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BUSINESS SCHOOL ORIENTATION — Students at Bainbridge Graduate Institute hold their seven-day orientation at Channel Rock, an retreat center designed on sustainable living principles on Cortes Island in British Columbia. BGI is the first business school to offer a Masters of Business Administration in Sustainable Business.

— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute

Crawford's Tonkawa Traditions Festival Set For Oct. 1

CRAWFORD—The 6th Annual Tonkawa Traditions Festival is set for Saturday, Oct. 1, in the historic Tonkawa Falls Park in Crawford. Crawford is located in Central Texas and the hometown of President George W. Bush.

Sponsored by the Crawford Chamber, the day will begin at 9 a.m., with a parade on down town Main Street. The gates to the park will open at 10 a.m., and attendees are invited to begin a full day of activities and attractions planned to encourage everyone to spend the whole day.

Stroll throughout the beautiful shaded park to shop; enjoy the performers on the Entertainment Stage, including the Mudcats performing throughout the day; watch the lawn mower races in

the morning and enjoy the Antique & Classic Car Show. Everyone is invited to bring the kids to enjoy all the activities in the Kid's Corner.

The BBQ Cookoff will begin Friday evening, with the awards on Saturday.

Enter your favorite pie in the pie contest. Organizers encourage those attending not to miss the Cow Patty Bingo. "Come join the fun at Crawford's community festival!" said a spokesperson.

Vendor space is available for arts, crafts, educational, antiques, collectibles, and food vendors by calling 254-486-9626, or print an application from the chamber website at <www.crawfordchamberofcommerce.com.>

Founders' Day 2005 Coming To McGregor

McGREGOR—McGregor will celebrate in 124th birthday at the 14th Annual Founders' Day Festival on Saturday, Sept. 17, in historic downtown McGregor.

The day will begin at 7:30 a.m. with a gunshot signaling the beginning of the 5K and 10K races. At 10 a.m., a parade will travel down Main Street (Hwy. 317) led by a color guard from Ft. Hood. Following the parade, food and craft booths will open, as well as the quilt show, and the historic picture display of McGregor.

Elementary through high school kids can compete in wagon and big wheel races, while the adults race on riding lawnmowers. Kids can also play in the children's area, which will have a Space Walk, climbing wall, games, and crafts. A special area for men will feature a large bass fishing display, A Dell electronic display, as well as boats, ATV's, golf equipment, and much more.

There will be numerous entertainment acts throughout the day, including The Bad Seeds Band, The Vertical Worship Band, The Happy Travelers German Band, The Dazzling Weasel Faces, The Trendsetters Zydeco Group, and a Mariachi Band.

The McGregor Volunteer Firemen will serve a barbecue dinner at 5:30

p.m.; a street dance featuring country band Branded Heart will follow from 8:30 p.m. to midnight.

All proceeds go toward projects in McGregor, such as updating parks, beautifying the city, and business development. For more Founders' Day information, go to <www.mcgregor-texas.com/foundersday.htm.>

BioWillie Fuel Finds New Home In Austin

DALLAS — Austin has become the latest location in Texas where diesel-engine drivers can purchase "BioWillie," the biodiesel fuel brand named after its founder, the country music legend Willie Nelson.

Biodiesel is a clean-burning, biodegradable fuel produced domestically to utilize family farmers while reducing America's dependence on foreign oil.

"Biodiesel is the future," said Nelson, founder of Willie Nelson Biodiesel. "This is a great day for America when a retailer in my home town of Austin decides to make biodiesel available, especially with historically high fuel prices highlighting how much the fuel we use impacts every aspect of our lives."

The Majorbrand gas station, just off highway I-35 exit 232B on the south side of Austin, will offer a B5 blend of the fuel. The blend will be increased from B5 to B20 blend after the first few loads have been sold.

BioWillie fuel is currently available at the Carl's Corner truck stop, plus other locations Texas locations like the Loves Travel stop in Midlothian, the RK Travel Center in Amarillo, and two retail outlets in Ft. Worth.

Company representatives say future plans include seeing truck stops and gas stations carrying the B20 BioWillie blend of biodiesel all over the Lone Star state.

For more information on Willie Nelson's Biodiesel, visit (www.wnbiodiesel.com).

Poll: Bush Would Lose To Election Contests

NEW YORK — President Bush's job approval rating fell to a historic low of 41 percent last week, according to a new Zogby America poll. The rating is so low in fact that all of his predecessors since Jimmy Carter would beat him in presidential contests.

The President received passing marks, however, on his handling of the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina with 36 percent, four percentage points higher than the rest of the government in general for its role in relief efforts.

The President's job approval rating has been gradually slumping since late February.

There has been a one percent increase — up to 52 percent approval — of his handling of the War on Terror.

Conducted from Sept. 6-7, the Zogby America survey of 1157 likely voters has a margin of error of +/-2.9 percentage points.

Bush Sacks FEMA Chief Amid Bi-Partisan Criticism Of Storm Relief

WASHINGTON — Amid bi-partisan critics who say he commanded the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts poorly, FEMA Director Michael Brown was relieved of his post by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff with the blessing of the Bush administration last week.

Brown is still the director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. His replacement is Coast Guard Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, who was previously head of relief operations for the City of New Orleans.

The decision to remove Brown came at lowest public approval rating of Bush's presidency. The government's hurricane relief efforts have been sharply criticized by both Republicans and Democrats.

Sen. Trent Lott (R-Mississippi)

snapped, "Something needed to happen. Michael Brown has been acting like a private instead of a general."

Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nevada) and three other Democratic leaders signaled for the FEMA director removal in a letter to the president. Reid and Sens. Dick Durbin of Illinois, Chuck Schumer of New York and Debbie Stabenow of Michigan wrote, Brown "simply doesn't have the ability or the experience to oversee a coordinated federal response of this magnitude."

While Republican leaders, whose members outnumber Democrats in both houses, called for a joint panel to investigate the causes for the slow hurricane relief efforts, Democratic leader said they want an independent commission instead.

ACLU Wins Ruling In Patriot Act Case

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — The American Civil Liberties Union won a ruling in federal court late last week so that its client may identify librarians who received an FBI request for records about library patrons under the USA Patriot Act.

U.S. District Court Judge Janet Hall, though ruling in favor of the civil liberties group, is giving the government a window to appeal until Sept. 20.

Prosecutors said that without the gag order, the identity of the ACLU's client might jeopardize an investigation into terrorism. They added that the client was still able to debate about the Patriot Act as the ACLU argued.



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

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

Web Newspaper: iconoclast-texas.com

EDITORIAL
Associate Editors:
Don M. Fisher
Nathan Diebenow

ADVERTISING
Melanie Harvey,
Marketing Director
Carolyn Black,
Advertising Manager

PUBLISHER & EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
W. Leon Smith

BUSINESS
Kay Ortiz, Front Office Manager
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Proposed Bill To Help With Educator Benefits

Public Servant Retirement Protection Act

WASHINGTON — The Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE) co-hosted a legislative briefing last week in Washington, D.C., for the Texas congressional delegation, along with the offices of U.S. Rep. Chet Edwards (D-Waco) and U.S. Rep. Kevin Brady (R-The Woodlands).

Purpose of the briefing was to promote the Public Servant Retirement Protection Act (PSRPA).

If passed, the PSRPA would amend the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) to mitigate some of the negative effects on educator pensions caused by Social Security laws.

The WEP reduces Social Security benefits for educators who are eligible for Teacher Retirement System (TRS) pensions.

The current amount of an educator's benefit reduction is determined by an arbitrary formula based on the number of years he has paid into Social Security.

The PSRPA would replace the WEP with a new formula that treats educators in a manner similar to the treatment of private-sector employees and would provide more retirement money for Texas educators.

The goal of the legislative briefing was to convince all members of the Texas congressional delegation to sign on as co-sponsors of the bill.

"At least 15 bills that address this problem have been filed during recent years to deal with the reductions in educators' Social Security benefits. We hope the PSRPA will get a vote and pass during this session. The Texas delegation needs to get behind Congressman Brady and Congressman Edwards and get something positive accomplished for educator pensions," said Brock Gregg, ATPE's director of government relations.

In recent years, ATPE has made some headway on this issue. "We hope to build on our previous efforts to get the PSRPA passed by this Congress. Not only would the PSRPA provide more retirement benefits for educators, but it would also provide a legislative vehicle that ATPE and our congressional supporters could use to pass other amendments that address the full repeal of all Social Security offsets that reduce Texas educators' pension benefits," Gregg said.

About the organization: The 105,000-member Association of Texas Professional Educators is the largest educators' group in Texas and the largest non-union group nationwide. Its membership consists primarily of classroom teachers but also includes para-educators, administrators, college students and retired educators. ATPE is committed to advocating for better benefits for all educators, promoting a collaborative work environment, protecting the right of educators to choose the association they feel represents their interests, and providing the best education possible for all Texas children.

Reaching The Voter Confidence Tipping Point

Arcata City, Calif. Establishes Model Voter Confidence Resolution For Nation's Cities To Follow

BY W. LEON SMITH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, THE ICONOCLAST

ARCATA, Calif. — Voter confidence has plummeted during the past two

presidential elections with corporate-owned voting machine tabulations in question from coast to coast. Several organizations have advocated changes in the voting system, but one city is taking it a step further. The City of Arcata, Calif., after months of debate and consideration, has adopted what is called the Voter Confidence Resolution.

According to Dave Berman, one of the resolution's authors, this type of initiative, if adopted by cities throughout the country, could have a decisive impact on the confidence voters achieve by providing unquestionable election returns.

"But we must first change the national dialogue," he said.

Berman is aggressively taking his case to the people, conducting workshops, keynoting speaking engagements, and asking cities throughout the country to seriously push this agenda.

The heart of Arcata's resolution is an eight-point comprehensive election reform platform, including:

- (1) voting processes owned and operated entirely in the public domain, and
- (2) clean money laws to keep all corporate funds out of campaign financing, and
- (3) a voter verified paper ballot for every vote cast and additional uniform standards determined by a nonpartisan nationally recognized commission, and
- (4) declaring election day a national holiday, and
- (5) counting all votes publicly and locally in the presence of citizen witnesses and credentialed members of the media, and
- (6) equal time provisions to be restored by the media along with a measurable increase in local, public control of the airwaves, and
- (7) presidential debates containing a minimum of three candidates, run by a nonpartisan commission comprised of representatives of publicly owned media outlets, and
- (8) preferential voting and proportional representation to replace the winner-take-all system for federal elections.

In an interview with ICONOCLAST publisher W. Leon Smith, Berman explained the importance of the resolution:

BERMAN: We have a message that we're trying to get out. We're trying to change the point of view of the people in this country and are actually giving them talking points to rally around so that we can all be on the same page so that there becomes critical mass. What we're trying to do is build to a tipping point. It's almost unbelievable that

we've come to this point in time without having passed that tipping point already.

ICONOCLAST: Is the Voter Confidence Committee, of which you are a member, part of the City of Arcata or is it something separate and this happens to be the first city that joined it?

BERMAN: This is a citizen's organization that is based in Humble, County, Calif. and Arcata is one community in the county and

they were the first to embrace this resolution. They've got a long history of being really progressive in that regard.

Council member Dave Meserve has been recognized around the world as a small-town progressive leader, particularly in regard to resolutions against the Patriot Act and calling for the impeachment of the Bush Administration. Earlier this year, he spearheaded an effort to get through a resolution that contemplated making Arcata a sanctuary for contentious objectors. He's a genuine progressive leader. We have others in this community, too.

It's a natural for the movement behind the voter confidence resolution to come from here. There's a lot of people in this community who unabashedly called for revolution, and I'm one of them. I don't mean to say revolution, because I don't say that word unless I say "peaceful" revolution. This is a very peaceful community.

ICONOCLAST: But you're wanting to go nationwide with the voter confidence resolution?

BERMAN: Right. What I think needs to happen is we need to see community after community building the unity that is necessary for the city council in each particular town to register that there's sufficient support to warrant their representing the views of their constituents by passing this statement.

We have a couple of things that emerge as a result of this approach. One is we're healing the divide that has so maliciously and intentionally been created in this country. Community by community, building unity and overcoming this hurtful wedge that's been put between us, that's got enormous value. Doing so in a way that leads local government to see that the true representation of their people would be simply getting behind this statement, now that's got value, too, because when we have a whole line-up of communities across the country who are all saying the same thing, now we're talking about the actual mechanics of how to build to a tipping point.

I said a little while ago about how we haven't reached the tipping point yet. Well, tipping points do come after time when there's been a gradual build-up of things. This is the nature of the tipping point. It's about how little things can make a big difference. You can either

just observe and study tipping points from the past and note how this pattern of how it always builds gradually, or you can take a lesson from your efforts for social planning for change and start to amend your strategizing if you are a social leader or an aspiring one and plan to develop that gradual swell which is the approach we're taking with this resolution.

What I see is an opportunity to call into question the legitimacy of the U.S. government. I think we're going to have to go through this gradual process of awakening people to realizing this, to questioning it, and ultimately the value comes in when we've got more and more people registering that same question and over and over again. That question is, "Has the consent of the governed been withdrawn, yet?" Because this assumes the answer.

ICONOCLAST: Let's dissect the election reform platform. For instance, number one, you have "The voting process is owned and operated entirely in the public domain," that meaning, I am assuming, that voting machines would be owned by the public trusts?

BERMAN: It's interesting that you would jump to the assumption there would be voting machines. There is nothing in that provision of the resolution that says we have to have voting machines.

ICONOCLAST: Paper ballots would be acceptable?

BERMAN: Yes. This community has been collaborating on finding just the right wording for this resolution for 16 months. From the time that I first presented it until it passed there were 16 months that went by, countless revisions, compromises about which provisions are really essential in order for us to accomplish the two main goals which are: number one, ensure conclusive outcomes, and number two, create a new basis for confidence where none exists. So we have lots of different points of view on this and that's totally reasonable and respectable, and it's going to be the same way across the country.

What we tried to do is wind up with language that would make consensus. That's what I mean by healing the divides. We need to build consensus community by community in order to eventually build consensus nationwide.

ICONOCLAST: Does the resolution extend itself to other forms of local government, like school districts and counties, or is this just a city target?

BERMAN: Arcata does tend to stand alone at times. The county of Humble is progressive, I would say, overall as well, although they may not be as quick to stick their neck out as Arcata. The very direct answer is that the county board of supervisors has not taken an interest in moving this resolution forward. Right now, it's just Arcata.

ICONOCLAST: If you go to number two, "clean money laws to keep all cor

Continued On Next Page



Dave Berman

• VOTER CONFIDENCE RESOLUTION ... Continued From Page 3

porate funds out of campaign financing," that would pertain, according to this resolution, just to the city government. What you are trying to do is start a ground-swell to where other forms of government would latch onto this and it might eventually become something that might even pertain to presidential elections?"

BERMAN: Oh, yeah. These are principles more than anything. The resolution is not meant to necessarily be a platform that the city has to now commit itself in every waking hour to attempt to implement. Although I will say to the credit of some of the council members in Arcata, the discussion has now become, "Okay, let's have a meeting at the elections department and let's go through this platform, point by point, and see how the city can actually take action behind its words." We've now passed this. It is a statement reflecting the thinking of our community and we need to figure out how we can act to support these statements. We haven't quite gotten there yet, but that's the next step. It's where we are beginning to go.

I don't expect that we are going to see the city council of Arcata completely overhaul local elections following the points in the resolution. That was never really the point. The point was to put out there a template that reflects the consensus view of our community about what minimal criteria need to be in place to ensure conclusive election results and to create a basis for confidence. We expect as other communities pass this resolution their reform platform section of their resolution may differ somewhat and that's okay, because the tipping point notion that we're trying to build to relies on consent of the governed question and asking it over and over again, has the consent been withdrawn yet?

Well, clearly nobody thinks so yet, just because Arcata's passed it. Say Berkeley's next, or Brooklyn, or wherever. The answer's still going to be no. So we ask it over and over again as each community comes on board with this. At some point it goes from no, no, no, to yes, yes, yes, and then we've hit the tipping point because we understand its nature and we've manufactured a path to get there.

ICONOCLAST: Regarding the path, there are two elements on this resolution. Number four and number eight. Number four is declaring election day a national holiday. Number eight is preferential voting and proportional representation to replace the winner-take-all system for federal elections. Both of these tend to make one think that a national scenario would be in play.

