling the shots! As an educator, I can tell you that this "No Child Left Behind" was nothing but a flim-flam. The schools have less money now than they did before Dubya took office. Schools are going without proper equipment, books, library facilities; teachers have lost tenure; programs have been eliminated. The only reform is that our nation is going to hell in Herr Rove's rucksack.

So, Bush wants to expand personal ownership. Fine. Who's going to pay for all this when one has no income in his glorious "not recovered" economy? The fact is, more than half of the homes "owned" by individuals or families do not as yet have enough collateral built up to even touch the principle. Or, there's a second mortgage on far too many of them. And, now there's this new scam — interest only mortgage payments.

If the payments can't be made, who wins? The Conservatives' friends — the banks! The average schmo can't even file for bankruptcy relief anymore, no matter what the cause.

WHAT health insurance? This regime hasn't done one damn thing to help Americans with that problem.

Again, read the last phrase of Rove's statement, paraphrasing Bush, several times. Did we not already live in free society before the coup d'état of 2000?

Continued On Next Page

Part Two: Karl Rove's Speech Autopsy

Continued From Previous Page

Preparing us for life in a free society sounds frighteningly dictatorial to me.

The next dogma Rove mentions is that Conservatives "...are defending Time-Honored Values." He continues, "...political liberty depends on a healthy social and moral code."

If this is true, why doesn't Der Karl live up to these values and moral codes? He certainly can't believe in moral liberty, because he's wholly against any opinion but the Conservative voice.

He goes on about how the Conservative values of families, schools, and communities, as well as churches, neighborhood and private groups are "...the institutions that will inculcate virtues, shape character, and provide the young with moral education."

That's quite a mouthful from a guy who's been known as dishonest, an underhanded sneak, and a backstabber since he was a teenager. And, since I haven't read anywhere about Der Karl having a wife or raising any kinder of his own, who is he to spout this message to Americans and the World?

In reading this passage, I am reminded of the National Socialist message as the political landscape was realigned in Germany during the 1930s. Albert Speer, Heinrich Himmler, and the others were all about inseminating the existing institutions - families, schools, communities, churches, neighborhood and private groups - with Party values. These values were meant to instill virtues, shape character, and provide the young with moral education - as deemed proper by and estimable to the Party.

The National Socialists of 1930s Germany were also ultra right-wing Conservatives.

Rove: "...President Bush supports the protection of traditional marriage against activist judges...insists on testing, high standards, and accountability in our schools...has fostered a culture of service and citizenship."

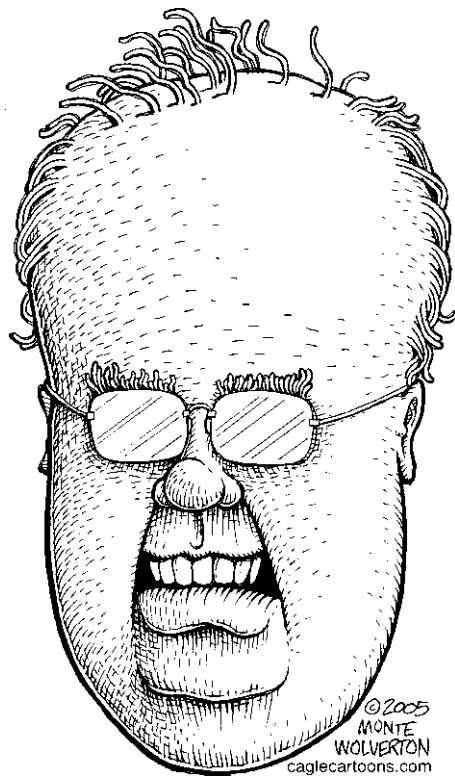
The German Fascists took over the courts, stacking them with their own judges. They lashed out against homosexuals. Only students who reached certain levels of academic excellence were treated as suitable; everyone was expected to honor the state by some form of personal sacrifice.

"President Bush supports these things because he believes they will lead to a society that is more compassionate and decent, stronger and better. We are attempting to spread liberty abroad - and we must show that we are worthy of liberty at home."

First, I sincerely doubt Dubya could have come up with these constructs on his own. Oh, maybe the overly simplistic spreading liberty all over hell and back. These last two sentences provide me with the vision of a crowd being spurred into a frenzy of imperialistic superiority. This is definitely exclusionary rhetoric tinged with tyrannical overtones.

