

\$1.50 Per Copy

CRAWFORD, TEXAS

Vol. 6, No. 40

October 5, 2005

www.iconoclast-texas.com

© 2005, THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST

## INSIDE STORIES

**Roberts To Lead Supremes**

**Reporter Leaves Jail**  
Page 6



**VR Offers \$100,000 Reward**  
Page 7

**DeLay Indicted**  
Page 7



**Sheehan Arrested**  
Page 8

**Editorial**  
**A World Without Political Parties**  
Page 9



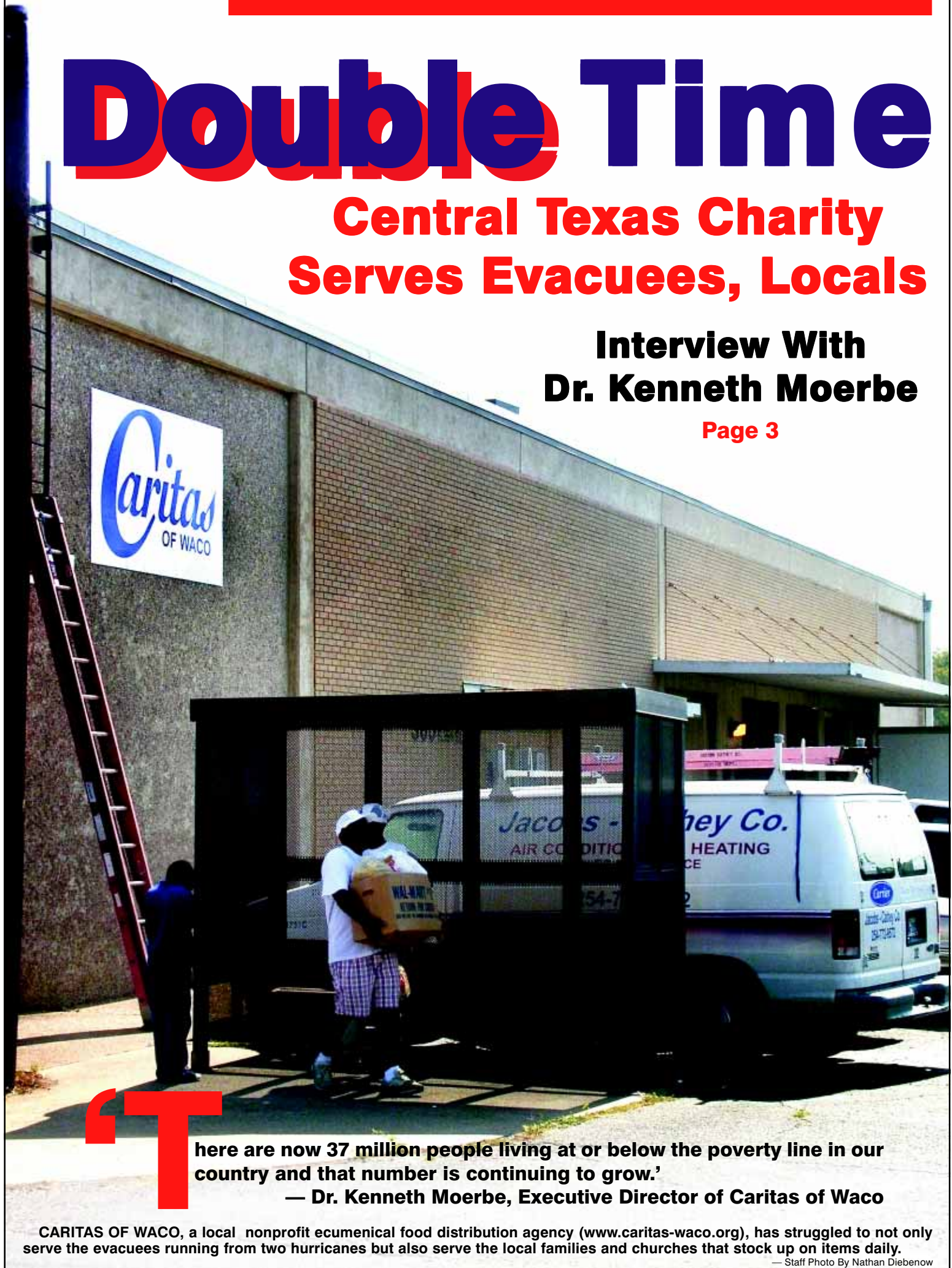
# The Lone Star ICONOCLAST

## Double Time

**Central Texas Charity Serves Evacuees, Locals**

**Interview With Dr. Kenneth Moerbe**

Page 3



# T

here are now 37 million people living at or below the poverty line in our country and that number is continuing to grow.'

— Dr. Kenneth Moerbe, Executive Director of Caritas of Waco

CARITAS OF WACO, a local nonprofit ecumenical food distribution agency (www.caritas-waco.org), has struggled to not only serve the evacuees running from two hurricanes but also serve the local families and churches that stock up on items daily.

— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow

# CLASSIFIEDS Reach Around the World

Buy two get  
one FREE\*



Run your classified word ad twice and get the third ad free! See order form for more details or call (254) 675-3336.

## Employment

### Clifton Moulding Corp. NOW HIRING

Clifton Moulding Corp. has immediate openings for dependable employees who are willing to work overtime.

No Experience necessary. Work involves manufacturing wood mouldings. Duties may include defecting wood material for preparation of finished wood mouldings, preparing wood stock to be used for mouldings, actual preparation of mouldings, or priming of mouldings.

**We Offer:**

• Referral Bonus

• Shift Differential  
• Paid Holidays  
• 401(k) Plan

• Paid Vacation  
• Cafeteria Plan  
• Savings Plan



No experience necessary. Equal Opportunity employer. Apply at the Heart of Texas Workforce Commission, 702 S. Ave. G, Clifton.

## Real Estate

### LAND FOR SALE

50 acres  
off FM 219  
at Womack, TX.

Will sell all or part.  
(254) 290-3396

## ATTENTION

### NOW HIRING POSTAL POSITIONS

No Experience Required  
Excellent Starting Pay  
Paid Training  
Excellent Benefits



Get Prepared. Call:  
866-300-6495

Adcode:P5523

## For Sale

FOR SALE — 2000 Palm Harbor Masterpiece, 76x32' doublewide, 4BR/2 BA, 2 living rooms, kitchen, dining room, laundry room, and more. By owner. No owner financing. Must be moved. \$55,000. 254-694-1788 or 694-1789.

w33tfn

# TAPA Helps Children Cope With The Stress Of Hurricanes, Floods

DALLAS — The Texas Association of Psychological Associates shares the concerns of parents and teachers about the emotional effects on children of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Families along the Gulf Coast have been uprooted, sometimes more than once.

As their parents focus on the day-to-day struggle of getting their families taken care of, what will be the emotional impact on the children?

### What parents, teachers, and neighbors can do

Traumatic stress is the normal response to frightening or extraordinary events. Caring adults, parents and teachers can do much to lessen the impact of these events on children. The following are suggestions we all can do to help children recover:

- Be available when children need attention and reassurance, whether it is to talk or just to be nearby.

- Reassure children in realistic terms that they are safe.

- Explain what has happened or what will happen next in simple, factual terms and in vocabulary the child can understand.

- Let children know that it is normal to be upset after bad things happen.

- Allow them time to play; try to keep a normal routine; and find a way for them to help: write a letter or make a call to a relative, draw a picture, or help with simple chores.

With support, children will recover well, and the events may even help children build healthy coping skills. The website of the Texas Association of Psychological Associates [www.txapa.net] has links to many of the websites providing useful and free information on the effects of Traumatic Stress and on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

### The effects of traumatic stress are not uncommon

The effects of traumatic stress have been well documented and vary according to the developmental levels of the children. Common symptoms include regression, increased fearfulness, poor concentration, irritability, aggressiveness, withdrawal, or grief. Sometimes

the effects of the traumatic stress do not appear for several days or weeks.

The severity of children's reactions may vary according to the intensity of their loss, personal injury, injury or death of a loved one, or multiple losses or frightening events.

Children with pre-existing mental conditions or exposure to previous traumatic events may be especially vulnerable to traumatic stress. The children leaving the Gulf Coast brought with them same percentage of learning differences, behavioral issues, and emotional problems as are found in many classrooms in Texas. These children may have special needs that must be addressed in our schools.

### Traumatic stress is prevalent in our children's lives

While disasters such as hurricanes and floods make the effects of traumatic stress epidemic in the populations affected, the same symptoms can be seen in many of our children on a day-to-day basis. Accidents, fires, family violence and neighborhood violence can cause the same symptoms in children and the resulting difficulties in learning. Left unrecognized, they may impact the child's capabilities on into adulthood.

### When children need professional help

Particularly vulnerable children may develop a post-traumatic stress disorder, which requires professional intervention. Symptoms include re-experiencing the trauma, feeling that the trauma will occur again, avoiding reminders of the trauma, emotional numbness, inability to concentrate, and startle reactions. Children with these symptoms should be referred to a mental health professional trained in working with the results of traumatic stress.

### More Resources

The Texas Association of Psychological Associates has established links on its website [www.txapa.net] to many of the websites providing useful and free information on the effects of Traumatic Stress and on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

The website of the Texas Association of Psychological Associates also has links to resources to help build Safe Schools.



The Lone Star Iconoclast (USPS 022-833) is published weekly, on Wednesdays, by Smith Media, Inc., P.O. Box 420, Crawford, TX 76638 and 310 W. 5th St., P.O. Box 353, Clifton, TX 76634

Periodicals Postage is Paid at Clifton, TX 76634.

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

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

DEADLINES: 5 p.m. Fridays.

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

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

Web Newspaper: iconoclast-texas.com

**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  
Allison Smith, Bookkeeping,  
Internet Manager  
Michael Harvey, Collections/Scheduling

**ICONOCLAST: An exposé of icons.  
Icon-buster.  
Fighter for Truth, Justice, and the American Way.**

**CIRCULATION**  
Charlie Gandy  
Pernie Stanford  
Wayne Thompson  
Bud Shaffer  
Bobby Williams  
Evelyn Suesz  
Robert Koenig  
Wanda Raines

THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST welcomes letters of up to 150 words on any public issue. Any letter that exceeds the word limit may not be considered for publication. We publish only original letters addressed to The Iconoclast. An address and daytime phone number must be included so the author's identity can be verified. No letters will be published until authorship is confirmed. Those who write letters are asked to limit their entries to one per month. All letters are subject to editing. The Iconoclast reserves the right to decline publication of any submission. Letters must be signed. Letters written in the promotion of political candidates or issues to be decided by an election will not be considered for publication unless they are scheduled for publication three weeks or more prior to the election. Individuals may purchase advertising space during the period prior to the election in support of candidates or issues to be voted upon. Letters written as cards of thanks may be charged classified ad rate and be placed in classified section of newspaper, at editors' option.

THE ENTIRE CONTENTS of each issue of The Lone Star Iconoclast are protected under the Federal Copyright Act. Reproduction of any portion of any issue will not be permitted without the express permission of Smith Media, Inc.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: Any error or erroneous reflection upon the character, standing, or reputation of any person, firm, or corporation which may appear in this newspaper will be gladly corrected upon being brought to the attention of the management.

# Double Time

## Central Texas Charity Serves Evacuees, Locals

### Interview with Dr. Kenneth Moerbe

By NATHAN DIEBENOW  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

WACO — The City of Waco and the rest of Central Texas have welcomed their fair share of evacuees from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and much coordination between a number of agencies developed to care for them.

For example, a former Wal-mart building in Waco, originally to be used as a fully equipped hospital for evacuees with special needs, was converted into a triage center, the first step before patients receive treatment at two area Veterans Administration hospitals. Already over 400 evacuees have utilized the center manned by some 300 personnel from out of town.

But while out-of-state and local emergency officials and volunteers worked the state's disaster plan in Waco, other local organizations have had to work double time to handle the needs of evacuees over the course of the last month.

Caritas of Waco, a local nonprofit ecumenical food distribution agency (<[www.caritas-waco.org](http://www.caritas-waco.org)>), has struggled to not only serve the evacuees running from two hurricanes but also the local families and churches that stock up on items daily.

According to its website, Caritas assists more than 75 families a day with its 22 full-time and part-time workers, and other volunteers. The agency operates on about \$60,000 per month, most of which comes from individual contributions.

Dr. Kenneth Moerbe, the Executive Director of Caritas of Waco since 2002, recently spoke with THE ICONOCLAST's Nathan Diebenow at the Caritas headquarters in downtown Waco about Caritas' role after Hurricane Katrina, the state of poverty in Texas, and his hopes for more effective solutions to poverty in the future.

ICONOCLAST: What has been going on at Caritas for the last month?

DR. MOERBE: Well, a lot. The role of

Caritas with Katrina, to start with, was that we were sort of a secondary agency to assist any number of churches. I think at one point we had assisted some 40 churches, organizations, agencies that were going to Louisiana and taking things. Besides the things we have at our thrift stores, they were looking for diapers, personal hygiene items, water, etc. We received some of those things through our gifts and tithes program from the Wal-mart return center here.

