

# INSIDE STORIES



— Editorial —

## Time To Tumble The Walls

And

Call To Mind



By Don M. Fisher

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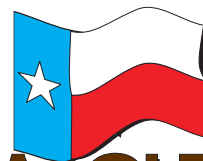


## Promoting Western Heritage Page 16



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# The Lone Star ICONOCLAST



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# Better Paths To Glory

## Vietnam Vet Suggests Alternatives To Military Service



## THINK FOR YOURSELF

It's becoming clear that there are better ways to sort out the world's problems than to go around killing each other, destroying properties and our resources, causing more stress and pain. There are better ways to do it than ... war is pretty convenient. It makes a lot of money for some people. Unfortunately, that's what it's about.' — Thomas Heikkala, Co-director of Nonmilitary Options for Youth

# Energy Bill's Secret Could Create More Enrons

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As members of the Senate and House last week met to negotiate items in the proposed energy bill, among the key components in both versions of the bill is the repeal of Public Utilities Holding Company Act (PUHCA), a New Deal measure that prevents utility holding companies from consolidating as well as using their assets for investment purposes.

“With PUHCA gone, for the first time since 1935, there would be no restrictions on utility holding companies,” wrote Kelpie Wilson, Truthout’s environment editor. “Among other things, holding companies would be free to raid the assets of utilities to feed speculative investments in completely unrelated

businesses - just the kind of behavior that Enron engaged in with such disastrous results. Another change would be opening up U.S. utility ownership to foreign investors.”

Supporters of PUHCA’s repeal point to the goodness of competition and innovation within the industry. Critics and regulators note that mergers would be easier but reduce the powers of state agencies to help consumers.

Wilson said that although the majority of the mainstream media remains silent on this issue, there is still hope to stop the demise of PUHCA.

“PUHCA repeal is in both the House and Senate versions of the bill, so it might seem like it’s too late to stop this

train, but passage of a final energy bill is far from certain,” she said. “Several things could still derail the bill - the biggest item would be the liability shield for manufacturers of MTBE, a gasoline additive that pollutes groundwater. It’s in the House version but not the Senate, and Tom DeLay won’t snuff it for anything because, after all, he IS the government. And with a real ethics investigation hanging over his head, he probably can’t afford to let it go because he will need endless cash from MTBE manufacturers to keep himself out of jail.”

She continued, “But if DeLay is somehow neutralized, PUHCA repeal could become the issue that kills the energy bill. The Senate version couples repeal with some additional oversight authority on utility mergers granted to FERC, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. A number of senators supported PUHCA repeal only because of the addition of FERC oversight. If the House Republicans succeed in pulling that provision out of the final version, it may prompt Senators like Maria Cantwell and Barbara Boxer to vote against the bill in the end. But that’s not likely to happen if the general public remains in ignorance and senators hear nothing but silence from their constitu-

ents.”

Wilson added in her statement that the energy bill would perhaps need to be killed in order to prevent the repeal of PUHCA.

“And, if you contact your senator and he or she tells you that PUHCA isn’t needed because increased FERC oversight will give consumers all the protection they need, ask if they know who President Bush just appointed as director of FERC. The answer is Joseph Kelliher. Kelliher was Dick Cheney’s point man in organizing the secret energy task force that drafted much of the energy bill,” Wilson noted.

There is an online petition at ([www.petitiononline.com/NYCR/petition.html](http://www.petitiononline.com/NYCR/petition.html)).

## U.S. Has ‘No Vision’ For Iraq, Says Iraq’s Former Interim PM

AMMAN, Jordan — Iraq’s former interim prime minister Iyad Allawi said the United States government has “no vision” for Iraq and predicts violent instability in Europe, American, and the Middle East if Iraq fails to unify into a sovereign state and enters civil war.

“The problem is that the Americans have no vision and no clear policy on how to go about in Iraq,” said Allawi, a secular Shi’ite, in a recent interview with THE SUNDAY TIMES. “The policy should be of building national unity in Iraq. Without this we will most certainly slip into a civil war. We are practically in stage one of a civil war as we speak.”

Increasing violence was seen erupting between Shi’ites and Sunnis at the time of Allawi’s remarks. The Shi’ite majority has threatened to remove officials from Saddam Hussein’s

former Ba’ath party from military ranks, which would ignite Sunnis, the minority that held bureaucratic power through much of Saddam’s reign.

Allawi, a frequent critic of the U.S. former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority Paul Bremer, stressed that the security forces and military must be rebuilt. Allawi disagreed with Bremer’s policy to oust former Ba’athists from the Iraq’s military as well as the army without proper replacements.

That being said, Allawi still believes the U.S. should stay in Iraq with no firm schedule to withdraw troops, he said.

“If we don’t build a state, we will lose,” Allawi warned. “Not just as Iraq, but the region as a whole and Europe should say goodbye to stability and so should the United States. Iraq will become a breeding ground for terrorists.”

## ‘Liberation Video’ To Host Event On Downing Street Memos Anniversary

AUSTIN — A number of activists in cities around the country will hold events on the third anniversary of the Downing Street Memos’ existence this Saturday, July 23.

One such event, a screening of *The Downing Street Basement Tapes* of the Congressional hearing, is to be held in Austin by Liberation Video.

Inspired by house parties hosted by MoveOn.org, Liberation Video is an online video rental service that specializes in alternative, progressive, and political film, said its owner Michael Polachek.

For times and directions, visit the Liberation Video website.

### INFO

[www.liberationvideo.com](http://www.liberationvideo.com)

## Soft Drinks Should Get Health Warnings, Says Consumer Group

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Soft drinks should be labeled like cigarettes because of the health risks associated with consuming the sugary product, says the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), a U.S. consumer group that recently petitioned the Food and Drug Administration.

Excessive intake of sodas can lead to diabetes, decayed teeth and a host of other problems including obesity, the Center noted, adding that the warnings would be effective in controlling the habits of young people who are drinking these beverages now more than ever.

Groups funded by the food and beverage industry do not want these labels, stating that the causes of obesity are complex and lists of calories and ingredients are already on the products’ packages. They added that these suggested soda regulations would, if implemented, limit consumer choice.

## Groups Promote Fair Trade Chocolate At ‘Charlie’ Screenings

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — Willy Wonka may have been nice to his own chocolate factory workers, but a group of fair trade advocates are shining light on the real chocolate industry’s abusive child labor associations with cocoa farms in the Ivory Coast.

Global Exchange, International Labor Rights Fund, United Students for Fair Trade, and the Canadian Fair Trade Network are organizing creative actions to promote fair trade at screenings of Tim Burton’s summer blockbuster “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” which hit U.S. theaters last Friday.

“A peak behind the sourcing practices of companies like Mars, Hershey and Nestle — maker of the Wonka Whipple Scrumptious Fudgemallow Delight — reveals not a magical candy forest, but a real human tragedy as children as young as nine continue to toil under unimaginable conditions on West African cocoa farms,” said the group in a joint statement.

Actions were planned in San Francisco; Boston; Washington, D.C.; Victoria, B.C.; Honolulu; Portland, M.E.; Albuquerque; and more.

Global Exchange also encourages teachers, counselors, and youth group leaders to add its Fair Trade education materials to their student’s summer reading list. Fair Trade lesson plans, teaching materials and action guides for children of all ages are available online at ([www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/fairtrade/cocoa/chocolatekids.html](http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/fairtrade/cocoa/chocolatekids.html)).



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# Better Paths To Glory

## Vietnam Vet Suggests Alternatives To Military Service

By NATHAN DIEBENOW  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

CRAWFORD — When the Pentagon announced last week that the Army National Guard and Army Reserve missed another month of its new soldier recruitment quota, one Vietnam veteran living in Austin wasn't very surprised.

"People don't want to go to war. Wars aren't real popular things," said Thomas Heikkala, co-director of Nonmilitary Options for Youth and member of Veterans for Peace. "Parents don't want their kids to go to war. It's a horrible stress and strain on parents to think about their kids in the military, so they tell them not to do it. So they're not getting their quotas because people don't want to do it."

Heikkala said that since the first Gulf War, he has felt called upon to share his own wartime experiences and knowledge with students before they decide to enter the armed forces. Through Nonmilitary Options for Youth, Heikkala and others like him have gained access to high schools and colleges to give young people a view of military history not readily covered in class, on television, or by military recruiters. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have only made NOY more active in preventing students from trading in their books for weapons.

Last Monday, the Pentagon said that the Army National Guard's recruitment quota for the month of June was short by 14 percent, more than 10,000 soldiers behind its goal of almost 45,000 recruits for the year. Discrepancies exist, however, on the number of consecutive months the Army Guard has missed its recruitment target.

Since the war in Iraq started in March 2003, the number of U.S. casualties has reached nearly 1,800. Wounded U.S. soldiers are listed at just over 6,500. Last Friday, 12 suicide bombers killed seven U.S. troops along with at least 21 other people across Baghdad.

Numbers aside, "bizarre" was the description of the war in Iraq given by Heikkala, a former infantryman who served with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade from March 1968 to January 1969 in Vietnam.

After returning from the Vietnam War, Heikkala joined a nonviolent movement in his hometown, San Francisco, to stop the war. In the early 1970s, he became one of the founding members of an intentional commune in Tennessee that later blossomed into an international humanitarian aid organization

called Plenty International.

From Austin, Heikkala now serves as Plenty's renewable energy advisor. His wife, Karen, serves on Plenty Austin's board of directors. As a founding member of PeaceRoots Alliance, he has also developed registration materials for conscientious objectors.

Even though his passions seem "leftist" and "idealist," the California transplant says he remains grounded and balanced.

"I walk right-foot left-foot, not right-foot wrong-foot. I use my body, my physical and spiritual resources, in an integrated way. To deny one side of our make up severely undermines our ability to cope with life's experiences. We end up being handicapped by prejudices and lack of resources," he said.

During the height of army recruitment season — the summer — when high school graduates are looking for jobs, THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST'S Nathan Diebenow caught up by phone with Heikkala, a carpenter by trade, to talk about the ways in which young people can live life without joining the military, the dangers and myths of military service and benefits not told by recruiters, the real purpose of war, and the upcoming Veterans for Peace Conference in Irving, Texas early next month.

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ICONOCLAST: I was looking for more information about you on the Internet and found that you're an advisor to Plenty International. I recently saw a program on Plenty on Free Speech TV and got excited about the work in teaching soy manufacturing to communities in Central and South America.

HEIKKALA: Plenty has been around since 1974. It came out of The Farm Community near Summertown, Tennessee. Farm is a cooperative community right now. It has a big old place south of Nashville where it settled in 1971. It was settled by a lot of folks who at that time were called hippies. I was one of them at the time.

I came home from Vietnam in 1969, and a couple of weeks later some friends of mine took me to a thing called Monday Night Class. It was an open meeting that was held by a fellow who had been a professor at San Francisco State College and became a hippie in the process of the 60s. But he was so educated and everything that he became a source of information for people. He sort of became a teacher, a guru, so to speak.

Steven Gaskin is his name. He's an author and a speaker and he still lives in the community, although he's not the community guru. He's just a member of the community. He comes out of a tradition that is more free form and open, although it has had its dogmatic times I suppose. (laughs) A lot of people go through changes and try to figure out what's best as they go.

Plenty was formed out of that group because we wanted to do something to help people any where any time that we felt we could. So we did projects over the years in many different countries. Currently its biggest project is called CAFSI, the Central American Food Security Initiative. They have soy producing programs in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Mexico. They have folks who go there and help them with their production processes and how to market and learn how to do it. Some of it has been going on since the late 1970s. Some of it is a little newer.

ICONOCLAST: Tell me a little about yourself, your family history, your experience with Vietnam, and why you're working with Nonmilitary Options for Youth.

HEIKKALA: I'm a second generation American. My grandparents are all immigrants from Finland and Denmark. They had big, huge families with 10 and 14 kids. Most of the men were World War II veterans or are, the ones who are still around, like my dad, but he's not still around.

I grew up in San Francisco which is where he was stationed during World War II. He was stationed at the Pacific Theatre Communications Center at the Presidio. I was highly entranced with militarism and the war. I spent a lot of my youth going to the library and the comic book store checking out books about the war. I was just totally engrossed: "What was this all about?" For my 16th birthday the thing that I got and wanted the most was this huge coffee table book called *A Pictorial History of World War II*.