Now, Herr Rove is ready to tell us about the state of Liberalism.

"Liberalism is at greater risk now than at any other time in recent American history. The risk is of political marginality, even irrelevance. Liberalism risks getting defined, as conservatism



once was, entirely in negative terms."

Herr Rove quotes this passage of Paul Starr, co-editor of the liberal publication The American Prospect. He fails to explain the obvious - Mr. Starr is taking the position that the Roves and such are taking anything and everything Liberal and demonizing it. Unfortunately, they have the money, the seats of power, and the ministers of Jesus behind them, so people buy their bull.

Then Herr Rove goes on to make a series of wholly inane comparisons between Conservatives and Liberals, all of which are broadly-drawn generalities and none of which are backed by any type of specific example. This is exactly the type of lame non-committal information we've been hearing since Bush started running for President in 2000; it accuses but says nothing. All these non-statements do are sow seeds of disruption.

"Conservatives believe in lower taxes; Liberals believe in higher taxes. We want fewer regulations; they want more." Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Each and every one of his comparisons was exclusionary and inflammatory, not to mention as wrong as a fox in a henhouse.

Then Herr Rove went on to the remarks that made all the news outlets around the world, wherein Liberals don't care about National Security. What a pompous ass!

Where in the hell does Herr Karl Rove, Architect of the Destruction of the United States of America and all it stands for, get off telling *anybody* they aren't concerned with America's safety and security?

He said that after 9/11, "Conservatives...prepared for war (while) Liberals...wanted to prepare indictments and offer therapy and understanding..." Der Karl also stated that "...Conservatives believed it was time to unleash the might and power of the United States military against the Taliban...Liberals believed it was time

to submit a petition..."

Then, he attributes these responses to MoveOn.org. Well, hell's bells, Karl, MoveOn doesn't speak for me, or all Liberals, or even a large segment of us.

However, as an Illinois Democrat Senator, Dick Durbin, a duly-elected lawmaker who never needed to use smear tactics, *does* speak for me. And he was 100% correct when he stood on the Senate floor and compared the FBI report about treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay by our military, as Bush regime-approved, to techniques used in Nazi Germany, Soviet gulags, and the Pol Pot regime.

You, Herr Rove, a never-elected anything, had less than no business bad-mouthing Sen. Durbin, and making the ludicrous claim that Al Jazeera was broadcasting his words and making life more dangerous for our troops. The very point Sen. Durbin was making was how the Rove/Bush Regime has made life excessively dangerous for our brave troops because you SOBs sanctioned such brutality to begin with!

Then, Der Karl bragged about how Georgie had received more votes than any other candidate in history. Isn't it funny how in some districts the number of votes he received were larger than the number of registered voters? Or how Diebold won't let any Governmental agency inspect their voting machine software to see exactly how the paperless votes were tallied? What was

left out was that by mere appearances Dubya barely got enough votes to win - I guess they didn't want the machines to go overboard with their tallies.

After spending the entire sermon to the choir preaching that the Conservatives are, essentially, entitled to run the whole show from now on, and going on about how if people don't fit into the Party's mold and mindset they'll be cast aside, Herr Rove has the unmitigated gall to say that the Democrats lost power because we were exclusionary and possessed an entitlement mentality.

To wrap things up, Herr Rove claims that Dubya, in the form of his alter ego, President Bush #43, and today's Conservative movement are "...shaping history, not trying to stop it. Together we are articulating a compelling vision of a better world..."

Every word of this speech is a compass needle pointing directly to one thing - complete dominance over all. These guys, and CondoLIEzza, want to take over everything; not just America, but the World. Herr Karl rove is the scariest, most dangerous man on Planet Earth.

Remember Bush saying, "If you're not with us, then you're against us?" He didn't just mean other world leaders. They are completely exclusionary toward all.

As far as Herr Rove is concerned, Resistance is futile - prepare to be assimilated.



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Where There's A Will, There's Procrastination

Like millions of Americans, during the Terri Schiavo tragedy, I saw how important it was for my wife and me to make certain arrangements in writing. I didn't want the government or strangers making these very personal decisions for us. And like millions of Americans, from the moment I made up my mind to do something about it, I did absolutely nothing. Until now.