BERMAN: That is the ultimate goal.

ICONOCLAST: But a city cannot pass a national holiday, can it? The reason for having a holiday on election day would be, I assume, to get people out to vote?

BERMAN: I know that there've been people calling for making election day a holiday for a long time. The primary motivation is to increase voter turnout.

ICONOCLAST: On number eight, preferential voting and proportional representation; can you explain that a little?

BERMAN: Consent of the governed as the micro-frame that we're using to promote this. That speaks to whether or not constituents are really being represented by the people installed into office. Proportional representation is a way to ensure that when a community is not

100 percent behind one candidate or one party that the people who come out on the losing side don't end up with no representation. If you've got a divided community like so many seem to be these days, why should 49 percent of the people end up with nobody representing their views if they lost the election?

ICONOCLAST: Say, in a city's mayoral election you have three candidates and one candidate gets 51 percent of the vote and the other two get smaller percentages, are you saying there would be co-mayors?

BERMAN: No, no, no. Proportional representation applies to multi-seat races, so you might have a congressional district with ten seats and three parties and the result being you get five representatives from one party and three from another and two from another as a result from proportional representation.

That emerges typically from a form of voting that in its umbrella term is called preferential voting.

There are a lot of different ways to implement preferential voting. The most common one that you are probably familiar with is called instant runoff voting.

In a nutshell, the voter on the ballot ranks the candidates in order of preference. That's why it's called preferential voting.

So your top choice, you put a one next to it. Your next choice you put number two next to it and so on. And you don't have to pick more than one candidate. You can pick just one or you can pick as many as you want up to the number of candidates there and a potential write-in.

So what happens is, first of all, the nature of preferential voting requires a majority to win. And that's in contrast to requiring a plurality to win. That's major, because if you can no longer win with less than 50 percent, part of our voting system guarantees majority rules. That's a fundamental notion of democracy.

But how do we get there? We're not there right now. Preferential voting will help get us there, because it will ensure that in order to win, you've got to have a majority, and how to get a majority if you've got more and more candidates diluting the pool, spreading out the vote among more candidates, less likelihood of anyone getting 50 percent. This is why you rank the candidates.

What would happen is if nobody gets 50 percent or more after the votes are tallied, the candidate who's got the least number of first-place votes would be eliminated and everybody who voted for that candidate as their first choice will have their vote redistributed to the person that they picked second, and this happens automatically in an instant runoff.

So we don't need to go to the expense of another election day and continue campaigning. Invariably, turnout for runoff elections is always lower, so this is also a way to keep the voter turnout essentially the same as it was for the original election because everyone who was at the original election participated in the runoff, instantly.

And so, we would continue through this process if, after the first instant runoff we still didn't have a majority winner, the person then in last place would be eliminated and the votes transferred according to next preferences and this would repeat over and over as long as necessary until we assured that the winner has the support

of the majority of the voters.

ICONOCLAST: So the reason for the resolution is to move things in that direction?

BERMAN: That's right. There's definitely a multi-path forward. Number one, let's look at what we can do here locally to improve our election systems according to these ideals that we have espoused. It may not be possible to do them all, but we recognize that these are better ways and let's see what we can do to implement them.

And then the bigger picture, which is thinking globally, acting locally...so the global part is pushing this platform into the national debate, encouraging other communities to pass their own resolution, patterned after this. We aren't trying to force anybody to accept our platform verbatim, in fact we expect it will be different in other places. What we hope will be the same and the value of having a series of these resolutions passed, as I said about building to the tipping point, is commonality of framing the matter.

It's framing it around the fact that there is no basis for confidence currently, but these changes would create a basis for confidence and there is currently a guarantee of uncertainty of election results. We're never going to have unanimous agreement about the outcome of an election under these conditions. Just that alone would be a hugely power frame. If we were able to influence the national debate about the legitimacy of our government and our ability to determine who is an appropriate and worthwhile representative of the people, that's a significant contribution to the country if we're influencing the national debate in that way, and, ultimately, that can happen even if subsequent resolutions pattern on this one, pass in other communities without being identical.

What ultimately needs to happen if we are to have a peaceful revolution is the network of communities that have gotten behind this will then need to be communicating with each other to resolve the differences in the various similar versions of the resolution. We start with consensus in Arcata, consensus there, consensus there, consensus there, and then we bring all the communities together who have gotten behind these concepts and we say, "Okay, now let's build an even higher order of consensus that resolves the minor differences that have emerged in the different versions of the resolution." That's kind of the big picture, grand plan.

ICONOCLAST: What is the next step?

BERMAN: I'm doing it. I'm talking to you. I'm trying to get the word out in other parts of the country and I have submitted the resolution in a letter to every city council member in each of about a dozen cities that were targeted for their progressive nature. We've made all those decision-makers aware of what we've done and we've asked them to consider joining us and are trying to encourage people who live in these places to go and lobby their local officials. We're saying go look what we've done.

We've gotten lots of 'atta-boys. That's cool, but what we really need now is to see you in Berkeley, Calif., or in Portland, Ore., start calling your city council members and follow up on the fact that I just put my foot in the door for you.

I just made them aware of something

that is a truly progressive and revolutionary approach to improving elections and re-instituting democracy where we clearly do not have democracy anymore. And what you locally in any of these cities need to do is let your city council members know that you are aware of this approach, you think it makes sense, you are willing to work to help build the consensus in your community that it would take for the city council there to act with confidence that they would be enacting a resolution that reflects the will of their community.

ICONOCLAST: Have you found any organizations that are doing the same thing you are?

BERMAN: I don't think anybody is doing the same thing already, but some people are starting to get behind me.

Bev Harris from Blackbox Voting, she just endorsed the resolution, Velvet Revolution recently endorsed the resolution, David Cobb who was the 2004 Green Party Presidential candidate, he's endorsed the resolution.

In June in Houston, you might recall there was a meeting of the Baker-Carter election reform committee, and a host of other long-time administration stooges pretending to look at the problems with elections and this was their second and final meeting to discuss problems with the 2004 election.

It was a complete sham.

As a result of that meeting being called, election reform advocates from around the country convened a counter-hearing held the day before. It was June 29 and June 30. The purpose of the counter-hearing which was called the "election assessment hearing" was to hear testimony and receive evidence from experts who have studied what occurred last November and to discuss ways to improve and repair our election systems.

At that hearing, David Cobb submitted to testimony the voter confidence resolution. This was before it had been passed. This was somewhat of a symbolic thing. He submitted it into evidence and all of the documents that were submitted into evidence, as well as transcripts of the testimony given that day, were compiled into a single record from the event that was presented to the Baker-Carter commission. It was duly recognized. It wasn't like so many other times when the voice of the people is just completely marginal and set aside maybe with lip service being paid. I believe the record was also submitted to Congress.

Coming up Sept. 30, and Oct. 1 and 2, in Portland, Ore., there is going to be another national election reform conference, called "the summit to save our elections." This one I am going to go to personally. I will be doing a workshop about the resolution. The point for me in doing this is to, like, train the trainers. There will be election reform leaders from all over the country there. My intention is to lead them in a workshop that will show them how they can conduct a workshop when they go back to their communities.

The workshop that they'll do will accomplish the things that I've been telling you about, build consensus on a local level, address the wording of the resolution with the template as a starting point, and find what's comfortable for your community to adopt.

INFO:

<<http://guvworld.blogspot.com>>

Evergreen MBAs

Business School Offers Degrees With Soul

By NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATED EDITOR

CRAWFORD — This may sound crazy — like some late night info-commercial hocking a product that is too-good-to-work — but it's true, and it might cure insomnia for people who feel their day jobs have become as fun and rewarding as 19th century Kentucky coal mining.

Well, my little canaries, here's the medicine: a business school that teaches its students the skills not only to make money but also to save the world at the same time.

I know that you're thinking, "Yeah, right, I've got a bridge to sell you, too, buddy. I'd rather watch Three's Company re-runs. Where's my remote?"

But check this out.

The Bainbridge Graduate Institute on Bainbridge Island in Washington offers a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) and a certificate in Sustainable Business in a business school program that adheres to the "triple bottom line" philosophy (an enhanced version to the standard "bottom line" mind set) articulated as the three Ps — people, planet, and profit — or the three Es — environment, economy, and equity.

Born of Frustration

BGI was formed in early 2002, out of frustration with the corporate world, by Gifford and Elizabeth Pinchot and Dr. Sherman Severin. The idea for an MBA program that promoted socially and environmentally responsible business practices grew from Gifford Pinchot, a Harvard economics graduate and grandson of the first U.S. Forest Service

chief, after repeatedly experiencing CEOs dismantle projects against his advise.

Now in its fourth year, the BGI program is booming. Last May, BGI graduated 14 students, which was double from the first year. About 21 are expected to graduate this year, and 60 are currently enrolled in the latest class. All this while enrollment in traditional MBA programs has declined by 30 percent around the country

Business schools, such as the University of North Carolina, the University of Michigan, London Business School, Stanford, and Yale School of Management in New Haven, Conn., have a long tradition of teaching sustainability to their students, but "it's not the focus of the entire institution, nor is it the focus of the entire curriculum," said Jill Bamburg, MBA Program Director at BGI.

"At the larger business schools that are starting to do work in this area, [sustainability] is generally offered as an elective, and what they do is that they have their standard core curriculum as they always have and then they allow those particular students who have particular interests in those areas to take electives," said Bamburg.

Though men still dominate the traditional MBA schools, the gender ratio is pretty even at BGI, she added. Most BGI students has been historically in 35- to 50-year-old age group, but the newest class' age range shifted to about 25 to 65.



ISLANDWOOD LEARNING CENTER on Bainbridge Island, Washington is home to MBA students of Bainbridge Graduate Institute over a four-day weekend once a month from October to May for seminars.
— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute

"All of those students are in fact working adults. Some of them are early in their careers and want to get focused on doing things that matter to them. Others are people who had successful careers in other professions and who now have weathered their mid-life crisis and are ready to align their day to day work with their values. We tend to get both groups of folks," said Bamburg.

Kevin Hagen, who since graduating from BGI's second class is now head of Corporate Social Responsibility at Recreational Equipment, Inc., the country's largest and oldest consumer co-op, characterized the two communities attracted to BGI as people with a liberal bent from the nonprofit world who are looking for "the MBA with a soul" and people with traditional business backgrounds who have had socio-environmentally responsible values all along but needed a language with which to persuade those in the board room.

"It's very interesting. Folks maybe from the advocacy community all their life realize that, 'Gee, just because you work for business doesn't mean that you wake up every morning trying to kill babies. Imagine that,'" Hagen said. "Meanwhile, business people are finding out that these guys aren't just tree-huggers spiking trees and chaining themselves to bridges. These are thoughtful, creative people, and together they realize that both of them were dead wrong. They are opposite

sides of the same coin and the same mental processes and the same thinking."

For the most part, every student at BGI in encouraged to share their experience, resources, and ideas in a healthy atmosphere, which is usually foreign to traditional MBA programs, said Annie Brudno, a graduate of the second BGI class who co-owned an architecture firm for 23 years with her husband in Austin.

"It was a really unique learning experience — very different than going to a traditional MBA school where it's pretty much dog-eat-dog, and 'I'm going to try to stab you in the back to get ahead,'" said Brudno. "This is very much a collaborative effort to see how much we can learn, how much we can accomplish, how much we can teach each other. It was a very positive experience."

Hot for Teacher

Like other executive MBA programs, BGI students attend an orientation designed to help them bond with each other; however, they are treated to seven days at Channel Rock, a retreat center designed on sustainable living principles on Cortes Island in British Columbia.

"It's a brilliant and beautiful site that ... has a lot of sustainable features built into the buildings and site plans, and that's where our students stay. They eat sustainable, organic food that is grown

Continued On Next Page



GIFFORD PINCHOT (right) spawned the idea for the Bainbridge Graduate Institute, an MBA program that promoted socially and environmentally responsible business practices. Pinchot is a Harvard economics graduate and grandson of the first U.S. Forest Service chief, the same man who convinced President Theodore Roosevelt to begin conservation projects of land in the United States.
— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute

• **EVERGREEN MBAs ... Continued From Page 5**

on the site there,” said Bamburg.

BGI gathers the most cutting-edge professors and business professionals in sustainable thinking from around the country to teach, lecture, and “play” with students.

“I had professors from Stanford, MIT, (University of Virginia) Darden School of Business, the list goes on,” said Hagen. “It’s really neat that these folks are finding the opportunity to teach at BGI because they really get to develop curriculum in real time in this fast moving place.”

Such lecturers from the past year have included Dr. Michael Braungart, world-renowned for developing cradle-to-cradle design; Gene Kahn, organic-food industry pioneer and founder of Cascadian Farm; Paul Dolan, former CEO of Fetzer Vineyards and a BGI “entrepreneur in residence”; Michael Crooke, President and Chief Executive Officer of Patagonia, Inc.; Amory Lovins, CEO of the Rocky Mountain Institute and author of *Natural Capitalism*; and Christine Ervin, former CEO of the U.S. Green Building Council.

“The speakers we’ve had in the last two years have been amazing, and to have access to these people on a small scale is one of the transformative things of the school. For example, the CEO of Patagonia spoke to us. If he had come to the University of Texas, maybe he would have gotten a question in, maybe not, but we all got a chance to talk with him,” said Brudno.

BGI’s curriculum and syllabi centers around entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, and innovation, created with the intent to saturate the business world with as many responsible leaders as possible.

“One of our missions as a small school and a new school is to serve as an incubator in the area of sustainability and then to do what we call “Mission 2,” which is to make that material and knowledge available to larger schools so we can have a multiplier effect,” said Bamburg. “And we’re committed as an institution to be an open source school, so we’ll make all of our syllabi and as much as our curriculum material available to anyone to use. We want other people to pick it up and use it.”

BGI offers both an MBA in sustainable business and a certificate in sustainable business for experienced business managers to soak in these practices.

The MBA is a two- or three-year, part-time program for working individuals. Tuition for two years is about \$33,000. Students come for seminars held over a four-day weekend once a month from October to May at the IslandWood learning center on Bainbridge Island, 35 minutes by ferry from Seattle.

Washington state has authorized BGI to grant degrees, but BGI has to wait at least two years to gain national accreditation. Discussions are currently underway between BGI and the University of Washington on allowing business school students from UW to take electives at BGI, which is largely due to student interest.

This interest is reflected in the Aspen Institute’s Business and Society Program and the World Resources Institute 2003 study “Beyond Grey Pinstripes,” which noted that elective courses in social and environment studies increased 70 percent since 2001. Conferences and other events on these subjects doubled, as well.

School’s Out

In addition to executive greed, dirty accounting practices, and unfair labor practices of multi-national corporations in the United States, environmentally-friendly legislation passed by foreign bodies has also accounted for the increased need of companies to hire and encourage employees to understand the principles of sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

Hewlett Packard, for example, sent two of its employees who happened to be married, Will Hertling, 35, and Erin Gately, 38, of Portland, to take part of BGI’s inaugural class. HP has gone so far as to reimburse tuition for more employees who have attend BGI.

“The education I got (at BGI) helped me do my job better because I was able to look at it from more of a business perspective instead of only looking at it from an engineering perspective,” said Gately, who, as an environmental product steward for HP, has had to keep up with environmental issues that affect the company’s products, specifically with ink jet printers.

While Gately and Hagen continue to work on sustainability projects for their respective companies, Brudno, as she helps co-write a HUD grant to design green modular homes with her colleague Callie Ridolfi in Seattle, is returning to BGI this fall to facilitate a class on leadership and personal development.

“I’m very excited about that actually because one of the transforming experiences for all of us in the school is to realize how very deeply we feel about the environment and how people are treated, whether its working here or in India or whatever the situation is,” said Brudno. “You can’t separate that abiding — I don’t know what to call it — caring, love, interest — from business. If you do, then you’ve cut yourself off from being a human being. You’re just a money making machine.”



NATURE’S CLASSROOM — Gifford Pinchot, co-founder of the Bainbridge Graduate Institute, leads a class on environmental awareness on Bainbridge Island, Washington.
— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute



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Vigil Continues In Crawford: Camp Casey Memorial To Stay

By DEBORAH MATHEWS
STAFF WRITER

CRAWFORD—The Camp Casey Memorial has been left as it was in the ditch in Crawford, with the Continental Flag flying at half-staff above. Organizers plan to maintain the site through the help of volunteers from Veterans For Peace and other groups, acting as Honor Guard and overseeing the maintenance and care of the controversial memorial.