By the time I had gotten into college, Vietnam had started. I graduated in 1963. There was a lot of questioning going on out there on the West Coast, but I wasn't too involved with anything about that. But I couldn't help but notice it. And there was a draft back then, too. Everybody was drafted, so I avoided that for a while by going to school and getting deferments because I wanted to become a pilot. I got my pilot's license and started as a flight instructor, and



**THINK FOR YOURSELF**

then I got drafted shortly after. But because I started wearing glasses right about then, the military wasn't interested in me being a pilot, even though I had a commercial pilot's license, an instrument rating, and a flight instructor certificate. (laughs) They weren't interested.

So I became an infantryman. Because of the draft they don't give you too many choices about what you want to do, what they want you to do. I was sent to Vietnam with a whole battalion of people. I slowly realized in the process that this was a terrible thing that was going on in Vietnam. It was created as this big lie. It was kind of hard to take because I had so much admiration for all the soldiers in World War I, World War II, and Korea and all that stuff. Particularly the fighter pilots was what I was excited about. I met a few of them. But then I found out that Vietnam was built on these big lies, largely for economic reasons. It had nothing to do with fighting communism. It was more like, "You're on my turf! You're in my market! You can't have that! We're going to kill three million of you! That should prove it!" (laughs) So that was pretty gross.

But I joined the Farm Community shortly after getting out. That was helpful because I felt pretty crazy coming home. I didn't know what to do with myself or how to deal with life very well, and the Farm Community people were all idealistic, trying to figure out how to make something out of themselves in this world we grew up in that was wild and crazy back in 60s and 70s. It was very, very helpful. It was a real healing experience. I found my wife and had three kids. One kid just graduated from college last May from UT (the University of Texas) from engineering school and the other two just got married this year.

ICONOCLAST: Congratulations.

HEIKKALA: Yeah, it's been a big year for us. Everybody is doing fairly good.

But since the Gulf Wars started happening, the first one and the second one, I realized more that all this war studying that I did and having been there created a body of knowledge that I'm still called upon to pass on and to try to do something positive with, even though I work as a carpenter and help people repair their houses. I'm into renewable energy and stuff. This seems like something that I do besides making a living and whatnot.

ICONOCLAST: So that's why you par  
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ticipate in Nonmilitary Options for Youth.

HEIKKALA: Yeah, because, you know, wars over the centuries just ruin societies. They devastate societies of their natural inheritance. By that I mean, the young people who inherit the jobs and skills that make a society a pleasant place to be and a community a healing experience for those involved, but those who mostly go and fight the wars are the working people — the butchers and the bakers and the candlestick makers, and the computer operators and the plumbers and the farmers and all the people our society would have to take on those kinds of jobs that are sorely needed. Look, I'm busy all the time, and everybody I know that has a skill level in the building trades or the different kinds of trades, they're busy all the time. They have backlogs often, and they hand off some of their work to other people. Even when there's a poor economy, they're still busy because they take care of real stuff.

Our government has largely been a government of money and power and corporate interests. You know, since its inception it's been this way. I mean, even our American flag. Most people think it's an original, but it's not an original. It's a copy of the British East India Company flag.

ICONOCLAST: Really? (laughs)

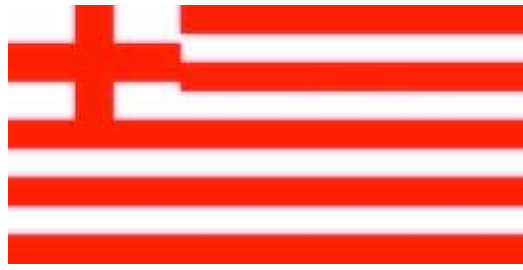
HEIKKALA: The East India Company was the big colonizer, resource exploiter privately-owned, huge conglomerate of families who would go around the world and find poor societies that had some kind of valuable resource which could make a lot of money for whoever could get their hands on it. England and a lot of other European countries were really into this colonization stuff. They could go some place and start bleeding off whatever resource was there for very little compensation to the people who lived in these areas. It's gone on for hundreds of years. It's still going on.

So when George Washington had Besty Ross make the flag, all he had her do was to take the cross out of the upper left hand corner where there was a rectangle and put 13 stars on it because the flag already had the red and white stripes. This was the flag of the East India Company, the resource exploiter star of the world, and George Washington adopted that flag as the American flag which implies that even though the British government was thrown out, it's whole economic system was adopted and moved in full steam.

This system went on to colonize and exploit the whole rest of the country. It colonized all the Indian lands and exploited it and either killed or pushed Indians out of the resource areas. If you ever talk to Native Americans, they'll say the American government made like 350 treaties with Indians in North America and broke every one.

The history is long and sordid on that level, and about somewhere in the late 70s, I had the flu for several weeks and started studying a lot of stuff because I wanted to know how come this world existed like this, you know? I didn't un-

derstand it quite the way I was telling it to you, but I knew something was up, and I realized that war is really about money and power and resource exploitation and machismo. It's not about democracy or ending slavery or setting



**THE BRITISH EAST INDIA COMPANY FLAG might have been the basis for the Stars and Stripes, the national flag of the United States of America.**

people free. All that stuff that has happened is only incidental to the real exploits of war which are economic, based on the greed of resource exploitation. That's the main deal. The good that happens, they've got to put up with helping the people a little bit when they have wars.

I mean, what did soldiers get hundreds of years ago? When they conquered some place, they got the right to rape, pillage, and plunder. Right?

ICONOCLAST: Yeah.

HEIKKALA: So they don't quite get that any more, but the news isn't good, nonetheless.

ICONOCLAST: Well, it seems like more Americans are becoming aware that Bush's war in Iraq isn't what it's cracked up to be. And groups like Veterans for Peace, Gold Star Families for Peace, and Nonmilitary Options for Youth is spreading that news. What have been some of the successes of Nonmilitary Options for Youth in Texas?

HEIKKALA: We have worked with the school districts. During the school year, we bring to students more of a picture of what's going on than what they have learned so far. These are additional pieces of their education. We get

**“U**nlike any contract that exists because once you join, you're no longer your own person. You're now a G.I. “Government Issue.” You are to do what you are told. You are a part of a bigger thing. You're supposed to be a cog in the machine, and you're supposed to do stuff when the next cog moves you. That's how it exists.”

— Thomas Heikkala, Co-director of Nonmilitary Options for Youth

invited by school teachers to do presentations in their classes or college classrooms or with groups to tell what our message is about.

We're trying to tell people that there are better options than joining the military, for finding money for school, discipline, and ways to travel and things to do that are of a nature of community service. We have studied these issues and found options and ways for folks to do other things. We work a little bit with school counselors. We have information packets near the military recruiters' packets in schools.

We talk about conscientious objection, its history and that it's about to help people understand if they might think they are one. We help them understand what that phrase actually means: conscientious objector. Very few kids know what that word means. We do a presentation. We say, “How many of you have heard of a “conscientious objector?” We

get one or two hands out of 30 kids. High school kids.

We talk a little bit about the toxicity of being at a war, like we had Agent Orange during Vietnam and now we have depleted uranium. (sighs)

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, we did a story on depleted uranium. That stuff is nasty.

HEIKKALA: It's pretty horrible stuff. We talk about things that the military recruiters won't tell them because a bunch of us are veterans and we know what they tell you and what they won't tell you. Things like this delayed enlistment program that underage kids can join when they are 17, and they promise to go into the military once they get out of high school. They get their parents to sign this thing with them that says that they're in the military, but they're not really in it until they're out of high school, but they're in. So the recruiters tell them that once you do that you're really in, but you're not really in. You're not really in until you're really in. But they don't tell kids this. They tell them, “You sign this, and you're really in.” I had a recruiter say, “You can't tell my DEPs that they're not really in!” We said, “Well, that's what it said in your uniform code of military justice. It says that if they really don't want to go into the military, then you don't really want them.” It really says that in the laws. We help some kids in the delayed enlistment program get out of the delayed enlistment program, but do you know some of this stuff that's going on with military recruiters?

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, I hear that military recruiters are desperate for new recruits. They're being pressured so much to meet their quotas that a few of the recruiters have resorted to bullying teens, telling them to lie to their parents, forging documents, and cheating the army's drug-test system. I also hear that the military is trying to enlist high school dropouts and those with criminal records.

HEIKKALA: Right.

ICONOCLAST: It's funny because a

lot of these teens are not tuned into any mainstream news reports. They're only tuned to “Army of One” ads on TV and in teen and fashion magazines, which make the military look cool, exciting, and sexy. So, tell me some more of these myths of the U.S. military that recruiters use to sell military service to students.

HEIKKALA: There is this thing called the sign-up bonus. If you join, you get this bonus. Well, it's not really a bonus. It's really a loan. If you get this bonus when you join up and you screw up while you're in the military, they want it back. It's not a free bonus. It's a loan. In other words, it's based on your performance and if you meet the military's goals. You could be demoted, some kind of court martial, or nonjudicial punishment or 15 different kinds of ways for screwing up. If you get enough of that, you lose your benefits.

Another one is you don't get the G.I.

Bill just because you join the military.

ICONOCLAST: You don't?

HEIKKALA: No. You've got to sign up when you enlist. You have to sign up for it. It's not just a given that you get that. And it has very strict limits, too. To sign up for it, you have to pay into it in your first year of enlistment to the tune of a little over \$100 a month. I think \$12,000 is the total. You don't get it back. It's not reimbursed to you. It just goes into this fund that the military uses.

When you're at your lowest pay level, you're an E1 or an E2, and you're paying in \$100 a month into this G.I. Bill thing, and they tell you, “Oh, once you get into your duty station, you get time off and go start taking classes and use your G.I. Bill.” Well, that may be true for some situations, but the military tends to work people really hard and long hours, and if you think about going to school and working full time, it's not an easy thing to do. Young folks do it sometimes because they're young and they're able to handle it, but it's still not an easy thing to do.

One of my sons did that. He was working full time and went to school full time at ACC here in Austin for a year and a half or two. It was difficult for him. He didn't have any weekends. You're either working or going to school.

What else? If you say, “Okay, I'm going to join the army. I want to become a computer tech.” The recruiter will say, “Fine, fine. Sign here and you're in.” Well, if they don't write that down in the enlistment agreement that you're signing up because you want to be a certain thing, you may not get it. You actually have to have things in writing, very specifically in writing, which they don't often do. The recruiters are told to be real friendly, real kind, real accommodating, but if you go sideways with the situation, they can become real difficult to deal with. Very difficult. I've heard quite a bit about recruiters calling them and calling them and calling them and calling them.

Everything in the military is in writing. All things that are done is in writing in the military. Everything has to be paperworked. So you have to have your paperwork very together to get what you want out of the military.

ICONOCLAST: So it's almost like you have to know contract law. It's like your signing up for a service.

HEIKKALA: Yes, but unlike any contract that exists because once you join, you're no longer your own person. You're now a G.I. “Government Issue.” You are to do what you are told. You are a part of a bigger thing. You're supposed to be a cog in the machine, and you're supposed to do stuff when the next cog moves you. That's how it exists.

In the military the discipline that you get is doing what you're told — always doing what you're told without question, virtually without question. If you don't do what you're told, you can get into trouble. It could be a little trouble or a lot of trouble. If you duck the system, and don't do what you're told, you're getting sideways with the system, and they don't tell you that kind of stuff.

Democracy does not exist in the military. It's a top-down, the shit-rolls-down type of organization. They say that it has

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• **BETTER PATHS TO GLORY ... Continued From Page 4**

to be that way if you're going to fight war: "You gotta do what you're told if you're going to fight a war." Well, what the hell is the war for?

I mean, it's becoming clear that there are better ways to sort out the world's problems than to go around killing each other, destroying properties and our resources, causing more stress and pain. There are better ways to do it than ... war is pretty convenient. It makes a lot of money for some people. Unfortunately, that's what it's about. It's not about the incidental good that happens around the edges of it. Slavery does still exist, even in the U.S. You keep hearing stories about how people are enslaved when they get brought across the border illegally. That means that antislavery hasn't been a big priority. Not a big enough priority to really eradicate it. Just because the Civil War happened and slavery was supposed to end, well, it sort of ended for a while, but then it got worse again, real bad around Woodrow Wilson's time. He was a terrible racist.

ICONOCLAST: How is that? How did slavery still exist in the United States after the Civil War?