Finally, last week, I got a Living Will/Durable Power of Attorney Form. It's not unusual to delay doing things that deal with the unpleasantness of death. We all know that we should have wills, but how many of us put off making one out? Similarly, we might joke about our future funerals. Maybe we don't want to be cremated because smoke always makes us sneeze. We kid about silly things we might want on our tombstone



By
**Lloyd
Garver**

like, "Your shoe's untied," or "You Lose. It's My Turn To Pick Up The Check." But we don't want to talk seriously about "the arrangements." So, it's no surprise that I kept putting off thinking about and making some serious medical decisions.

One of the main purposes of the form is to designate the person you want to make life-and-death decisions for you if

you're incapable of doing so. See? It's not exactly a fun form to fill out. The document states that your "agent" will be the person making the big decisions for you. This brought me to an abrupt halt. My show business experience with agents has taught me that they might not be the ideal people to decide these things. If a client isn't "hot," an agent treats him as if he were dead, and if he is hot, a good agent will still try to get him a job long after he's dead and buried.

But then I saw that "agent" was just the legal term for proxy or the person that you want to make these decisions. Obviously, this is a huge responsibility that you're giving someone. It's the ultimate in trust — even more so than letting them drive your new car.

For many years, my wife and I had

somewhat different philosophies about all this. She's a realist. I'm a dreamer. I worried that the day after they pull the plug on me, they'll discover a cure for whatever I had. I read about people who were in comas for 20 years and then suddenly wake up one day, run a mile and come home and conjugate their French verbs. And I figure, why not me?

Recently, the more we've talked about things, our points of view have gotten closer together. But that doesn't really matter. Our living wills don't have to be the same. The beauty of these things is that you can customize them to your own personal feelings. If the only "heroic" or "extraordinary" means you want to keep you alive is a chocolate milkshake every day, you can write that in. As I went through the form, I saw that every contingency imaginable is provided for. It's one thing to think of procedures and treatments in the abstract, but here they're talking about you. Seeing all these possibilities in print made me want to put the document aside, but I persevered.

Those who make up these forms must know how difficult they can be to get through, so they even throw in a clause for comic relief. At least, that's the only reason I can think of for it. This provision states that if you name your spouse as the person to make these decisions and you get divorced, you can still have your ex-spouse be the one in charge. Yeah, right. That's exactly the person you want making life-and-death decisions for you. If you've had a bitter divorce, can't you just hear your angry ex saying something like, "He's got the sniffles? Pull the plug."

I made it through the entire form. Despite how uncomfortable it made me feel, I'm glad I hung in there. It's obviously the sensible, mature, and responsible thing to do. And now all I have to do is sign it — which I'm definitely going to do later today. Or tomorrow. Well, soon.

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

Secret Society Shapes Future Of Texas

Twenty-four-year-old Sam Houston joined a Masonic lodge in his home state of Tennessee on July 12, 1817, a couple of decades before members of the fraternal order shaped the future of Texas.

The principles and practices of Masonry date back to the Middle Ages, when the building of churches on a monumental scale was the public works project for eight centuries. The stoneworkers that roamed from place to place plying their indispensable trade were known as freemasons, and their craft associations or lodges evolved into secret societies after the decline of cathedral construction.

The birth of modern Masonry took place in 1717, when four of the surviving fraternal organizations came together under the Grand Lodge of England. The British migration to North America included a large and influential group of Masons, who founded the first lodge at Boston in 1733.

By the time the colonists challenged the mother country for control, membership had increased to an estimated 3,000 in more than a hundred lodges. Masons were a majority at the Constitutional Convention of 1787 with 32 of the 55 delegates. The fact that the motto and several symbols of the order appeared on the currency printed by the new government can hardly be chalked off to coincidence.

The Marquis de Lafayette claimed Gen. George Washington was such a zealous Mason that he entrusted key commands only to fellow disciples. While the Frenchman may have been stretching the truth, as president Washington did wear his Masonic regalia for the ceremonial laying of the Capitol cornerstone.

None other than Stephen F. Austin tried to establish the first lodge in Texas with a petition to the York Grand Lodge of Mexico in February 1828. But before his application could be processed, the Mexican government banned the York brand of Masonry.

Texas Masons had to wait almost eight years for a lodge of their own. With a charter granted by the Grand Lodge of Louisiana, Dr. Anson Jones, John H. Wharton, and four other Masons held their first meeting at the Brazoria courthouse in December 1835.