Veterans For Peace member Carl Rising-Moore is currently living at Camp Casey and plans to attend the Commissioners Court to be held in Waco on Tuesday, to hear discussion on right-of-way issues and the legal aspects of long term existence of the site. Already having been presented with "Notice" from County Commissioner Ray Meadows, Rising-Moore said, "The document was addressed to no one and signed by no one."

The document titled "Notice" included the following information: "All structures, tents, signs, crosses, vehicles and other obstructions must be immediately removed from the right-of-way of this County Road to allow the County to perform mowing, road maintenance and ditch maintenance. The failure to remove such obstructions could result in your arrest for obstruction of a roadway under §42.03 of the Texas Penal Code. See *Brightbill v. State*, 734 S.W. 2d 733, 734 (Tex. App. - Amarillo 1987) (blocking of ditch which prevented county maintenance held a violation of §42.03 of the Penal Code). Furthermore, leaving discarded structures or trash in the ditch area may be prosecuted as lit-

tering under §365.012 of the Texas Health & Safety Code.

The paramount purpose of public roads is travel; and maintenance/repair of roads is necessary for the convenience and safety of the public. Vehicles which are not moved will be towed. Other items which are not moved will be removed and hauled to storage, or disposed of by the County. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated."

Currently serving with Rising-Moore and the Honor Guard of Camp Casey Memorial is Dickey Ingram and Barbara Barker, both of Veterans For Peace. According to Rising-Moore, "We didn't blink and they didn't move it." In response to the notice, the three have cleaned, mowed, and raked the memorial site and plan to constantly maintain it. "It will be the finest looking ditch in Texas when we get through with it," said Rising-Moore.

"We'll go into the winter soldier routine if we must. We will be here until our troops come home, however long that takes." Making reference to the Winter Soldiers of Valley Forge in December of 1777, Rising-Moore said that what they're doing is in honor of those soldiers, too.

Attempting to assert their First Amendment rights and, at the same time, be good neighbors, according to Rising-Moore, the three will continue maintaining the Camp Casey Memorial, without interruption, but are currently seeking volunteers to help in the Guard.

Anyone interested in becoming involved with the Honor Guard of the Camp Casey Memorial can contact the Veterans For Peace organization.



BRAINSTORMING MANAGEMENT NEEDS are students of Bainbridge Graduate Institute, an MBA program that promoted socially and environmentally responsible business practices.
— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute



THE CHANNEL ROCK COB HOUSE is a grass-roofed cob house where students of Bainbridge Graduate Institute (www.bgiedu.org) meet for 11 intensives a year on Cortes Island. The rest of the work is done from home.
— Photo Provided By Bainbridge Graduate Institute

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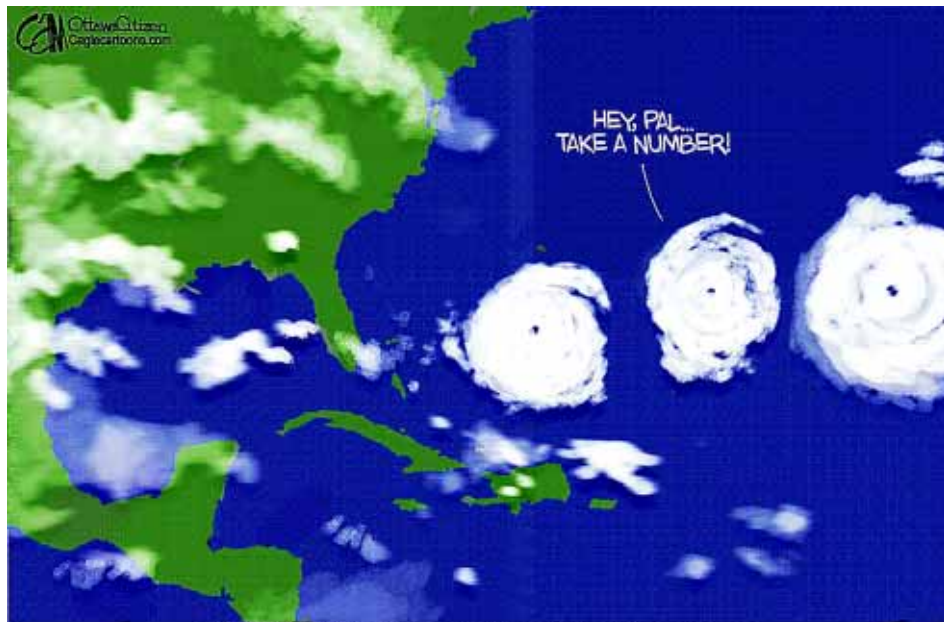
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THE WORST PART IS THAT THE SEASON IS JUST STARTING.

New Book On Social Security Hits Bookstores

CRAWFORD — In February, THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST published an interview with author Allen W. Smith, Ph.D., who had written a book entitled “The Looting of Social Security.”

Since that time, he has written a follow-up book, “Social Security — The Attempt To Kill It,” which could easily be considered the best book on the subject yet.

Allen W. Smith earned his Ph.D. in economics from Indiana University and spent 30 years teaching economics to university students. He has appeared on national television and has been interviewed on more than 150 talk shows.

The author has given THE ICONOCLAST consent to publish excerpts from the book:

CHAPTER FOUR (excerpts)

President Clinton also ran on-budget deficits during the first six years of his presidency. However, because of the Clinton deficit-reduction package, the deficits declined significantly during each of Clinton's first six years. Finally, in 1999, the deficit was totally eliminated, and there was a tiny surplus of \$1.9 billion. In fiscal 2000, the federal budget had a surplus of \$86.6 billion. These were the only two non-Social Security surpluses during the preceding 40-year period, and they may well prove to be the only two surpluses that many Americans will see during their entire lifetimes.

The budget returned to deficit territory during George W. Bush's first year in office, posting an on-budget deficit of \$32.5 billion in fiscal 2001. The deficit soared to \$317.5 billion in 2002, \$538.4 billion in 2003, and \$567.4 billion in 2004. Thus, instead of paying down the debt as promised, President Bush added approximately as much to the debt in 2

years as was added during the first 200 years of American history. The deficits are projected to remain in the \$500 billion plus range indefinitely unless action is taken to reduce them, and I see no deficit-reduction plans on the horizon.

George W. Bush should have been in a better position than almost anyone else to know just how dire the federal budget situation was and what a dismal failure Reaganomics had been during the 12 years Reagan and Bush were in office. His father was vice president for eight years under Reagan, and served four years as president. As the son of the vice president for eight years, and as the son of the president of the United States for four years, George W. Bush had access to information not available to many.

With aspirations to be president himself someday, the younger Bush must have talked shop with his father and tried to learn as much about the job as possible. Certainly he had to know that during those 12 years of Reagan and Bush, the national debt had quadrupled. Didn't he have any concern that Ronald Reagan and the elder Bush had added three times as much to the national debt in just 12 years as all the previous presidents in American history had added in nearly 200 years?

He must have shared his father's pain when the elder Bush failed to win reelection. And all he had to do to learn why his father had been defeated was listen to the news. It was the economy and the massive deficits that did his father in, and it was Clinton's promise to reduce the deficits that brought victory to him. Knowing about those massive deficits during the Reagan-Bush years, and knowing how much the national debt had risen in just a few years, how could George W. Bush keep a straight face when he told the American people that the government had surplus money?

Alabama Capitol Sees Peace Rally

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — The Bring Them Home Now Tour — a gypsy-style, anti-war rally that kicked off last month by Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a slain soldier who demonstrated near Crawford — hit Montgomery, the state Capitol of Alabama, last week.

About 30 Montgomery-area residents attended the rally. The end of the tour is slated for Sept. 21 in Washington.

Editorial

OP/ED
Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

Defrauding

The United States Of America

DEFRAUD (*verb*): cheat, bilk, circumvent, deceive, delude, pilfer, rip off, rob, rook, screw, shaft, victimize.

Which of these synonyms describes the federal government's and Administration's role in dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina? You may pick more than one.

It is clear that the residents of New Orleans and other cities caught in the path of Katrina were victimized, deceived, and screwed by agencies designed to provide protections following such a disaster.

As a means of covering their misdeeds, the Republican blame machine has announced the formation of a “bipartisan committee” to look into the matter. Of course, Moe, Larry, and Curly Joe did this without telling the Democratic leadership of either house, a good way to avoid equal representation in order to cover tracks, nor did they provide bipartisan subpoena power.

USA TODAY published a report last week from the Department of Homeland Security inspector general, indicating that questionable disaster relief payments in the millions of taxpayer dollars were made by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in regard to last year's Florida hurricane. Also noted were fraudulent claims in the millions of dollars after the 2001 attacks on 9/11 of the Pentagon and World Trade Center towers.

The people in charge, and it goes all the way up to the President, should not only be fired, but vigorously prosecuted.

This type of dealing makes the Teapot Dome scandal of former President Warren G. Harding look more like a Romper Room coloring contest and Watergate appear more like a shell game at a carnival. Values have become depleted with Bush's skull and bones approach to decency. America's citizens owe it to their democracy and to themselves to open their eyes and demand justice.

Is it defrauding the United States to have unqualified individuals appointed

to top FEMA positions as a means of gifting political friends, and in the process, downsizing the capabilities of that agency? How many of President Bush's oil company buddies have received top appointments? How many other agencies are in ruin due to appointments as political favors?

Plenty. And you can now look at the Supreme Court appointment that is pending this week. This is just one more.

The time has come for America to put its foot down.

This does not mean saying, “Let's start all over and forgive this Administration for its previous indiscretions and hope it doesn't happen again.”

It means demanding a thorough investigation into the matters of 9/11, FEMA, Halliburton, Katrina, soldiers as pharmaceutical guinea pigs, and the memos of Downing Street, to name but a few. We must demand that this Administration be put on trial, for this is the competent way to rein in an Administration out of control and in love with only itself. A trial is the straightforward route to obtaining the truth.

As the 20th century breathed its last, so did idealism in America. The hope for an even better future has turned into a struggle for survival, and the shadows grow darker.

Our land of promise has been shaped into a deformed bizarro world crafted by the terror president and his cunning unelected ventriloquist.

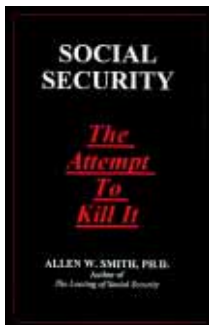
Bush retained his throne with the spread of fear, as he deceptively placed himself upon a glorified ecclesiastical pedestal that has everything to do with personal power and nothing to do with compassion for the masses. Louisiana is proof.

The deception lingers. It's time to seriously consider extending the President's five-week vacation to 52 weeks a year and call in a newly elected reserve who might actually be willing to work full time — for the people, all classes of them.

Our country could use the break.
— W. Leon Smith



Allen W. Smith



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Fickle Fashion Foibles

I expect the ladies who read my column won't mind, but I hope you men can stand another one about fashion. I just can't help myself.

The good news is that we have been invited to a pleasant family do in Dallas next month. The bad news is that I can't wear jeans and boots to the parties and events.

My department store buyer/daughter once again suggested I purchase a couple of current fashion magazines and hit the stores. A friendly, knowledgeable clothing store manager recommended her two favorite, hip, up-to-the-minute publications. Thus began my most recent continuing education into what is new, cool, and fashion forward (this month).

And can you believe it?!!!! —Turns out several of the hot new trends are . . . well, actually quite old. I mean really old. Really, really old. I mean, way back of your closet, haven't seen the light of day in a decade or two old. Wait until you hear this: I thought it was bad enough last season when silver, gold and metallics became popular yet again. . . .

I've lived through this metallic trend about three times already. A really sharp individual with a lot of time on his or her hands might just about calculate my age with this information. (But please don't).

I had finally thrown out the silver belts just before this last surge in metallic popularity. Figures. Those silver sandals in your grandma's closet that no self-respecting consignment shop would accept, that wouldn't have sold even at a yard sale last year —the gold bag considered way too out of date —These are all over the nearby malls. With hefty price tags. (And the kicker is that my daughter assures me they are already on their way OUT in the big cities).

Animal prints, were in style about, what? —five minutes ago? . . . and then OUT of style just as fast as they arrived (or about the time they finally filtered down to more out-of-the-way markets like ours —and I finally purchased them). . . .It took some time for me to decide I was ready to dive into the animal print thing again. As usual, after the shock of being inundated with a new/old fashion trend, I finally became desensitized, brain-washed by retail America (specifically the "rag business") into thinking something was cool —when it was totally outdated five minutes before. I broke down and bought animal prints just about the time the trend went out of style, my usual pattern. (Timing is everything).

So Animal prints are already back again, but in subtle touches this time, or so my daughter informs me. —Just a bit here and there as trim (thereby giving the manufacturers an outlet to use up all the leftover materials from last time. How crafty). Animal prints! Give me a break. And I bought into it.

The flared skirts that were oh, so popular several years ago are back now too. Previously, they were accompanied by jackets no fashion conscious woman would wear today. But throw away the jacket, and the skirt looks up-

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.

to-the minute. Go fig. So did any of you actually keep these suits for ten or fifteen years? Well, gee, no! So we are expected to buy the flared skirts all over again. Of course, that's how the game works, what keeps the fashion industry in business. Well, many of us aren't the same size any longer, so what the heck? Go out and buy, buy, buy. Retail wins another round. . . . although not with me. I never looked good in those skirts anyway. I didn't wear them before and won't be wearing them now (she said with conviction. I have been known not only to sometimes eat my words, but to choke on them. I didn't like pointy toes shoes either when they reappeared a couple of years ago. Now I have several pairs, just in time for the trend to change to rounder toed ballet-slipper things that all look like Chinese peasant footwear. I really should never say "never").

Cropped jackets are in. Now this is just adorable for anyone weighing in at, oh, say between 80 and 95 pounds, dripping wet. I like jackets that cover my back, if you know what I mean. Most women "of a certain age" and some who are years younger would agree. I'll vote with my pocketbook on this one, won't be purchasing too many cropped jackets. Bottom line. . . they just look stupid. The proportions are all wrong. They assault my fashion sensibilities, admittedly only one woman's opinion. You know, just because the fashion industry decrees it, we don't have to buy it. Baby boomers, especially those fast approaching the fixed income stage are especially (hopefully) becoming more discerning about their purchases. This is why target markets are a lot younger.

One of the strangest fashion resurrections involves socks. Knee socks are cool again (and not only favored by partying Japanese businessmen). OK, not too bad. I like knee socks, went through this trend for the first time in elementary school. Textured stockings are in again too, just when those you stubbornly kept have finally lost every bit their elasticity. For years, they sat patiently waiting in the back of some forgotten drawer during too many seasons' changes of temperature. Now sadly, it's too late.

I couldn't do this next sock thing when it was popular during my twenties or thirties, and I won't be able to do it now: This fad conjures up way too many mornings of dressing for Sunday school in little white socks and patent leather mary janes. Yes, folks, mark my word, it will be cool yet again to wear your skinny little socks with dress shoes, preferably high-heeled.

This comes at a time when the socks we wear with sneakers are

made so small as to be almost invisible. We just finished replacing all our tall white socks with the little ones that don't show above the athletic shoe. Now we're supposed to wear anklets with dress shoes. How ironic. I figure the teens MIGHT be able to get away with this one. I definitely won't be trying anklets with dress shoes unless they're paired with a little number from Frederick's of Hollywood, to push the totally outrageous right over the edge. (And I ask you, dear readers, what are the chances of THAT, at least in public? Well, maybe on Halloween).

Filmy, layered, hippie-type rayons and silks are in yet again, often paired with jeans and boots. (This is the only new/old look I do love and will wholeheartedly embrace. What can I say? I came of age in the sixties! Anyway, it's a nice change from the denim shirts and will probably keep people from wondering if I'm a little too much of a tomboy).

Of course, the boots aren't exactly like those in my closet. That would be too easy. Just as cowboy boot manufacturers finally settled into only rounder toed, often rubber soled, comfortable footgear, here comes the fashion industry with —of all things—pointy-toed, high-heeled, leather soled boots. Could anyone have predicted this strange turn of events?