HEIKKALA: Not as such like buying and selling. Making it very, very difficult for people to intergrate. You think if slavery really ended, but there was still — slavery made a lot of money. It pretty much built the South and whether it's full slavery or wage slavery —

ICONOCLAST: — which is what you're talking about, right?

HEIKKALA: There were people getting indentured still. You hear them finding truckloads of people here or there whether they are Chinese or from the South, and you find a ranch with a bunch of people on it, paying off their debts for getting into the country.

ICONOCLAST: Oh, so you're saying that there are people coming here, but they're sending all their money back to their country of origin in order to pay off their loan.

HEIKKALA: Or to pay off their Coyotes or whoever brought them in here.

ICONOCLAST: Okay. I follow you. I follow you.

HEIKKALA: I don't know if you've seen these articles in some papers. We see them every once in a while where they find a whole truckload of people or they'll find some hotel or some ranch where there are a bunch of immigrants stuck there because they're paying off their Coyotes and they can't do much until they've got their debts paid.

ICONOCLAST: Right. I'm familiar with these stories of these Coyotes but not the debt slavery system angle to it.

HEIKKALA: There's not a lot of them, but the fact is that it's still happening. I guess my point is that some of this kind of stuff like making wars and slavery, they're really greed-based things. And because they make a lot of money, they're hard to eradicate unless there's a real enlightened government or populous that won't allow it to happen. But we don't have that real enlightenment. We have greed. That's an old, old long-time history of our country: exploitation, colonialism, and using these resources to make money and get rich.

So we're helping folks to try to understand some of that stuff, and we're finding options for them.

ICONOCLAST: Specifically, what are some options for the youths in the poor and working-poor classes?

HEIKKALA: Well, in some ways, they are hard to find, but what we do is to encourage young folks to follow their interests. A lot of young folks don't know what to do with their lives. They're getting out of high school, but they all have interests in things. So we encourage them to think about their interests and to follow them. Find ways to make a little money, but to follow their interests, and their interests will take them through their life. It will settle into some things that they will feel dedicated to as they go along. They will be happier with themselves in the long run if they follow their interests, rather than going with the flow, whatever that might be, you know?

I guess that's why I got drafted. I said, "Well, I don't know what else to do. I don't know if should go anywhere else. The government says I have to do it. I guess I better do it." If you're a young person and you don't know what to do and what's going on, you feel compelled to join the military because it's some sort of right of passage. Maybe killing people is okay in certain situations, even though you may know someone who is in jail for killing somebody, but all of a sudden, if you join the military, it's okay. What? That's crazy. As many people that are on the black wall in Washington for Vietnam, there are those who committed suicide after they got back because of whatever things they weren't able to live with that were a result of that war.

ICONOCLAST: What are some other myths?

HEIKKALA: We studied the G.I. Bill and how it's different than the original one, the G.I. Bill of Rights that existed in 1945 for the 16 million G.I.s that were coming home from World War II. There's a terrific book called *When Dreams Came True* that really taught me on how it really came to be through the Congress and through the pressure groups that helped create it. World War I veterans were involved in making that happen because they got such a lousy deal when they came home from war. In World War I, they were given a train ticket home and a promise of \$400-\$500. This was 1918. That was the G.I. Bill of 1918: a train ticket home and a promise.

ICONOCLAST: Wow! That's pretty hardcore.

HEIKKALA: Yeah, so a lot of these guys were pretty upset. They had some big, huge demonstrations in Washington in the 20s and 30s about all this stuff. Demonstrators were all routed by the officers of those days which were Patton and McArthur and Eisenhower when they were younger.

So this G.I. Bill of Rights happened in World War II. It was pretty impressive as far as the benefits it had for those guys. It changed our country forever because they went for it in droves, but then they totally dropped the G.I. Bill for a time after Vietnam and recreated it. It's this thing called the Montgomery G.I. Bill which is pretty inadequate for what it does.

The original G.I. Bill should exist for all young people, to be able to go to any college they want, study what they want, and their tuition is paid for. It would make a great difference in the prosperity of this country and the self-esteem. As it is, education is very expensive, and it's difficult for young folks, especially poor folks, to get it. You have to be pretty

dedicated if you want to do something. So we try to help young folks to follow their interests and to have faith in themselves.

We also talk about the trades, to get involved in the trades. There's a lot of benefits to having a little apprenticeship, learning some skills. It's a great way to build discipline and self-esteem, and it's not coercive like the military.

ICONOCLAST: In a recent NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE, General Barry McCaffrey (he's a retired four-star army commander who went to Iraq last month) said about the current military recruitment situation, "We're reaching the bottom of the barrel." Why and how have we reached the bottom of the barrel? To what do you attribute the U.S. Army missing its recruitment quotas for the last nine straight months nationwide?

HEIKKALA: People don't want to go to war. Wars aren't real popular things. Parents don't want their kids to go to war. It's a horrible stress and strain on parents to think about their kids in the military, so they tell them not to do it. So they're not getting their quotas because people don't want to do it. They're realizing the benefits aren't that great if that's what he means by the bottom of the barrel. They're just ignoring the fact that the people really don't like that war very much.

ICONOCLAST: I was reading in the AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN that a spokesman for the Texas National Guard said that the draw for current soldiers to reenlist in the military has a little more to do than a paycheck and reenlistment bonuses. He said, "A lot of it has to do with the Texas culture. We're an interesting kind of amalgam of the old South and the tradition of military service, and the West, which also has a military tradition." He went on to say, "I think military service is held in very high regard in this state." Do you think that soldiers from Texas are any more warlike than soldiers from any other state or nation, or is it that this state's poverty problem contributes to military service?

HEIKKALA: Oh, I don't know. American kids, whether they are in Texas or anywhere else, grow up conditioned to think that America is this great, special place, and the rest of the world is not quite as good. They all need to be like us or something, that our democracy is really the best one going. Everything else doesn't really come close to it. We're sort of elitist. We can be very proud of it. There's a lot of pride that goes along with that. We have our Fourth of July stuff, you know? The only incidental things are touted as being the important things like the ending of slavery or the ending of British rule or we stomped fascism and the Nazis, the Chinese, and Korea. We did all these good things, and so a lot of our society is conditioned to believe that the military is a great saviour of all this stuff, and they don't understand unless you talk about it with them that there is a flaw in the economic system.

Although I'm grateful that my namesake died in Europe to stop fascism because it was rampant, I can't deny at the same time why World War II happened.



Thomas Heikkala

It wasn't just to end Hitler and to stop the Nazis. We bred him. Our corporations and our big economic system fed, bred, and raised up that whole fascist thing in Japan and Germany because they were the fanciest, high-tech countries in the world besides the U.S. They had all these amazing abilities and high-tech stuff, even back then, and we just sold them all the materials they could use to build up their weapons systems, and they shot it all back at us.

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, they were all driving Fords, weren't they?

HEIKKALA: You know, we had huge amounts of scrap metal back in the 20s, 30s, and 40s. The Industrial Revolution was just going wild from the time of Kitty Hawk in 1903, or whenever it was, to World War I when all of a sudden we had fighter airplanes to World War II when we got airplanes that could shoot rockets.

The Germans and the Japanese had fancy if not fancier airplanes and boats than we did. But we sold a lot of this scrap metal to Germany and Japan, and they built their armorments with them, and they made a lot of their weaponry with it: their U-Boats, their Zeros, their battleships, and all that stuff.

We had a lot of collaboration with the Nazis, a lot of the large American corporations like IBM, General Motors, Ford. They weren't supposed to rearm after World War I, but they did anyhow. That was largely an economic thing, you know?

So it's important to let young folks know about choices, that they don't have to do what they feel compelled to do. They need to critically think about what's happened to them and have enough information and get a little older so that they can, when they decide to join the military, have a more thought-out system rather than be compelled before they hardly know what to do about themselves or even know themselves.

Kids love education. They don't always love school.

ICONOCLAST: (laughs)

HEIKKALA: Not too many put up with it until they get out of it, but you know, when they are younger, they really love it. They really love learning a lot. I have two kids that dropped out of high school. All mine are grown. They finally got their G.E.D.s They enjoyed working instead of going to school. Then they both graduated from college. One of them got a B.A. at Evergreen State. The other one got a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from U.T.

We told them, "Go with your interests. What do you want to do with yourself? It's your education. What do you want to learn? What do you want to figure out? What do you want to do?" When they felt that it was in their hands again, they were able to do something for it, feel responsible for it. They want to explore life.

ICONOCLAST: It's looking like the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard won't meet its quotas this year. Do you think it's likely that President Bush will call for a draft? If he does, do you think that it would be a signal not only that his administration has given up on "volunteers" but it has also lost momentum for his war policy?

HEIKKALA: I don't know. It won't be easy to do a draft. When there was a draft in the 50s, 60s, and 70s, there were military bases all over the place that were processing draftees. Basic training is eight weeks. Advanced training is eight weeks or longer depending on whatever your advanced training might

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• **BETTER PATHS TO GLORY ... Continued From Page 5**

be. Then you're off into something. And they had large amounts of people moving through this system; well, they've dumped a lot of that system. It doesn't exist like that anymore. It exists to process volunteers, and it would take a lot of changes to make a draft exist again. It can't happen quickly. It'll take a long time for that to happen.

It's very expensive, and the military doesn't like them because they're not volunteers. They're forced by a draft. A draft is coercive. It's forced. People don't like to be forced. Some will say that you're doing your duty and all this stuff. That's the kind of stuff they do and put up with, but they don't like to be forced to do stuff. The military doesn't like people who talk back and argue with you and go AWOL and be a pain in the ass and make the military prison system a bigger deal. (laughs) You know what they called the prison in Vietnam?

ICONOCLAST: What?

HEIKKALA: They called it — it was at a place called Long Bihn Post. There's a town called Long Bihn, and it was Long Bihn Jail, or "LBJ."

ICONOCLAST: Oh, God! (laughs)

HEIKKALA: So that's where you went. To LBJ. It's a real negative for politicians to force the draft on people. The other day I read in the paper that there was an accident, a helicopter crash on a base. They crash in the best of times. I don't think there will be a draft, but this war is so bizarre. Bush is so lame. It's hard to understand it sometimes.

ICONOCLAST: Let me ask you about the Veterans for Peace conference that's coming to the Dallas area (Irving) in early August. When I first heard about Veterans for Peace about two years ago, I was astonished that it had been around since 1985. I understand that there are 123 chapters in total and three in Texas now.

Earlier I was looking at the workshop schedule <[www.veteransforpeace.org/convention05/schedule2005.htm](http://www.veteransforpeace.org/convention05/schedule2005.htm)> at the conference, and I must say I was impressed with the breadth of topics. What topics are your particularly interested in?

HEIKKALA: Well, I've helped organize three of the workshops. Two of them on counter-recruitment and another on the G.I. Rights Hotline. Have you heard of the G.I. Rights Hotline?

ICONOCLAST: No. Tell me.

HEIKKALA: The G.I. Rights Hotline is a service that has been in this country for some years now, and it's an 800 number. You can call and get information and help on legal issues. There are people there that help people with counseling with their personal and legal issues. Mostly people already in the military call up and say, "I'm having a big problem with my conscientious objector papers." "I have a big problem because I have an officer who is treating me a certain way." "I've been arrested for this, and I'm trying to figure out how to make the best of it because I'm having a lot of problems associated with it because of the way I'm being treated." "I'm trying to get out of the military." There's a whole slew of things involved with this.

They have 10 or 15 places you can call that are associated with this G.I. Rights Hotline. There's a website: <[www.girights.org](http://www.girights.org)>. It deals with discharges, the delayed enlistment program, discrimination, gay issues, AWOL issues, harassment, conscientious ob-

jection. The 800 number, the national hotline, is (800) 394-9544. They get almost 3,000 calls a month. They're going to come to the Veterans for Peace conference to go over it in more detail, so they can help more people.

There are some others that I'm interested in attending ... Abdicating for Veterans, something about the School of Americas in Latin America.

ICONOCLAST: Isn't that the "Assassination School"?

HEIKKALA: Yeah, the "School of Assassins" is what they call it in Central America. It's in Fort Benning, Georgia. They have a big demonstration there every year.

ICONOCLAST: Yeah, I think they recently had it.

HEIKKALA: They get 10,000 or more every year for a big weekend. I went once, and it was an incredible experience, I have to admit. It was the most amazing experience to be a part of that.