This Week
In Texas
History

By Barte Haile



The records and property of the pioneer Masons were destroyed three months later by marauding Mexican troops. During the rebel retreat after the fall of the Alamo, a Louisiana courier delivered a fresh charter to Dr. Jones, who carried the document in his saddlebags for the rest of the Revolution.

The Masonic presence was undeniably strong at the Washington-on-the-Brazos convention in March 1836. Of the 59 signers of the Declaration of Independence, 20 identifiable Masons included Sam Houston, James Collinworth, Lorenzo de Zavala, Thomas Rusk, and Antonio Navarro.

Two years later in May 1838, Grand Master Jones proudly announced, "The Order already boasts nearly two hundred Masons in full communication, which number is now rapidly increasing by the accession of new and worthy members." Far more impressive than their size, however, were the positions of power they held during the decade of sovereignty.

The long list of Masons in the Republic regime reads like a who's who of early Texas history. The four presidents as well as the nine vice-presidents were members. Seven out of nine speakers of the house and eight of the 14 judges on the supreme court also belonged. Thirty-six of the 61 delegates to the special convention in July 1845 which accepted the United States' annexation offer were known Masons.

At the subsequent convention called to write a constitution for the newest and biggest state, Masons took the lead in pushing for the fulfillment of a promise the Republic never had the resources to keep. A Mason-dominated committee recommended, "The Legislature shall, as early as practicable, establish free public schools throughout the State, and shall furnish means for their support by taxation of property."

When lawmakers delayed in honoring the constitutional commitment to education, Masons temporarily took up the slack. Between 1850 and 1873, the order opened and operated 17 state-chartered institutions and another hundred or so schools which functioned without official sanction. The direct and grateful beneficiaries were thousands of young Texans, whose hunger for learning might otherwise never have been satisfied.

During this period of their greatest philanthropic efforts, the Masons experienced unprecedented expansion. The number of Texas lodges soared from 24 in 1846 to 515 in 1880.

The prominence of Masons foreign and domestic in the nineteenth century naturally gave rise to tales of behind-the-scenes intrigue. Stephen F. Austin, for example, supposedly received his empresario grant from a Mexican congressional committee composed entirely of fellow Masons.

In a more dramatic instance, former Texas governor Francis Lubbock, who had been taken prisoner with Confederate president Jefferson Davis, was reputedly freed from post-Civil War captivity by Masonic intervention.

Barte Haile welcomes your comments, questions and suggestions at haile@pdq.net or 1912 Meadow Creek Dr., Pearland, TX 77581.




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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE'S 7/08/05 editorial that urges the Senate to hold-off voting on tax legislation until reviewed by the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) is way off the mark. One must ponder whether CHRONICLE editors comprehend who is on the LBB. In truth, those who serve on the Board are the same legislators who are involved in the decade-long fiasco of attempting to finalize resolutions for an inadequate finance system for public education and the overdue relief for homeowners who have the ongoing burden of sky-high property taxes. In addition, many members on the LBB are too closely tied to the governor's special interest "umbilical cord."

All that would be accomplished in holding-up the Senate vote and awaiting a decision by the LBB is to again postpone overdue resolutions to both long-time problems. THE CHRONICLE should applaud Lt. Gov. Dewhurst and the Senate for standing-up to a governor and house who so far have refused to approve rational solutions for the crisis issues that continue to plague Texas families. Time to get the job done without further unnecessary delays.

Legislators haven't gotten the message

During each of the past seven years there has been an increase in the number of home foreclosures throughout Texas. There is a reason for this. Homeowners cannot afford the sky-high property taxes currently in vogue. In the past two years of legislative sessions elected officials have selected to do nothing about the problem, hence, the ongoing crisis.

In addition, it is obvious that providing adequate financing for public education has NOT been a priority either. During the past ten years the only prominent efforts to resolve school issues have occurred in the court system. Legislators have continued to shirk their responsibilities under the laws of the state constitution. In any other industry, such behavior is grounds for dismissal.

Perhaps it's time for the state to consider dismantling its legislature? Since it apparently will not and cannot provide Texas families and schools with logical, urgent, long-needed resolutions to these two issues, why do Texans require such a system?

Should legislators fail once again to provide relief to Texas families and schools, it's up to the voters to eliminate legislative incumbents in the next several elections. Only then may positive outcomes push Texas back on-track.