The really fashionable boot styles come with heels in which no self-re-

specting cowgirl could possibly work. Arrive at the cattle auction in these and get laughed out of the place like you just stepped right out of the Metroplex. These fashionable boots ARE most often sold in trendy boutiques in places like L.A., Santa Fe, and New York, even Dallas, Austin or Houston. Most of the women who buy them have never kicked the stuff boots were invented to kick. I however HAVE.

In fact, I'll bet if I can find that box of old boots I had finally decided to throw out or turn into vases or whatever. . . I'll just BET there are some pointy toed, high heelers that have kicked their way through plenty—that could pass for high fashion at a party if I wash them up —and if I jazz up the rest of the outfit just right. I'm not sure I can remember how to do that, but if the occasion presents itself, I will rise to it and literally "clean up good."

As I see fashion trends come and go, lately at warp speed, I find that I am drawn more and more to the classic things, and no matter how my daughter tries to tell me that black is "last season," I end up buying black —or white — or blue denim (or nothing, since I already own such things). I care less and less if I am "in style." If only, if only we could go fashionably through life, for any event or occasion (of whatever magnitude). . . . in simple jeans, boots, and starched white shirts. Maybe from now on, I will just do it. Perhaps I will start a new fad.



Moving Left

ANATION Divided

Moving Right

I Want My City Back!

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "Louisiana is a good place to run to."

I don't know what woke me.

But at 3 a.m. I fumbled out of the sheets, through the French doors and out onto the Bourbon Street balcony.

A glass broke somewhere down below; a woman laughed; a drummer signaled the end of a set with a snare riff.

The last revelers were staggering past in the final pained throes of their drunk, calling for another drink, calling for each other, calling their regrets that would not drown in the overpriced syrupy citrus-camouflaged liquor that too-friendly barkeeps pushed through the neon-lit smoke to those unused to facing regret.

I leaned over the floral iron that provocatively laced the dying party lights the way the lingerè shops beckoned the timid tourists.

It was the death before dawn when the party herd animals bed down and the predators close up the registers and tally their kills.

Somewhere a lone saxophone moaned over the change in its open case, singing now not for the coin, but just to wail in the dark.

I couldn't place the tune, but I knew the song.

*In the heart of the night
In the cool southern rain
There's a full moon in sight
Shinin' down on the Pontchartrain
And the river she rises
Just like she used to do
She's so full of surprises
She reminds me of you . . .
In the heart of the night
Oh, down in New Orleans*

—Paul Cotton

And I knew what woke me up.

It was a lover wanting my attention.

Sleep when you're dead, country boy, there's a city out there that has been the heart and soul of this country for three centuries.

And she wants more than your money.

Her calling is culture and her avocation is sophistication.

The blood of a nation flows down the father of waters into her veins.

She has welcomed twice as much wretched refuse to these teeming shores at that puny little island in New York.

She has been washed in the blood of all our wars since we redeemed ourselves in 1814. She was the jumping-off

place for Manifest Destiny and the siren of fortune who always offered a goodnight kiss to the American Dream. She was a repository of art, architecture and letters, the aesthetic mecca for everything decent about the South. And finally, she gave us the sound and the soul and the voice that thrilled the whole world and made it dance to our tune.

And she was calling me to come out and play.

Not just make yourself foolish, although she could certainly do that.

No, make yourself alive.

Crash the party of Bacchus and bathe in the libation for the Queen of the Mississippi, beside which the Nile is a wading creek and the Seine is an overturned spittoon.

I will always love her.

Oh, yes, she was also tough, even mean. Dangerous at times and corrupt at others. Dirty and impoverished. It was her charm that so much exaltation could arise from such despair.

We have lost a national treasure.

We have not just watched New Orleans destroyed.

We have torn her heart out.

We have told the Queen of American cities that we simply do not give a damn; we were only around for the party, and for the love of God I cannot see how she, or anyplace, can survive that realization.

Would we have hesitated an instant had the Smithsonian been threatened for a week?

Would we have ignored the warnings of two decades about danger to Mount Rushmore or any Washington monument?

We left her poor and defenseless to die on her streets in their wheelchairs and hospital gurneys.

Ten thousand?

This is America, where death tolls from hurricanes are in hundreds, or dozens, where we do not let ten thousand people die in earthquakes and floods because we muster all the resources of the world's greatest nation and we fight back!

We spit in the face of God if we have to, but we do not let storms claim ten thousand of our countrymen.

We pack up the Normandy Invasion and we push back hell.

The thousand deaths only happen in

third world countries run by greed mongering bureaucrats who stuff their pockets with relief funds while mewling about how hard they tried and why they failed while pounding their Bibles and whining about God's will like it was an excuse for not giving a damn about people too poor to turn a profit for the business class.

Is that a Tennessee Williams floating toward the river?

Are the scavengers picking over the remains of a Louis Armstrong or Fats Domino?

Those are the fruits of a city like New Orleans; how many of them have we let rot in those putrid waters?

And today I heard the economists gloat about the profits to be made from rebuilding her as an adult Disneyland, a low air faire destination for the Vegas-weary consumers of American vulgarity.

It is not we, America, that let New Orleans suffer.

We have given, and we have been generous. We have not just given our

Call To Mind



By Don M. Fisher

money. We have given ourselves: treated the sick, opened our homes, protected the weak, offered hope where we could and comfort where hope could not be found.

I am proud of Americans.

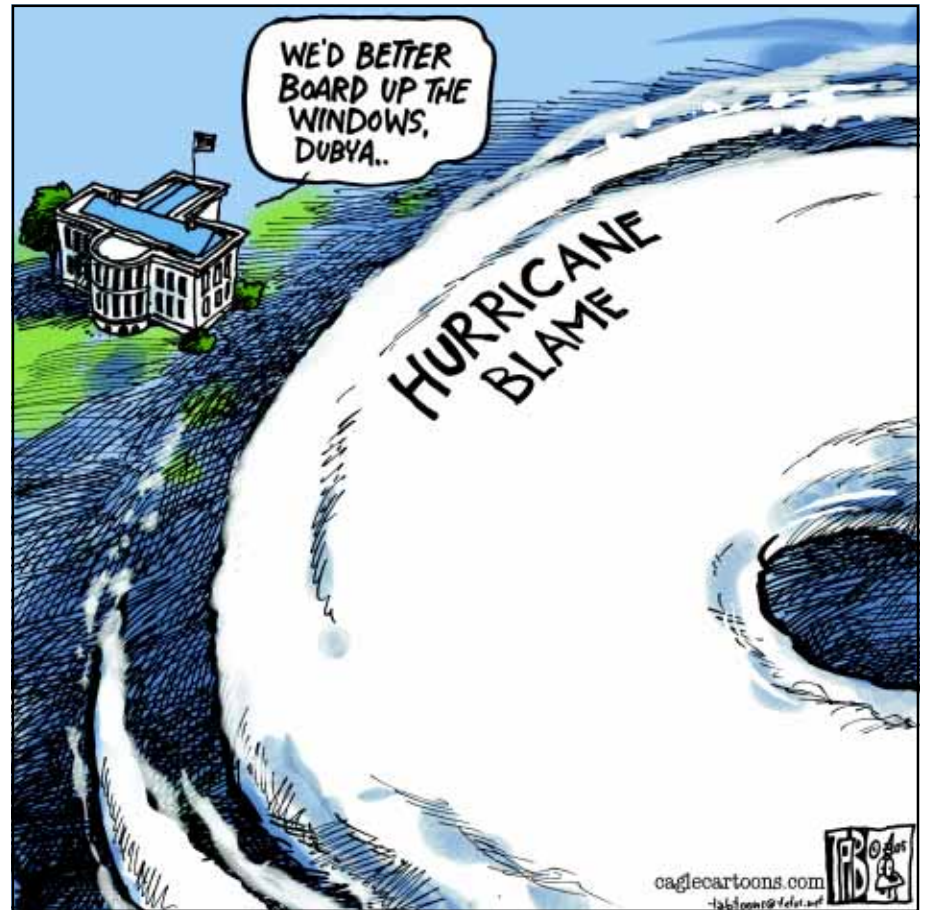
But I am repulsed by those who sat idle as chickens in a hail storm when they were needed, then, when they were just in the way, rushed to find some poor folks to get their pictures taken with.

And there's a special place in hell for those who are now rolling out the pork barrels on the Potomac so "privatization" can roll the victims on the Mississippi. They don't want your "economic boost" or your low interest loans or your hugs for the camera.

They want their city back.

And while you're at it, the rest of us would like our country back.

You know, the way it was when the help didn't wait for the rain to stop.





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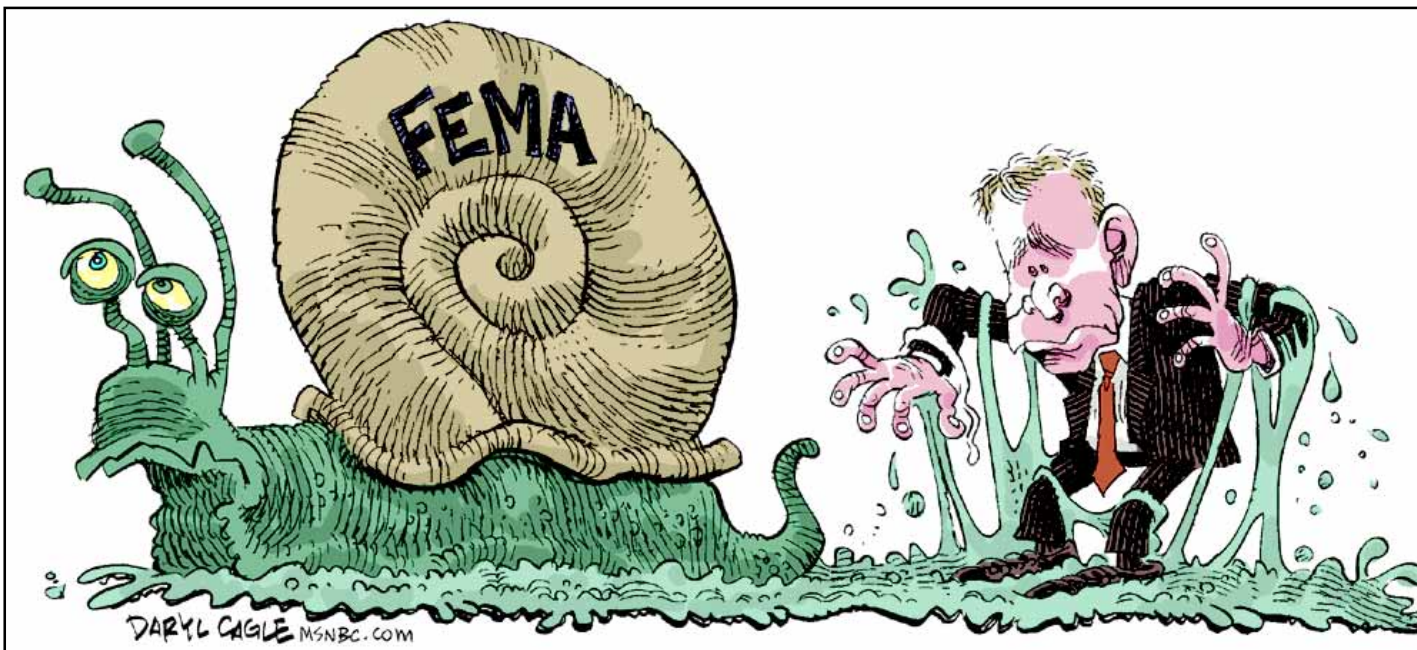
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The Trenchwalker



By W. Leon Smith

Bush Quit His Job

Those who have worked for any of my small companies know it is a dangerous proposition to not show up for work, to ignore an assignment.

My employees know that I will probably replace them, immediately. It's happened before.

This is what they have been told:

"If you don't show up to do what you are supposed to do, I naturally assume that you've quit. The job has to be done. It's your duty to do it. If it doesn't get done, then you've quit the job and I will replace you with someone who will do the job. It is the task that is important, not you. The task to be completed is why you have the job. It is not simply to give you employment."

To be perfectly honest, I have fudged on this ruling from time to time, occasionally offering second chances, but I usually regret it. It depends upon the degree of the infraction and what is lost.

Generally, tendencies to not show up for work repeat themselves, over and over. Employees are really stupid if they think I will buy into their placing blame elsewhere or if they attempt to create excuses. In fact, I take such antics as an affront.

Death is a pretty big infraction.

President Bush did not show up for work when Hurricane Katrina blew in. Neither did FEMA and Homeland Security, agencies filled with gift political appointments, hang qualifications.

If a President will not act on a timely basis when faced with an emergency, then he must be replaced. Our national security is at stake, as are our lives.

Having the Administration and federal agencies act when they are supposed to is not a handout to the people in trouble. They've paid for it with taxes and trust. It's part of doing the nation's business.

Elaborately staged photo-ops at the scene of the disaster by both the terror president and Mrs. Bush is an abomination, eye candy for those who think it is the will of God that we sacrifice our countrymen to an inept leader who does not want to derail Armageddon.

No, Bush quit, plain and simple.

Dereliction of duty is too kind a terminology. So is impeachment as an end-result. He didn't shirk his duties, he ran away from them.

The hurricane was an act of nature. The terror, murder, and human disaster that followed rest squarely on the shoulders of criminally inept agencies and the Administration that rules them.

During those long and painful days following the hurricane, we had no President.

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The Bully's Back

I've done the math. Actually, it's more like algebra. Only with words.

(TRUTH plus VALUES) times (LOGIC plus COMMON SENSE) equals REASONED THOUGHT, or (T+V)(L+CS)=RT.

REASONED THOUGHT divided by THE O'REILLY FACTOR equals CHAOS READ AS PANDERING, or (RT)/(TOF)=CRAP.

A week after the worst natural disaster in America's history, the chief purveyor of one-sided, cheap shot, unfair, imbalanced reporting and commentary chose to ignore the subject of New Orleans entirely in his syndicated column.

That's because Big Bully Bill had no way to defend the hero of Pennsylvania Avenue, the All-American Texas cowboy from Yale, the almighty sovereign War Leader and most brilliant military tactician George W. Bush – and how along with his minions he managed to turn a terrible storm and its aftermath into absolute hell on earth.

No. Mr. O'Reilly opted instead to divert attention away from the inept ersatz president, and the even more unqualified political appointees he rewarded with high-paying positions of import and consequence far beyond their levels of ability or interest.

A couple of months ago I took Bill to task for assailing Howard Dean. The good doctor was only doing that which was expected of him as Chairman of the Democratic National Committee, coming down loud and hard on the Right-wingers and hardcore Conservatives.

Funny how that works in the singular-thought process, collective mind of the Righties – it's perfectly okie-dokie for schmucks like O'Reilly to get paid ungodly sums to rant and rail, unfettered, their lopsided view of the glory and greatness of Bush #43, plus how all Americans should think and live, for hours every day on national media. However, anyone daring to exhibit the chutzpah to question the quality of decisions emanating from the West Wing, or voicing an opinion to the contrary regarding freedom of choice, is just wrong, wrong, wrong.

Now, Bill O'Reilly picking on Howard Dean is one thing, to be sure. Dean is a veteran of political warfare at the highest levels, and knows the territory. He fully understands the nature of the beast and its weaponry.

However, when Big Bully Bill uses the power of the media at his disposal to attack Cindy Sheehan, a mother who sacrificed her eldest son to Bush #43's war of personal aggrandizement, and oil for profit, he shows himself to be nothing more than a pompous blowhard who enjoys picking on those weaker than himself.

O'Reilly positions himself as knowledgeable of the inner feelings of those of us on the left in both these columns. The former was titled "Hate-monger Dean surely isn't what Dems want"; this week's title was "Sheehan about to become liability for nation's liberals."

That's one hellacious crystal ball he's using!

He starts this column, as with the one on Dean, with a fallacy: "Hurricane Katrina wiped out 'Camp Casey'..." (I have come to learn from reading O'Reilly's columns that it's important

for him to hook the Conservative reader with a Right-wing fantasy in the lead sentence.)