ICONOCLAST: What went on? What was amazing about it?

HEIKKALA: Well, they have it on this big four-lane street that leads to the front gate of Fort Benning. It's a long street, a quarter mile or half a mile long. They take up the whole street. The street gets closed down.

People used to march on to the fort at the School of Americas, and they'd get arrested. They still do it, but the military has closed it off and made it much harder to go on there. But they pay tribute to all the people who have been killed in Central and Latin America due to the training they received there at Fort Benning.

The School of the Americas (it's called something different now) train people on how to keep their society passive, to put down any kind of rebellion that would go against this system of privatization. It's basically a military system that is designed to keep a society so that it is passive and allows the exploitation of its resources to happen through large multinational corporations that are promoted through NAFTA and CAFTA and World Bank stuff that opens up peoples' social system to privatization. They try to privatize everything from water systems to just making life more expensive and difficult for the people south of the border. It's not to keep a society free from terrorism or help it be more democratic. It's to help the multinationals put down any insurrection against them.

There seems to be an interesting workshop on gender and militarism, nonviolence training, posttraumatic stress disorder. There's a bunch of nice workshops.

ICONOCLAST: There are. You know, I've read that there's been a growing number of pro-war, Bush-loving, evangelical Christians who are signing up into the armed forces, most notably in the Air Force, but I noticed that there wasn't a workshop on religion and militarism. I think it's a pretty new topic, wouldn't you say?

HEIKKALA: Yeah, it's become a bigger issue nationally because some of the stuff that has been going down in the Air Force Academy, but you have to draw the line somewhere. This is the first time they've had this much stuff. There's a lot of issues that they've dealt with in the past, but this year they're really trying to get this kind of information out because it's more of a national movement. The veterans see that they are needed to help to educate young folks about

what they're facing if they're going to go into the military.

ICONOCLAST: What should the role of the military be in today's world?

HEIKKALA: The nice thing about it is that it's kind of a community. It's a sexist community in that it's not very integrated between men and women. The military is pretty — like we said earlier — when they win the war, it was rape, pillage, and plunder. The attitude towards women was pretty piss poor in general, but if they can get over this stuff and not be a coercive thing whose primary goal is to win wars but to be more like a giant community service organization, that could be a real positive thing.

ICONOCLAST: What do you mean?

HEIKKALA: Like this big tsunami thing that just happened. The military is the best vehicle for bringing in aid because they have lots of planes and lots of ships and lots of things to help out. The aid organizations can bring tons of rice, tools, and equipment to the docks and the loading areas, and the military

has enough airplanes and ships to transport it all.

ICONOCLAST: Where do you see the peace movement going in the coming months in Texas?

HEIKKALA: The peace movement is out to create common ground alliances with people and other groups in an effort to bring attention and energy to our common need for justice and peace. With justice based in love with respect for our planet and its inhabitants and not competition, which is based on the false notion that there is a lethal inadequacy of life support on Earth, we will all have a place to live where we all have access to food, shelter, education, jobs, resources, and opportunities that suit our spirits.

**INFO**

Plenty International,  
[www.plentyaustin.org](http://www.plentyaustin.org)  
Nonmilitary Options For Youth,  
[www.progressiveaustin.org/nmofy/drupal](http://www.progressiveaustin.org/nmofy/drupal)  
Peace Roots Alliance,  
[www.peaceroots.org](http://www.peaceroots.org)

## Seven Governors Urge Bush To Lead On Energy

WASHINGTON — Governors from the Midwest, West, and Northeast late last week urged President Bush to lead a national project to achieve energy independence within a decade in an open letter to the White House. The letter was released the day after the long-awaited members of the complete House-Senate energy bill conference were named.

Lawmakers are under pressure to send the president an energy bill before the congressional recess in August because of soaring gasoline prices.

The signatories believe that the nation's security and energy needs provide a mandate to rejuvenate our nation's economy. In the letter, seven governors pushed for creating a new generation of American jobs, as advocated by the Apollo Alliance, a new coalition of national security, labor, environmental, civil rights and business leaders who are fighting for energy independence from foreign energy sources <[www.apolloalliance.org](http://www.apolloalliance.org)>.

"America needs to think big, and rise

to our potential by tapping the can-do spirit core to our shared history," said Gov. Christine Gregoire, D-Wash. "In Washington state we are working to create alternative energy solutions to meet future needs, and we encourage support for similar measures at the federal level."

Gov. Rod Blagojevich, D-Ill., noted that both the House and Senate versions of the energy bill do little to stop rising gas prices.

"We need an energy bill that delivers relief to everyday people who work hard to make ends meet," said Blagojevich.

In addition to Gregoire and Blagojevich, signatories included Governors Jim Doyle, D-Wis.; Ted Kulongoski, D-Ore.; Janet Napolitano, D-Ariz.; Bill Richardson, D-N.M.; and Brian Schweitzer, D-Mont., who all noted that energy efficiency policies have already been implemented in their states and urged President Bush to extend them to the federal level.

**INFO**

[www.apolloalliance.org](http://www.apolloalliance.org)

## Willie's Album Cover Get Wal-Mart Makeover

CRAWFORD — What is Wal-Mart smoking?

The Wal-Mart approved cover art of Willie Nelson's new reggae album, *Countryman*, features a palm tree in place of marijuana leaves which will be released everywhere else. Universal Music Group Nashville bent to the giant retailer's wishes.

The 72-year-old country singer's album released last week is not the first CD to be edited by the notorious big box business: Sheryl Crow's album was banned because song lyrics about kids shooting each other with guns bought at Wal-Mart; Prodigy's 1997 album was removed because of the lyrics to "Smack

My Bitch Up."

The rest of Nelson's *Countryman* remains unaltered and features reggae versions of his songs and covers.

Toots Hibbert of Toots and the Maytals accompanied Nelson on Johnny and June Carter Cash's reggae song "I'm a Worried Man."

Nelson is currently touring with Bob Dylan.

Tickets go on sale July 30 for the 20th anniversary of Farm Aid, which will take place on Sept. 18 with fellow Farm

Aid founders John Mellencamp and Neil Young in Chicago. Just shy of \$30 million has been raised for farmers by the concert.



# 'Litter Force' Superheroes Encourage Younger Texans To 'Blast the Trash' In Nine Cities

## Don't Mess With Texas Introduces New Initiative To Teach Children About Littering

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is now targeting even younger Texans with its litter•prevention campaign. With the help of the new "Litter Force," Don't Mess with Texas will teach elementary•age children about the perils of littering and how they can pledge to help "Blast the Trash" and protect Texas roadways from litter.

Starting this week, the educational outreach campaign will take special "Litter Force" vans to nine cities in two weeks, making stops at local YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs in each market. Events will feature cartoon illustrated superheroes and trash villains who will educate children about the consequences of littering and encourage them to join the Litter Force to help eliminate littering in Texas.

The Litter Force, a group of four superheroes, aims to excite and inspire younger children to become litter•savvy and join their team. Each character uses special powers to "Blast the Trash:"

- "Hawk" sees litter that may be hidden or is miles away
- "Ultra" shoots a beam from her magic bracelets to prevent littering by

catching trash

- "Bolt" hears litter as soon as it is dropped and races with amazing speed to catch it

- "K-900" the team's half•bulldog, half•robot canine, uses his expert sense of smell to detect litter and can teleport himself anywhere to pick it up

The Litter Force's mission is to protect the environment against a gang of trash villains. The villains are representative of the most common types of litter found on Texas highways as recorded by TxDOT in the 2000 Visible Litter Study:

- "Master Packet" is a gooey, squirting ketchup packet
- "Madam Gum" is a chewy, sticky wad of bubble gum
- "The Chipinator" is a crinkled snack bag that hurls its uneaten potato chips
- "Sloppy Straw" is a spitwad•shooting beverage straw
- "Pop•Top" is a soda can that flings its metal tabs at the Litter Force

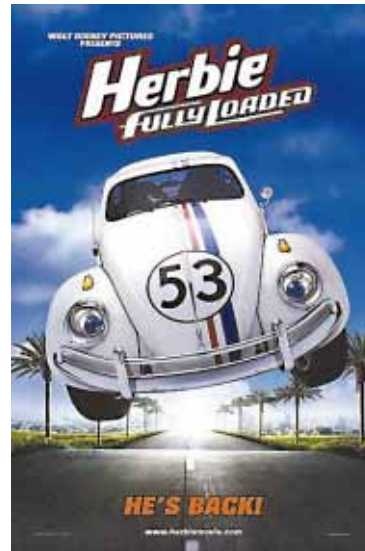
"This is the first time Don't Mess with Texas has created an educational campaign on this scale targeted to elementary age students in our nearly 20•year history," said Howdeshell. "We're very excited about these planned events, and we are confident that children will respond positively to the Litter Force and its message."

Activities will include a litter hunt and a game that familiarizes children with the different forms of litter—large, small and "accidental" (litter that accidentally flies out of cars and pickup trucks). They will have the opportunity to join the Litter Force by reciting a pledge promising not to litter and to encourage friends and family to do the same. Children will also receive a Report a Litterer note pad to keep in their parents' cars so they can report littering to TxDOT. Children can help their parents record the car's description, license plate number and details about the incident and submit the information to <www.dontmesswithtexas.org>. Offenders will receive a letter informing them they were spotted littering and they will be given a Don't Mess with Texas litterbag for their car to prevent future littering.

Most important, kids will learn that even the smallest pieces of trash count as litter, especially cigarette butts, food wrappers and bottle caps. These items and other trash add up to 1 billion pieces of litter on Texas roads every year, ac-

ording to TxDOT's 2000 Visible Litter Study.

Stops include the cities of Austin, San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Tyler, Beaumont, Abilene, McAllen, Amarillo, and Laredo.



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## Crawford Masonic Lodge To Host Blood Drive

CRAWFORD— Crawford Masonic Lodge #585 will host the Carter BloodCare Blood Drive on Saturday, Aug. 13. The drive is open to the public and will run from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The drive will benefit the Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. This hospital is one of the nation's leading pediatric centers for the treatment of orthopedic conditions, certain related neurological disorders, and learning disorders, like dyslexia. There is no charge for treatment at the hospital and admission is open to Texas children from birth to 18 years of age.

For additional information or to volunteer to the hospital, call 214-559-5000 or visit the website at <www.tsrhc.org>.

For information about the blood drive, contact Thomas Lowe at 254-486-2612.



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# Kerry Pushing For 'Kids Come First Act'

WASHINGTON — Former Presidential candidate John Kerry says that it is “totally unacceptable that, in the greatest country in the world, millions of children are not getting the health care they need. That’s why I have introduced the Kids Come First Act.”

The movement is intended to persuade the Federal government to provide this need.

“In the Senate, I am working hard to convince my colleagues to co-sponsor this vitally important bill,” said Kerry.

“But, the most important co-sponsors — the ones who can help push this legislation through a Republican Congress and the Bush White House — are the hundreds of thousands of grassroots activists in the <johnkerry.com> community.”

Kerry notes that currently a fourth of the nation’s children are not fully up to date on their basic immunizations, a third with chronic asthma do not get a prescription for medications they need, half of uninsured children have not had a well child visit in the past year, one in six has delayed or unmet medical needs, one in five has trouble accessing health care, a fourth does not see the dentist annually, and a third had no health insurance during 2002 or 2003.

“Helping the 11 million children who have no health coverage isn’t even on the radar screen of the Bush administration and the Republican leaders in Congress,” Kerry said. “But, we’re going to put it there.”

“To date, over 470,000 Americans have signed our Kids Come First petition,” said Kerry. “We’re closing in on our immediate goal of 500,000 before President Bush makes his State of the Union Address. We’ll build from there until we stand one million strong. We’ve got to put getting our children the health care they need at the top of our national agenda. It won’t be easy, but we will never relent until we find a way to put Kids First.”

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# Promised Pension Benefits For Texas Teachers At Risk

## 'Enough is Enough!' Says AFT, AFL-CIO

AUSTIN — A proposal for new and deeper cuts in promised pension benefits for Texas teachers has surfaced in the Texas Senate in the waning days of the current special session. The bill—SB 8 by Robert Duncan (R-Lubbock)—would mandate a minimum retirement age of 60, even if teachers meet the “Rule of 80” requirement that currently allows a teacher to retire without suffering a benefit reduction for early retirement if his or her age and years of service equal 80.