Peter Stern, Driftwood, Texas

To Don Fisher:

Hey, just saw your shout-out and it warmed the cockles. excellent compliment coming from a writer like yourself - right back atcha and thanks very much!

Karen Brooks

To The Editor:

You have so much good stuff in your paper, you shouldn't let it be brought into disrepute by publishing such totally erroneous letters as that from Anita Knight in the 6/8/05 issue about depleted uranium. This isn't politics, this is just chemistry!

The very first sentence is wrong! "I am certain you are aware that Depleted Uranium is Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride (UF6)." That is as wrong as saying that Oxygen is Water (H2O)!

Uranium ores are converted to the gas UF6 so that it can be enriched in the lighter U235 isotope needed for fuel and bombs. The Fluoride is then REMOVED to leave the metallic uranium to make fuel and bombs. The rest of the uranium hexafluoride, now mostly U238, depleted of U235, also has the fluoride removed, and is converted to a very heavy metal WITHOUT ANY FLUORIDE.

Ms. Knight goes on to describe the horrors of fluoride, which have NOTHING TO DO with the depleted metallic uranium used in munitions. The uranium has its OWN problems, relating to its chemical toxicity and low level radioactivity, but all those fluoride compounds are totally irrelevant!

But her letter shows an even deeper ignorance of basic chemistry. Once an element has combined with another, its properties are totally submerged in the new properties of the compound. Sodium will burst into flames when touched by water; but that doesn't mean that so will sodium chloride, common table salt. Amino acids are made of carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen, and so is TNT; but amino acids don't blow up! Teflon has fluorine in it, but has none of the toxic effects of Sarin.

This kind of uninformed chicken-little hysteria about non-existent dangers only destroys our credibility for when we try to attack the many REAL dangers of the world.

If you get a letter claiming to assert scientific facts, why not run it by a scientist before running it in the paper?

Harvey S. Frey, MD, PhD

To The Editor:

Let's Fix Our Government

Supporting gay rights in Texas is not about being a Democrat or a Republican; it's about standing up for human dignity. Regardless of one's political, religious, and even sexual orientation, Texas voters need to look beyond prejudice and fear and vote against banning same-sex marriage.

Texas stands out for its meddling government. The Texas House recently tried to ban loving gay couples from adopting. Many in our legislature want to ban gay couples from any sort of civil union or legal protections for their relationship. Worst, the Texas government made criminals of consenting adults for what they did in the privacy of their homes. The Supreme Court finally struck down this unconstitutional law in Lawrence v. Texas. Is this the traditional Texas Republicans' idea of small government?

Those who support banning gay marriage talk about family values. However, the irony of banning loving committed couples from legal protections is that it forces gays to live and love each other out of wedlock with nothing legally binding them to stay together. And while "pro-family, anti-gay" advocates spend enormous resources stealing human rights from Texas gays, thousands of Texas children remain uninsured and without a decent education.

As a Catholic, I understand doctrinal differences. As a gay Texan, I love our state and just want to be included. This doesn't mean special rights—just equality. It doesn't mean abandoning religious doctrine, but rather separating Church and State.

The constitutional amendment that we will vote on this November 2005 will either

hurt real people, like me, or stand for human dignity. It's up to the voters to decide.

Thank you,

Ken Seifert, Conroe, Texas

To The Editor:

I am completely perplexed how some people can argue that 'Intelligent Design' ought to be taught in our schools ("in the interest of getting all the facts out there and letting the students decide which to believe"), but who then take exactly the opposite argument about "teaching all the facts" of family planning and birth control - saying then, "Oh, that's a topic best left for the family to teach." If "all the facts" are beneficial and productive for one purpose, they're equally beneficial for the other. Any other argument is bipolar (medically, semantically, or both), and definitely not about ensuring "that kids get all the facts."

Tim Slack, Newburgh, IN

To The Editor:

So let's try to get this straight. We invaded Iraq because Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction, except he didn't, and because he was tied in to the attacks of September 11, except he wasn't. We're staying in Iraq, President Bush said Tuesday night, because terrorists with the same ideology as those behind 9-11 have congregated there since we arrived.