We are the distributor for this return center which serves about 350-400 Wal-mart stores. It's a pretty broad area — for products that are Wal-mart's vendor's products. If they don't want to pay for the items to be brought back from wherever they are, Minnesota or whatever, they tell Wal-mart either to destroy them or give them to charity. Wal-mart has charity programs at all six of their return centers. Caritas is the designated distributor. I think we are at over 1,000 pounds of stuff, mostly paper products, that we have given mostly to agencies. Once people started coming here, we started giving things to shelters.

There wasn't much food involved. One of the things you need to understand is that this is the most difficult time for us to obtain food. Last week, we continued a program we did last year. All the Midway High School freshmen come here and volunteer — it's one of their programs. When I took them on a tour, we walked out to the food warehouse, and the adult supervisor said, "Where's all the food?"

This is a typical time — August and September. It's difficult for us to get food, to rescue food, or to get it from the food banks. We didn't know what we were going to do about that, but we have served about 100 (people) out of our front door for both hurricanes. That's mostly food and clothing. With the second wave, Rita, we started then providing about 30 different shelter locations

**A**lthough it's not as dramatic as for those who have lost their homes, and this happened in a very brief period of time, everyday we serve people who are homeless. Everyday we serve people who don't know where their next meal is coming from. Everyday.

— Dr. Kenneth Moerbe,  
Executive Director of Caritas of Waco

because we got many more people in Waco. They were all over the place, in churches and so on. There it was, whatever of the other products we could give them, but it was a lot of food.

There's the difficulty for us — how do we balance?

One of the things that I think is important to say here is I've been to several meetings of (the nonprofits in this area), and the concern that is voiced: number one, just like after Sept. 11: "What's going to happen contribution-wise?" Because people have given most generously to this, are we going to see a dip in our own local contributions?

It's trying to serve both of them with limited resources. Although it's not as dramatic as for those who have lost their homes, and this happened in a very brief period of time, everyday we serve people who are homeless. Everyday we serve people who don't know where their next meal is coming from. Everyday. See what I'm saying?

From what I can see, Waco and the McLennan County area have generally been very responsive to the folks. I've met some disgruntled evacuees. They are angry anyway. I can't imagine what has happened to them, so it's been difficult sometimes to say, "How much can we give away to a shelter at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, you know? We've got a heavy load out there."

First we were secondary, and we stayed in that. We're supporting these others. We don't have a shelter. We don't have a feeding program, but last week, we really got more into the business of food for evacuees. More evacuees came for food than certainly these pantries.

ICONOCLAST: So how did local contributions pan out after Sept. 11?

DR. MOERBE: I think most of the agencies locally fared pretty well. I think some of them attached to national organizations like the Salvation Army, like the American Red Cross — although Red Cross, again, benefitted because millions of dollars were given to the Red Cross nationally because they are a first responder.

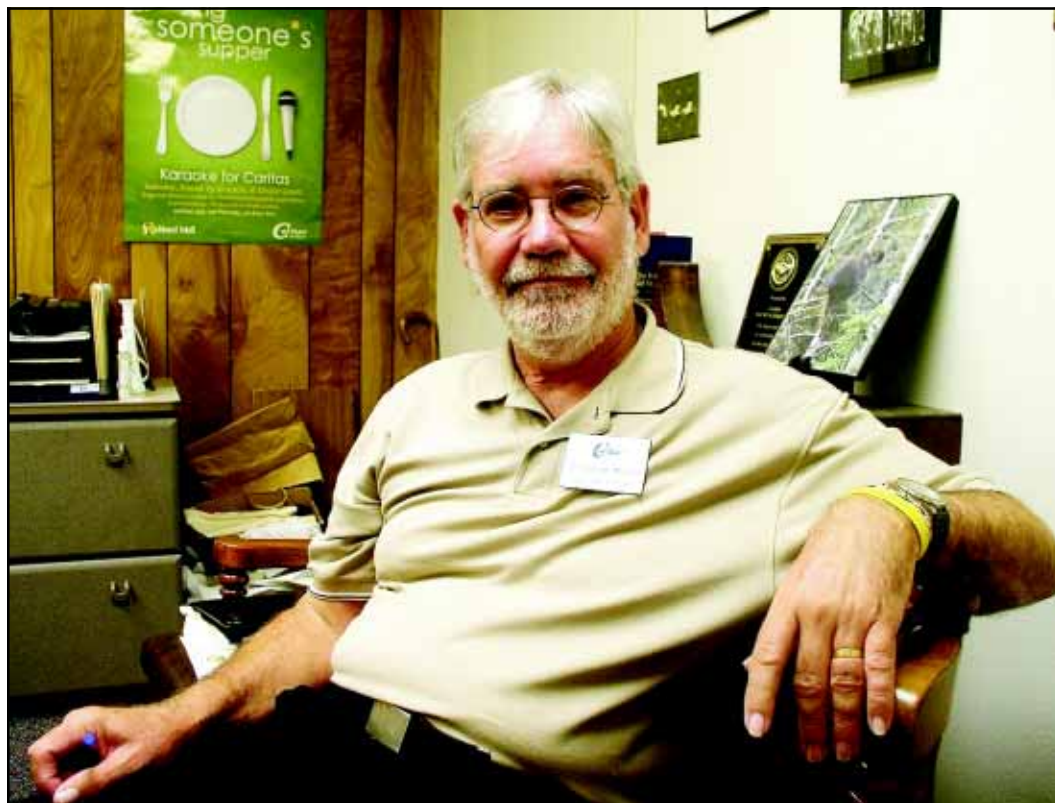
For us at Caritas we saw it. We could see it because it came at a time of the year — usually, October, November, December, especially the holiday season, beginning with Thanksgiving — that's usually when the nonprofits see the gifting growing.

Many people give to us every month. Many organizations give to us every month, but the people who give once a year to various charitable organizations, that's when they are going to give. At the church I used to serve, as much as 25 percent of our contributions came in December. It was kind of hairy up until the end, and it always happened each year.

We experienced a little bit of a dip. The bigger issues happened to nonprofits dependent upon grants. You know what happened to the market, you know what happened to investments, and it has finally just come back out of that, really, after four years, that those funding organizations, foundations, and corporations weren't earning the money they were earning before. They couldn't gift as much. We're not dependent on them. We receive some grants at times for construction projects. There's nothing I can think of except for a couple of federal legislative grants that we received for day-to-day operations.

To anticipate, I think this whole area

Continued On Next Page



## • DOUBLE TIME — CARITAS OF WACO

... Continued From Page 3

— Central Texas — is not called the Heart of Texas for nothing. I think the folks here have a lot of heart. I really think they are going to understand that they need to somehow continue to support those of us that are day-to-day besides having these additional things that we are going to respond to.

ICONOCLAST: Where is Texas, in your opinion, in the response to the poverty of its people?

DR. MOERBE: Let me try to say it in terms of what I see as a reality and has been the reality and what I hope will happen.

The reality is, how does Texas rank in terms of, for instance, the support of children like child protective services or programs like the children's health insurance programs, compared to other places. We're going to be 48 or 49 or 50 out of 50.

In most social concerns, Texas tends to be in the 40s.

We tend to be in the lower 20 percent in terms of at least of governmental funding.

I don't know any statistics of how philanthropy — in other words from individuals, corporations, business, how does Texas compare? I think we would be better there.

That goes back again to people's feelings. I think Texas is still a state a lot of people talk about independence, that anybody can pull themselves up by their bootstraps, you just need to work hard enough and try hard enough. Those of us who work in the poverty area realize that is a myth. There are many, many factors. I'm not going to fault anyone, but the tendency is to generalize.

I started a conversation with a group two days ago. Sitting there, I heard these generalizations. We get people in here, yeah, if they got off their duff, they can probably do better. That's not the majority of the people we see in here. These are people that are working poor. Especially, I think in the urban areas, like in the City of Waco, we've got a lot of working poor — in other words, people that are working one or a couple of jobs but because they only work for \$5.15 an hour and they have no benefits that leave them stuck where they are. They are not going to climb out of that and they are going to stay at that poverty level.

I watched this as I was watching the folks going into the Superdome in New Orleans, right before Katrina hit.

I looked at those people and I said, "I know those people. I see those people right out here. They are the same people." Just appearance-wise.

They could not evacuate. They didn't have cars. They didn't have vehicles. They really couldn't do it on their own.

Then, as it turns out, there were any number of incidences where they tried to walk out of there later and were stopped and prevented from some of the communities around. Most of them welcomed them, but there were some: "You're not coming into our community." They saw them as a certain element. But I recognized those people. That's who they were.

They said in the City of New Orleans, 25 percent of the population live at or below federal poverty guidelines, which is about \$18,000 for a family of four. That's the same thing here in Waco. It

improves a little better when you get into the county. There are some other communities around here that really have a lot of working poor.

Now, that's the way it is. My hope is that once you see this, what's going to be the response? I don't know. It's mostly going to be related to New Orleans because what was discovered were certain things about the poverty level there, and that we have some significant issues in this country, not only there but in a lot of other places, with poverty.

There are now 37 million people living at or below the poverty line in our country and that number is continuing to grow.

We've got 47 million who don't have medical insurance and that's a big factor for a lot of these folks that we see. They go to the emergency room and they can't pay. So when something happens and they try to pay, it really hits them really more difficult than us who have had insurance, and I guess my hope is that maybe out of this will come a realization of the level of poverty in Central Texas, in Texas, and in our nation. It's not just the urban areas.

ICONOCLAST: I saw a statistic online that said that Bosque County where my family is from generations ago, its poverty rate is like 14.7 percent, and then I go to Dallas County, and it's 14.8 percent. Pretty much the same, but just to the north of Dallas County in Collin County, the poverty rate is something like 4.2 percent. It blows my mind.

DR. MOERBE: You may think its the cities that these things happen, but in the rural areas there are pockets of poverty in all of these counties. I mean, right here in McLennan, or in Falls, if you go the other direction, Limestone, the levels there are greater than I think they are here.

ICONOCLAST: How do you conceptualize poverty in trying to stop it? I mean, the conceptions with President Johnson was the "war" on poverty. But how do you as someone who works day-to-day on the ground think about how to stop poverty?

DR. MOERBE: There is the story of "You can give a man a fish and feed him for a day or you can teach him how to fish and you can feed him for a lifetime." Caritas is an agency that is that fish for the day. Now we've gotten into advocacy — trying to advocate, why is this? What can we do to change this?

Most of our advocacy, though, has been public awareness. We don't come with plans. We just want people to know because most people are blind to these people. Most of us don't see these people.

I say that, some days, you just can't catch fish and that's what we're here for — to provide that supplemental health to keep you going so that hopefully through some other agencies you can learn to fish or get some skills so you can get out of this poverty.

We cooperate and collaborate with all kinds of other agencies that can provide financial counseling. They provide different kinds of counseling to someone who is poor because of mental health issues or an addiction. We try to help with those things. So we're at a different place.

What I think we're trying to do is sus-



**SERVING THE SERVANTS** — Caritas of Waco distributes reclaimed commodities from Wal-Mart's vendors in order to distribute them to people in Central Texas who are in need and to churches that also distribute items to the people in need in their areas.

— Staff Photo By Nathan Diebenow

tain people with basic kinds of things, so that their level of day-to-day existence is such that they can not only take advantage of other things but also take advantage of folks wanting to assist and help them move out of that poverty. That's our role here and we're not developing too many programs to do otherwise.

With that said, at just the level as I see it, it's been how many years since we raised the minimum wage? I'm not sure. A lot of years. A lot of years. It's been brought up all the time. And it didn't fare too much better under a Democratic Congress.

There are efforts, for instance, in Waco between industry and corporate entities to want to through education and other means to help people move out of poverty and by offering them better wages now because they have received better training.

I think it's not a coincidental thing that you find TSTC (Texas State Technical College) here in Waco because they are some folks who are going to help some folks have skills and abilities who are committed to work ethic — I'm not saying that there are a bunch of poor folks out there. Students go out there. Probably if you compared them to the Baylor students, that's the case. MCC (McLennan Community College) offers a lot. They do a lot of things with TSTC. They do a lot of things with local businesses to train. But the community college and the technical college do a lot more things within business and industry to say, "What do you want in an employee? How do we match that?" And that's where those salaries are going to go, but I think it's also a matter of legislation to somehow keep track of what's going on. That's the basic issue here. We have a lot of people working at a lot of jobs that are \$5.15 an hour, and if it were \$6, there's a tremendous change that would come about.

ICONOCLAST: My original question to you was how you conceptualized or thought about the work by which we should stop the spread of poverty. LBJ used the concept of war, and the way I understand you describe the solution to poverty is through a team effort of the community at large. You're not describing it through the lens of war. It's team work.

You know this reminds me. I was watching a lecture on the UCTV cable channel by Robert Reich, the former Department of Labor secretary under President Clinton. Reich was telling a story out how he was at some party or something, and he had to leave early and travel somewhere by car. His buddy

— an acquaintance of his — asked him where he was going and if he needed a lift in his private jet. It occurred to Reich then that there are people that can just do that — just jet to any destination they want because of their wealth — and a majority of people don't see those wealthy people either — maybe on a TV drama or something, but not in person.