”Sen. Duncan’s proposal is taking us backwards in our efforts to attract and retain quality teachers,” said Linda Bridges, Texas Federation of Teachers President. “Lawmakers have increased the costs teachers pay for their retirement health-care benefits, cut their promised pension benefits, and slashed the health-care stipend for all current teachers and school employees. Enough is enough. It’s time to start respecting Texas teachers and adding incentives for the profession instead of disincentives.”

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## The Joke's On Karl

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "If you can't say nothin' nice about somebody, go into politics . . ."

Take Karl Rove.  
To the nearest tall tree with a low limb.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a dead armadillo beside the road?

The armadillo doesn't try to convince you it was killed by terrorists.

How do you know if Karl Rove is hiding in your house?

He's in the closet.

How many Karl Roves does it take to change a light bulb?

Two. One to change the bulb and one to blame the liberals because the old one burned out.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a vacuum cleaner?

There isn't any. They both make too much noise, they both dig up dirt and they both SUCK!

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a Huggie?

They're both full of crap, but the Huggie doesn't leak it.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a coral snake.

A coral snake might have a li-i-i-tle bit of a conscience.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and alligator skin boots?

The alligator is still inside Karl's boots.

Where does Karl Rove sleep?

Anywhere that's discreet.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a four-star restaurant?

Four stars.

## Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



Why does Karl Rove keep a copy of the U.S. Constitution next to his bed?  
Saves tissue.

Why did Karl Rove pretend to be drowning at the beach.

He needed a date.

Why did Karl Rove refuse to put his hands in the cement at Grauman's Chinese Theater?

He was afraid he'd uncover the body.

What is the difference between Karl Rove and a rock?

The rock is more concerned about global warming.

How did Karl Rove get rich?

He invented a gay bar that no one can be seen entering or leaving.

What's the distinguishing feature of the Karl Rove Escort Service?

There's no armor plating on your date, either.

How did Karl Rove serve his country?  
With fries and a medium Coke.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and a hurricane?

The hurricane doesn't blame the Democrats for all the destruction.

What was the meanest trick Karl Rove played on George Bush?

He disguised himself as a pretzel.

What did Karl Rove do on his vacation this summer?

He attacked swimmers on the Florida Gulf Coast.

What's the difference between Karl Rove and Benedict Arnold?

When Arnold sold his nation's secrets, he had the decency to leave the country.

### A note in passing:

Arthur Fletcher, known as "the father of affirmative action," died last week.

The 80-year-old former chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights served four presidents and was responsible for implementing the "revised

Philadelphia Plan," which required minority employment specifications for companies and labor unions doing federal government business.

The four presidents were Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and the first George Bush.

Fletcher was a Republican, a real one, not among the party's current crop of fascists, and an honorable man who served his nation and his race with dignity and diligence.

Lest we forget, affirmative action was a Republican plan administered by Republican presidents and decent public servants like Arthur Fletcher.

We all walk the same earth; muck and mountain.



# Editorial

OP/ED

Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

## Time To Tumble The Walls

First, there were the Downing Street memos.

Now, there is evidence of a major leak in Karl Rove's propaganda machine.

The political compass is pointing to the White House with growing evidence that indeed the reason to go to war in Iraq was fixed either around erroneous beliefs or outright lies, hang the truth and hang the facts, either way.

Right now the focus is on Rove, the White House deputy chief of staff who is credited with a multitude of dirty tricks that led to George W. Bush's ascension to the White House, twice.

Rove has been named as the source who leaked CIA agent Valerie Plame's identity, which ruined her career and also sacrificed national security.

Since there were pro-war and anti-war factions in the CIA prior to the United States' journey into war and since it is becoming increasingly clear that actions were taken to fix policy to embrace the Iraq invasion, it is incontrovertible

that squelching any peace initiatives would become part of that policy.

With the new revelations about Rove, it is incumbent that Congress get to the bottom of the matter and immediately initiate hearings involving all the key players, including the President and his minions.

Propaganda and arrogance can be a deadly mixture. Just ask 1,700 dead soldiers, thousands of dead Iraqi children, and an economically shortchanged world where terror's shroud is growing within the halls of governments everywhere. It is a cancer without boundaries. Terror feeds upon terror. There are no innocents.

Bush's faith-based assumption regarding WMDs — void of facts, or perhaps worse, ignorant of facts — should teach Americans to take a lesson from their Missouri counterparts with a "show me" attitude. Governance through blatant lies is treason. Fired? Does such tempered remonstrance answer so monstrous a charge?

Rove is due a rendezvous with Congressional interrogation, as are President Bush, George Tenet, and other governmental officials who participated in "fixing" a war that has killed our young men and women and made our nation a pariah in much of the rest of the world. The citizenry of this planet increasingly sees us, the American people, as liars and bullies because we do nothing to rein in the thugs we have elected. Even a cursory reading of the world's press reveals that the majority of the world sees us as humankind's enemy.

We do not live on this planet alone, and cannot survive on the pretense that those millions who fear us are irrelevant.

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



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# New Trend In Grad Gifts Has Parents Going For Bust

As I watched John Stossel's "20/20" report about LuLu Diaz, the girl whose parents gave her \$6,000 breast implants for her high school graduation gift, I was shocked by the notion of a father agreeing to be part of anything that would make his teenaged daughter more enticing to teenaged boys. As luck would have it, I actually spent several years in my teens. Because of this I can tell you there are many teenaged boys who still haven't made it past the "breast implants" portion of this column. Sadly, some may never finish reading it because, in order to break them out of their current hypnotic spell, it will become necessary for a close friend or family member to light this newspaper on fire.

Let's face it: This is the nature of most men until the aging process inspires a level of physical maturity that dethrones sex as the main motivator. While there is no set timeline for this transformation, most experts agree it begins anywhere between six and eight months after death. Until then — at least from a father's perspective — men can't be trusted.

Knowing this, I've already begun saving for our daughter's graduation gift,

which will be an entire new wardrobe consisting of multiple pairs of sheet-metal pants and turtleneck sweaters made from chain-link. I may throw in a make-up kit as well, just in case she decides to lift her metal visor during conversation. I'm sure my daughter will thank me later for adding a degree of difficulty to the courtship process, which will eliminate those who aren't persistent.

Or, at the very least, those without a blowtorch.

Naturally, my wife says I'm getting ahead of myself since our daughter is still only 10 years old. But time passes quickly, and in another 15 years she'll begin dating. When I explained this to my wife, she laughed.

Hard.

Howard Dean has exercised more emotional restraint.

For some reason, mothers are better equipped to handle the whole dating prospect. I think it's because — statistically speaking — they aren't men. They have no idea what it's like to be an 18-year-old male. Well, I do, which is why I will personally be screening each of my daughter's potential suitors before rendering my final decision to boot



them right off the front porch.

I know what you're thinking: What if she wants to attend a college that can't be seen from home using the scope on a high-powered rifle?

Admittedly, it's important to establish a certain level of trust with your daughter.

You have to encourage her to venture beyond the realm of your protection.

You have to allow her a sense of freedom.

And you have to do it without letting her know she's being followed — more than likely by a full-time private detective. How can I do this? Because, to a father, money is no object when it comes to providing his daughter with the false sense of freedom she de-

serves.

OK.

Fine.

I'm overreacting.

But she's not getting breast implants for a graduation gift. Why? Because while LuLu's parents say their "gift" is meant to boost their daughter's self-esteem, they have to see that things won't end there. It'll be a tummy-tuck at 19, then higher cheekbones and a thinner nose for her 21st birthday. By then, of course, it'll be time to tighten that sagging 21-year-old chin. Eventually, when she's completely unrecognizable and can't pass through airport security without an X-ray of her head, LuLu will be happy and confident knowing she can, at long last, easily ditch her parents in a crowd.

While it's true I want my daughter's self-confidence to be grounded in who she is and not how she looks, I have to admit I'd like to avoid the cost of expensive breast implant surgery.

The truth is, I'm flat busted.

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

## Who Served...and Who Didn't

### Democrats who served:

- \* Richard Gephardt: Air National Guard, 1965-71.
- \* David Bonior: Staff Sgt., Air Force 1968-72.
- \* Tom Daschle: 1st Lt., Air Force SAC 1969-72.
- \* Al Gore: enlisted Aug. 1969; sent to Vietnam Jan. 1971 as an army journalist in 20th Engineer Brigade.
- \* Bob Kerrey: Lt. j.g. Navy 1966-69; Medal of Honor, Vietnam.
- \* Daniel Inouye: Army 1943-47; Medal of Honor, WWII.
- \* John Kerry: Lt., Navy 1966-70; Silver Star, Bronze Star with Combat V, Purple Hearts.
- \* Charles Rangel: Staff Sgt., Army 1948-52; Bronze Star, Korea.
- \* Max Cleland: Captain, Army 1965-68; Silver Star & Bronze Star, Vietnam.
- \* Ted Kennedy: Army, 1951-53.
- \* Tom Harkin: Lt., Navy, 1962-67; Naval Reserve, 1968-74.
- \* Jack Reed: Army Ranger, 1971-1979; Captain, Army Reserve 1979-91.
- \* Fritz Hollings: Army officer in WWII; Bronze Star and seven campaign ribbons.
- \* Leonard Boswell: Lt. Col., Army 1956-76; Vietnam, DFC! s, Bronze Stars, and Soldier's Medal.
- \* Pete Peterson: Air Force Captain, POW. Purple Heart, Silver Star and Legion of Merit.
- \* Mike Thompson: Staff sergeant, 173rd Airborne, Purple Heart.
- \* Bill McBride: Candidate for Fla. Governor. Marine in Vietnam; Bronze Star with Combat V.
- \* Gray Davis: Army Captain in Vietnam, Bronze Star.
- \* Pete Stark: Air Force 1955-57
- \* Chuck Robb: Vietnam
- \* Howell Heflin: Silver Star
- \* George McGovern: Silver Star & DFC during WWII.
- \* Jimmy Carter: Seven years in the Navy.
- \* Walter Mondale: Army 1951-1953
- \* John Glenn: WWII and Korea; six DFCs and Air Medal with 18 Clusters.
- \* Tom Lantos: Served in Hungarian underground in WWII. Saved by Raoul Wallenberg.

### Democrats who did not serve:

- \* Bill Clinton: Did not serve. Student deferments. Entered draft but received #311.

### Republicans who served:

- \* John McCain: Silver Star, Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, Purple Heart and Distinguished Flying Cross.
- \* Don Rumsfeld: served in Navy (1954-57) as flight instructor.
- \* Dan Quayle: Journalism unit of the Indiana National Guard.
- \* Lindsey Graham: National Guard lawyer.

### Republicans who did not serve:

- \* Dick Cheney: did not serve. Several deferments, the last by marriage.
- \* Dennis Hastert: did not serve.
- \* Tom Delay: did not serve.
- \* Roy Blunt: did not serve.
- \* Bill Frist: did not serve.
- \* Mitch McConnell: did not serve.
- \* Rick Santorum: did not serve.
- \* Trent Lott: did not serve.
- \* John Ashcroft: did not serve. Seven deferments to teach business.
- \* Jeb Bush: did not serve.
- \* Karl Rove: did not serve.
- \* Saxby Chambliss: did not serve. The man who attacked Max Cleland's patriotism.
- \* Paul Wolfowitz: did not serve.
- \* Vin Weber: did not serve.
- \* Richard Perle: did not serve.
- \* Douglas Feith: did not serve.
- \* Eliot Abrams: did not serve.
- \* Richard Shelby: did not serve.
- \* Jon Kyl: did not serve.
- \* Tim Hutchison: did not serve.
- \* Christopher Cox: did not serve.
- \* Newt Gingrich: did not serve.
- \* George W. Bush: failed to complete his six-year National Guard; got assigned to Alabama so he could campaign for family friend running for U.S. Senate; failed to show up for required medical exam, disappeared from duty.
- \* B-1 Bob Dornan: Consciously enlisted after fighting was over in Korea..
- \* Phil Gramm: did not serve.
- \* Dana Rohrabacher: did not serve.
- \* John M. McHugh: did not serve.
- \* JC Watts: did not serve.
- \* Jack Kemp: did not serve due to a knee problem, although he continued to play for the NFL for eight years.
- \* Rudy Giuliani: did not serve.
- \* George Pataki: did not serve.
- \* Spencer Abraham: did not serve.
- \* John Engler: did not serve.
- \* Arnold Schwarzenegger: AWOL from Austrian army base.
- \* Ronald Reagan: due to poor eyesight, served in a non-combat role making movies.