What bull! Katrina didn't wipe Camp Casey out. The plan all along was for it to break last week. A number of caravans with buses and other vehicles were scheduled to head to Washington, D.C. from several locations on September 1, culminating in a three-day protest on the 24th, 25th and 26th. The RoveBush Evildoers will most likely run from the Mothers of fighting and fallen sons and daughters, and vacate the Capitol that weekend.

This lighthouse of journalistic integrity has the cajones to call Ms. Sheehan an extremist! What does that make you, Bill? A moderate, I suppose?

As with Dr. Dean, he puts forth the assumption that liberals are distancing themselves in droves from this stalwart American Mom – and again makes it seem like he actually has this on good authority, without substantiation.

The Bully of the Airwaves and Print bases his assault on Cindy's initial response shortly after losing her son, Casey, at age 24 in Iraq. The Sheehan's and other parents who had lost children in combat met with Bush #43 in June of 2004. It was only two months since Casey's death, and she was most likely still in shock when her "kind" remarks about Bush #43 were reported in her hometown Vacaville, Cal., newspaper.

A month later she became associated with "Families Speak Out," an anti-Iraq war group; that September the SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE quoted Cindy, "Our only goal is to have people understand the human cost of war."

Up to that point, it appears, O'Reilly is okay with Ms. Sheehan. However, he took umbrage when, last October, she was quoted in THE WASHINGTON POST: "(My son) died for someone who wouldn't even fight for his country."

Good gravy, Bill, the truth hurts, now, doesn't it? That is the human cost of war!

The Bully muddies the water even more at this juncture. He claims that Cindy began showing up in ads paid for by MoveOn.com, but doesn't give a time frame. Now, even I think the folks at MoveOn waste their opportunities and contributions by going so far beyond common sense they alienate the intended demographic. I was on their e-mail list last year, but had myself taken off because what they sent out bordered on lunacy. Anyway, I never once saw anything featuring Cindy Sheehan until this summer.

He also claims that Ms. Sheehan began showing up at Bush #43 events (no dates, places or actual witnesses), with her only purpose being to call Fearless Leader "a variety of nasty names." If she did, more power to her. It's her right as an American, and she paid an extremely hefty price for that privilege. The only flaw in O'Reilly's ludicrous statement is that nobody gets anywhere near a Bush #43 "event" without a super secret pass, awarded only after swearing an oath of allegiance to the Almighty Master and signing it in blood (or so this is what I've heard).

Then Big Bully Bill finds fault with Cindy's own new organization, GOLD STAR FAMILIES FOR PEACE. What in the



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

hell has he got against parents who have lost sons and daughters in Iraq and Afghanistan? Is he afraid it's going to come out that these are wars of horse manure? Well, we already know that!

Bill's complaints include Ms. Sheehan asking why neither First Twin Jenna nor Barbara is in the military, and her statement on AlterNet.com that America's children are being killed and maimed for "a series of lies, mistakes and miscalculations."

He includes uncorroborated comments as to how Cindy: Appears at a rally in support of convicted terrorist supporter Lynn Stewart; says as a nuclear power, the U.S. has no right to tell Iran it can't have nuclear weapons; claims Israel is "occupying" Palestine.

At this point, Big Bully Bill O'Reilly brands Cindy Sheehan as a full-blown radical! Oh, what an evil woman!

Not only that, but O'Reilly's bent out of shape because this woman had the audacity to accuse the U.S. of "killing innocent people."

Gosh, Bill, say it ain't so. The good and beneficent RoveBush Fascists wouldn't actually kill innocent people for their own personal gain, would they?

Forget Iraq and Afghanistan – can you say New Orleans?

Imagine that, a person who wants to stop death and destruction.

The media Bully blithers on about Cindy calling insurgents "freedom fighters," and saying their murderous terrorist acts are justified because of the U.S. "occupation." Bill, you're a real putz. I sincerely doubt this woman has sided with the very people who killed her son. The fact is, Bush #43 has sided with them – Muqtada al-Sadr, the leader of the uprising in which Casey Sheehan was killed, was one of the primary designers of the Iraqi Constitution.

One of the more insane opinions I've come across from the mouths and keyboards of Right-wingers lately is that they have this cockamamie idea that Liberals are in cahoots with the jihadist Muslims who want to destroy America. It's not us, my fellow Americans – the ones to fear are those nice folks who usurped the system of free and open elections in our Nation while stealing the White House, Senate, and Congress back in 2000, then 2002, again in 2004... and now the Judiciary.

Bill used his Bully machine to, as he put it, "chronicle Cindy Sheehan's Left-wing contacts and her actual statements about America on (his) television and radio programs" on August 8.

Gee, ain't it wonderful that Cindy has her own multimedia exposure outlets that pay her tons and tons of bucks to spew poison across the land?

Of course, Bill took it as an affront when she responded by saying, "The O'Reilly Factor is an obscenity to the truth and to humanity."

You go, Girl!

God forbid, Mr. Big Bully Bill O'Reilly, people should actually speak their mind in the United States of America. The 1st Amendment is not the sole propriety of you Right-wing fanatical elitists who think you have an entitlement to all media, all government, all business, all oil.

Cindy Sheehan represents the average American parent. **She gave up a son, you self-important twit.** What in the hell have you ever given up?

Everything you bitched about Cindy Sheehan doing she had every right to do as an American and a citizen of the World. "CERTAIN INALIENABLE RIGHTS," Bill.

What is it about that phrase that you schmucks on the Right side of reality don't get?

By the way, along Cindy's trek to the Capitol she made a stop yesterday in Wheaton, Ill. – serious Bush #43/Republican territory. According to the news reports from Chicago, hundreds of folks came out to support her and the anti-war movement. As to the flip side, there were but a handful of pro-Bush #43, pro-war types, most noticeably of the past retirement variety.

Shalom, y'all.

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Regional Bigotry Is Alive And Well In America

By **TRISH BOWCOCK**
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

"I don't think they should rebuild that city" stated a beauty shop operator in Medford, Ore., 2,500 miles from the Big Easy. The comment was made with callous disdain. My jaw dropped. Rarely at a loss for words, I found myself speechless. How could anyone really believe that to be a viable option? Discussion ensued. A consensus was reached. "Shut 'er down!" they roared. Yikes! "Board-up New Orleans?" Permanently displace several hundred thousand people? Abandon a city so rich in culture and history? Silent and sobered, I returned



Trish Bowcock

home to ponder the foundation for this phenomenal proposition.

Was abandonment advocated following the 1989 San Francisco earthquake? Just as with New Orleans, San Francisco's geologic location creates a predictable formula for large-scale natural disaster. Yet, the San Francisco risk is accepted. So why not with New Orleans? The difference in attitude can only be explained by "regional bigotry." New Orleans is Southern. San Francisco is West Coast. The bottom line is that regional bigotry is alive and well in America.

Four years ago I moved to Oregon. I love it here. But, my roots grow from

the South. Born in Georgia to parents descended from Alabama and Virginia I sport a southern accent. Before migrating west, I never much thought about my drawl. I did not understand the strong regional bias against Southerners. My dialect inadvertently brought an awareness of regional bias to the forefront of my conscience. Comments about the American south are offered to me on a daily basis. A mere "how are you today?" uttered from my lips can evoke an uninvited, sometimes arrogant, diatribe on the rampant racial prejudice in the south. Usually from someone who has never ventured south of the Mason Dixon line. There is a presumption that the south is a hotbed of ignorant bigotry. All white southerners are presumed

racist. The south is deemed an uninhabitable region to be avoided. The irony in this presumptive bias is extraordinary.

Yes, racism exists in the south. But the south does not hold a single license to racism. Racism is a sad state of mind permeating the world over. Those condemning the south based upon a perception of racism should look inside their hearts. Bias toward an entire region is just as destructive as the individual racism deplored. For those advocating the abandonment of New Orleans, I implore you to ask yourself why? Is it truly because the city exists in a geologically risky local? Do you feel the same way about San Francisco? Or is New Orleans expendable merely because it is Southern?

Some Who Wander Are Just Looking For Their Car

As I've mentioned on more than one occasion, I'm severely directionally challenged. I have admitted this openly, without shame, in hopes that I might be an inspiration to those out there who, at this very moment, are looking up at the Seattle Space Needle and wondering:

When was this thing moved to Atlanta?

I specifically mention the Space

Needle because experts suggest that people who are easily lost should use landmarks as a way of maintaining a sense of direction in unfamiliar territory. For me, this means staying keenly aware of my surroundings while, at the same time, avoiding eye contact with anyone who might actually be willing to offer directions. Though my wife would say this stems from my being stubborn, it's really more about avoiding a conversation that begins something like this:

Hi there. I seem to be lost. Can you tell me the easiest way out of the park-



By
**Ned
Hickson**
Siuslaw News

ing lot?

This is no exaggeration; I actually DID get turned around in an unfamiliar parking lot this week. That's because I made the mistake of not retracing my exact steps back to the car. Instead, I took the nearest exit leading from the building and proceeded directly outside which, for me, was like walking into the "Upside-Down Room" at the House of Mystery. I eventually discovered that I was at the complete opposite end of the parking lot from where I came in — but not before my wandering caught the attention of at least three people who stopped to ask if my car had been stolen.

Because of this condition, the thought of trying to find my way through a corn maze this weekend sounds about as fun as trying to find my way...

Well — just about anywhere else.

Apparently, for a few dollars, I can basically do what I normally do anyway, except with the added benefit of being completely surrounded by corn. To me, this is a little like someone with claustrophobia paying for a chance to spend the night in a 55-gallon drum.

For my wife, however, it's an opportunity to let our kids participate in something she believes could become a "special family tradition." In my opinion, it's really not that special; I get lost with the kids all the time. In fact, throw in some vegetables and frozen food, and it's not much different than me taking the kids to the supermarket.

Still, I decided to call the corn maze people and see if there was any chance my \$6 entry fee included a global positioning device. I was told No, but that I had nothing to worry about. I thanked him for his assurance and assured HIM that I planned to eat as much corn as humanly possible until I was rescued by a search party.

He said he hoped I was hungry.

And I plan to be.

Assuming I find my way out of the parking lot.

(You can write to Ned Hickson at the Siuslaw News at P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439, or visit his weblog at <www.nedhickson.net>)

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There Are Theories, And There Are Theories

Last month, President Bush said that it would be a good idea if something called, “intelligent design” were taught along with the theory of evolution. That way, children would be exposed to “different schools of thought.” I’m all for kids being exposed to “different schools of thought.” In fact, I wonder why President Bush limited it to only two explanations of how the earth and humans got here. There are dozens of different beliefs and explanations for how the world as we know it was created. Of course, some of them — such as intelligent design — don’t fall into the category of “science.”

Some people believe in a strict inter-

pretation of Genesis. Some even believe that dinosaurs and humans roamed the earth at the same time. Other cultures believed that a giant turtle created the land of Earth. One belief is that a woman who fell from the sky was behind the creation of the Earth. Others believe that a jumbled mass of elements at the beginning of time was in the shape of an egg. Similarly, the ancient Greeks believed that a hatched golden egg gave birth to the sky and the Earth. So, why not teach all of these approaches — along with intelligent design — in the same class. And call that class, “comparative religions” or “creation myths.” Just don’t call that class, “science.”

Those pushing the intelligent design alternative to evolution are taking advantage of the word “theory” having several definitions. The reasoning goes that a theory is not a fact but just conjecture, so alternative conjectures should be taught as well. Unfortunately for those who have embraced intelligent design, there is a very specific definition for a scientific theory such as the theory of evolution, and it’s not conjecture.

When you look up “theory” in your dictionary, you’ll see several definitions, and the one having to do with science is quite different from the others. If you take a step further, and look at a science



Modern Times

By
Lloyd
Garver

book or a science web site, you’ll learn that in science, “A theory is an explanation of a set of related observations or events based upon proven hypotheses and verified multiple times by detached groups of researchers. In general, both a scientific theory and a scientific law are accepted to be true by the scientific community as a whole.” In other words, it’s not just a “good guess.”

Einstein’s theory of relativity, the quantum theory of physics, and the Copernican theory that the earth revolves around the sun are scientific theories. The theory that

the line you get into in the supermarket always takes the most time, or that the best way to make it rain is to get your car washed, or that right when you sit down to dinner, the phone will ring may all fit into one of the definitions of “theory” that you’ll find in your dictionary — such as conjecture or supposition. But like “intelligent design,” they just don’t happen to be scientific theories.

Intelligent design promotes the idea that an unseen force is behind the development of the earth and humanity. Those who embrace intelligent design don’t like to say that they believe the “unseen force” was God. I guess they feel it won’t sound scientific. To me, trying to make a spiritual idea scientific undermines both the spiritual idea and science. It’s sad that religious people should feel afraid to admit that they feel God was responsible for creation.

While I was growing up, religious people seemed to have no problem reconciling evolution with their beliefs. Some did this by interpreting the Bible in a way that would not contradict science. Some just separated science from their faith. It just wasn’t an issue. I learned in school that the Scopes trial (the so-called “monkey trial” of 1925) put an end to seeing evolution as heresy just as it put an end to seeing the literal interpretation of the Bible as the only way to make sense of things. All of a sudden, now it seems like some people are trying to turn the clock back a hundred years or so when vast numbers of people scoffed at the idea of evolution — just as they had scoffed at the idea of the earth revolving around the sun four hundred years ago.

The only hesitation I have about the theory of evolution is that if we are truly an evolving species, getting wiser and more developed with time, why is there a bunch of people today who actually want to call intelligent design, “science?”

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 a weekly column for SportsLine.com. He can be reached at lloydgarver@yahoo.com

A London Diary

By KAPIL KOMIREDDI
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Opposing views generally create unrest. Then, naturally, a place encouraging plurality, be it of thought or action, should suffer from unrest. There are few exceptions to that rule. And London is — or, until recently, was — the mightiest of all examples. London was one of the few places in this world where both the professor and opposer of a view not only survived but thrived. Karl Marx, sitting in a monarchical London, propagated class revolution and fathered Communism. Benazir Bhutto, officially seeking refuge in London, opposed Downing Street’s decision to go to war. All that seemed to change last month, when London was hit by suicide bombers. Perpetrators of last month’s terror attacks on London never understood the essence of democracy or debate. Those who aided them and fuelled their rage can never understand it either. The war in Iraq, though abhorrent, cannot be a justification to commit mass murder. There is a gentleman called Nathan Diebenow in the hometown of President Bush; he is terribly antiwar, and his disaffection with the establishment’s actions translates not into carnage but extremely profound articles.

Ironically, these hate-preachers and their intolerant philosophies survive because they operate inside a liberal-minded and tolerant society. The very institutions these so-called jihadis want to war against and destroy ensure their safety and protect them. The very rights they detest enable their existence. Now let us perpend: If we, in order to tackle them, renounce any of the liberal principles we hold dear, then, in spirit at least, they will have triumphed. Operating under the aegis of what defines us — liberty and tolerance — if they can force us into redefining ourselves, then we have been defeated.

Two days after the attack, in his column in *The Sunday Times*, Michael Portillo, the former Conservative MP, immediately expressed concern that the increasingly “authoritarian” Blair might use the attacks as a justification to crack down on civil liberties: “Blair can count on genuine... support... We ask him not to abuse it... We expect terrorists to attack our way of life. Our government must not.” *The Independent On Sunday* echoed his view: “It should be clear that further attempts

to remove historic protections of liberty... are irrelevant...” *The Observer* went a step further: “It would be a tragic victory for terrorism if we faltered in our determination to protect our open society and tolerance for all beliefs.” Of course, such views weren’t shared by all. Editorialists at *The Sunday Telegraph* and *The Sunday Times* took a slightly different view.

The more important point is that London had just been attacked, and some influential members of its clerisy were worried not about another attack — which eventually was attempted — but the exploitation of the atrocity by politicians to carry out further atrocities on individual liberties. The most delightful lesson to be extracted from the recent op-ed ramblings is that, despite unprecedented atrocities, people (at least the intelligentsia) here aren’t prepared to renounce their faith in the principle of liberty.