The thing I realized about the relationship between Reich and his buddy and the disparity between the rich and the poor was that these two guys knew each other, although they were of different socio-economic levels. That and one was willing to help out the other.

DR. MOERBE: After Hurricane Katrina, I've heard people say, "I've never realized that there were people

Continued On Next Page

### CORYELL COUNTY COMMISSION CO.

Sale Every Saturday

Cattle 12:00 Noon  
Jody & Robin Thomas  
(254) 865-8219

**Date: 9-24-05**

No. 1 Steers  
under 300 lb. 165-195  
300-400 lb. 130-167  
400-500 lb. 120-145 Steady  
500-600 lb. 110-126  
600-700 lb. 100-114  
700-800 lb. 97-106

No. 1 Heifers  
under 300 lb. 140-185  
300-400 lb. 130-165 Steady  
400-500 lb. 115-140  
500-600 lb. 105-125  
600-700 lbs. 100-118  
700-800 lbs. 92-100

Slaughter Cows  
High Yielding 50 to 55  
Low Yielding 42 to 48 \$1 Down  
Fats 48 to 55  
Thin & Shelly 40 to 45

Packer Bulls (1250-2075 lb.)  
Yield Grade 1&2 60 to 67 Steady

Cow & Calf Pairs  
Young Choice 1100 to 1350  
Young Fair 950 to 1100 Steady  
Aged Pairs 700 to 900

Young Pregnancy Test Stocker  
Replacement Cows  
500 to 1025 \$10-15 Up  
Number of Head....316

Gatesville  
Jody Thomas (254) 865-8219  
Sale (254) 865-9121  
Mobile (254) 223-2958

# Disaster Aid Available To Workers In Counties Hit By Hurricane Rita

*Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange and Tyler Counties*

## Self-employed Workers Also May Qualify For Disaster Unemployment Assistance

AUSTIN – According to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), workers in Chambers, Galveston, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange and Tyler counties who were affected by Hurricane Rita have until Nov. 30, 2005, to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-1606-DR.

To be eligible for help under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-1606-DR, workers must:

- Have worked or been scheduled to work in the disaster area, but because of the disaster no longer have a job, a place to work in the area, or you could not get to your place of work because of disaster damage;
- Have been prevented from working by an injury or illness as a direct result of the disaster; or
- Have become the head of the household and need employment because the head of the household died as

a result of the disaster.

Often, business owners who are self-employed are not aware of potential benefits to which they may be entitled. Those who were self-employed, but lost all or part of their livelihoods as a result of this disaster, may well be eligible for benefits. Individuals must provide income tax forms (Schedules SE and Schedule C or Schedule F) or other proof of self-employment to receive disaster unemployment benefits. If in doubt, call one of the toll-free numbers listed below.

To receive DUA benefits, individuals must provide documentation indicating an employment record at the time of the disaster or verification of the weeks the applicant was scheduled to work. TWC officials understand that because of property losses, some individuals may not have necessary information readily available. Each claim is considered individually, therefore those who

may be eligible for assistance should call the TWC Tele-Center network at one of the numbers listed below Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. to talk with a representative or file a claim.

- Austin local: (512) 340-4300
- Dallas local: (214) 252-1200
- El Paso local: (915) 832-6400
- Fort Worth local: (817) 420-1600
- Houston local: (281) 983-1100
- McAllen local: (956) 984-4700

San Antonio local: (210) 258-6600  
Others call toll free: (800) 939-6631

*The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the programs it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit [www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org).*

## SPECIAL PROMOTION BUSINESS CARD ADS

Call **ON THE INTERNET and IN THE PAPER!**  
**(254) 675-3336**



**‘Y**eah, it’s government, but politics is the people, and it really has to do with a different understanding, and again, you’re very much aware of the division now between the rich and the poor.’

— Dr. Kenneth Moerbe,  
Executive Director of Caritas of Waco

### • DOUBLE TIME — CARITAS OF WACO

... Continued From Page 4

that couldn’t leave. I didn’t think about people who were living in poverty who really didn’t have anything so they are not going to go back to anything. They’re not going back there. Or when they go back, they didn’t have much to start with; now they’ve got less.”

I hope it will increase the awareness of poverty. I believe in an innate good in people.

I’ve looked at people that way, and as a parish pastor I thought that way. As a teacher, I thought that way and see it that way. Here, I see it that way and you have people take advantage of you, but I think it’s there that, if enough people understand, we have a significant issue across the board.

Lately I’ve seen statistics about infant mortality and other health-related stuff compared with other countries in the world, and you’ve seen the reference already to the “Third World” with Louisiana or something like that. Well, there’s a Third World in a lot of places in this country, and maybe this has made people realize what’s going on.

ICONOCLAST: Robert Reich also said there are two reasons to the economic disparity here: one is innovation, that businesses in their aim to be more

efficient are using more machines; two is globalization, that businesses, if they are going to need labor, are going to use cheap labor in another country. He said that the component that can change this disparity is politics. So you’re nodding in agreement with that.

DR. MOERBE: Oh, yes. By and large. When you talk about the political, not just referring to government, that’s obviously where we are. I haven’t heard many statistics lately since about 1996 on welfare reform. We’re almost 10 years into that. What has happened there? I didn’t think it was welfare reform. It was putting pressure by saying you only get a limited amount of time that you still will be able to receive these benefits because of where you are, but what’s happening?

A lot of the workforce commission stuff has been positive. I think it has benefitted. But the poverty level continues to climb by absolute number and percentage of people living in poverty. Yeah, it’s government, but politics is the people, and it really has to do with a different understanding, and again, you’re very much aware of the division now between the rich and the poor.



Book/Bible Repair (Specializing in conservation restoration)  
Custom-made books for all occasions.  
We are “Bound to Please”

### THE BOOK DOCTOR

320 W. 7th St., Dallas, TX 75208 (214) 946-1760  
[www.thebookdr.com](http://www.thebookdr.com)



### PERSONAL INJURY & WRONGFUL DEATH



IN WACO: 254-772-7500  
[www.withvic.com](http://www.withvic.com)  
1-877-WITH-VIC  
9484 842  
SERVING CENTRAL TEXAS  
WITH OFFICES IN WACO,  
TEMPLE AND AUSTIN

THE LAW OFFICES  
Vic Feazell P.C.  
TRIAL ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS OF LAW

Principal office in Austin.  
Meetings with attorneys by appointment only.  
Not certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization.



# Roberts Becomes Supreme Court Chief

WASHINGTON — John Glover Roberts Jr. was sworn in as the 17th chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court last Thursday, but the White House will perhaps announce the next nominee to replace retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor for the court this week.

By a vote of 78-22, the Senate accepted the 50-year-old U.S. appeals judge as the replacement for the late William H. Rehnquist, who died last month.

Roberts won the votes from every Senate Republican and about half of the Democrats.

However, because Roberts kept quiet on his judicial philosophy during his confirmation hearing, Democrats point out that they have little clue as to how he might lead the court.

"At the end of the day, I have too many unanswered questions about the nominee to justify confirming him to this lifetime seat," said Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid of Nevada.

# Reporter Leaves Jail To Testify In CIA Leak Probe

WASHINGTON — NEW YORK TIMES reporter Judith Miller testified behind closed doors Friday before a grand jury, after 85 days in jail for contempt of court for refusing to testify in an investigation into who leaked the identity of a covert CIA operative, Valerie Plame.

Miller said that she could testify because her source — Vice President Dick Cheney's chief of staff, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby — released her from her promise of confidentiality.

Libby's lawyer said that his client had released her through a written waiver a year ago, but Miller said that she wanted personal assurances from the source.

Prosecutors wanted her to disclose her conversations in July 2003 with

Libby in order to see who leaked Plame's identity to newspaper columnist Robert Novak.

White House officials are under suspicion of leaking the identity of a CIA operative, whose husband had criticized the Bush administration for falsifying intelligence before the war of Iraq. Former Ambassador Joseph Wilson said that there was little evidence that Nigeria had supplied the former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein with materials to make weapons of mass destruction. Washington used the claim that Iraq had WMDs to invade Iraq in March 2003.

Both Libby and presidential aide Karl Rove deny involvement in the leaking. They say that they only found out after it was published in Novak's column.

# Georgia Schools Close For Two Days To Save Fuel

ATLANTA — Georgia's Governor Sonny Perdue ordered Georgia public schools to close for two days to save fuel.

The effects of Hurricane Rita on oil refineries and pipelines initiated the governor's action, which he estimated would save about 250,000 gallons of diesel fuel by idling buses, plus more fuel by facility and parents to stay home.

Although there was no rush to gas stations as predicted by some, Secretary of State Cathy Cox, a Democratic gubernatorial candidate, still called the Republican governor's action a "stunt."

Agreement on the decision came from all but three of the state's 181 districts, but the opinions of parents were mixed with some complaining for the little time to find and pay for child care for their children.

# Reagan's Education Secretary Under Fire For Abortion Comment

WASHINGTON — Former Education Secretary William Bennett came under fire for suggesting that the crime rate might be lowered by aborting African American babies.

"But I do know that it's true that if you wanted to reduce crime, you could, if that were your sole purpose, you could abort every black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down," said the author of "The Book of Virtues" on his

radio show, "Morning in America."

The White House criticized Bennett's remarks Friday.

"The president believes the comments were not appropriate," White House press secretary Scott McClellan said.

The former education secretary under President Reagan responded to criticism by saying that his point was that using abortion to cut crime was wrong morally.

## LEAKY POND??

**SODIUM BENTONITE** is a swelling clay.

★ 100% NATURAL ★ NON-TOXIC

★ A PROVEN SEALANT FOR PONDS, DAIRY LAGOONS, LANDFILLS & TOXIC WASTE LAGOONS

**TEXAS SODIUM BENTONITE POND SEALANT**

**IS AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA**

FOR PRICING AND INFORMATION

ON THIS PRODUCT CONTACT:

**GEORGE BURTON**

at 325-885-2339 or FAX 325-885-2138

*He will be happy to help with any pond problems you may have.*

CHECK OUT OUR WEB PAGE AT: [www.texassodiumbentonite.com](http://www.texassodiumbentonite.com)

(1-800-433-5495)

Bosque Supply (Clifton, Texas) has Texas Sodium Bentonite Products for sale in 50 lb. bags by the Bag, Ton, or Pallet.

The Cliftex Theatre is temporarily closed for repairs.

Since 1916



306 W. 5th St.  
Clifton, Texas

All tickets: \$5.00 per person  
(254) 675-1229

# Subscribe Today



A NATIONAL

# INDEPENDENT

Newspaper

PRINT EDITION or INTERNET EDITION

It's Easy, Just Call  
(254) 675-3336

or log on to:

[www.iconoclast-texas.com](http://www.iconoclast-texas.com)

We Accept:

VISA — MC — AmEx — Discover

Your Support Is Appreciated.

We also accept PayPal

# Velvet Revolution Launches Government Accountability Reward Fund Of \$100,000

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — VelvetRevolution.us, a network of more than 120 progressive organizations seeking honest government, just launched the 'Government Accountability Reward Fund' to induce whistleblowers to come forward with information about criminal activity by high government officials.

Specifically, VR has a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of officials involved in the following three incidents: 1) the illegal outing of CIA Agent Valerie Plame, 2) the illegal payment of bribes

to Congressman Dennis Hastert, and 3) the rigging of the 2004 Presidential election in Ohio.

In the event more than one person provides information or information about more than one incident, the money will be split between the persons.

The information provided must be new and not previously provided to the press or government entity or official. The information must be verifiable and be a major contributing factor in the arrest and conviction of the government official(s). In the case of the Valerie

Plame, the evidence must implicate and convict a senior White House official or officials. In the case of Dennis Hastert, the evidence must implicate and convict him. In the case of Ohio, the evidence must implicate and convict persons who actually and knowingly rigged the 2004 Presidential election in such a way that it changed the true outcome.

There have been credible news reports that senior White House officials conspired to and did knowingly and intentionally disclose the identity of Valerie Plame. Other news reports have indicated that Dennis Hastert took bribes from foreign interests and hid those bribes through political action committees. Moreover, many news reports have stated that persons rigged the election in Ohio to favor the Repub-

licans, and now top Republican officials are under investigation and indictment in Ohio for corrupt practices.

VR believes, if these reports are true, that there are upstanding American citizens who have important information which could verify them. VR wants these people to come forward, and this reward is an incentive to do so.

According to investigative journalist Brad Friedman, it is clear from the recent indictments of Tom Delay, Jack Abramoff, David Safavian, Bob Taft and George Ryan, and investigations of Bill Frist, Karl Rove, Scotter Libby and others, that the stench of corruption is reeking from those in power. VR wants citizens who have knowledge of this corruption to come forward, for the good of the country, and put an end to this epidemic of illegal activity.

## DeLay To Face Conspiracy Charges In Court Oct. 21

WASHINGTON — Rep. Tom DeLay stepped down as House majority leader late last week after being indicted by an Austin, Texas grand jury on a single felony count of criminal conspiracy in violation of state election law.

DeLay, who must appear in court on Oct. 21, is accused of conspiring with two others to support Texas legislative candidates by using illegal corporate donations through his own Texans for a Republican Majority Political Action Committee and the Republican National Committee in Washington.