### Pundits & Preachers & Icons:

- \* Sean Hannity: did not serve.
- \* Rush Limbaugh: did not serve
- \* Bill O'Reilly: did not serve.
- \* Michael Savage: did not serve.
- \* George Will: did not serve.
- \* Chris Matthews: did not serve.
- \* Paul Gigot: did not serve.
- \* Bill Bennett: did not serve.
- \* Pat Buchanan: did not serve.
- \* Bill Kristol: did not serve.
- \* Kenneth Starr: did not serve.
- \* Antonin Scalia: did not serve.
- \* Clarence Thomas: did not serve.
- \* Ralph Reed: did not serve.
- \* Michael Medved: did not serve.
- \* Charlie Daniels: did not serve.
- \* John Wayne: did not serve.

# An Open Letter To Our Fellow Citizens Of The Planet Earth

"The angry left is trying to smear..."  
Karl Rove.

These are the words of Ken Mehlman, Rove protégé and Republican National Committee Chairman.

They are not the words of the average American citizen.

Nor are these words which we would like you to believe. Because, in all honesty, most of us don't buy them.

In reality, most Americans don't believe anything that emanates from either the current regime or what passes for leadership within the Republican Party.

Angry? *Hell, yes, we're angry!*

Left? Not all of us. (Okay, so I'm a middle-aged Hippie radical – but after 25 years of parenthood my rebellious nature has been mellowed through acquaintance with philosophical common sense moderation. Besides, the amount of time as I spent in the Army earned me the right to be as stalwart a leftist as I wish.)

Smear Hauptmeister Rove? That's like George W. Bush calling Saddam Hussein a mass murderer... Oh, wait, he's been doing that for years.

How can you smear the Chief Political Smearmaster of the past 25 years?

This is exactly the trick utilized by the extreme Conservatives who follow Herr Rove's deceit-filled methodologies. The foundation of virtually every campaign Rove has managed has been character assassination – never based upon fact, and rarely dealing with political issues. Just ugly untruths turning upside-down and inside-out some strong, positive point that made the opponent better than Rove's candidate, often with the result of ruining that person personally or professionally, or both.

Unfortunately, Rove's smear campaigns have always prevailed. Of course, it never hurt his candidates to lay waste to the voting process itself.

We have experienced the pattern time and time again during the regime of the never-elected George W. Bush; the Rovists turn their side's unconscionable lies and massive screw-ups into the fault of somebody – *anybody* – else. They never apologize for mistakes; they ignore questions that require embarrassing responses; they blame the "Liberals" or "Liberal media" every time they're caught with their pants down; they don't hesitate when it comes to killing people by the tens of thousands (yet they won't "kill" a Petri dish glob for scientific research); they refuse to act at the behest of the majority of Americans, whose money goes into their bank accounts (both legally and otherwise) at least twice each and every month.

The gang currently at the highest levels of American Government are not "Public Servants," rather they are self-serving, greedy bastards who want to steal as much as they can from all of us – that's you as well as me, within the 50 States and beyond! And were Mars already colonized, they'd be ripping off those unsuspecting folks, too.

Don't think for ten seconds that anyone who is serving in the RoveBush Regime has ever considered the good of any other human being beyond himself or herself. Some of them may talk the talk, like George W. Bush and Condolizza (not a misspelling) Rice, but have you ever heard so much as one



Out Of The Blue

By  
**Jerry  
Tenuto**

word from Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld or Hauptmeister Rove that expresses any modicum of concern for his fellow man? How about the future welfare of this Nation or any other? Don't hold your water, because it ain't gonna happen, Dear Friends.

Those with scruples who signed on to work at the West Wing back in 2001 left as soon as they realized what was going on around them, most of them prior to onset of the 2004 race. The individuals with enough intestinal fortitude to take the high road and blow whistles on regime blunders, untruths, ineptitude, and flat out illegalities, such as former Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill, were subjected to the most vicious and vile character assassinations the Rovists could concoct.

Donald Segretti, one of Richard M. Nixon's lawyers sent to prison as a result of Watergate, expertly tutored the teenaged Herr Rove in political subterfuge. Rove has any number of minions such as Mr. Mehlman, each with their entire network of brain synapses scrubbed to the point of blind loyalty to the "cause" (whatever Herr Rove decrees at any particular moment.) As his lofty position combined with the ability to put more spin than a gyroscope on any issue would attest, Mr. Mehlman must have been Rove's prized pupil.

The Mehlman's don't even have to think, as the script is either provided from on high or firmly ingrained in their psyches. It wouldn't surprise me in the least to discover if a head CT scan might reveal some sort of implanted chip. No matter what the issue, they're always on message, and the talking points never change – only the names and events get shuffled around as necessity dictates.

Just a few weeks ago, while "answering" reporters' "questions" (pre-selected, of course), George Bush cupped his ear, bent his head down and off to one side, then told someone to "hold on" before responding to an inquiry. Just like with his radio receiver during the debates with Senator John Kerry, in which Kerry ran circles around the ersatz president.

It's frightening to think that after we rid Washington, D.C. of all the Nixon vermin, it became re-infested with a new generation of bacterium that is stronger and far more devious. What's worse is this new breed seems to be impervious to any known strain of cleansing agent.

Consider the rise of the Conservatives in U.S. Government in terms of a computer worm. The longer the worm is around, the further it spreads. It spreads from computer to computer, surreptitiously infecting systems at will. As it spreads and infects, it burrows ever deeper into your hard drive. Eventually, the worm becomes so large and widespread that it renders your hard drive – and countless others – abso-

lutely useless.

Not only does the worm crash individual hard drives, it can wipe out entire networks as well.

This Conservative Movement that Herr Rove is so proud of has been working in much the same way. I traced its origins back to Sen. Joseph McCarthy and his infamous Communist "Witch Hunt" that blackened American history in the post-World War II era, although it may go back even further.

"Tail Gunner" Joe was a wholly incompetent Republican Senator from Wisconsin who suspended all Constitutional rights with his own personal version of the Spanish Inquisition. Virtually anyone who had ever set foot within 50 yards of a university or Hollywood movie set between 1935 and 1950 was subjected to his madness.

Able assisted by a young Republican Congressman from California, Richard M. Nixon, these two destroyed more lives and careers than an abacus could tally. Although many of his moviemaking friends were blacklisted for 10 years or more, Ronald Reagan slipped through the interrogation unscathed.

The Conservative scourge picked up again nearly 20 years later during the reign of the aforementioned "Tricky Dick" Nixon. Everyone knew he was a liar and a crook, yet he managed to get himself elected – twice. His was America's most corrupt administration up to its time (can you say "Watergate"?). Even as the first president forced to resign due to misconduct, he went out with the arrogance of a Mafia Don.

Compared to the RoveBush Regime, the Nixon administration seemed like five years of Sunday School.

After a short respite with President Jimmy Carter, far too honest for the job, we were subjected to 12 long, grueling years of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. Reagan de-regulated everything. This laid the groundwork for huge corporate mergers, a lack of diversity in media ownership, and a mere handful of banks and oil companies controlling their markets.

Reagan's policies also encouraged the atmosphere for scandals such as Enron, perpetrated by pals of the Bushes who have yet to be prosecuted. Of course, the Rovists blame these debacles on the administration of William Jefferson Clinton.

During the era of Reaganomics, more people filed for bankruptcy relief than at any previous time in our Nation's history. Businesses closed with alarming regularity, and the unemployment rolls swelled to new record levels. Let's not forget the surreptitious, illegal arms deals.

People loved Ronnie so much not only did he get voted in twice by astounding victories, but there's a movement to deify him as Lord of the Conservatives.

As for Daddy Bush, well, his big moment came when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait and ticked off the rest of the civilized world. Past that he accomplished not one damn thing. Fortunately, he's a whole heap smarter than his son and didn't screw up every internal system within the country along with the entire world. (He didn't much help, either.)

Again, we were fortunate enough to enjoy eight generally pleasant years of peace and prosperity with Bill Clinton at the helm, despite a continuous barrage of attacks by extreme Right-wingers, including a ludicrous and ineffectual partisan impeachment, that began the day he won the Democratic nomination. This onslaught continues to this day, with no sign of letting up.

Then, the Supreme Court delivered to America and the World, without legal precedent, the RoveBush Regime. As Stimpson J. Cat would say, "Happy, happy! Joy, joy!"

You can connect the dots of Conservatism from brutish McCarthy all the way to the miscreant George W. Bush with no effort whatsoever. In fact, there is but one degree of separation between Nixon and Rove.

Here's another pearl of wisdom attributed to Mr. Mehlman. This statement was found on the Republican National Committee's website, dated July 12, 2005. Don't get whiplash from the spin:

"It's disappointing that once again, so many Democratic leaders are taking their political cues from the far-left, Moveon wing of the party. The bottom line is Karl Rove was discouraging a reporter from writing a false story based on a false premise and the Democrats are engaging in blatant partisan political attacks."

This is the mantra put forth whenever Democratic leaders and lawmakers, duly elected by their constituents, do their jobs and speak out against errant Republicans. They are attacked by these RNC mouthpieces who can never be accused of performing true Public Service. And the attack is virtually always the same.

The typically hardcore Right-wing RNC types paint all Democrats with the same broad brush as the most extreme, specifically Moveon.com. In true Rovist tradition, they muddy the waters to make it seem that all Democrats ascribe to the Moveon agenda. Just as the extreme Right that controls the RNC is but a small minority, Moveon is a minute fraction of Democrats. Much as the Conservatives don't like to spread truth, most Democrats consider Moveon.com as too far out in left field.

Of course they refuse to admit it, but the Republikanische Partei leaders lean so far right they've had the left-turn signals removed from their behemoth 10-miles-per-gallon SUVs.

Here they are, circling the wagons around a guy whose entire career is a legacy of unbridled deceit and exclusionary tactics. Herr Rove doesn't want the American Republic to continue for all – he wants it to serve the New Order as designed by and for Hauptmeister Karl Rove. One only needs to read his discourse to the Conservative Party of New York State this past June 22; it is chillingly evident that Herr Rove's concept is for all Amerika, and the World, to submit with servility to the dictates of his vision of the dominant Conservative Movement.

The fact that everyone in the West Wing and the RNC, plus numerous sundry Republican figures, are repeating the same White House-issued "talking points" covering Rove's ass, (in all likelihood written or approved by "Turd

**Continued On Next Page**

# An Open Letter To Our Fellow Citizens Of The Planet Earth

By Jerry Tenuto...Continued From Previous Page

Blossom" personally), proves two things many of us have know all along about this regime: These people consider themselves above the law; and, Rove truly is the Hauptmeister (Headmaster).

**YET, KARL ROVE WAS NEVER ELECTED TO ANY PUBLIC OFFICE, BY ANY VOTERS, ANYWHERE!**

The more the White House says nothing; the longer this goes on without a resolution; the stronger the "offensive" defense strategy (demonizing victims Joseph Wilson and Valerie Plame; blaming the "Liberals" and the media); the repetition of talking points, all lead to

only one conclusion: that Herr Karl Rove must be the squealer, the rat, the stoolie, *the tattletale*.

Still, as of this writing we can't be 100% sure, because the White House is stonewalling. "We can't comment about an ongoing investigation." Oh, crap! Rove is sitting in the room - have him just go to the microphone and make a statement already. If there were one honest person in the Regime, an investigation wouldn't be necessary!

But then, everyone on Earth knows we've got a White House filled with spineless wimps. Who else would cook up a phony scheme to start an unjusti-

fied war by invading Iraq under false pretenses (for oil - Operation Iraq Liberation).

This was payback for Mr. Wilson being in disagreement with RoveBush Regime, and publicly calling them out about their lies.

It was an act of treachery on a personal level, and, on a national scale, an act of outright **treason!**

The biggest problem for the RoveBush Regime is that it can't afford to let Der Hauptmeister fall. As Herr Rove bites the dust, all the strings will begin to unravel. Without his unprincipled machinations, there will be no way these schmucks can keep a lid on all the prestidigitations, the closed-door dealings, the prevarications, the boys hiding in closets.