Iraq is now the "central front" in the war on terrorism, the president said. And just how did it become that? Whatever the ghastly defects of Hussein's Iraq, it was not a playground for terrorists. There was no terror in the old Iraq but Hussein's own, which was a nightmare for his own citizenry, but not a threat to ours. Now, Bush argued, Iraq is in danger of becoming something it never was — the equivalent of Afghanistan under the Taliban. But it's Bush's war that transformed the country and created that threat, if we are to believe the president's own assessment of the danger that the Iraqi terrorists pose. And if we don't take on the terrorists there, he said, we'll have to take them on here.

But which ones? Surely not the bitter-enders from Hussein's regime, or the Iraqi Sunni extremists; their fight is there. As to the Islamic militants who have arrived from other lands, they are a threat, but no more of one than the Islamic militants who are not in Iraq. Yet it is in Iraq where we have deployed the lion's share of our forces, so much so that our ability to respond to the threat of a very different kind of terrorism — from North Korea, say — has clearly been diminished. Bush spoke as if we had the terrorists tied down in Iraq. One could plausibly argue that it's the other way around.

On the other hand, one could also plausibly argue that we don't have, and never have had, enough forces in Iraq to secure

the country or ensure domestic tranquility. Bush noted that no ground commander had ever told him that we needed to send in more troops, and I don't doubt that. Before the war even began, the one commander who did make that argument, Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki, drew the audible ire of Donald Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz. Shinseki did not have his term of duty renewed and was told to find employment in civilian life. A starker object lesson for ground commanders thinking about questioning the wisdom of Rumsfeld and the size of our force could scarcely be imagined.

And when will we go? In the latter years of the Vietnam War, the Nixon administration touted the "Vietnamization" solution: We were training the South Vietnamese army to do what our own troops had been doing; the South Vietnamese were always on the verge of being able to fight the war largely by themselves. In fact, they never got beyond the verge; in the climactic North Vietnamese attack, their army crumbled.

Now, Bush is talking "Iraqization" (which is no clunkier a neologism than Vietnamization once was). We should be wary of making too neat a parallel here. The new Iraqi government certainly has a greater claim on legitimacy and popular support than all those South Vietnamese governments ever did. But in much the manner of Richard Nixon, Bush has tied our departure to the readiness of the Iraqi soldiery. "As the Iraqis stand up," he said, "we will stand down."

But suppose the Iraqis don't stand up, or only make it as far as a crouch. Right now, Bush said, there are 160,000 Iraqi forces in the process of being trained. According to Delaware's Joe Biden, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the number of them in freestanding units able to carry the fight to the enemy right now, without U.S. tactical guidance, is 2,500. In short, the administration has subjected us to a two-front recruitment war: The number of Iraqis willing to become real soldiers in this war, like the number of Americans willing to become real soldiers in this war, is currently woefully inadequate. Administration strategy, apparently, is to hope that their number grows faster than our number declines.

On our long-term policy toward Iraq — whether, for instance, we intend to keep permanent bases there — Bush remained mute. But our justification has turned back to 9-11. Rather than go after Osama bin Laden directly, we decided to overthrow Hussein to enable bin Laden's legions to relocate to Iraq and defeat them there. So much for straightforward strategy. This was cunning beyond belief — indeed, beyond comprehension.

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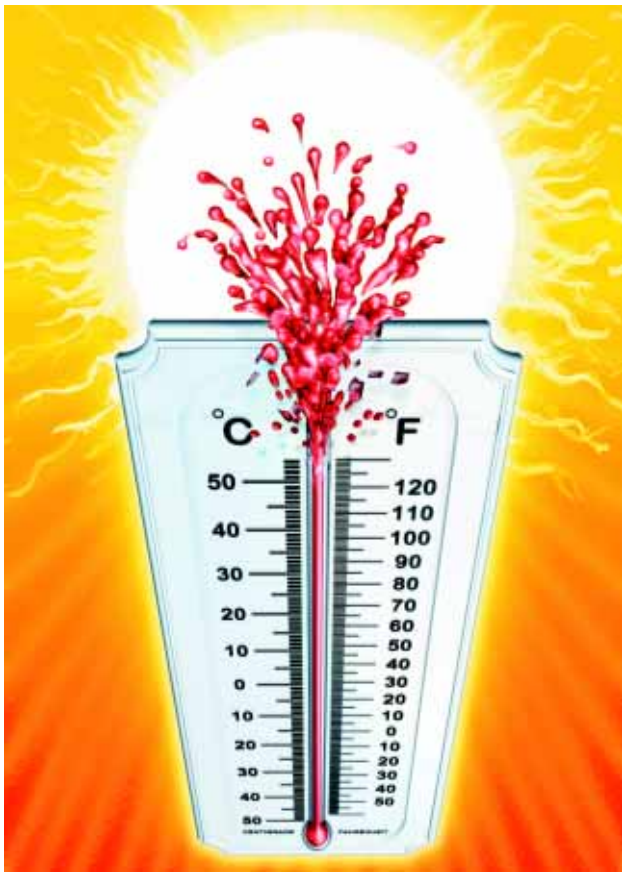
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Summer Heat Can Be Hard On Vehicle Tires