If convicted, DeLay, 58, could face six months to two years in a state jail and a fine of up to \$10,000. According to Republican ethics rules, he stepped down from his leadership position.

DeLay said in various media outlets that due to a voluntary interview in which he admitted having little knowledge of his fundraising committee's operations, he was under the assumption that prosecutors would not come after him. He blames partisan politics for the change in the tune of Travis County (Texas) District Attorney Ronnie Earle.

Although a Democrat, Earle has said that he has prosecuted more Democrats than Republicans in his career as a district attorney.

## Hurricane Relief Slow In Rural Texas Cities

CRAWFORD — Relief from Hurricane Rita has been slow to rural Texas, caused more criticism of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

With no electricity and little drinking water or food, some residents using tents for shelter were forced to utilize the Neches River for their bath needs days after the hurricane hit.

Despite delivering ice, water and meals to residents, FEMA's response has been inadequate, say local officials in the hardest hit parts of East Texas.

A FEMA spokesman said that al-

though materials were in place before the hurricane, communication troubles due to power outages are partially to blame for lagging actions. Twenty-seven southeastern Texas cities have distribution sites set by FEMA, noted the spokesperson.

Still, Jefferson County Judge Carl Griffith said he wants a state commission set up by Gov. Rick Perry to study the emergency response. Congress held its own hearings last week on the response to Hurricane Katrina.

## California Governor Nixes Bill Supporting Gay Marriage

SAN FRANCISCO — A bill to allow gay couples to marry was vetoed last week by California's Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

California's Democrat-led legislature approved the bill, the first of its kind, though the governor vetoed it as expected, saying that this issue should be left to voters and the courts.

Schwarzenegger's critics say he missed an opportunity to end a vestige of legalized discrimination in

their state.

California citizens voted five years ago to define marriage as a legal union of opposite sexes.

In the spirit of defiance, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom issued city marriage licenses to same-sex couples last year.

The state supreme court nixed those licenses, but it has left the lower courts to issue of legalizing same-sex marriages.



**FACTORY AUTHORIZED CLEARANCE**  
**POLARIS**

**SPORT QUAD OF THE YEAR MEETS BEST PRICE OF THE YEAR.**

**REBATE OF UP TO \$400 AND \$69 MO. at 6.9% for 24 months\***

**On Polaris® Predator**  
**LAKE WHITNEY POLARIS**  
211 S. Hwy. 22, Whitney, TX • (254) 694-2655

\*Offer good at participating Polaris dealers and subject to product availability. Finance offer valid subject to credit approval on the Polaris StarCard® credit card on qualified consumer purchases financed during the promotion period. Maximum finance amount \$10,000. The promotional fixed Annual Percentage Rate (APR) of 6.9% and reduced minimum monthly payment of \$69 of the purchase amount (rounded to the next higher dollar) are effective from the date of purchase and continuing for a period of 24 months. Thereafter, the APR and minimum monthly payment applicable to this purchase will increase to the minimum monthly payment specified in the Cardholder Agreement and the Standard APR of 17.9%. For Accounts not kept current, the Default APR of 21.9% will apply to all balances. This promotion is available only at participating dealers. Certain rules apply to the allocation of payments and Finance Charges on your promotional purchase if you make more than one purchase on your Polaris StarCard. Call 1-888-367-4310 or review your Cardholder Agreement for information. WARNING! ATVs can be hazardous to operate. For your safety: always wear a helmet, eye protection, and protective clothing and never carry passengers. Polaris adult models are for riders aged 16 and older. Polaris youth models of 89cc are for riders aged 12 and older. Polaris youth models of 49cc are for riders aged 6 and older. Be sure to take a safety training course. For safety and training information, see your Polaris dealer or call 1-800-342-3764. www.polarisindustries.com. ©2005 Polaris Sales Inc.

# 'Peace Mom' Arrested Outside White House With 370 Others

WASHINGTON — The mother of a slain U.S soldier who held a 26-day vigil near President Bush's ranch was arrested outside the White House last week after a weekend of demonstrations that attracted tens of thousands of people.

Cindy Sheehan was taken to jail with about 370 other antiwar demonstrators and charged with demonstrating without a permit, a misdemeanor that carries a \$50 fine.

The group led by religious leaders attempted to give President Bush a list of the names of all the soldiers and civilians killed in Iraq. When the president failed to show up, the members sat down on the sidewalk on Pennsylvania Ave. to protest.

White House said that it supported the demonstrator's right to express their differences of opinion with the administration; however, Washington is still committed to keeping troops in Iraq.



Cindy Sheehan

— Iconoclast Photo

# No Camping Along County Roads, Say Commissioners On Split Vote

WACO — McLennan County commissioners last week approved by a 3-2 vote a new ordinance that prohibits residing and placing sewage receptacles along all county roads.

Commissioners Ray Meadows, Wendall Crunk and County Judge Jim Lewis approved the ordinance. Commissioners Joe Mashek and Lester Gibson opposed the ordinance's application to their precincts.

The ordinance, initiated by after thousands of protesters utilized the county road to the Western White House near Crawford during Cindy Sheehan's vigil last month, includes the very roads leading to the President's vacation ranch.

Complaints from the citizens of Precinct 4, the area in which the president's ranch lies, and health and safety issues prompted Meadows to propose the ordinance, which critics say was unnecessary if law enforcement had enforced state laws already on the books.

McLennan County Sherriff's Department declined to comment, but Mike Dixon, an attorney for the county, noted

that the new ordinance is another tool for law enforcement.

Dixon contended that the new law still allows for freedom of speech near Bush's ranch, but not for extended periods of time that require camping and lead to littering on the land. Except for Mashek, the commissioners voted last month to stop parking on certain areas around the Bush Ranch.

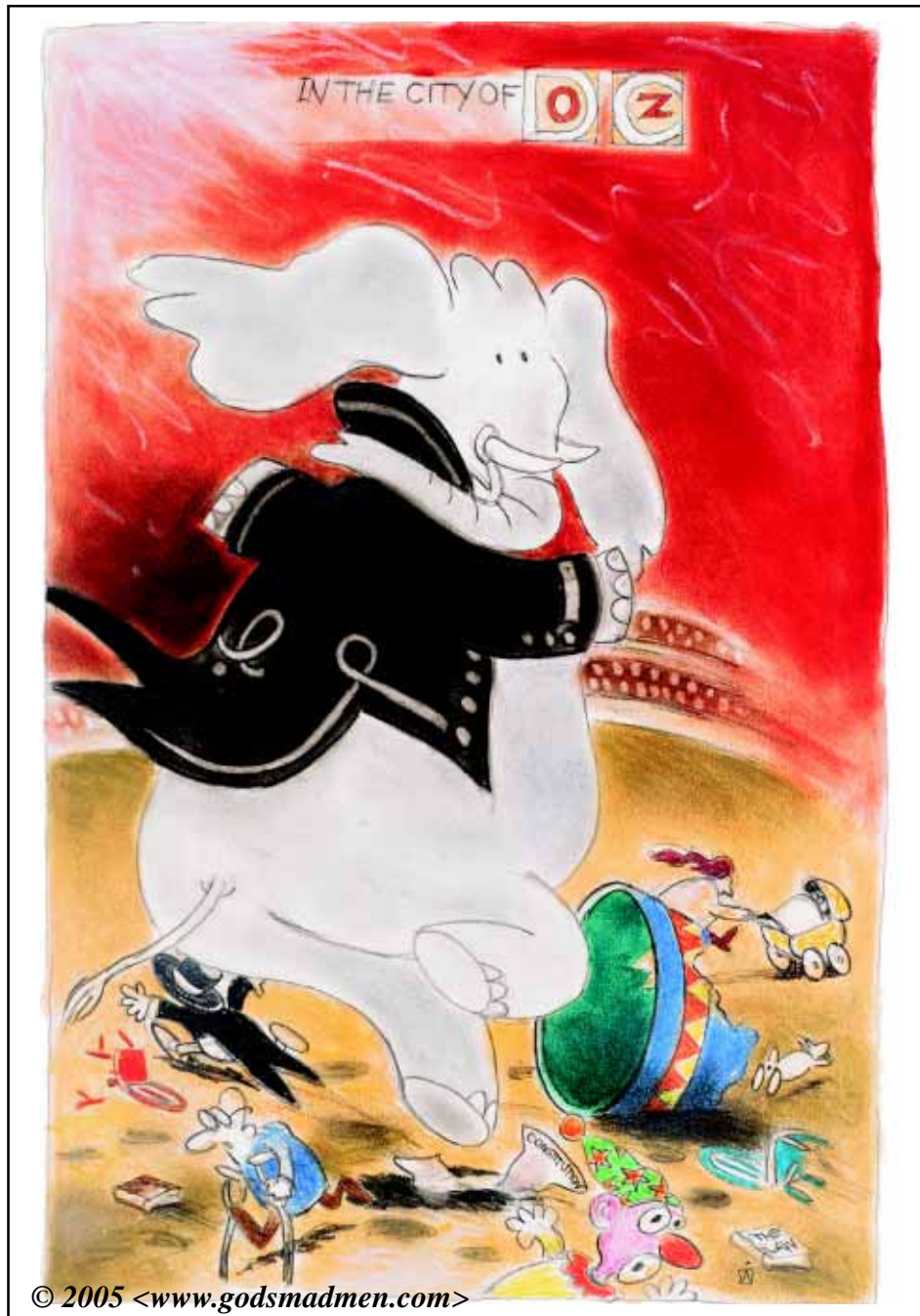
Director of the Texas Civil Rights Project Jim Harrington said that he wants to read the ordinance, but would support the plan if the right to protest is valued.

**Have a Party at The CLIFTEX!**

Reserve the CLIFTEX Theatre for your next birthday or special occasion.  
Call for reservations.

**CLIFTEX**  
THEATRE

**(254) 675-1229**



© 2005 <www.godsmadmen.com>

Support the paper that stands alone...



**THE ICONOCLAST**  
IS A NATIONAL

**INDEPENDENT**  
Newspaper  
Geared At Marketing Your Products  
**COAST TO COAST!**

Call (254) 675-3336  
To Place An  
Advertisement  
or log on to  
www.iconoclast-texas.com

## C & C Collision Center, LLC



- Truck
  - Trailer
  - Auto
- Repair Specialists

*"We Make Friends By Accident"*

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

- Free Estimates at your place or ours
- Pick-up & delivery (if needed)
- PPG certified paint specialists
- Fiberglass specialists
- Expert frame straightening
- Computerized Comp-Est and Mitchell Estimating Software
- Eagle Spray-on Bed Liners
- 30 day billing for Approved Fleet Accounts
- DOT inspections for commercial trucks and trailers
- State inspections for automobiles
- Lifetime warranty
- E-mail updates regarding your vehicle (pictures included)

254-848-7008  
1-888-345-1178  
5849 N. State Hwy 6  
(Speegleville Area) Waco



# Shock And Awe Will End Traffic Violations

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "I never minded a posse with slow horses."

Before we get into the real stuff, I'd just like to say, hypothetically, that if we were to retroactively abort Bill Bennett, the overall intelligence level of this country would go up.

It would be an impossible, ridiculous, and morally reprehensible thing to do, but the intelligence level would go up.

Well, depending on your point of view, it might be morally reprehensible.

I don't want to be taken out of context here.

So let me clarify my point.

Bill Bennett is a dangerous idiot.

He is Josef Mengele with a Ph.D.

Oh! That's right.

Josef Mengele had a Ph.D.

If Bill Bennett is a scion of virtue, so were the Tuskegee doctors.

Virtue is not just keeping your hands off your wee-wee and keeping god under the pledge.

Virtue is doing no harm by word or deed.

Virtue is thinking about what you say in public.

Virtue is *not* claiming that Black people are inherently dangerous and ethically inferior, even if you are speaking hypothetically and don't mean it, which is another way of saying that virtue is not SHOOTING YOUR MOUTH OFF WHEN YOU'RE NOT THINKING, DOLT.

Unless of course you were thinking, and that's just what you really think.

Maybe virtue is just not being a hypocritical racist.

Goodbye, Bill.

I won't be thinking about you anymore.

Speaking of racism, Neighbor Bush's newspeech to the windswept nation, in which he promised the Gulf states that our children will buy them 40 acres and an SUV, utilized a word that should have struck terror, anger, and vengeance in the heart of every Southerner alive.

But there it was, big as lies and twice as ugly.

Rhetoric that went completely unnoticed except to those who believe the War Between the States is not over.

RECONSTRUCTION!

He said it.

He repeated it.

And the TeeVee Anchor Choir repeated the chorus:

"Oh Ya-a-a-ay, Holy Reconstruction,  
Gonna lay down my burden,  
Down by the deficit!"

And then he dropped the other shoe into the punchbowl.

We need to revise the law of Posse Comitatus.

Okay, a little history music, Perferror!  
In 1876 half this country was under martial law.

In spite of any intentions, it was oppressive, inspired citizens to rebellious outlawry and gave the military a reputation as jack-booted thugs.

Sort of like Abu Ghiraib

However, big business was making money "reconstructing" the South.

There was cheap labor, low interest rates and lots of slaves to cheat out of their federal recompense.

And the TeeVee Anchor Choir repeated the chorus:

"Here I am!