In my view, however, the police and the intelligence services are not entirely blameless. Not only did the police fail to prevent another attempted attack, but its officers went and shot dead an innocent Brazilian man because they weren’t competent enough to establish his real identity. Then, for the purpose of self-preservation, they distorted the facts, and didn’t even attempt to quell the miasma of misleading rumours which were doing vigorous rounds. For instance, the victim, Mr. de Menezes, was not, as was rumoured, wearing a “bulky” coat but a light denim jacket. The police never intervened to correct this. Sir Ian Blair, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, whose imminent departure looks virtually ineluctable, never reined in to correct the glaring errors. The Metropolitan Police, it seems, hoped that the truth would be buried under a heap of undetectable lies, and that, in a climate of fear, citizens wouldn’t question them. That clearly doesn’t appear to be the case — which is another triumph for the principle of liberty. Sunbathing in Barbados, Tony Blair (who, by the way, is no relation to Sir Ian) has expressed his full support for Ian Blair. Clutching her dead son’s photo, Mr. de Menezes’s mother wants Sir Ian to resign. *Vincit omnia veritas?* Well, we shall see.

Multicultural Myth:

London’s multiculturalism is a myth. In reality, every place has its own character, and sooner or later, the outsider adopts, adapts, integrates and becomes an insider. The word to describe London would be “varicoloured,” not

GUEST COMMENTARY

“multicultural.” Melting pots have a culture and character of their own. And London is, by far, the biggest crucible known to man. A Kiwi friend of mine, for instance, has a boyfriend who is Iraqi. A quintessential Englishman I am acquainted with is getting married in December to his Muslim fiancé from Hyderabad, India. Not so long ago at a restaurant I visited, a Muslim woman of Palestinian origin was explaining different types of tiramisu to her date, a soigné Jewish chap of Israeli origin. (Stone me for asking, especially since it sounds homoerotic, but why cannot Sharon take out Abbas to dinner and discuss Seder or Ambrosia?) I can go on about so many such instances, but the common and binding factor would be this city, broodingnagian in size and thought, with a common — not multi — culture of integration at its core, in which, sooner or later, everyone melts.

Bibulous evenings:

I arrived at a few conclusions recently (and they’re, as someone — was it Oscar Wilde? — said, subject to change): What could be more relaxing than sipping a pint of Stella and reading Miles Kingston’s silly, yet highly apposite, humour columns? Or, for that matter, sipping Polish vodka while listening to Nina Simone and reading Catherine Townsend’s evocative pieces about her never-ending amorous dalliances in the aptly titled column “Sleeping Around”? (I am so thankful that I’m not challenged with the task of writing one such column on a fortnightly basis, or even, owing to the exiguous spell, on a yearly basis.) The other evening, on a usual night of carousing, I met an exceptionally beautiful girl called Jenny. Just looking at her liquid eyes, her forehead and (excuse me) her peculiarly shaped, yet beautiful, teeth reinstated my faith in life. Conversing with her — which revealed that innocence still exists — completed my semi-transformation from a cynical and stolid misanthrope to a responsive human being. There is, I concluded that evening (with ample support from equally intoxicated fellow-drinkers), so much beauty in life, only a fool wouldn’t want to lose oneself in it. The atmosphere, too, is conducive to life: Security level in London has been officially downgraded. After all, Tony Blair is away on holiday.

Write to the author at: kapskom@gmail.com

One-Man Army Blitzes Germans In Italy

Private Jimmy Logan was just another dogface in the crowd that waded ashore at Salerno, Italy on Sept. 9, 1943, but by the end of that bloody day the tough Texan had earned the Medal of Honor.

Born east of San Antonio at Luling and raised out west at Rising Star in Eastland County, James M. Logan joined the National Guard in August 1936. Though four years shy of the minimum age requirement, he somehow convinced the recruiter that he was 18.

The rearguard became the vanguard in November 1940, when the citizen soldiers were mustered into federal service. After basic training at Camp Bowie in Brownwood, the Texans waited for the inevitable war with Nazi Germany.

Fighting their way off the Salerno beach in the predawn darkness,

This Week In Texas History

By Bartee Haile



Logan's rifle company was forced to take cover in an irrigation ditch a half mile from the shore. A machine gun strategically positioned behind a stone wall blocked their advance.

While his comrades kept their heads down, Jimmy Logan crept to the top of the trench for a quick peek. At that very instant, a Germany infantryman cautiously emerged from a gap in the stone fortification, and the sharpshooting private dropped him in his tracks with a squeeze of his M-1 trigger.

Oblivious to the concentrated fire from the machine gun, Logan scored direct hits on the next two Germans through the breach. Inflicting three casualties with three bullets, he singlehandedly stopped the enemy counterattack.

The gutsy G.I. then set his sights on the machine gun itself. To the astonishment of his colleagues, he sprinted the 200 yards of the open terrain to the stone wall without suffering so much as a scratch.

Hidden from view by the three-foot barrier, Logan crawled along the wall toward his objective. He suddenly sprang to his feet and jumped into the machine-gun nest with rifle blazing.

Two Germans died on the spot, and the rest ran for their lives from the crazy American. Logan seized the unmanned machine gun and cut short

their retreat.

The smoke finally cleared to show two terrified Germans cowering in the corner of the bunker. The private took the pair prisoner and delivered them safe and sound to the battalion command post.

Returning to the front, Logan found his unit again in serious trouble. This time their nemesis was a sniper holed up in an abandoned farmhouse a football field and a half away.

Although he gave at least four enemy marksmen a clear target, Logan reached the two-story structure in one piece. Blasting the lock off the front door, he stormed into the farmhouse just as the sniper was coming down the stairs. In a confrontation reminiscent of an Old West shoot-out, the Texan was a split-second faster on the draw.

Having put in a full day, Private Logan definitely was entitled to a well-deserved rest. Instead, he continued to risk his neck long into the night leading reconnaissance patrols far behind enemy lines.

In recognition of his selfless acts of extraordinary heroism at Salerno, Jimmy Logan was awarded the Medal of Honor. Nine months later, he added the Distinguished Service Cross to his growing collection of combat decorations.

In a vineyard on the outskirts of Velletri, Italy on June. 1, 1944, the recently promoted sergeant ordered his squad to dig in. In a matter of moments, the handful of Americans came under attack from a superior German force.

Telling his men to sit tight, Sgt. Logan took on the enemy by himself. After halting them with a grenade barrage, he cut loose with a Browning and emptied 15 magazines of ammunition before the overheated automatic weapon jammed.

Totally demoralized by the one-man army, the panic-stricken Germans broke ranks. Seizing another Browning, Logan turned their chaotic retreat into a bloody rout.

The amazing encounter yielded an unbelievable body count. The sergeant was officially credited with 25 kills and 15 captures. As a result of this fantastic feat, the Texan became only the second American soldier to win both the Medal of Honor and the DSC.

A minor leg wound 10 days later gave Logan the chance to catch up on his correspondence. In a letter to his mother and sister halfway around the world in Luling, he avoided any mention of his latest hair-raising heroics.

Her son's refusal to divulge the details of his most recent accomplishment did not surprise Maggie Logan. She had, after all, learned of his Medal of Honor from the newspapers.

"He didn't write me anything about the battle," Mrs. Logan said in reference to the Salerno invasion. "He didn't want me to know about it. He thought it would worry me."

And what did Jimmy Logan's mother think of her war hero son? "Winning those medals doesn't make me think any more of him because I can't think any more of him than I always have."

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

Letter From Cindy Sheehan

Dear Friends and Supporters of Peace,

On August 31st, we closed down Camp Casey on the outskirts of President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas. In the three and a half weeks that we were in Crawford, thousands of people passed through - some for just a few hours and some for days or weeks. Throughout the country, hundreds of thousands of people responded to my vigil, calling on the President to meet with me and, just as importantly, adding their voices to the growing cry for an end to the war in Iraq.

The horrific events that have unfolded in New Orleans and other parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, in the wake of the deadly hurricane Katrina are stark reminders of just how lop-sided our nation's priorities are. Resources that could have been used to save lives are instead tied up in a war that continues to kill Iraqis and U.S. servicepeople. Our nation is at a crossroads: will we continue to squander resources and take lives in a war that never should have happened, or will we commit ourselves to the re-building of the Gulf Coast and the lives torn asunder by Katrina? It is clear that both cannot happen at the same time, and in this context our urgent call to end the war in Iraq must be as clear and strong as ever.

The same day Camp Casey closed two important initiatives were launched. Gold Star Families for Peace kicked off a campaign to hold Congress accountable for taking us into war, and also for ending this war. I sent a letter to every member of Congress - all 435 representatives and 100 senators - asking the same questions I've been asking President Bush. At the same time, three buses left Camp Casey to head North, East and South carrying members of Gold Star Families for Peace, Military Families Speak Out, Iraq Veterans Against the War and Veterans for Peace to dozens of cities. The buses



Cindy Sheehan

will converge on Washington, DC September 21, just days before the national anti-war protest being organized for the weekend of Sept. 24-26. In addition to community forums and other events, on the road we will visit members of Congress asking for a meeting and answers to my questions. You can join this campaign as the buses pass through your community, or become a part of a delegation being organized in your Congressional district.

In case you have not already made plans to be there, I want to encourage you to join me in Washington, DC that weekend. I'll be marching on Saturday, Sept. 24 with United for Peace and Justice, and later that same day will be speaking at the "Operation Ceasefire"

free concert at the Washington Monument.

You know as well as I do that the majority of the people of this country oppose the war. As we talk to people from every part of the country, it is clear that the time is right for this demonstration in the nation's capital. You do not want to miss this crucial event - it's looking like the Sept. 24-26 weekend will be the largest gathering so far of the movement to end the war in Iraq. It will also be the first opportunity since Katrina hit our shores to raise our voices in a call for new priorities.

Most importantly, I urge you to come to Washington on Sept. 24, to tell President Bush and Congress in the strongest possible way that it's time to bring the troops home. But don't come alone - bring your friends and family, bring your co-workers, your classmates, your neighbors. Visit the United for Peace and Justice website for details about the day's events, and for information about the interfaith service, grassroots lobby day, and nonviolent civil disobedience action at the White House being planned for Sept. 25 and 26.

And your help is needed in another way. To reach the potential of what will be a history-making event, United for Peace and Justice needs your financial support. Please take a moment right now to make the largest donation possible. I know that many of you have given and will continue to give to Katrina relief efforts, and it's important that we each do what we can to help out. But hopefully you also understand how important it is to lend your financial support to the Sept. 24-26 Mobilization.

I want to thank all of you who gave so much to support my efforts while I was in Texas. Now, as we all move into the next phase of our efforts to end the war in Iraq, I look forward to seeing you in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 24.

Perry Needs To Go Quickly 'Into That Quiet Night'

By PETER STERN
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Gov. Perry has proven that he doesn't care about Texas families and their children. Up until two years ago Perry re-

fused publicly to recognize that public schools are in financial crisis; this past year he vowed that it is the number one priority. Even then, his questionable method of financing education was to

increase entertainment taxes on Gentlemen Clubs. In truth, the governor is out-of-touch with reality and has done little to provide the majority of Texans with some financial relief and/

or quality of life.

What Perry HAS done is to provide his special interest campaign contributors with legislation and perks that add to their profit margins.

- Lax legislation and poor oversight enabled the insurance industry overnight to double the cost of home insurance

- Perry signed the legislation that protects the medical industry from "frivolous" malpractice lawsuits; even with that, health care costs have remained high and are increasing

- While Perry and the Republican Party have pushed the platform of "No New Taxes", they have pushed for toll roads throughout Texas; what are toll roads if not new taxes?

- Perry signed the telecom bill that enables phone companies to provide cable services

- Perry pushed for and signed the legislation to deregulate the costs of college tuition; as a result, tuition has continued to sky-rocket

- During the past several years Perry promised to provide homeowners with property tax relief; there is no relief in sight

- Perry signed the bill to provide property tax exemptions to religious institutions/churches on investment land

- Perry has wasted more taxpayer dollars on lackluster special sessions than any previous governor

- Perry has been the strongest lobby for the business sector.

It is time that voters recognize that the governor cares for nothing but his own special interests. In the 2006 gubernatorial race current Texas Comptroller Carole Keeton Strayhorn — a supporter of the business sector, conservative fiscal policy AND Texas families — remains the Republican Party's most intelligent choice for that position.



Peter Stern

A Perfect Storm

GUEST COMMENTARY

By REBECCA RABINOWITZ
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

As the raging flood waters ravaged New Orleans, and the rest of the Gulf Coast staggered from near cataclysmic damage, it is finally, abundantly clear that the Good Ship W has listed so far to starboard under the weight of its right wing ideology and hubris, it is in imminent danger of sinking. With it would go the neocons' imperialistic fantasies for W's second term. Only such dire consequences for their political agenda - and a few well placed photo ops with the desperate citizens begging for assistance in the wake of the hurricane - could have bestirred the snarly Vice President to return from his Wyoming vacation, where he was likely blasting flocks of hapless birds (or perhaps fleeing Democrats) out of the skies; or the Secretary of State back from shoe shopping at Ferragamo in New York, for further damage control and spin.



Rebecca Rabinowitz

Now we learn that Madame Secretary has made a saintly pilgrimage to her native state of Alabama - we can presume that she left her Ferragamos at home in their boxes, and instead borrowed a pair of hip waders from the Veep's favorite duck blind. One can hope that perhaps on her craven flight of sudden nostalgia, she found the time to sort through and actually accept the heretofore unanswered numerous offers of international assistance to our hurricane victims, since her vacation shopping foray seems to have interfered with finding a way to "match up" the offers with our needs, as she unctuously put it during her press conference the other day.

Meanwhile, back at the spin ranch, David Brooks waxed positively lyrical in his NY Times column, about the "strong economy and moral code" in this nation, and yet another round of self congratulatory press conferences by a large group of white men in polo shirts and khakis desperately tried to drive home the notion that this was "not just any disaster - this was unprecedented", and "the public has to understand how difficult it is to move equipment around". Yeah, right - and "help is on the way" - "just around the corner", in fact. The problem with this gang is that their logic is so circular, that mythical corner never seems to materialize, and in the meantime, soldiers continue to die for no discernible reason, stretched to the limit National Guards troops are overseas as their families and lives are obliterated by Hurricane Katrina here at

home. The poverty rate has risen every year that Bush has been in office; citizens are forced to choose between life-saving medications and food; the gap between the haves and have nots continues its dizzying upwards trajectory; jobs are shipped overseas; entire communities are shuttered; corporations abandon their pension obligations; 46% of Americans lack even basic health insurance; women are suddenly third class citizens whose presumptive right to medical privacy or to be gainfully employed is now decidedly up for grabs, our crumbling national infrastructure is sacrificed further in order to conduct unnecessary wars on the cheap. In what nation, might I ask, do David Brooks and his right wing companions reside? It certainly isn't this one.

It is incontrovertible for all but the willfully blind that the Bush administration and its cabal of neocons neither cares nor has a clue about the reality of life in this nation, as a result of their morally bankrupt economic, social, and environmental policies. Repeatedly invoking the name and blessings of God is a paltry substitute for morality. What kind of morality permits abandonment of the poor, elderly, and infirm as flood waters rise? What kind of morality says that if you hew to a narrow religious and social view, you are upstanding, yet implies that anyone who believes differently is "sinful," "unchurched" or otherwise unworthy? Since when has wrapping oneself with the flag and denouncing dissenting voices as traitors substituted for true patriotism?

The hard reality is that the entire social safety net in this nation has been savaged by right wing Republicans since the time of Ronald Reagan. They have been ably assisted by ever more timorous Democrats, who decided, under the dubious leadership of Bill Clinton's DLC pals, that the Democrats might also prosper with the largesse of corporate fat cats, thus side-stepping their traditional championship of the underprivileged: of society's most disenfranchised. We are literally being looted by rapacious oil companies, by the greed of corporate chieftans, and by the vast military industrial complex, about which another type of Republican, Dwight Eisenhower, famously warned. The punitive new bankruptcy "reform" bill, the "starve the government and reward the wealthy" tax cuts, the undoing of 80+ years of hard-gained environmental and endangered species protections, standards for clean water and air, the "welfare reform" bill, the omnipresent "NIMBY" mentality in this nation, are bitter testament to our re-

fusal to make ANY sacrifices, and it has all crashed down upon us in this perfect storm of a hurricane.