AUSTIN – It may be summer time, but the “living” is not easy for your tires. Motorists should use caution during the summer to make sure their vehicles are in shape.

According to a 2004 study conducted by the Rubber Manufacturers Association, only 16 percent of Texas drivers properly check their tires – leaving 84 percent who are asking for trouble.

Research sponsored by the tire industry group shows that 32 percent of drivers in Texas wrongly believe that the best time to check their tires is when they are warm after being driven for at least a few miles. Actually, tires should be checked before you hit the road.

Texas Department of Transportation is reminding motorists that underinflated tires combined with hot weather and a fully-loaded vehicle can lead to tire failure. Underinflated tires generate excessive heat, which can be dangerous.



If a tire goes flat while traveling at a high rate of speed, drivers should remove their foot from the accelerator and coast to a stop. Do not slam on the brakes, which could cause a rollover.

Proper tire care and safety is easy. The most important factors in tire care are: proper inflation pressure, vehicle loading, and tire wear, regular inspection, good driving habits and vehicle condition.

The RMA recommends taking five minutes every month and before every long trip to check your tires, including the spare.

To increase safety motorists should also: obey posted speed limits, wear safety belts properly, avoid fast starts, stops and turns, avoid potholes and debris, avoid contact with curbs, and avoid overloading the vehicle.

Motorists can check a vehicle’s tire information or owner’s manual for the maximum recommended load for a particular vehicle.

Choose Irrigation Systems For Water Efficient Landscapes

By **DOUGLAS F. WELSH, Ph.D.**
PROFESSOR AND EXTENSION HORTICULTURIST

COLLEGE STATION — There are two types of irrigation systems for use in landscapes — sprinkler irrigation and drip irrigation. Within a water efficient landscape, use a combination of these two systems in watering lawns, trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and flowers.

The goal of an irrigation system is to give the plants a sufficient amount of water without waste. In addition, by zoning the irrigation system, higher water requirement plantings can be watered separately from lower water requirement areas.

Sprinkler irrigation is the most commonly used method of watering. The two kinds of sprinkler irrigation systems are the hose-end sprinkler and the permanent underground system with raised sprinkler heads.

The differences in these two sprinkler systems are in the cost, convenience and efficiency. Permanent, sprinkler systems are much more expensive than hose-end sprinklers. Yet the permanent system is much more convenient and can be much more ef-

ficient in applying the water.

The major advantage for sprinkler irrigation is in lawn watering. A sprinkler system, hose-end or permanent, is the most widely accepted way to water a turfgrass area.

There are some drawbacks to sprinkler irrigation. First, sprinklers wet the plants and flowers, as well as the soil. Water which remains on a plants through the night increases disease and decay. The best time to sprinkler irrigation is early morning prior to sunrise and just after to allow time for the plant leaf surface and flowers to dry before nightfall.

Another disadvantage of sprinkler irrigation occurs on windy days. Watering in as little as a five mile per hour wind will distribute the water unevenly over the soil surface and cause a great deal of evaporation.

Perhaps the most efficient way to water the home landscape is with a prop-

erly designed and well-maintained drip irrigation system. Drip irrigation slowly applies water to soil. Water flows under low pressure through emitters laid alongside the plants.

Water applied by drip irrigation has little chance of waste through evaporation or runoff. The water is applied directly to the plant’s root zone. This also eliminates waste from applying water to unplanted or weedy areas.



Overall irrigation requirements will vary according to plant species, soil type, rainfall, and temperature. Established, well-adapted plants require less frequent watering than newly planted trees and shrubs. A minimum length of time to operate a drip irrigation system is two to three hours; however, it may take four to six hours to thoroughly wet the root zone of an established large shrub or small tree.

Covering the drip system with mulch is often recommended to hide the drip tubing from view and add to the life expectancy of the system.

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