Ro-o-ock me like a Hurricane!"

## Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



Times were good.

Unless you lived in the South.

There was only one problem: One of those pesky national elections.

Which the Republicans were going to lose.

And they did.

Technically.

But that never stopped a Republican.

The election went to New York Gov. Samuel J. Tilden, a reformer who had cleaned out Tammany Hall and the Canal Ring (the latter included numerous influential big money Republicans. Don't do that. Makes 'em awful mad. They sick their pet congressmen on you.)

However, a Useless Simpson Grant crony named Dan Sickles began reviewing the electoral votes on election night and figured that Rutherford B. Hayes could still win if the Republicans could throw out one vote somewhere, say, Oregon, and did not "lose" the remaining Southern states of Louisiana, South Carolina and FLORIDA. Yes, friends, Florida, now home of Brer Bush and the Electoral Tarbaby.

Sickles, a former Union General who lost a leg at Gettysburg (Aim high, you slack-jawed white trash!) sent an order to the military governors of those states.

He had no authority to do so, but party chairman Zachariah Chandler was too drunk to steal an election.

Sickles received confirmation from the commanding officers of all three states, including that now-infamous telegram from the military governor of South Carolina, Daniel Chamberlain:

"All right. South Carolina is for Hayes. Need more troops."

He got his troops; the country got Rutherford B. Hayes and a 20-year recession.

Amazing what a Republican majority and a standing army can do.

Within two years disaffected Southerners were joined by disgusted Republicans in prohibiting law enforcement by the military, i.e. posse comitatus.

Now can you imagine why Neighbor Bush might want to gut a law like that:?

But if you don't have a particularly vivid imagination go to <<http://www.antiwar.com/news/?articleid=2444>>.

You don't have to read.

Just look at the pictures.

Now, imagine your son or daughter during a 3 a.m. traffic stop at the mercy of the Yankee Army.

Not the courageous Army that fights our wars.

The Army that will make sure we all follow orders.

You know, even my friends tell me I'm extreme in referring to the Republican Party as U.S. fascism.

But in 1932, Benito Mussolini wrote the Italian Encyclopedia entry for "fascism."

Go to <<http://www.fordham.edu/>

>halsall/mod/mussolini-fascism.html and judge me, and Neighbor Bush, for yourself.

But General Lawlor disagrees. "There is an advantage to the warrior ethos," he says. "Working counterinsurgency is a lot different from bringing aid and relief to people who are in distress."

He suggests that the lesson of Katrina was a lack of leadership at all levels: Emergency-response planners had everything they needed, he says, but they did a poor job of organizing it.

How significantly the military will be impacted by any effort to further incorporate it into disaster response will de-

pend on the shape of future proposals. But the first step would likely be the amending of Posse Comitatus, and civil libertarians, too, worry that any change - however small - could be rash and misguided.

After 9/11, "the government immediately leapt to the conclusion that there was a lack of power," so it passed the Patriot Act, says Timothy Edgar of the American Civil Liberties Union, suggesting that a revised Posse Comitatus could give the military a keyhole to greater power down the road. "Changing the law in a way that threatens civil liberties isn't the answer to a problem of management."



## Editorial

OP/ED

Opinion - Columns - Letters

— Editorial —

# A World Without Political Parties Individualism or Group-think

The indictment of Tom DeLay points to a fundamental anachronism to freedom — political power machines run amuck.

The Republican Party and the Democratic Party are not really parties. They are, in every true sense of the word, corporations.

If you vote in one of their primaries, you become a minor stockholder as you endorse the political corporation's existence and agree to worship its henchmen.

Tom DeLay didn't work for the U.S. government. He was a corporate operative, drenched in the suboptimized gamesmanship of power. The gerrymandering of Texas took priority over school finance. Gerrymandering was a political corporation priority. School finance was the priority of the masses. The Republican corporation won. Texas lost.

Municipal and school board elections tend to not feature Democratic and Republican corporations. They feature unbranded candidacies. These political races are not partisan as to which corporation an official belongs. These candidates run as independents. This grass-roots approach is where democracy shines the brightest.

Upon election, their ownership is not by a political corporation, but by the public.

There is an unsettling elitism in the two-party system as it exists today.

The President (currently a Republican) makes a radio address. This is followed by the Democratic Party response — two corporate political machines selling their goods.

Where is the Green Party response? Where is the Libertarian Party response? Their corporations are not considered "viable?" They are not, according to the parties in power.

And what of the presidential debates? Bush vs. Kerry.

Where was Nader?

Conventional wisdom says that minor political corporations don't have a chance. Why buy stock in Acme Widgets when you can sign on with a Halliburton?

Much of the problem has to do with the way Americans have been trained to look at the political spectrum, horizontally, left to right. Actually, the correct perspective is vertical, top to bottom, using haves and have-nots as the template, for this is where intrinsic differences actually appear.

At the neo-conservative Republican level, haves are good. Have-nots are bad. Haves are good since they have money. They have earned the "good" logo by being successful financially. The have-nots have not learned how to be good.

This was not always the case with the Republican Party. Take Lincoln, a self-proclaimed liberal who fought for the have-nots.

Most Americans, if they carefully analyze themselves, will find in themselves a mixture of many political elements. They might agree with Libertarians on one issue, with Democrats on another, with Greens on another, and with Republicans on yet another.

With the absence of power-hungry political corporations, individualism could flourish. If independents would run in every race and get themselves elected, thereby removing faceless corporate power and its endless corruptions from government, a return to ethics might again gain emphasis. However, right now, the corporations own the arena, making this a daunting task.

Promoting candidates not owned by corporate influence, but instead by influence of the masses, should become a goal. This is attainable only with an enlightened voting populace.

— Written By W. Leon Smith

# You Win Some, You Lose Some

Sometimes it hurts real bad to lose:

How could 22 Democratic Senators and the body's single Independent act so stupidly?

How could all 55 Republican Senators be so pigheadedly loyal to a failed presidency, one that never should have existed in the first place?

When did our elected officials just give up?

How did America land in this sink-hole?

Let's examine the steps leading downward into national dysfunction:

Supremes lead vocal William Rehnquist arbitrarily allowed the high court to illegitimately decide a question regarding voting and states rights, then offered the deciding opinion that implanted George W. Bush as the 43rd president of the United States.

Later studies pointed out that Bush #43 actually lost the election, but thanks to five supercilious members of The Black Robes we're stuck with him.

The new Occupation Regime, surreptitiously under the thumb of the (then) widely unknown Herr Ubermeister Karl Rove, made its first big impression on the rest of the planetary community almost immediately by pulling out of the Kyoto agreement. This worldwide effort to curb global warming was years in coming, and embraced by the administration of Bill Clinton. However, the RoveBush Fascists made it their "litmus test" for scientific endeavor; Bush #43's contention was that all the eminent scientists and other leaders had no idea what they were talking about, and more studying was needed.

That tunnel-visionary, meatheaded decree of a backwater rube effectively killed any progress toward reducing global warming.

Internationally, the world was put on notice that the White House of Bush #43 was going to make up the rules from now on — there's a new sheriff in town and he runs the gaming table! Texas-style law had arrived for all humankind!

In its Campaign to Deny the American People Constitutional Freedoms, this was the first salvo in the new Occupation Regime's dictatorial scheme to undo each and every program and endeavor the Clinton Administration, and other Liberal administrations, had installed or set in motion.

In rapid succession, the economy began to slump; ecological programs were tossed aside; gasoline and other fuel and energy prices rose; people's overall demeanors turned from cheery and hopeful to snide and dour.

Before anyone knew it, we awoke on September 11, 2001.

As the day progressed many of us, but not enough (and, unfortunately, not most), had proof positive of just what kind of presidential material George W. Bush was not.

Could the RoveBush Occupation Regime have stopped or minimized the attacks? Did the Regime wish to do either? How much did the White House Occupiers know about the events of 9/11/01 prior to that date? Were any West Wing luminaries inculpatory functionaries regarding the disasters that befell America that day?

These questions linger still, and if answers are to be found will first require



Out Of The Blue

By  
Jerry  
Tenuto

a thorough cleansing of the entire Washington, D.C. power structure.

The terrible events of 9/11/01 gave Bush #43 unprecedented leeway to steer the Nation in precisely the direction Herr Rove wanted it to go.

Bush #43 openly blamed the "terrorist" attacks on the globally-operating Al Qaeda group, led by U.S.-trained Osama bin Laden. The same intelligence that blew the 9/11 signals indicated Osama was hanging out in Afghanistan, which bordered Pakistan. We put the fear of annihilation into Pakistani President Pervez Masharraf, along with a few well-placed incentives, then set up a base of operations in this "friendly" country. With the wool pulled over most American eyes, Afghanistan was bombed from a fanatical, Taliban-run, theocratic dictatorial hellhole back into its rightful place as the heroin growing center of the world.

However, to paraphrase the old PBS game show, everyone began singing, "Where in the World is Osama bin Laden?"

A little piece of legislation was then rapidly enacted into law. Sold to taxpayers as a means to thwart future terrorist attacks on the U.S., the *Patriot Act* flowed through Congress like crap through a goose.

Since it had one of those typically cute, innocuous Madison Avenueish titles, the kind Neo-cons affix to every bill designed to screw the country (*Clear Skies Act; No Child Left Behind*), Mr. and Ms. Regular American had no idea this was the beginning of the end of our personal freedoms.

George Orwell was right; his estimate was just 17 years early.

Then, RoveBush and the troupe fabricated intelligence reports that strongly suggested Saddam Hussein was harboring and building weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The alleged "proof" was sketchy, at best. All the White House had were some satellite and spy plane photos of trailers.

Big whoop!

I was trained by the Army to read aerial photography, plus worked with mobile nuclear missiles. There was virtually no conclusive evidence of weapons of any sort to be found in any published pictures.

Additionally, no trailer-borne missile would have the range or accuracy to reach a North American target from Iraq.

I can understand how Bush #43 and the West Wing Evildoers wanted there to be missiles and other WMD in those pictures. Hell, when you're delusional from power everything else becomes fallacious. What escapes me is how Colin Powell, a four-star Army General and the sole trained pair of eyes in the bunch, could have gone before the United Nations and the World with that bogus conclusion.

Generally, the nations of the World

didn't buy the RoveBush fish story, but our troops were sent into Iraq, anyway.

Somehow, a year-and-a-half later Bush #43 got re-elected.

Or did he?

With elections officials being investigated and indicted in Ohio, the jury is still, quite literally, out on that determination.

Meanwhile, our soldiers and Marines die senselessly, needlessly every single day.

Iraqi police and civilians are being slaughtered by the dozens on a daily basis.

Still more dozens, possibly hundreds, died in Hurricane Katrina and its wake as a result of gross ineptitude and callous disregard by the RoveBush Occupation.

Lest we even detour into the financial and emotional costs of these tragedies.

While the U.S.A. continues to nose-dive into disasters of every sort, not one person with West Wing privileges does anything to actually solve any problems.

Each one of them has the routine down pat: Turn camera right and announce what a good job "Brownie" or whomever is doing; point camera left and shift the blame off onto anyone below your pay grade who's readily available.

When Justice Sandra Day O'Connor announced she was splitting from the Supremes, without hesitation Bush #43 gave us John Roberts. Here we have a lawyer, produced by a privileged home and a series of elite, if somewhat clandestine educational institutions, whom by all accounts never lived among, worked in, nor dealt with the real world.

There's a frightening thought — yet another Conservative sittin' in with the Supremes minus any clue as to what being a regular, American everyman feels like. There are already far too many elitists deciding what's good for us.

Then, as though he hadn't screwed America enough, before the Senate can even debate or vote on Roberts, Rehnquist moved on to that Most Supreme Supreme Court.

Amen.

Well, Rehnquist's carcass wasn't even cold yet when Bush #43 made the big announcement — he done changed his mind. Or Herr Karl Rove changed his mind. Or Dick Cheney... or somebody change their mind.

The thing was, John Roberts ain't gonna replace Justice Miz Sandra now. Nope.

Now, John Roberts was gonna be the Bush #43 nominee fer Lead Vocal with the Supremes.

Here's where the travesty comes into operational mode: We have a putz sitting in the Oval Office, figuratively and only occasionally, whose "elections" to that office are highly suspect. Anyone on Earth who gets news from sources other than Fox or Rush Limbaugh knows America is in the throes of an Occupational Regime, run from the dark by Herr Ubermeister Karl Rove.

We are supposed to have a system of "checks and balances" within the make-up of our governmental structure.

Yet, somehow it has broken down, and a layabout frat boy who never accomplished anything in his life without daddy's influence and money;

An ersatz president whose own staff admits he doesn't comprehend the speeches they write for him;

A pathological liar who told America he'd been watching the Katrina devastation on television, yet had not seen one demolished house until a DVD was burned for him and he was force-fed the "highlights";

A man who started two illegal wars — invaded two sovereign nations without cause, something the United States has never done in our history — based upon pure balderdash, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths (and counting);

A presidential figurehead who has done so much damage on so many levels that it will take volumes to write about them all and generations to rectify or even discover many —

What on earth qualifies this George W. Bush to nominate a repressive judge with only two years of bench experience and no real world background as Chief Justice!?