The nation is in dire need of a Category 5 soul-searching. Watching scenes unfolding in the Gulf Coast states, which more closely resembled Apocalypse Now than a supposedly civilized country, should propel us into a day of reckoning. We cannot have it all: we cannot indulge in an endless orgy of tax cutting; eviscerate every social safety and educational support program; gorge on finite fossil fuel; wreak havoc on our pristine wilderness areas and endangered wildlife in an unending quest for one more barrel of oil while disdaining realistic and environmentally sound alternatives; pursue an indeterminate global "war" on terror on the cheap, while completely ignoring the views of international allies; allow the religious agenda of a vocal minority to utterly undermine our commitment to scientific, healthcare and technological advancement; shamelessly fob off a cataclysmic debt on future generations because we can't manage to "just say no" now; and elect short sighted political hacks who seek only to secure pork barrel spoils instead of our national well-being. It is past time for us to grow up - to accept the reality that we have become overly indulgent in hearing only what we want to hear, and not what we must: that our financial cupboard is stretched beyond the breaking point, and difficult decisions loom.

For a nation which has always been in the vanguard of individual philanthropy and generosity at home and abroad, it is time to rekindle our national flame of tolerance, of civil liberties, separation of church and state; upholding national and international standards of fundamental decency and transparent justice, of technological innovation and the highest quality of education for everyone. Our planet is fragile, and we are the stewards of her greatest wonders: what we destroy now cannot be reclaimed. The true measure of a civilized society is how we care for our most vulnerable citizens: what we have seen in this hurricane should leave every single one of us shaken to our very core, because it is not a pretty picture. If we cannot commit to assuring that every citizen of these United States will have lives of personal security and dignity, then we must question our monumental arrogance in admonishing the rest of the world. The question before us now is not whether we have the ability: it is whether we have the will to demand that our government chart a new course for the ship of sta

MAILBAG ICONOCLAST

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

As a military retiree who spent two tours of combat duty in Vietnam in the 60s and 70s, I am compelled to write this letter regarding Cindy Sheehan's anti war movement.

To begin with I abhor war in all forms, but I detest even more people who go against our President and his policies.

I sympathize with the loss of her son during the war, but there are hundreds of other mothers in the same situation, but they are supporting our president and not trying to emulate the infamous Jane Fonda and that fearless leader John Kerry.

I would suggest that Mrs. Sheehan do the same. Her son is dead. How would pulling our troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan now help him or her? I also suggest that this woman quit feeling sorry for herself and donate her time to helping us win this crazy war. One question does come to mind: who is financing her movement? other government haters? war cowards?

In closing, I ask Mrs. Sheehan and her fanatical followers to turn this over to Jesus Christ and let him bring it to an honorable end. Prayer always helps. Try it Mrs. Sheehan.

Sincerely,

Arthur Garrett, Fayetteville, NC

To The Editor:

MSgt. Mark Hill of Gause, Texas who has 24 years in the Air Force and Air National Guard was activated this week under Operation Noble Eagle for Presidential Support Duty for the Defense Information System Agency and the White House Communications Agency.

He left Wednesday, Aug. 17.

THE EAGLE in Bryan/College Station interviewed MSgt. Hill and printed an article on the bottom of the same page was an article about the vigil that Cindy Sheehan is doing.

Everyone has the right to their own views, that's what America stands for.

But like MSgt. Hill her son chose to join the military. He knew going in what might happen just like MSgt. Hill did.

I just wanted you to know that there are those of us who are proud of our service men and women and what they are doing. MSgt. Hill and I have been married, divorced and back together for 21 years and have two daughters. We and our families and friends are very proud of what Mark is doing.

We are glad that he does not have to go all the across the ocean to do his job, but he is still in danger like any other soldier or citizen of the United States these days. And had he been sent to Iraq we would have missed him and worried about him, but we would still have supported him like we always have. Though it will be easy for him to come home for visits. We do not know how long this duty will last.

After an interview over the phone staff writer Arena Welch wrote the article on MSgt. Hill. I am very pleased with what she did.

I feel for everyone that has lost a soldier, whether it is this war or any of the past. But in the same vein I am glad there are those willing to risk their lives to allow me and Mrs. Sheehan to express our views and feelings.

Stacey Hill, Gause, Texas

To The Editor:

Mr. President,

Each day Americans become more resigned to hearing your defensive rhetoric regarding "staying the course," hearing about more devastation coming out of Iraq

and Afghanistan, and now, about early hints of Civil War between factions in Iraq, all the while our own economy reels under the stress of energy costs and the enormous out-of-control national debt, as well as the spending frenzy of those we entrusted to be good stewards of and fiscally responsible for our hard-earned tax dollars. As of today, 8/24/05, the national debt stands at \$7,936,698,051,658.05, or \$26,738.73 for each American alive. There is little good that has come from this administration, the least of which is your inability to acknowledge that this war was started on lies and deceptions, that there is no clear-cut means for exiting the war, and that this war and the absence of world peace, your legacy to the generation(s) to come, will last long after you've gone back to the ranch in Crawford where you will pontificate about how things should be in your perfect, insulated world, drinking tea or whatever out under the sunlit trees, and living the "good life" with the wealthy, privileged, influential and elite you've surrounded yourself with these past years.

Articles are now being written about the "heat" you must be feeling about your crusade into Iraq...the American public is waking up to a protracted and almost hopeless situation that can only get worse...and those of us who have known all along that a disaster was inevitable given the warmongering, the fiscal recklessness and the desire of our leader to be perceived as the savior/king of the world community, do hope that deep down you do know that you have crossed a line of servant-leadership of ALL the people, of ignoring and disrespecting the ordinary American citizen, and of pandering to narrow special interest groups and those you call "your people...the 'have's" of this country.

As of this date, 2,101 American men and women have died in your war...that they should have ever been sent to fight for a trumped-up war has no honor...but we do honor their determination to fight to keep their brother and sister soldiers alive in this war...that they will defend their fellow soldiers is a matter of honor, but for even one to be killed, or one to suffer life-long devastating disabilities for this war is shameful...Mr. President, where is the democracy, the brotherhood, the tolerance, and the peace you've been "preaching" would come about when you sent our soldiers into a killing field, all the while stubbornly sticking to your "war at all costs" rhetoric? It is a given that your "popularity" numbers are suffering, but you haven't a clue what suffering is all about...having never served your country in anything even remotely near combat, having never sent a child into battle, and having never burying a loved one after they've met a horrific end in war, you have no idea of the devastation this war and the years ahead will cost this country and the world community.

Sharperlady

Dear Editor:

Because Bush did nothing about the New Orleans Levee Breach for three days, we must impeach.

Howard Scott Pearlman, Cherry Hill, N.J.

To The Editor:

Category 5 Accountability

Hurricane Katrina and the federal response to it are not about politics or race but about indifference and a willful neglect which appears to be veering into the arena of criminal. There are no argu-

ments or disputes when the facts are reviewed. American citizens are dead and dying as a result. Much "spin and water carrying" is taking place in the mainstream media. Finger pointing legitimately ends up overwhelmingly in the direction of FEMA and our current president.

I, like many others, am donating and doing what is in my power. One hundred plus percent of our energies need to be directed toward the future of people in dire need but in the quiet moments between the hustle and bustle a little contemplation about the immediate past has to happen. It is incumbent upon those not directly impacted by this manmade assisted natural disaster that we understand what went wrong and prevent it from happening again. If that understanding were to lead to the impeachment or resignation of a president, then so be it. The president and our federal elected officials work for us, the people, not against us, as has been quite vividly demonstrated in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Accountability is needed and must be demanded by the people!

As a nation, or even just FEMA, we were imminently prepared for hurricanes in Florida's 2004 season. A Sept. 4, 2004 FEMA press release put out before Hurricane Francis hit land states: "Washington, D.C.- The Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency has positioned a powerful list of disaster response personnel, equipment and supplies to help those who are displaced of suffer losses after Hurricane Frances continues to move across Florida." "Homeland Security's FEMA and the U.S. Coast Guard, along with its partner agencies, Health and Human Services, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Defense, are prepared with personnel, equipment and supplies to respond to state requests for federal help."

As the mainstream media news conferences are spread across the land President Bush, Homeland Security Director Chertoff, FEMA Director Brown and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld are repeating that the Louisiana Governor Blanco had not asked for help. This is gladly repeated with no presentation of the facts. Our media is failing us as citizens. On Aug. 27, 2005 a letter was sent from Louisiana Governor Blanco to President Bush. Excerpts are as follows: "I request that you declare an emergency for the State of Louisiana due to Hurricane Katrina for the time period beginning August 26, 2005 and continuing." "Pursuant to 44 CFR 206.35, I have determined that this incident is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary to save lives, protect property, public health, and safety and or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster. I am specifically requesting emergency protective measures, direct Federal Assistance, Individual and Household Program (IHP) assistance, Special Needs Program assistance, and debris removal."

FEMA was clearly not interested in helping when reviewing the comments by Louisiana, Jefferson Parish President Aaron Broussard on the Sept. 4, 2005 Meet the Press program with host Tim Russert.: Aaron Broussard said to Tim Russert, "Let me give you just three quick examples. We had Wal-Mart deliver three trucks of water, trailer trucks of water. FEMA turned them back. They said we didn't need them. This was a week ago. FEMA—we had 1,000 gallons of diesel fuel on a Coast Guard vessel docked in my parish. The Coast Guard said, "Come get the fuel right away." When we got there with our trucks, they got a word. "FEMA says don't give you the fuel." Yesterday—yesterday—FEMA comes in and cuts all of our emergency communication lines.

They cut them without notice. Our sheriff, Harry Lee, goes back in, he reconnects the line. He posts armed guards on our line and says, "No one is getting near these lines." Sheriff Harry Lee said that if America—American government would have responded like Wal-Mart has responded, we wouldn't be in this crisis. But I want to thank Governor Blanco for all she's done and all her leadership. She sent in the National Guard. I just repaired a breach on my side of the 17th

Street canal that the secretary didn't foresee, a 300-foot breach. I just completed it yesterday with convoys of National Guard and local parish workers and levee board people. It took us two and a half days working 24/7. I just closed it."

A FEMA press release dated August 29, 2005 is titled: "First Responders Urged Not To Respond To Hurricane Impact Areas Unless Dispatched By State, Local Authorities". The press release later states "The National Incident Management System is being used during the response to Hurricane Katrina and that self-dispatching volunteer assistance could significantly complicate the response and recovery effort." As stated in the previous paragraph there were supplies turned away by FEMA. Why did FEMA not take the supplies and incorporate them into the National Incident Management System? If FEMA could not do that then why didn't they direct them to the state or local authorities to have them incorporated into the system and distributed immediately? Notice a pattern yet?

On September 1, 2005 President G.W. Bush told Diane Sawyer the following on the Good Morning America program: "I don't think anyone anticipated the breach of the levees." This lie has been spread by the mainstream media as well without questioning it. As the New Orleans City Business article noted earlier this year, the Corps' construction budget for the regional district had gone from \$147 million in fiscal 2001 to \$82 million in fiscal 2005. Scores of projects, from efforts to build levees, canals and pumping stations to bridge improvements – all of which deal with flood mitigation – are incomplete. (The administration's fiscal 2006 budget proposal cut construction funding for the district even further, to \$56 million.) The New Orleans area Southeast Louisiana Flood Control Project has felt the pinch particularly hard. After receiving \$36.5 million for fiscal 2005, the project was cut to \$ 10.4 million in the fiscal 2006 White House Budget.

Let your conscience be your judge on accountability. With the help of President Bush and FEMA, the victims of Hurricane Katrina are quickly losing their grip on the American dream of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. While we are judging we should all support a halt to any confirmation hearings for any presidential court nominations until there is accountability for the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

Mark Adams, Neosho, MO

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the lack of response from our government to accept Cuban president Fidel Castro's offer to aid Katrina victims in the Gulf Coast. Castro has offered multiple times to immediately deploy 1,586 doctors with 43,000 pounds of medical supplies. Cuban doctors are internationally respected as some of the most well trained physicians in the world and are routinely sent to other countries for disaster relief. I believe it is a grave mistake for our country to deny this much-needed help to the poor and displaced population of the Gulf Coast.

Condoleeza Rice has stated that the U.S. would not reject aid from any country, yet our government has not contacted the Cuban government about their offer. Time is of the essence here. As we have

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already witnessed, untimely response to this disaster has cost innumerable lives of American citizens and the hope of hundreds of thousands of desperate people, not to mention the respect of the American and the international community who are watching helplessly.

I am dismayed that our leaders would not immediately utilize every resource that has been offered. I can only speculate on why the Bush administration would sit idly on this offer from our closest geographical neighbor, but there is really no acceptable excuse. The victims of Katrina need, deserve, require all the medical attention possible, this very instant. Castro says his doctors are ready to fly out a moments notice. When will we accept them?

Nicolas Azios

Graduate Student- Univ. Texas at Austin

To The Editor:

Get even with the State legislature: Vote-out incumbents.

The Texas legislature may be filled with some good apples and bad apples, but it sure does look like all the apples are filled with worms.

Let's recap some of the special interest legislation that was approved and/or permitted so far this past year:

- Deregulation of higher education tuition
- Eliminated "frivolous" malpractice lawsuits to lower medical costs (*ha!*)
- Increased lawmakers retirement benefits, tied to pay raises for judges
- Approved unconstitutional provision for longer terms of Regional Mobility Authority members
- Permitted lax home insurance legislation (*which overnight doubled the cost of homeowners insurance*)
- Permitted lax health care legislation (*which enables ongoing increases in costly health care insurance*)
- Pushed for the deregulation of telecom (telephone) costs (*our bills should increase shortly*)
- Inability to sweep aside special interests to approve adequate financing and learning outcomes for public education
- Approved governor's and TxDOT's plans for toll roads (*often results in double and triple taxation*)
- Shirked away publicly from new taxes, yet increased new taxes in many areas
- Promised for years to provide property tax relief, yet again didn't deliver
- Ensured that religious institutions don't have to pay property taxes on land investments
- Continued to enable lax regulations on charter schools (*so that special interests win out*)
- Pushed more former state costs onto local districts
- Did little to restore cuts made to needed social programs (contrary to popular belief, some are needed)
- Did little to ensure that all children have quality and affordable health care.

So, if all the apples in the legislative barrel continue to have worms in them wouldn't it make sense to replace those apples ASAP with oranges?

During the next several elections, voters need to rebuild their legislature from the ground up by voting-out incumbents. No legislator in either House or Senate deserves another chance to continue to

ruin the lives of Texans and their children.

Peter Stern, Driftwood, Texas

To The Editor:

Replacing The national Red Cross Disaster Program with FEMA was a political move that needs to be corrected. There isn't any way a government agency (FEMA) can do or include services that The American Red Cross once provided. The decline of volunteer personnel and reduction of blood donors because of the large decrease in community connected people has shown what happens and how the losses accumulate when no one knows what they are doing as with the Katrina disaster.

Government bureaucrats have to be turned on and told what to do. The American Red Cross, with the programs they once provided or were involved with in the communities, were constantly connected some way or another with the people. Every community had an American Red Cross water safety program, community swimming programs for teaching, competition and other swimming activity.

The big political hooker for continuing of the National American Red Cross program was money. Those with the money didn't want to provide the money. With FEMA they could stick those at the lower level of the money ladder with the tax.

The American Red Cross can not fight against funding for a church softball league or other local group in a small community for funding. The American Red Cross disaster, blood drive and other programs furnished by the Red Cross must be done on a larger scale.

I am ready to conclude that those who make noises about big government have silently quit participating in any community activity as well.

Louis Freitag, Carbondale, IL

To The Editor:

The Abandonment of New Orleans: Billions of dollars of belated aid can never wash away the stain of Bush's monstrous criminally negligent culpability in his crime against the City of New Orleans post Katrina.

In comparison; William Renquist, honorable man that he was, has Old Glory flown at half staff for his passing as is right and appropriate. Was one flag lowered in the entire United States at any location for the victims of Katrina? I have yet to see one. I'm embarrassed as an American.

We have pressing business to deal with, so the Supreme Court should make due in extremis with 8 or even 7 members. As a quick aside, Sandra Day O'Connor is the appropriate next Chief Justice and I hope that for that she will defer retirement. Any other confirmation hearings are grotesquely inappropriate before the issue of Criminal Culpability relative to the withheld relief of New Orleans is made public as the directly withheld relief by President Bush. This is a simple direct fact and Bush and no other must accept and reap the severest censure because the 'Buck Stops' with the President no matter how much he may try to dodge or minimize this hard truth.