Once that first trickle of blood hits the water, there will begin a feeding frenzy the likes of which even the most battle-scarred of Washington, D.C. veteran politicians won't be able to stomach. And, you can bet your last \$Euro or Yen that all the while George W. Bush is gonna be pointin' the finger of blame at everyone else but himself.

Ah, I can but dream, can't I...

Please, my fellow citizens of Planet Earth, do not be angry with us, the typical, average, run-of-the-mill Americans. Sure, some of us are rude and stupid. Others are downright presumptuous and ignorant. But, we wish you, our neighbors, no ill will. Besides, if you've read about our military recruitment problems, then you realize that nobody wants to enlist and go kill human beings elsewhere.

I really enjoyed my three years in Germany and one year in South Korea.

## Texas RR Commission Opens New Propane Training Facility

AUSTIN — Texas Railroad Commissioner Elizabeth Ames Jones today launched the opening of a state-of-art training center in Austin for propane-company managers and technicians statewide. At the opening, Commissioner Jones announced that the facility is also the site for a nationally funded research project that could help enhance propane safety and lower industry costs.

The Railroad Commission is the state agency responsible for propane safety and training in Texas.

Truly.

Many, many of us do not believe that George W. Bush was ever honestly elected president. If you're pissed off at American Foreign Policies, write your opinion and address them to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20500, or e-mail <www.whitehouse.gov/email/>. But please, be civil, okay. Or I'd be happy to hear from you here, at THE ICONOCLAST.

La paz, pronto... La paix, bientôt... Frieden bald... La pace, presto...

De vrede, spoedig... A paz, logo... Fred, snart... Shalom...

Peace, soon...

## Don't Take My House

Just when newspapers and magazines are filled with stories about how the values of our homes have skyrocketed, the Supreme Court ruled that our houses could be taken away from us. All the local government has to do is pay us the "fair market value" and they can have our homes and sell them to other private individuals to build condos, shopping malls, or hotels — anything that will bring in more tax revenue while supposedly improving the neighborhood. If I were to sell my house, I wouldn't want the "fair market value," I'd want the inflated value that all those news stories talk about. But I don't want to sell my house. We've only lived in it for seven years, and we haven't even unpacked all the boxes yet.

Sandra Day O'Connor's announcement about her retirement has mobilized people all along the political spectrum. Conservatives worry that President Bush won't appoint someone "conservative enough," and liberals fret that he'll name someone "too conservative." There has been much talk of the "litmus test" of the next Justice's position on abortion or religion. I want the President to use a different litmus test: appoint someone who will oppose the right of local governments from taking our houses just as O'Connor did.

Traditionally, the principle of Eminent Domain has been used to allow the government to take private property for "public use," such as highways, schools, courthouses, etc. That's been a dubious practice, but at least one could sometimes understand the justification in terms of making improvements to benefit more and more people. But forcing people to sell their house just so a new condo, a "Best Buy" or a McDonald's could be built in its place just doesn't seem right. As Justice O'Connor put it, "Any property may now be taken for the benefit of another private party." She went on to say, "Nothing is to prevent the State from replacing any Motel 6 with a Ritz-Carlton, any home with a shopping mall, or any farm with a factory."

I have to admit that I would probably love any Supreme Court opinion that used "Motel 6" as an example. I look forward to future law students



Modern Times  
By  
Lloyd  
Garver

referring to famous cases such as "Brown vs. Board of Education," "Roe vs. Wade," and, of course, "Motel 6 vs. Ritz-Carlton." But it's also a good example because it shows how wrong this decision was.

I've also given considerable thought to the idea of their taking away my house and building a shopping mall in its place. You dream of owning your own home, you save, you sacrifice, and it's finally yours, and then they take it from you and turn it into a place where kids hang out while they're cutting school? I don't want our bedroom turned into a stand where people buy cinnamon pretzels. I don't want our family room transformed into a Victoria's Secret.

Had I been one of the Justices ruling on the case (and, Mr. President, I am available, by the way), I would have added another thought in my dissenting opinion. If this is to be the law of the land - if they can take our houses and put shopping malls in their place, they should at least guarantee the former owner of the property a permanent parking space. And it should be in the shade, near the entrance.

So, I'm all for lengthy hearings and even filibusters if it will get us another Justice who will oppose local governments from taking over our homes. It seems UnAmerican. The government should not be allowed to deprive us of our sacred and inalienable right of the painful act of writing that mortgage check each month.

*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*

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# No One Was Safe From San Saba Mob

On the morning of July 19, 1889, three assassins gunned down a harmless old

man plowing his fields and left their grisly calling card — nine bullet holes

## Fencing Fun

Things were going too well. Then we had that rash of little annoyances, capped off with finding the dead calf, which was really a very bad thing. After that, the cows waltzed into the neighbor's yard, which might have given them access to both the road and the river. Again, not so good. Potentially awful. Our plans for this week were suddenly rearranged. Rebuilding the old barn had to wait. Priorities change here from day to day, from hour to hour.

It was during the repair of the old fence that we discovered the various ways to locate cow poop (a previous column). So you see, something good came out of it after all. (Always look for that silver lining!) And not only that, but I had a chance to try out my new (used) super-duper fencing belt.

Now this fencing belt is not a thing one dons with a special white suit and facemask, wielding a sword. My fencing belt is something I invented myself, for the barbed wire kind of fencing. Perhaps such things exist already in the world of fence building and everyone else knows of them. (I seem to learn everything sort of trial and error, by the seat of my pants, on the job, so to speak. Maybe such belts can be purchased from Tractor Supply or the Cabella's Catalogue. Perhaps they are available locally at Ace Hardware or the feed store or any large home store. I wouldn't know. I never went looking for one. But when I saw that old tool belt at Martha's yard sale, (the one Butch said he "outgrew"), a light bulb went off in my head.

I could put the T-post clips in one pocket (usually reserved for nails or screws, no doubt), fence staples in the other pocket. I could hang regular pliers, fencing pliers, nippers, and my old faithful sledge hammer from the belt. There was even a place for my reading glasses and cell phone if I chose to get really fancy. By the time I finished loading the belt, I knew there would be no need to exercise with weights later in the day. As I made my way through the mud and weeds, just putting one foot in front of the other and trying to stay upright became a full body workout. I could kill two birds with one stone, fence repair and weight training in one fell swoop.

So thanks, Butch, for outgrowing that belt. It's come in very handy!

All kidding aside, we had a full three days of fencing "fun" . . . . thinking we had the holes patched and then getting THAT CALL (again, always around dusk) to let us know the same three "ladies" had found yet another weak spot. (We couldn't just lock the whole herd out of the area. Oh no, that would have been too easy! Several brand new calves had been left sleeping in the tall grass. No way the mamas were going to exit, and no way the babies could follow.

—So three days of rising at dawn, trying to beat the cows to the holes in the old fence, repairing and running

## 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.*

wire, thinking we had a lock on it, then getting THE CALL again, late, of course, after our second or third shower of the (hot) day, after the second or third change of clothing. That was three days of chasing cows out of overgrown places they didn't belong, battling waist high weeds and vines, the kind that grab at your ankles and pull you down into the brambles. Boy, do I hate brambles.

We were working around such stickery things this morning; brambles, vines, crown of thorns, or whatever those smelly, thorny trees are called. . . . repairing (hopefully) the last bit of really bad fence. (The new fence will have to wait for winter, after all the evil greenery dies down, and after the swelling in Zack's knee goes down).

After acting as The Amazing Human Pincushion for an hour or so, I managed to turn miraculously into a veritable ant magnet, just like that. Yesterday, everywhere I stepped, there was cow poop. Today, everywhere I went, there were thorns. Then suddenly, wherever I stood, there were ants. If I stayed still for a minute, they attacked.

I had sprayed my ankles with bug spray and powered myself with sulphur (the old-fashioned method for warding off chiggers. I have yet to encounter any this year, but I hate them. Unfortunately they absolutely love me. So every year, I am on the lookout for the first sign of the little devils from May onward. I go to great lengths to avoid their gift that keeps on giving).

So, no chiggers thus far, but what protection is there against acres and acres of ants? None! I can barely keep up with those near the houses. One can only be diligent and watch where one stands. I was a little preoccupied trying not to trip and fall into brambles or be scratched to death by barbed wire or smelly thorn trees to notice I was knee deep in ants. Twice. (I don't worry now, you see, about stepping in cow poop. That's just a given. Cow poop pales in comparison to ant beds).

If you happened, very early in the morning, to see, out of the corner of your eye, a crazed woman in a field — racing to shuck off her jeans before being eaten alive by ants, that would have been . . . Well, I have to admit it, that woman would have been me. Such behavior is probably illegal, (certainly ill-advised), but there were extenuating circumstances, I assure you. If you see this again, please keep driving. If the woman is screaming for help, just call 911.

in the body.

The seven charter members of the San Saba Mob, respectable ranchers all, began with the best of intentions. Following the example of similar vigilantes in adjacent counties, they merely wanted to rid San Saba of the criminal riffraff.

Their first recorded foray was a complete fiasco. A naive schoolteacher, who went along for the exciting ride, was mistaken for a horse thief and shot through the heart.

Two posse participants were later overheard in a crowded saloon talking about the accidental slaying. The punishment for popping off was death, and the sentence was carried out by the condemned men's comrades.

After liquidating several suspected rustlers, the vigilantes hunted down the alleged ringleader, Ase Brown. They were in the middle of stringing him up, when an innocent passerby caught them in the illegal act.

According to the stern code of the instant-justice gang, any eyewitness was to be killed on the spot. But the frightened rancher, a friend of most of the masked executioners, begged for mercy and promised to leave the county if his life was spared.

The Mob agreed and gave him four days to clear out. Selling his spread and livestock, the cowman met the deadline only to be bushwhacked on the trail. The hard-hearted vigilantes had decided to take no chances.

Before long, even casual criticism of the San Saba Mob was considered a capital offense. The elderly postmaster at Locker, a tiny community in the northern corner of the county, spoke out against the reign of terror. Despite his age and a crippled leg, he was regarded as a serious threat and targeted for termination.

Standing within arm's length of their defenseless detractor, the trio opened fire. His bullet-riddled shirt was still burning from the contact wounds when relatives found him face-down in a blood-soaked furrow.

After the death toll reached 20 in 1890, the Texas Rangers staged a countywide crackdown. As expected, arrests resulted in pitifully few convictions, but the presence of the state lawmen produced three years of relative peace.

Confident the crime fighters would depart sooner or later, the Mob simply laid low. When the Rangers finally pulled out in 1893, the vicious vigilantes resumed their rampage.

Jim Brown, son of the late Ase, believed marriage into a high-ranking Mob clan would protect him. But no one was truly safe, as an ambush arranged by his brother-in-law soon proved. Brown died in the August 1893 attack, and his wife was seriously wounded.

The killing continued, though not at the murderous pace of the Mob's early days. Several founders supposedly tried to disband the group, but bloodthirsty newcomers insisted the job was far from finished.

As long as rumored wrongdoers were the casualties, most law-abiding individuals looked the other way. It took the cold-blooded murders of two upstanding citizens to turn public opinion against the Mob.

## This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



T.A. Henderson and William James perished a week apart in the summer of 1896. Henderson was marked for death because he dared to defy the nightriders, who had falsely accused him of being an outlaw. James was shot to pieces after his children repeated anti-Mob remarks uttered at the dinner table.

The same people that had previously protested Ranger interference in their private affairs beseeched Austin to send an entire detachment. As one petitioner put it, "The Mob in San Saba County have murdered in the last 10 years more people than was ever murdered by the Indians."

The Rangers returned with a vengeance on Aug. 13, 1896. Figuring the courts could sort it all out later, they rounded up everybody remotely suspected of vigilante activity.

But to make the mountain of charges stick, the Rangers needed a local ally with nerve enough to stand up to the Mob. W.C. Linden, the new district attorney, courageously accepted the challenge.

During his closing argument at the trial of Jim Brown's accused assassins, Linden wore a pearl-handled pistol on his hip. At the end of his powerful appeal, he turned and faced the spectator section packed with the defendants' sulen supporters.

"Yes, I carry a gun," the prosecutor said. "I carry it for just such occasions as this, and you all know I can use it."

Linden's courtroom theatrics had a dual purpose. First, he served notice on the Mob that he had not been intimidated by the many threats on his life. Second, he hoped by example to stiffen the spines of the jurors.

The tactic did the trick. The Mob murderers were found guilty and their reign of terror finally ended in San Saba County.