And, what in the hell is wrong with, not just the 22 Democratic Senators and lone Independent, but all 55 Republican Senators that they're so damned afraid to say "NO!" to Bush #43!?

Or, is it Herr Ubermeister Rove these 78 wimps fear!?

Honestly, *some* Republican Senators have to be in disagreement with the nomination of Roberts.

You know, in 1944 a group of German Generals, the real military men of the World War II Deutsches Armie, attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler. These were, to a man, heroes of the Homeland, including its most famous Erwin Rommel. After they were exposed, a poll was taken among the German people. Despite the fact that Germany was by then all but destroyed, food was scarce, countless innocents and soldiers had died and more would die, over 50% of the respondents expressed the opinion that the Generals — military experts — were wrong, and showed a blind faith and unwavering trust in Hitler's ability to triumph over the Allied Nations.

*There is none so blind as he who will not see.*

As for winning some:

First, thank you, Illinois Senators Dick Durbin and Barack Obama for voting your consciences, and remaining true to the constituents who elected you both.

Next, it seems good ol' Tom DeLay really should've taken off them overalls before puttin' 'em in the washin' machine. Looks like he's really got his butt in the ringer now.

Instead of takin' the hit on the chin and keepin' his mouth shut like a man, Ol' Tom had t'start right in with the Neocon whine that this is all made up trash, an' he didn't do nothin' wrong, and it's politically motivated, and such...

Oh, boo-hoo-hoo.

How much political motivation can Travis County District Attorney Ronnie Earle have — he can't even run against DeLay!

Methinks Ol' Tom doth protest too much.

(Let's hope the Democrats don't waste this opportunity like they have every other.)

One down and a whole Chevy Suburban-load to go.

Note to Lindy England: Chin up, Kid. You made several mistakes, but your biggest was trusting today's Army. Whatever you did, you shouldn't be doing time for it.

# Why James Dean Is Worth Remembering

By MELINDA PILLSBURY-FOSTER

SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Earlier this month the FRESNO BEE published yet another article, citing someone who postures as an authority on the life and significance of James Byron Dean; this Sept. 30th will mark the half century anniversary of Dean's death in a automobile accident in Cholame, California. During his lifetime James Dean was not famous. At the moment he died only one of his three movies to have been released was *East of Eden*. *Rebel Without A Cause* was not yet in the theaters.

When he died no one had yet considered the tiny body of work Dean left behind as his legacy. No one expected him to die. James Dean's movies represent the only tangible statement of his skill. But those movies in themselves proved to be a monumental commentary. The three films illustrate ability — that plumbs depths and exhibits an intelligence unusual in an actor only 24 years of age. The roles he created in those movies expand to dominate the screen against far more experienced actors. The intelligent portion of Hollywood understood that, but as with all professions only a few could see that. Most people who are fascinated by the magnetic appeal Dean was able to project ascribe that appeal to those causes that more define themselves than they do James Dean.

"He represents eternal youth," Legnon says, leaning on the memorial. "If James Dean had lived, he wouldn't be the icon he is. He'd just be an old guy, like [Marlon] Brando or Montgomery Clift or any of the actors that Dean came of age with."

It is easy for strangers to ooze opinion about someone when that person has been six feet under for a half a century. James Byron Dean died when he was 24 years old; he died having completed only three movies but those movies burn with the intelligence James Dean brought to every facet of his life. Many young actors are the product of the need in Hollywood for fresh meat. Not so with James Dean.

Shelby Legnon, who never knew Jimmy, says that if Jimmy had lived he would have been, "just some old guy, like Brando or Montgomery Clift." No one could be more wrong. Legnon did not know him.

But his movies speak to those who possess the wit to understand.

Jimmy was an individual who saw clearly and who had values that were defined and honed through years of thought.

If he had lived Jimmy would have transformed the entertainment industry; injecting the vibrant ideas and values that moved him originally into acting. Because that industry supplies the memes and cultural content of so much that we, as Americans, live and breathe every day of

our lives, and because the world watches us as the edge of cultural change, it is fair to say that James Dean would have changed the world. That was his intention and his aim; to impact the world through the craft of acting.

He understood how it could be used. He intended to use it.

James Dean had confronted such issues and the life of the spirit, mortality, the profound differences between people, and the ideas that drive the world when he was very young. He began life as a Mama's boy, enveloped in maternal attention. He shared with his mother a world of make-believe; they also talked about ideas. That world was shattered when his mother died and he was relocated to Indiana to live with his aunt and uncle, two people who were decent, kind, hard-working and very different. He was a sensitive child. He did not forget his mother; he continued to remember and to grieve, creating an intense internal life of ideas. Those ideas eventually took him into acting. People who are highly intelligent and creative make their own rules.

I knew James Dean; he was no hormone-driven Hollywood wind up doll. He was insightful, intellectually alive, and very aware of the kind of people and motives that confronted him in the reality of Hollywood, 1955. To be successful in Hollywood you had to play the games Hollywood expected. Jimmy understood people; he understood their limitations and their prejudices. He had learned to project what was expected of him.

The Hollywood perception of James Dean is colored by the timing of when he died and by the limited access he allowed to those whose approval he needed to succeed in the career he was passionately pursuing. If he had died three years later he would have had time to let Hollywood know who he really was; if he had died ten years later he would have changed Hollywood. But that is not what happened.

There was only one James Dean. How much of him you saw depended on how much it was safe for him to show.

Jimmy knew what Hollywood wanted him to be so that is what they saw. He was much more.

I have spent my life fascinated by ideas and James Dean was a major influence in creating that interest.

James Dean explained to me the process of photosynthesis by telling me when I was just a small child that, "Trees breathe; Live exists on Earth because the green growing things breathe in the light of the Sun and produce the oxygen that we, and all life, needs to survive." An amazing way to make that process real and viscerally available to a child.

James Dean loved thinking about the processes of life. He loved books and the ideas that roil in the mind when that mind weaves the possibilities of what is now with what could be. He pounced on new facts with delight.

The first time I met Jimmy it was over Beanie sandwiches in the kitchen of the family home in West Los Angeles. He was a student; I was a kid. He was the kind of person who listened to children and responded thoughtfully, by which I mean he was able to connect and engage in a real discourse, not talking down to me but exploring the ideas that found their way into our conversation, introducing ideas as part of the text. With Jimmy if there was conversation there were ideas to discuss.

It was on that very first visit that Jimmy and I discussed mortality. It was the first time anyone had mentioned the subject to me. I had been watching a tortoise dissolve back into dust, so to speak. I had discovered the tortoise already very dead

behind a bush in the back yard of the house. I was fascinated by the process of its dissolution as ants carried it away and it shrank into itself. I had not told anyone else because I knew how they would react. The tortoise would evoke shrieks and Mom would remove it.

Given a chance I hauled Jimmy back to look, too. Jimmy was delighted. He proceeded to tell me about observing the same process with a cow on a farm back home. Then, squatting down for a closer look, he told me that the essence of the tortoise, the thing that had made it move and live, was gone. The same happened to all that lived, he told me.

From that time on we talked about ideas whenever he showed up for a visit. Towards the end of the visits he had started talking to me about books he was reading and the ideas that excited him in those.

Jimmy was looking forward to a career; that career would only begin with acting. He mentioned moving on to directing and other work. He had been unhappy with the way a book he had read was made into a movie. The book was *Fountainhead*. He wanted to remake it because he thought the characterizations were flat and had failed to evoke the wonderful potential of the human life. I suspect now, looking back through a life time that has afforded me the opportunity to know more than I want about Objectivism, that if he had tried to do the remake he wanted Ayn Rand would have strenuously objected. Jimmy had a strong sense of spirituality that would have offended her. Jimmy would probably have ignored her objections. He was like that. He knew what he wanted and he was determined.

I have many memories of Jimmy; he always found time to talk to me and since we shared a fascination with ideas there was always lots to discuss. The essence of spirit, the past and how we know and understand it; the flow of time. All of these things were subjects we discussed. He did most of the talking, naturally. I listened carefully and asked questions.

Does a shallow, self indulgent kid greedy for fame and the potential for self importance and what fame can buy spend that kind of time with a child? No. Would that kind of discourse slip from the lips of an angst ridden pop tart? Hardly.

If Jimmy had lived he would not have become a fat, self-indulgent has been. He would have taken the capital he had created in name identification and respect and invested it in projects that pushed the edges of thought in new directions. Hollywood would have followed his lead because he was worth following. He would have started projects for kids in Fairmount, Indiana; he would have, perhaps run for office. He would have done good in all directions. He cared about people and he cared about the kind of world his generation would leave behind.

I know that to most people he exemplified the undirected angst of youth. Ironically the image he left immediately in the minds of most Americans was the product of hard work at the craft of acting. To see that perhaps Legnon should stand back and consider the intellectual vigor it takes to achieve that outcome. Jimmy was directed, focused, intent, inquiring and passionately interested in everything around him. That remains the unspoken and compelling presence that continues to fascinate, even if the viewer does not understand why.

I wish you could have known him. Then you would understand why he is worth remembering.

Melinda Pillsbury-Foster is the founder and president of the Arthur C. Pillsbury Foundation and the author of several books including, *A Tour of Old Yosemite*, and *"GREGED: The NeoConning of America."* She is a long time Republican, and a member of the National Federation of Republican Women.

## Newfangled Stuff

If an army runs on its belly, then anti-war or pro-war protestors run on water bottles.

I was trying to remember how anyone managed to stage rallies back in the 60s and 70s without water bottles. (It was suggested to me by a long time activist that more wine and soft drinks were consumed back then. Another person suggested that no one in his or her right mind would have staged a protest in Central Texas in August back then. But I'm pretty sure some of the Civil Rights Sit-Ins were held in pretty hot times. No pun intended).

Years ago, my then husband Paul sold some European spring water to all the beautiful people on South Beach in Miami. (This was just before "Perrier" was starting to become a household word). He sold quite a lot of the water one summer to kids rollerblading on the beach boardwalk. He came up with this idea that one day, everyone would be buying bottled water. We all thought he was absolutely crazy, (which he often admitted that he was. But he was also smart and saw the future). Why would anyone but tourists who were accustomed to bottled water buy such a thing when they could get it from the tap for free?

Now bottled water is as common a sight as, well, a cell phone. We think nothing these days of people talking into little boxes or seemingly into nothing at all, as they walk around in stores, in their cars (one of my pet peeves, and dangerous), all over the place.

Now you can hook into the Internet from a cell phone. Cell phones can also take pictures, make movies (I think), do text messaging, play music. You can use a cell phone to funnel a satellite radio station into a regular radio by setting the phone or the radio or maybe both on a certain frequency. I'm a little unclear on most of this, in case you couldn't tell. Cell phones do things I can't even describe. So do I-Pods. I'm not sure I have ever seen an I-Pod.

I saw in Crawford that people can setup computers (even in a field, if there is a power source, connect wirelessly to the

## 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.

Internet, and "blog" all over the country, giving continuous updates on anything in the world they want to report on. A few years ago, I think a "blog" was something you stepped on that stuck to the bottom of your boot.

Technology is moving so fast I have given up trying to keep up with it. I'm still trying to figure out how to use my TV remote and program names into my cell phone. I'm trying to figure out all the things my cell phone can do. And I bought the simplest model.

The one thing I definitely want that is considered new technology... But wait; maybe it is old news by now. Things move so fast. . . . I definitely want a digital camera. I have wanted one for years now, ever since they came out. And after using one from the newspaper office recently, I'm definitely hooked.

Internet access is getting faster and faster. It never seems to be fast enough for some people. I can't move fast enough to keep up with the really speedy computers. So I stick with my modem. It's slow but it's relatively cheap. All this new fun costs money. I seem to have less and less of that each day. As gas prices go up (and everything else will follow), I pull in my belt and tell myself I don't need anything new and pricey.

I think I might still have an eight track around here somewhere, and I KNOW both Zack and I own record albums, even a turntable. Most kids these days don't know what an LP is. Most have never seen or used a dial phone.

I feel more and more like a dinosaur each day. I hope to become a lot older and expect to be a lot more clueless as time goes on.

# Texas Gambler Tangles With Wild Bill Hickock

Ever willing to oblige fellow Texans, Phil Coe agreed on Oct. 4, 1871, to give four dozen cowboys a guided tour of Abilene when they arrived the next day in the Kansas cowtown.

As adept at making friends as filling an inside straight, Philip Haddox Coe was so popular that a company of Confederates elected him their lieutenant. However, as soon as the six-foot-four civilian learned a uniform went with the rank, he skeddaddled to Mexico.

Coe returned to Texas after the southern surrender and opened a saloon in Austin. When it came to fleecing the patrons, he preferred the personal touch, but the brisk business soon required the services of a second card-sharp. So he hired Ben Thompson and got Texas' fastest gun in the bargain.

Long before they exhausted the supply of suckers, the happy-go-lucky gambler and the grim gunfighter had become constant companions. Searching for greener pastures, the duo chose the rowdy Kansas cowtown of Abilene in the winter of 1871.

Unlike the skittish locals, Coe and Thompson made the wild trail hands feel right at home at the Bull's Head Saloon. While the visiting Texans usually paid through the nose for their hospitality, few seemed to care. And those that did dared not complain in the presence of the pistol-packing partner with the dreaded quick draw.