The main issue of this correspondence is to articulate the ugly truth of this disgraceful moment in American history. This truth is that immediate and massive rescue, and food and water relief were poised per the U.S. Navy on at least one huge aircraft carrier ship directly behind

Katrina's winds. But the order was withheld unconscionably by Commander and Chief George W. Bush. Further military bases were poised to render immediate massive troop and food and medical aid within hours of Katrina's passage but the order was withheld by their Commander and Chief George W. Bush.

Bush refused to give the relief order that only he as Commander and Chief can make to our military and not Mr. Brown of FEMA. And failing to act resulted in that hundreds, if not thousands, suffered and languished, and or, perished hideous deaths for unrelieved days to come!

The damage was of Katrina's making, but ensuing deadly catastrophic travesty lies solely as the full, direct, and personal responsibility of George W. Bush. If the shoe fits, he must wear it. Whether Bush has the honor and courage to step up to the plate and take his medicine like a man is another issue. But the medicine must be meted out the the United States Congress regardless!

As for FEMA director Brown, a Bush appointee, he was simply and absolutely unqualified and incompetent. And the American people, and specifically the beleaguered victims of New Orleans and their families around the U.S. had to suffer the arrogant insult of George W. Bush complimenting Mr. Brown on national television for his 'good work.'

In comparison, in the Lewinsky times of President Clinton nobody died. However the absolute hamstringing of government to impeach Clinton cost our nation over a year of effective government whose ultimate cost rendered the up front dollar amount of 150 plus millions of dollars to be, in all actuality, chicken feed. The ultimate price extended to the fact that Al Qaeda was feverishly preparing its attacks while America was media distracted by Bill Clinton's sex life.

Now in New Orleans and America before the whole watching world is the major issue of Executive criminal negligence, mass manslaughter, negligent homicide, and wrongful death. And these are all glaringly and publically broadcast as actual, and actionable, and openly evidentiarily supported massively as regards the immediate post Katrina 'abandonment of New Orleans.'

The American media and world media alike will be hugely criminally negligent if they let this issue rest!

There must first be tried in the public media forum and then by the joint session of the United States Congress George W. Bush's high crimes and misdemeanors relative to these aforementioned issues.

Anything less than public censure, and subsequent impeachment and removal of the Bush administration wholly from office makes a mockery in the eyes of the U.S. Nation and the entire free world of every high ideal and standard that the United States of America has ever stood proudly for.

Anything less is starkly unworthy cowardice and criminal negligence of and by the U.S. Government and the U.S. Citizenry.

And know this; the collective bi-partisan good and fair citizens of these United States will not let this crime stand unanswered for!

But if we fail in this the world will aid, and abet, and wink at our enemies efforts to undermine and destroy us for many years to come because a disgraced America will be considered as lepers on the world stage. We will be labled as the corrupt super power that the world at large would love to see fall.

America cannot afford not to act. Miled Kilkenny, NY/NY. This is not a partisan correspondence because I am an active and enthusiastic Republican who voted for George W. Bush the first time but not the second. And he has proven me correct in my assessment. I look for a Senator

McCain-Rudy Giuliani ticket to replace the current administration before the GOP has disgraced itself irreparably for the far distant future.

Miled Kilkenny

Dear Iconoclast,

The breakdown of the chain of command during hurricane Katrina and each branch of the government pointing fingers at each other is exactly the same type of "pass the baton of responsibility" mentality of many of our elected officials and government workers that I have experienced as a person with a disability. I have had unemployment benefits unlawfully terminated because of my disability, but I was able to later get them reinstated once I confronted them with the laws they were ignoring. I experienced discrimination time and time again and found many government offices indifferent and slow to act. The same thing happened with Katrina, the feds are saying that the Mayor of New Orleans should have requested help sooner, but were they not watching the news and could have taken it upon themselves to contact the Mayor or Governor and told them what they needed to be doing, because sometimes you may have a Mayor or Governor that is inept and not qualified to their elected office. If someone on any level of Government sees a problem it is their duty and responsibility to do something about and not sit around waiting for someone else to fix the problem.

Sincerely,

Daniel Wayne Wilson

To The Editor:

Smaller government, conservative financial practices, companionate conservatives. What a bunch of lies.

We wasted money in Iraq instead of protecting our own people. Now a whole city is lost. The relief effort shows how clueless this administration is. They weren't ready for 9-11, or Iraq, or Katrina; pathetic on all accounts.

By the way I'd like to know where the hell all my tax dollars are going to. I know most of it goes to the military (we spend more than the rest of the world combined). Some of it was suppose to go to Homeland security which I hate as well. Neither of which has produced anything worthwhile. I won't bother to mention NASA.

I am sick and tired of my tax dollars wasted on the Military and big government and paying interest on our debt. Just 5 years ago we had surpluses and then 9-11 and you have spent billions chasing after a few bad guys which you still haven't found. Tortured and murdered innocent people along the way to boot.

Do something constructive with my money!!!

I want my tax dollars going to education, environment, infrastructure (levies bridges etc), and medical for everyone. We are the only industrialized nation without it. We need to pull our heads out of your asses before we end up like Russia!

We are the richest nation on the earth and should be feeding the starving, giving medicine to poor/sick, housing the homeless. Not spending billions on cluster bombs that incite anger and hatred towards US. If we help others we wouldn't have enemies we'd have friends.

Oh and have I mentioned GAS prices?

Charles Bowen

Hi:

I want to compliment the Iconoclast and Mr. Komireddi on his Sept. 6 article. I do not agree that we are "stuck" in Iraq, but there is no question that preparing to exit requires more thoughtful consideration than was given prior to or after the buttons were pushed on the way in (to which virtually all other nations objected).

I very much agree with Mr. Komireddi that Bush probably had his sights on Iraq long before he was elected, and that he

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had been looking for an opportunity to go in since he took the oath of office.

What I believe Mr. Komireddi may not have considered is that prepping for the war in terms of propoganda, wasn't a task left to White House spinners. The task was given to Judith Miller, and she all too willingly accepted. I would bet a lot on that based on half a dozen or so mainstream analyses, and I believe there is zero chance that she will ever talk. The Times' internal assessment of how she was allowed to publish false and unsourced reports is beyond stunning, and she apparently had not-too-subtle help from the Times' owner-to-be. I honestly believe she will take her own life before she will talk about any aspect of what she really did.

What I fear at this point is that Miller's involvement, which seems to be fairly widely accepted, suggests that Israel's hand may also have been stirring the pot or helping provide / manufacture misleading information. That is a horrible possibility, and would lead to explosive results around the world if it happened. Israel and the US would both sink below the horizon if that happened.

Hopefully we will learn more when Patrick Fitzgerald begins whatever the final phase of his task turns out to be. The President is already pretty close to the bottom. The last thing he needs is to end up with a few indictments in nearby offices to make it impossible to government to function before his term ends.

Cordially,
Edwin Kennedy

To The Editor:

AMERICA AT RISK

The suicide bombings in Iraq could break out anywhere in America at any time.

There are 1209 Islamic mosques in America teaching Muslim law. Muslim law divides the world into two entities, daru l-islam, the abode of Islam, and daru l-harb, the abode of war. Jihad, battling against the abode of war, is a duty for Muslims. The jihadist who dies in the battle against the infidels becomes a martyr, a shahid, and is guaranteed a place in Paradise where he will enjoy eternal sexual favors from his harem.

Muslim law is behind England Prime Minister Tony Blair's recent call for deportation of Islamic fundamentalists. Freedom of religion does not cover murder. America, you are at risk also.

Solamen David, Nacogdoches,
Texas

To The Editor:

Fixing Blame

Since the Republican Party, Republicans in Congress, and the President have been trying to fix blame on anyone but themselves for lack of reasonable response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, as well as bulging federal deficits, wasteful spending, lack of respect in the world community, the Abu Ghraib prison debacle, and outrageous prescription drug prices, I have a suggestion for them:

If they truly want to pinpoint responsibility for all of the above, all they need to do is to look into the mirror.

Paul G. Jaehnert, Vadnais Hts., MN
To The Editor:

Disaster hits (no, not this one, the other one) and our government eventu-

ally takes notice (better late than never). Damn the torpedoes, damn the expense, frisk that old lady and protect the country. Put this man in charge, put that man in charge and so long as they are the Rights men, the absolute control needed is assured. Now that supreme terrorist Mother Nature strikes, as she does on a regular basis, it turns out the Keystone Cops are running the show (déjà vu). Fell any safer now?

Alan MacFarland, Tallmadge, Ohio
My fellow Republicans,

I am personally deeply disappointed and disgusted as a lifetime member of the GOP.

Condi's curtsy, Karen's plastic sweetness, and George's smirk offer cuteness as the cure for cancer.

I can only say, "Help!" Where is the GOP party leadership in all of this? We have a severed artery here guys and we are loosing blood by the gallon. We are rapidly reaching the Nixon resignation moment and we are desperately in need of a Jerry Ford to cauterize the wound before we are knocked out of the saddle for the next couple of decades. I believe its time to pull Mr. Frist out of the bull pen and get him warmed up to sit in the Oval Office for the rest of George's term.

George seems to want to use Karen Hughes as a bandaid on an amputation but it looks more like a scab on a decapitation.

If we get one more bone headed response to a national or world disaster out of our Republican administration we will not only be raked through the mud of an impeachment, we will be tarred and feathered to boot. At least Richard Nixon had the good sense and respect for the party to bow out fairly gracefully and let Jerry Ford make the GOP look pretty good before the party imploded.

Gentlemen, it is time to smell the coffee and realise that we are looking at the same situation and things are getting disastrously ugly out there. Bush's monumental incompetence dwarfs Nixon's cupidity.

But I have such strong feelings and sense of urgency I think that I need to be more graphic.

George's intro to Karen Hughe's over at the State Dept. all but suggested that Karen Hughes is the next world savior. A more clear example of the wrong gesture at the wrong moment could not be imagined. Rove's usefulness has obviously expired and Georges political instincts frankly suck.

I can't decide if the Hughe's intro was more arrogant or more grandiose. Was George telling us that Hughes is going to now educate the world that the Bush administration is Almighty God's gift of glorious liberation to the world? What moron would buy this crap?

To date the Bush overall track record is a running litany of ill conception, poor preparation, questionable morality of policy execution, and general gross incompetence. On both the domestic and international stage this smacks of disengenous absurdity.

Gentlemen, nobody is buying this and nobody is in the mood to wink at it any more. The silliness has long since ceased to amuse even the folks that were willing to give Bush the benefit of the doubt in the heady post 9-11 days.

The Hughesian PR hype will not cut

it any more and the Party needs a way out urgently that does not have the Bush name on it. Please take this seriously my friends because I am too old to see our Grand Ole' Party take the huge hit that Bush is bringing down upon us. Thankyou for your indulgence.

Ted Olafsen, Santa Teresa, N.M.
To The Editor:

Many pets have been lost or abandoned in New Orleans and outlying areas in Louisiana and Mississippi and are trapped, starving, dehydrated, sick, injured, terrified. Rescue, sheltering, placement and reuniting with their families by animal aid organizations are ongoing and they desperately need diverse supplies. The best way to help is to send money and quickly to either of the following:

Noah's Wish, P.O. Box 997, Placerville, Calif. 95667

Petfinder.com Foundation, P.O. Box 16385, Tuscon, Ariz. 85732-6385

Please help these stranded animals!!
Elizabeth Gerteiny, Westport, Ct.

Dear Editor:

The Pro-war demonstrators at Crawford, Texas, already have their war. I fail to see any gain in their efforts, unless they are out to silence the opposition. It is probable that both sides have the same information concerning the war in Iraq. The war in Afghanistan comes out of different issues. In any case, war is the business of our congress and our president. But a considerable number of soldiers, serving in Iraq, have publicly stated that they volunteered to serve because the administration told everyone that the Iraq government was a consort of al Queda.

The truth is that the Saddam Hussein government, the Sunnis, hated al Queda. Moreover, the people presently governing Iraq, the Shites, are, indeed, friends of Osama Bin Laden and al Queda.

The Shites, world wide, refer to us as "the great Satan" (including our home-grown Shites). According the Shite doctrine, they cannot, ever, make peace with Jews or Christians. Also, Shites believe that they should "rule the world."

It is clear to me that the Shites are our greatest Islamic enemy. This leads me to conclude that the Bush Administration is giving aid and comfort to our declared enemy. Therefore, any member of our armed forces, their kinsmen, sweethearts, friends, and especially the mothers, have a just reason to redress their grievance.

Ray Hall, Shiner, Texas

To The Editor,

When I look at the situation in Iraq, I'm reminded of the Spanish-American War, when the U.S. "liberated" the Philippines and then killed over 100,000 Filipino insurgents who resisted American control.

George W. Bush and his neo-con cronies lied about the "imminent threat to the U.S. from Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction," and got the whole nation to go along with an unnecessary war. The conservative Republican ministers of misinformation then used clever slogans (patriotic mouthwash) to discourage democratic dissent: "United We Stand" (i.e., join in lock-step conformity and don't criticize anything our moronic president does) and "Support Our Troops" (i.e., opposition to the U.S. military occupation of Iraq is traitorous support of terrorism).

It is the worst kind of cynicism to play on "blind patriotism" to encourage gullible young Americans to sacrifice life and limbs to the oil gods and war profiteers, in a terrible folly that has destabilized the Middle Eat and provided a vast recruiting grounds for Muslim insurgents and terrorists. And as could be expected from the "patriotic" police-

state neo-cons, we now have a "Patriot Act" that weakens and undermines the Bill of Rights for all Americans.

In the wake of the four-year massive conservative thought-control campaign, it is heartening to see that Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a Marine killed in Iraq, has been able to retain an independent mind and challenge Bush's "noble cause." While George "bring 'em on" Bush has been spending five weeks at his Texas ranch—golfing, fishing, relaxing, and clearing brush in a time of war (but never fear, "Stay the Course" George thinks about Iraq every single day)—Sheehan has camped out on his doorstep, demanding a personal meeting with his royal majesty. (Actually, such a meeting would do little good, since the truth would go in one of George Duh' chimpanzee ears and out the other, because there's nothing in between to slow it down).

Meanwhile, the conservative "news pundits" (i.e., asinine spouters of scurrilous crap), like Watergate felon G. Gordon Liddy, have been villifying Sheehan, calling her a crackpot, stooge for Michael Moore, and worse. I say "God Bless Cindy Sheehan" for having the moral courage to stand up to our sorry excuse for a leader who controls the White House for his corporate boondoggle sponsors and the imperial mafia.

A. Cardwell, Napa, CA

To The Editor:

I would like to write this letter to your paper so that I may address the situation at Crawford, regarding the Presidents treatment of a Goldstar Mother. Mr. Bush, who likes to fancy himself as a "War President" needs to take some lessons from another President, a TRUE WAR PRESIDENT, and a true man of The People, Abraham Lincoln. When Mr. Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg Address, he referred to the war dead as "Giving their last full measure of devotion." Mrs. Sheehan and her son gave that "last full measure of devotion" and she should be respected and honored for that by all citizens of this country, including the President, regardless of her political stand on this issue of war, not only including the President, but ESPECIALLY the PRESIDENT!!!

I would also like to add an excerpt from Phillip Kuhnhaids book titled, *Lincoln*, regarding Abraham Lincolns twice a week meetings with the public during war times.

The days on which Lincoln threw open the doors to the public seemed to many like badly wasted time. Not to Lincoln. On one occasion, a visiting Major, seeing how taxed the President was by the audiences, suggested they stop. "No hours of my day are better employed" Lincoln replied. According to Francis B. Carpenter.

"Men moving only in an official circle are apt to become merely official—not to say arbitrary—in their ideas, and are apter and apter with each passing day. To forget that they hold power in a REPRESENTATIVE CAPACITY. Now this is all wrong. I go into these promiscuous receptions of all who claim to have business with me twice each week and every applicant for audience has to take his turn as if waiting to be shaved in a barber's shop. I tell you Major, that I call these receptions my PUBLIC OPINION BATHS' and though THEY MAY NOT BE PLEASANT, in all their particulars, the effect, as a whole, is renovating and invigorating.

I would also like to add a quote from Emerson: "We know the austere condition of liberty, that it must be reconquered over and over again; yea day by day, that it is a state of war; that it is always slipping from those who Boast it to those who Fight for it"

Bobby Palmer, Rich Hill, Missouri

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