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

## Texas Historical Commission Announces Partnership With Nimitz Foundation

AUSTIN — Working together by agreement as a state agency and a nonprofit organization, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Admiral Nimitz Foundation announce a new public/private partnership created to preserve the historic resources of the National Museum of the Pacific War and guide the expansion of the museum for the enjoyment of future generations.

Recently approved legislation authorizes the THC to contract with the Admiral Nimitz Foundation for the administration and operation of the museum, including its expansion, renovation and improvement.

MAILBAG

ICONOCLAST

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

**Options for Financing Public Education**

a. Eliminate the loopholes in the Business Franchise Tax and/or make businesses pay their fair share towards educating Texas children.

b. Use the State Lottery; it was supposed to be used entirely to finance education — raise the price of one ticket to \$2 or \$3 and take a larger percentage for public school funding. Also reduce the odds of winning the lottery. This will double the net revenue previously taken from the Lottery to finance schools — the state needs to stop being greedy for taxing one winner;

c. Increase the sales tax to finance public schools, **no more than one-half cent tax**;

d. After financing schools properly, consider a school voucher system. Parents should have an option and as homeowners should NOT have to pay double taxation to send their children to private schools.

e. Set up a separate Public Education Fund via sales & service tax, a maximum one-half cent charge to go towards school financing;

f. Apply a small School Finance tax to every business operating in Texas — companies should give back to the community, no exceptions; NOT a payroll tax.

g. Be more practical and reality-based in developing a more specific State Public School Budget with State tax dollars, and strive to maintain the highest quality of education for our children. This includes providing more money to hire the best administrators and teachers, and to research and implement the best programs and materials for our children. Control of the spending must remain within each school district. Our children continue to be the most precious resource of the State of Texas. In addition, children should be evaluated on their total educational development — not on government-dictated test evaluations;

h. Provide schools and/or districts with in-house professional management (Comptroller's Office) to assist in developing reality-based priorities and expenditures;

i. Increase the tax on the purchase of ALL liquor and tobacco products for financing schools;

j. Raise the tax on gasoline a few cents and provide the legislation for this increased money to go to Public Education — also change the current law that has some gas tax going to higher education. Since the deregulation of higher education tuition, half of gas taxes should be diverted to public education and half to building and maintaining roadways — **without the need for toll roads**;

k. Take a small percentage of monthly charges by rental properties and apartment complexes to go directly to public school financing;

l. Establish a Visitor Education Fund whereby all hotels and rental car companies charge a service fee that goes to finance education;

m. Establish an Airport Education Fund whereby the cost of flight tickets includes a service fee that goes to finance education;

n. Cut home property taxes by **at least 50-percent** — after years of being overburdened homeowners deserve REAL relief;

o. Increase slightly the sales tax on luxury vehicles and boats.

Using several of the above methods will ensure a finance system that is shared by a full range of Texas citizens and businesses and would eliminate sky-high property taxes for homeowners.

Peter Stern, Driftwood, Texas

To The Editor:

By disclosing Ms. Plame's identity as a covert operative, Rove (TURD BLOSSOM) has violated federal law that makes it a crime to intentionally disclose any information identifying a covert agent to unauthorized persons. Of course, even if the evidence against him doesn't lead to criminal charges, accountability for the White House would best be served by terminating Bush's consigliere. Given the gravity of the disclosure should questions be raised about Rove's trustworthiness in the interests on national security. In short Bush should send that fat scumbag packing, because it's going to be tough to wiggle out of this one.

But let's put aside the legal issues for a moment. Rove committed a firing offense. He leaked national security information as part of a fierce campaign to undermine Wilson, who had criticized the White House on the war on Iraq. Rove's overworked attorney, defends his client by arguing that Rove never revealed the name of Valerie Plame/Wilson to Cooper and that he only referred to her as Wilson's wife. This is not much of a defense. If Cooper or any other journalist had written that "Wilson's wife works for the CIA"—without mentioning her name—such a disclosure could have been expected to have the same effect as if her name had been used: Valerie Wilson would have been compromised, her anti-WMD work placed at risk and national security potentially harmed. Either Rove knew that he was revealing an undercover officer to a reporter or he was identifying a CIA officer without bothering to check on her status and without considering the consequences of outing her. Take your pick: In both scenarios Rove is acting in a reckless and cavalier fashion, ignoring national security interests to score a political point against a policy foe.

Despite the corner Rove has backed himself into, can Bush see any reason to believe Rove should not be on his way out. Nothing would surprise me more, what with all the asshole decisions he has made up to now. Rove is on shaky ground, but his firing or resignation is not imminent. Traditionally, when a high-ranking White House aide is just about to get canned, the White House spokesman signals this by saying, "The president stands behind 100 percent

Noomar

Dear Editor & Staff:

I felt compelled to write to you to express my gratitude to everyone at your newspaper who writes about the unjust and questionable dealings in the Bush Administration.

I applaud you for exercising the freedom of speech afforded to us in this great country. Although people have the right to disagree with your opinions, I would suggest that those people simply write a rebuttal of facts to your newspaper. Then, they too can understand that instead of boycotting or badmouthing your paper, they can also be afforded their freedom of speech.

I would like to share some quotes with you:

"In a democracy, dissent is an act of faith" — J. William Fulbright

"Without debate, without criticism, no administration no country can succeed—and no republic can survive." — John F. Kennedy

"Once a government is committed to the principle of silencing the voice of opposition, it has only one way to go, and that is down the path of increasingly repressive measure, until it becomes a source of terror to all its citizens and creates a country where everyone lives in fear." — Harry Truman

In the future, I sincerely hope that our country is not led by governments who will tout inaccuracies and false pretenses but rather by governments who embrace the freedoms guaranteed in our Constitution.

Sincerely,  
Maria Acosta, Wabasha, MN



**Bring Me The Head Of Cornman!!!**

Barak Epstein blew up a head in my bathtub.

Granted, it was a rubber latex head, and a few weeks prior, I put one of his menorahs in his bathroom — but he still didn't have to enjoy blowing it up!

I know I didn't enjoy putting his menorah on top of his john, but he'd leave magazines and books everywhere in our apartment, never once making a move to remove them up from view.

But something had to be done!

I mean, it was June; Hanukkah was way over, and the brass on his menorah was reflecting the sun right into my face as I watched TV from the couch.

I guess, in the end, the explosion was worth it; after all, the smoke did clear, the rubber and fake blood was cleaned up (eventually), plus not many people can say that their college roommate blew up a fake head in a bathtub for a scene in his first full-length feature film, *Cornman II: American Vegetable Hero*.

*CII* is about Leland Maize, a mild-mannered farm boy splashed with toxins that gave him the power to talk to corn.

Not exactly Captain Planet, but then again, Captain Planet isn't exactly Captain Planet, youknowwhatImean?

Cornman's arch foe is the evil, ecoterrorist Dr. Hoe. He's called "Dr. Hoe" because he's got a hoe for a hand.

Clever, huh?

The gist of *Cornman II* is that Dr. Hoe wants to control all the corn in the world, and to do so, he must destroy Cornman and his Mexican sidekick Butterboy.

**The Rubber Cement Index**



By Nathan Diebenow

The muscle behind Dr. Hoe's mad plans rests with his mutant, the half-corn, half-asparagus creation called Cornsparagus.

Clever, huh?

Now, Barak never intended to make a political statement in *Cornman II* on the evils of genetically-altered corn from the United States dumped in Mexico as a result of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

I know this because I asked him.

But I'd venture to guess that what led Barak to write his savvy script was his creative subconscious and his obsession with Troma Films, home to such activist pictures as the anti-atomic energy, comedy classics *The Toxic Avenger* and *Class of Nuke'em High*.

Instead of ruining the ending of Barak's movie, I suggest you watch it for yourself after I end with this final thought:

I'm glad that Barak vented his anger at me by blowing up that fake head in my bathroom, especially in light of news that U.S. guards flushed Qurans down toilets at Guantanamo Bay.

Perhaps we should encourage the radical Islamic and Christian worlds to make more movies, not war.

It might just lead to better cinema and a better world.

**INFO**

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# Texas-Okla. Cities Join Forces To Promote Western Heritage

FORT WORTH – Fort Worth has joined five cities in Texas and Oklahoma in a unique bi-state western heritage venture called “Frontier West.” The project gives travelers a unique chance to experience the museums, historical sites, architecture, food, entertainment, and other attractions in Fort Worth and the region via a free traveler-friendly magazine and a web site, as well as a historical audio CD that chronicles the epic war between the U.S. Army and the Comanche Indians.

Fort Worth is no stranger to playing to its strong suit: the city has traditionally marketed itself as the center of the galaxy when it comes to western tourism and travel. But when convention and visitor bureau director Doug Harman saw the opportunity to further expand his city’s offerings, he jumped at it—and now the city is seizing on its common western heritage with Abilene, Dallas, Lubbock, Odessa, and Oklahoma City to promote itself to travelers as a regional experience.

Harman says, “It’s critical for us to continually improve and upgrade our

tourism product. You can do that in two ways—build new attractions, or partner with new people to increase the catalog of things that you offer.”

Harman’s counterpart in Lubbock, Marcy Jarrett, agrees. “Lubbock is a long way from Houston or Dallas. Getting people excited about our considerable western heritage attractions is made easier by partnering with cities like Oklahoma City and Fort Worth.”

Despite their proximity and shared history, Oklahoma and Texas have traditionally promoted their western identity in a characteristically western way—independently. That’s partly because the distances are so great, partly because opportunities to work together have been limited, and partly because cultural tourism wasn’t as big twenty years ago as it is today.

Says Harman: “Today the traveler is more sophisticated, and demands a lot more than a seat on a tour bus. If we want to remain a leader in marketing western heritage and culture, we have to give people more. It makes sense to partner with other cities in the region—it gets our name out, and it gives us a chance to reach people who might otherwise pass us by.”

Visitors to Fort Worth will have little trouble recognizing that they’re in Cowtown. “But it’s more than that,” says Harman. “We’re part of a history that covers twenty million acres. Fort Worth went from being the savage frontier to being a safe haven well behind the line of Indian raiding. To tell that story, we need partners—both the communities that followed us and became the frontier, and those that preceded us.”

And what a tale it is. A glance through the magazine, which covers western art, ranching, cattle trails, Indian wars, and more modern western industries like oil and winemaking, reveals a complex and fascinating matrix of places to go and things to do—and it’s all laid out so that travelers can put their finger on a particular area of interest. The publication and CD can be ordered by contacting the Fort Worth CVB at 800-433-5747.

But how practical is it for a traveler to hit every stop in the guide? “It’s a cinch,” tourism marketer Seth Davidson says with a grin. “As long as you’re not in a hurry.”

Davidson coordinated the project with the six cities, and sees the project as one that he calls “win-win-win.”

“It helps Fort Worth get its message out to markets farther west, and to Oklahoma City. It helps the region by adding attractions to the mix like the Amon Carter Museum, the Sid Richardson Collection, of course the stockyards. But most importantly, it helps the traveler, who now has a reason to slow down and see some of the great things here in Fort Worth, it helps him or her to see and experience Fort Worth in the context of a region.”

Concludes Davidson, “When you see



Abilene Sculpture



Cowgirl Hall of Fame



Thistle Hill



Buffalo Gap Village



Cowboy Western Heritage

the stockyards as part of a larger historical experience, it’s more meaningful, and it’s more fun. The fact that it keeps you in town longer—which means a night at the hotel and a couple of meals—is icing on the cake.”

The Frontier West guide, web site, and audio CD fit neatly into regional tourism efforts that Fort Worth has already engaged in on other fronts. As part of the statewide nature and birding trail system, Fort Worth’s CVB knows the value of partnerships. Having forged a partnership with Oklahoma, who is now promoting the project in its state highway visitor centers, the future looks bright indeed.

To learn more about the Frontier West project, obtain a guide or audio CD, visit <http://www.frontierwestonline.com>, contact Seth Davidson at (713) 865-0416, [seth@wildsteps.com](mailto:seth@wildsteps.com), or contact the following convention and visitor bureaus:

- Abilene: 800-727-7704
- Dallas: 800-232-5527



Lubbock



Oklahoma City

- Fort Worth: 800-433-5747
- Lubbock: 806-692-4035
- Odessa: 800-780-4678
- Oklahoma City: 800-225-5652