After homesick Thompson left Abilene in mid-summer, Coe sold his share of the saloon. He resumed the life of the gentleman gambler earning a comfortable living at the poker tables.

The appearance of Jessie Hazell in early August started a different and more dangerous stampede. The demands of her profession had yet to rob the beauty of her stunning good looks, which immediately caught the roving eye of James Butler Hickok.

Although the long-haired lawman considered himself God's gift to women, Jessie managed to resist the temptation. But she practically swooned at the sight of handsome Phil Coe and his fat bankroll.

Wild Bill's gut reaction was to eliminate the competition. But a fear of Ben Thompson, who was liable to show up in Abilene anytime, kept him from killing his rival.

While on his appointed rounds several weeks later, Hickok bumped into Jessie and her new beau. He completely lost his head and in a jealous rage knocked

## This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



her to the floor.

Coe was on him in a flash. Bigger, stronger and far more efficient with his fists, the tall Texan beat Wild Bill to a bloody pulp in a crowded barroom.

Coe knew he was a marked man. Hickok would find the time and place to finish him off all legal and proper. Nevertheless, he stayed in Abilene taking care not to let Wild Bill catch him on the street alone.

Two weeks passed without so much as a word between the two antagonists. The talk around town of an imminent gunfight had been replaced by optimistic speculation about an unspoken truce.

Coe threw a party for 50 cowpunchers on the evening of Oct. 5, 1871. Surrounded by the army of Texans, he felt safe and secure.

Before the festivities were in full swing, Hickok warned the revelers against disturbing the peace and carrying firearms inside the city limits. He then withdrew to his favorite watering hole to await further developments.

At nine o'clock, the marshal heard the familiar sound of gunfire from the vicinity of The Alamo saloon. He slipped down the alley, entered the bar from the rear and stepped out onto the front veranda.

Past the point of mere intoxication, most of the Texans were falling-down drunk. Several were waving their pistols in defiance of the ground rules for the night.

"Who fired that shot?" demanded Hickok. His hands were on his hips a flick of the wrists from his twin forty-fours.

Gesturing with his smoking six-gun, Coe confessed with a laugh to taking a pot shot at a stray dog. He shrugged off the petty crime and presumed the marshal would, too.

Wild Bill answered with a vile curse, and on instinct Coe turned to face him. Hickok's pistols were halfway out of the holsters, when he raised his own gun and pulled the trigger in self-defense.

Coe's shot passed harmlessly through Wild Bill's coat, but his

adversary's rounds were right on target. The slugs struck the Texan simultaneously in the abdomen and went out his back through a gaping hole.

Running to help Hickok, Mike Williams elbowed his way through the mob of bystanders. So near-sighted he did not recognize his friend, Wild Bill put two bullets in the private policeman's head.

Williams died on the spot, but death waited three agonizing days before finally taking Phil Coe. His body was shipped back to Texas, where hard-bitten Ben Thompson wept openly over casket.

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

## Bad News Is Big News

I couldn't have been the only one last week who thought that some of the television news reporters actually seemed disappointed that Hurricane Rita didn't do more damage. I'm not saying that they would have preferred more destruction, but they were just so sky high the day before predicting the worst, it was probably natural that they were a little let down. After all, on television at least, bad news is big news.

I'm not forgetting some of the great reporting in the field on both hurricanes. The television news people brought us the story and challenged the explanations given by public officials. But some of their enthusiasm for the story seemed to evaporate when Rita wasn't as big a storm as they had thought it might be.

It also seemed a bit bizarre to see so many reporters standing out in the rain, telling us it was raining. At the same time, they told us that those who hadn't evacuated the area were being foolish. What about them? How many people saw them on TV and reasoned, "If they can be out in the storm, it must be safe for me to be in my house?"

But at least their being on the scene conveyed what it was like there. There was some rationale to it. Too often, in television news stories, a reporter will be at a location purely to imply that the story is more important than it is. Good examples are often on the late night local news. The anchor will tell us that a crime was committed and that the perpetrator was caught and is now in jail. Then they'll cut to a reporter standing outside the jail, saying that the criminal is inside and will be arraigned tomorrow. Why do we have to see the outside of the jail at 11:00 at night? How does that add to the story?

A perfect case of bad news being the life source of television news happened last week as that Jetblue aircraft was flying around with its front landing gear stuck at a weird angle. This occurred in the midst of all of the pre-Rita hoopla. Some news stations had split screens, half showing a weather map, and half showing the airplane circling around. And you could sense the rising pulse of the anchors as they juggled the stories.

The networks tried to maximize the negative in the Jetblue situation. The airplane circled over Los Angeles International Airport for three hours, using up fuel. During that time, nobody on the plane was in any danger, but some stations showed every



Modern Times

By  
Lloyd  
Garver

minute of those three hours. They interviewed various experts, including pilots and engineers.

Everyone they interviewed said they doubted there would be any problem in landing the plane. They emphasized that pilots are prepared for just such unusual circumstances. But "there probably won't be any problem" is not a good lead for a news story. So, each station frantically sought out more and more people who might suggest that there was at least the possibility of the story having a newsworthy ending.

The best they got was a couple of pilots admitting that they had never landed a plane whose landing gear was stuck like that.

Finally, it was time for the plane to land. This is where the story began for me. This was exciting, not like the three hours that preceded it. Would the pilot be able to land the plane smoothly and safely?

And then he did. He landed it perfectly. To me, that would have been a great story — despite worries about equipment, a competent pilot landed the plane without a problem. But again, that's not exciting TV news.

The story continued onto the Larry King show on CNN. The person he was interviewing confirmed that all the passengers were safe, and that none of them had suffered any physical problems. There was a long pause. Then Larry said something like, "That may be true. But who's to say how many of these passengers will suffer from psychological problems because of this ordeal?" He just couldn't resist putting out that little bit of hope for some bad consequences to the story.

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](mailto:lloydgarver@yahoo.com)

Thanks to Lt. Sid Franklin & the other members of the McLennan Sheriff's Department for their Peace Keeping Efforts at Camp Casey — August 2005.

Veterans for Peace  
VFP66 Austin Tx  
Crawford Peace House  
Palisadians for Peace  
Paul Wicker

# The Sorcerer's Apprentice

GUEST COMMENTARY

BY REBECCA RABINOWITZ  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Just when it seemed that there couldn't possibly be another outrage du jour from the Bush cabal, they have surpassed all previous records in a headlong plunge to the bottom of their oily morality barrel. Nothing except more tax cuts for the "haves and have mores" is considered sacred by the ruling Republican elite.

The emerging list of no-bid or limited bid contracts thus far signed for the gargantuan rebuilding and recovery ef-

orts in the Gulf states, is testament to the wanton, craven abrogation of the vaunted Republican "Contract with America," which piously preached the restoration of values and honor in government. The favored contract list is a veritable who's who of Republican donors, fat cats, dilettantes and parvenus. This crowd truly has no shame: they care not a scintilla for the inhabitants of the devastated region, who might actually benefit from the potential for jobs, contracts, and an opportunity to rebuild their shattered lives. Is it too much to expect that the focus of this taxpayer-financed reconstruction should be on local residents and businesses, particularly minority-owned, rather than once again lining the already platinum corporate pockets of the Republican donor list?

In the meantime, those right wing lobbyists cum politically appointed "guardians" of our land are hard at work undermining yet more environmental protection regulations, in their latest sop to the chemical, oil, timber and other perennial polluting industries, at the expense of and grave risk to the public. As much of New Orleans, Beaumont, and hurricane ravaged areas molder in putrid, fetid swamps of pathogens and toxic chemicals, the EPA is considering plans to roll back the accounting requirements for companies mandated to disclose toxic spills and releases of poisonous substances, from the current reporting trigger level of 500 lbs., to 5,000: a tenfold increase in permissible, unreportable toxic spills or releases.

As if this weren't enough, the Department of Labor is reportedly poised to invoke an arcane doctrine of sovereign immunity against whistleblowing federal employees, thereby assuring prompt reprisal against those who have the integrity to step forward to report environmental violations on toxic cleanups and other similar federal contracts.

The radioactive fallout from this anti-environmental action would effectively muzzle whistleblower reporting of violations of the Clean Air Act, Safe Drinking Water Act, and other public health regulations by federal staffers, unless they were prepared to forfeit their livelihoods.

President W. now paradoxically asks Americans to limit their driving in order to conserve gasoline, while his tax slashing, spend-us-into-debtors' prison party on Capitol Hill is working diligently to eliminate state and local community grants for

energy conservation initiatives, cut funding for various light rail projects and Amtrak, and undo the President's tepid hydrogen fuel program. Most of us recall the Vice President's acerbic comment that while conservation might be a personal virtue, it was no basis for a national energy policy. Ominously, Congress has taken this to heart: we should all drive less, but no credible, federal efforts will be directed towards offering long term strategic mass transit plans, forcing automakers to sharply increase fuel efficiency, or aggressively pursue alternative energy sources. As usual, the only plans on the table are those which would desecrate the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve and other dwindling national wilderness jewels by drilling for any possible oil and gas there. The Bush-Cheney "oiligarchy" continues its relentless assault on our earth, and the nation remains hostage to their buddies in OPEC.

For those devastated hurricane victims who feel that there is no other refuge except bankruptcy, don't expect a break from the Republicans there, either. The new bankruptcy law, set to take effect in mid-October, will put most people into a Catch-22 quagmire, where they will likely find little shelter from avaricious creditors. No one in Congress is inclined to reconsider the most draconian provisions of this "reform," for fear that other "feckless" Americans, such as those facing economic privation as a result of serious illness, might also find shelter from the creditor storm, thus nicking the banking and credit card corporate windfall. On a related front, the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act, which might provide respite to the hundreds of thousands of hurricane homeless, languishes like a wilted southern magnolia somewhere in a Congressional committee, with nary an affirming vote or Southern Comfort toast in sight.



Rebecca Rabinowitz

Meanwhile, back at the economic outhouse, the crushing federal deficit and resultant burgeoning debt continue to pile up. The current spate of conservative hand wringing about the monumental debt being fobbed off on our children is utterly risible, given their plundering of the treasury for the inurement of cronies and patrons. This

amoral, spineless Congress is reminiscent of the sorcerer's apprentice: the nation is awash in red ink as far as the eye can see, and those most desperate for government assistance are cast adrift, yet Congress can't muster the fortitude to utter the incantations required to stem the red storm surge. Where is that enchanted broom when we need it most?

— GUEST COMMENTARY —

## Recent CTRMA Toll Road Poll: Rubber Room Desperately Needed

BY PETER STERN  
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Recently a Texas toll road poll was administered by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA). The poll and its interpretation by officials are another reason for voters to question the sanity of Texas politics and the audacity of the toll special interest CTRMA.

The survey proved that most Texans don't want toll roads. Without documenting the findings and most of the issues surrounding the poll and toll roads in general, one key factor is hidden from view and part of the reason is that our officials *sweep it under the rug*.

There is no need for toll roads nor a reason to increase the gasoline tax to build and maintain Texas roadways. If gasoline taxes, which have been frozen by the governor and legislators for the past decade at the current percentage rate, all would go towards building and maintaining roadways as they were mandated to, we would not have the problem we currently have. The fact is that a large percentage of gasoline taxes goes to higher education. It is unbelievable that this continues even after the governor and legislators permitted special interests (led by UT) to deregulate tuition costs. Immediately, tuition sky-rocketed and continues to increase. Exactly what is the rationale for permitting gasoline taxes to finance higher education instead of to build and maintain Texas roadways?

Unfortunately for Texas families paying taxes, it is an integral part of our current political and legislative system to divert tax dollars to other needs and causes rather than to keep the money where it is supposed to go. The governor leads this action and legislators follow it. That's one of the ways they try to balance the budget every year. Shifting tax dollars around must stop.

Furthermore, TxDOT is "sitting" on taxpayer dollars instead of using it to build and maintain Texas road-

ways. Despite the fact that this is illegal and unconscionable, legislators "turn the other cheek" and have permitted TxDOT to become a

powerful political influence in determining our social direction in many areas. TxDOT needs more independent oversight to ensure it acts in the best interests of Texas families. Currently, it is NOT doing so.

Texas voters must keep in mind that this is the same CTRMA for which legislators tried to expand the membership terms from two to six years so that the current pro-toll membership would be maintained for a total of six years. After the push to do that, the court determined that it was unconstitutional to do so. Now the same push to increase membership terms has been placed as Proposition 9 to amend the Constitution to cushion the authority for pro-toll special interests.

Furthermore, even though a majority of Texans continue to reject toll roads as the option to build and maintain Texas roadways, the governor, legislators and the CTRMA continue to ignore the public's wishes. Bottomline is that the CTRMA cannot be trusted, not even to develop and interpret the recent toll poll. It doesn't matter if 90 percent or 50 percent of Texans don't want tolls. Toll roads are NOT the best or only solution Texas has to build and maintain its roadways. All other options must be reviewed and exhausted prior to going the toll route.

Peter Stern, of Driftwood, Texas, grew up in New York City and holds three post-graduate degrees in English and Writing (New York University), Administration & Supervision (Queens College), and Computer Science (Nassau College). He is a Disabled Vietnam-era Veteran. His job experience highlights 15 years in Education as a university professor, school administrator, and public school teacher; 10 years in the computer field as Director of Information Services.



Peter Stern

## Old West Trade Days

"Downtown West, TX"

Arts, crafts, woodworking, antiques, flea market & garage sale items.

Booth 10' x 12' \$25, two for \$45

October 8th & 9th

Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

For more info. 254-826-3188 M-F

Trade Days are the 2nd weekend of the month.

# The Best Part Of Waking Up Is Civet Droppings In Your Cup

Some of you are probably familiar with the civet cat, a tree-dwelling marsupial related to the mongoose family that looks like a cat and sprays its enemies with stinky oil.

Naturally, we humans harvest that oil and make it into perfume, which in turn is used by department store clerks in the women's section to spray enemies with during the holiday shopping season.

What many of you may not know is that civets are in the coffee bean producing business — something that's the most frightening beverage concept since the introduction of New Coke.

(For those of you with a weak stomach — or who happen to be drinking coffee at this very moment — neatly fold this section of the paper, then prepare yourself an Ajax mochaccino to cleanse your pallet with before reading on.)

Let's start with a little history.

Bean growers on the Indonesian islands of Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi have long regarded civets as pests because of their propensity to climb into coffee bean trees, eat only the choicest



By  
**Ned Hickson**  
Siuslaw News

berries, get hyped up on caffeine, and then talk incessantly about their stock portfolios while emitting a shrill sound similar to that of a espresso machine.

However, at some point, someone suffering from the biggest case of caffeine addiction in the history of man decided he was desperate enough to "harvest" the civet droppings as a way to get his coffee fix.

Though the trail leading to the identity of this "pioneer" is not complete, coffee genealogists have determined that it was someone visiting from the Seattle area.

From those humble beginnings comes the coffee bean known as

Kopi Luwak — which, loosely translated, means "Butt Coffee."

O.K., I made that part up.

It actually means "coffee" (Kopi) "weasel" (Luwak), which isn't much better — and a name advertising agencies won't be rushing to trademark any time soon.

Which brings us to our next question: how to market such a product?

Getting folks to buy something that, as its biggest selling point, boasts of being pre-digested by a weasel-like animal is going to be a tall order for any ad agency to swallow (at least, not without liberal amounts of cream and sugar.)

And with an average sticker price of \$200 per lb., don't bother looking for it in the bulk coffee section of your local supermarket. Unless, of course, U.S. manufacturers come up with a "generic" equivalent, which would be the only thing more frightening than Kopi Luwak itself. Given that the U.S.D.A. allows a certain amount of "foreign matter" in processed meats and canned goods, what kind of standards would be

kept on a product that begins as "foreign matter" in the first place?

We should probably move on.

There are a number of Kopi Luwak suppliers in America, with M.P. Mountanos Inc. being the first company in the U.S. to import the beans after trying them out several years ago. According to the company, the decision to purchase 70 kilos of the beans was finally made only after completing a seven-year search for a "reliable" and "stable" supplier.

Whether that's in reference to civet cats or growers, I'm not exactly sure.

What I am sure of is the potential market this opens up for us here in the Northwest, where pre-digested black berry jam can be found in abundance along most logging roads in the spring. For anyone interested in pursuing this venture, I wish you the best.

As for me, I'm content in just bringing you the straight poop.

(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](http://www.nedhickson.net))

United States Postal Service  
**Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation**

1. Publication Title: The Lone Star Iconoclast  
2. Publication Number: 0 2 2 - 8 3 3  
3. Filing Date: 09-30-05  
4. Issue Frequency: Weekly  
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 52  
6. Annual Subscription Price: Elsewhere - \$45; Copied Person: W. Leon Smith; Telephone: 254-675-3336  
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer): 310 W. 5th St., Clifton, Bosque County, TX 76634-1611  
8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer): P.O. Box 353, Clifton, TX 76634-0353  
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):  
Publisher (Name and complete mailing address): Smith Media, Inc., 310 W. 5th St., Clifton, TX 76634; Smith, W. Leon, 1515 W. 11th St., Clifton, TX 76634  
Editor (Name and complete mailing address): Smith, W. Leon, 1515 W. 11th St., Clifton, TX 76634  
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address):  
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)  
Full Name: Complete Mailing Address:  
Smith Media, Inc., 310 W. 5th St., Clifton, TX 76634  
Smith, W. Leon, 1515 W. 11th St., Clifton, TX 76634  
Fisher, Don M., P.O. Box 632, Valley Mills, TX 76689  
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box  None  
Full Name: Complete Mailing Address:  
12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)  
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months  
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement)  
13. Publication Title: The Lone Star Iconoclast  
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: 9-29-05  
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation  
Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date  
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run) 3050 2300  
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1), (2), (3), and (4)) 2648 1481  
(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies) 2648 1481  
(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies) 95 16  
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution 143 92  
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS 0 0  
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1), (2), (3), and (4)) 2886 1589  
d. Free Distribution by Mail (Samples, complimentary, and other free) (1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541 24 12  
(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541 4 3  
(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS 0 0  
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means) 0 0  
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d and 15e) 28 15  
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f) 2914 1604  
h. Copies not Distributed 136 696  
i. Total (Sum of 15g and h.) 3050 2300  
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by 15g times 100) 99.03912148 99.06483791  
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership  
 Publication required. Will be printed in the Oct. 5, 2005 issue of this publication  Publication not required  
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner  
W. Leon Smith Date: 9-30-05  
I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

## Folk You

Bob Dylan is a punk. That is the revelation I took away from *No Direction Home*, Martin Scorsese's new documentary on Dylan.

It wasn't that Dylan just punked the Right and the media with his songs and answers to their absurd questions. He punked the Left as well.

He was no one's puppet then, he's no puppet now.

Bob Dylan is a punk.

And by "punk," I mean as it meant in the late 1970s — someone seeking self-determination, not conformity.

So Dylan was punk before Punk was Punk, which, of course, makes the whole punk label hang absurdly on him.

The tip off for me in the documentary came during his drunken speech after receiving the Tom Paine Award at the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee's annual Bill of Rights Dinner on Dec. 13, 1963.

There, the 22-year-old Minnesota native expressed his frustrations with the expectations he felt leveled on him at the time. (In the process, he caused the committee to lose money on the fund-raiser when he insulted its old, balding members, compared himself to Lee Harvey Oswald so soon after JFK's assassination, and doubted the committee's integrity.)

Later, Dylan would piss off his fans for "going electric" and piss off his friend and fellow musician Joan Baez for not continuing to lend his music to "the movement"...

... but I ask, what kind of artist sacrifices his own spirit for someone else's whims?

A sell out.

How many songs must consumers buy before they call their composer a whore?

Blow *that* in the wind!

By the way, why aren't there more popular songs that question anything these days?

I mean, question *anything* — war, peace, rich, poor, dogs, cats, toasters, microwave ovens, dogs in microwave ovens — anything! I don't care. Something!

Why aren't more of our artists asking why

with their work? There's plenty of material: racism, poverty, hunger, war, gender inequality, materialism, family violence, child abuse, the death penalty, abortion ...

I know I'm flirting with hypocrisy of my own here after defending Dylan's artistic sovereignty, but don't you think that's strange?

Okay, well, I guess there is *Diamonds From Sierra Leone* by Kanye West.

The rapper flirts with his own hypocrisy, exposing his belly for bling bling materialism at the cost of violence thousands of miles away.

And sure, there's Steve Earle's *The Revolution*

*Starts Now*; R.E.M.'s *Around the Sun*; John Prine's *Fair & Square*; Bruce Springsteen's *Devils & Dust*; and Jessica Simpson's *These Boots Are Made For Walkin'* —

Hey, think about it.

Oh, and then, there's Green Day's last album *American Idiot*.

The snout noses punks who composed *Dookie* 10 years ago didn't quite blow it this time around, but it's all folk music, anyway, right, Lester?

At least, it ain't polka.

Oh, God, then we'd *really* have to worry about revolution.

And we wouldn't want that, would we?

Ha!



## The Rubber Cement Index

By Nathan Diebenow

**DOMAIN NAME CHANGE:**  
The Lone Star Iconoclast is in the process of changing its domain name.  
Now you can log onto the website at either:  
[www.iconoclast-texas.com](http://www.iconoclast-texas.com)  
or  
[www.lonestaricon.com](http://www.lonestaricon.com)

# MAILBAG

# ICONOCLAST

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor:

This time Chairman Joe Barton has shown his loyalty to corporate America by heading a Republican initiative to open new coastal waters to oil and natural gas development. He and the Republican's in Congress (Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison and others) would have you believe the hurricanes are the primary reason for higher prices at the pumps. Nothing could be further from the truth.

It takes many months for crude oil to be refined into gasoline. It would, therefore, take many weeks for any decline in refining process to really effect distribution. It only took one day for the price of gas to sky-rocket. For the simple minded and naive among you... you've been lied to. The increase in price at the pump is a gouge, nothing more. The oil and gas industry does it simply because they can.

The oil and tobacco industries own or have vested interest in most other large American corporations. Big tobacco, for example, owns most of the U.S. food industry (re: RJR-Nabisco, Kraft/Phillip-Morris, etc.). Select corporate-congressmen continually support the oil and tobacco industries through subsidies and protective legislation. In turn, they (esp. Barton and Hutchison) get re-election super-funding. It's just that simple!

What Barton is doing comes natural to him. He has continually protected the interest of super-corporations throughout his career. His loyalty to the super-corporations that make up the oil and tobacco industries is historic and unquestionable; and his Methodist/Christian demeanor an obvious façade.

Again Barton shows his true color, "Smokey Joe" blue. Again the residents of the Texas 6th District have failed to recognize the monster they have created.

*Leonard Jensen, Fort Worth Editor, Lone Star Iconoclast:*

The supporters of President Bush and his war on Iraq have submitted hundreds of letters to this newspaper over the past several years. Attempting to justify an unjustifiable action, they have endlessly repeated a handful of catchy phrases, trite clichés and statements of dubious veracity. Here are some of my favorites:

"We're fighting to bring freedom and democracy to the Iraqi people."

"If we don't fight them over there, we'll be fighting them here."

"The only thing those people understand is military force."

"The war on Iraq has nothing to do with oil."

"Forget about the WMD's—at least Iraq is better off without Saddam Hussein."

"Once we establish democracy in Iraq, it will spread throughout the Middle East."

"The insurgency is in its last throes. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

"If we withdraw our troops, our soldiers will have died in vain."

"Our soldiers are fighting for your right to protest."

"The war protesters just hate America. They should leave."

"The protesters are giving aid and comfort to the enemy."

"The war is dragging on because of the protesters."

"The war is dragging on because of the liberal media."

"The protesters don't really care about

the war. They're just seeking media attention."

"The protesters don't really care about the war. They just hate Bush and are against anything he does."

"President Bush and his advisers have information we don't have, so we should trust him."

"Bush never admits his mistakes. That's a sign of excellent leadership."

"If you're gonna make an omelet, you've gotta break some eggs."

"A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do."

"Freedom isn't free."

These phrases epitomize what passes for thinking in some circles. It's encouraging that they're appearing with less frequency as more readers question their own support for President Bush's war on Iraq.

*Burt Bogardus, Danville, CA*

To The Editor:

News dominating disasters must seem to Bush to be Heaven sent. True, his poll numbers are dropping, but not nearly as much as they would be if people were actually paying attention. Poverty, injustice, corruption, debt, hypocrisy, incompetence, environmental degradation, and exposure of the machine that benefits from all of the above gets relegated to page 8, if mentioned at all. If this is in fact the payback to the born again, I've come to the realization that I don't have the stomach for it and will have to be satisfied with the first time.

*Alan MacFarland, Tallmadge, Ohio Dear Editor:*

As a proud participant of the massive anti-war rally and march in Washington, D.C. Sept. 24th, it is heartening to observe that over 100,000 American patriots came together to march against the Bush/Cheney/Rumsfeld troika-sponsored war in Iraq.

Even more incredible was the eclectic nature of this sea of humanity. Ages of the marchers ranged from young adolescents who are becoming politically aware to the angry 20's and 30's to the deeply concerned parents of those of military age to the gray-haired grandparents, many with canes, who struggled to walk the entire distance but did so because of a sense of deep obligation to end the bloodshed.

By stark and very revealing contrast, a mere and nearly invisible 400 pro-war sympathizers attended a counter anti-war event the next day. 100,000 to 400! If that doesn't send a message to George W. Bush and his "warlords" within the White House bubble, nothing will.

Sincerely,

*Gene Muccolini, Mount Holly, NJ*

To The Editor:

Hurricane Rita has come and gone from Houston. I am happy to report that all of my family and friends came through the experience alive and unscathed physically, but I think emotionally we'll be feeling the after effects for a very, very long time. This past week has been an emotional roller coaster for all of us.

We started making preparations for Hurricane Rita Tuesday afternoon when we began to realize that the Texas coast was the most likely target for Hurricane Rita to hit. My family lives about 70 miles inland from the Gulf Coast, in far north-west Harris County, but damage from a hurricane can be devastating this far inland and even further, as we have all seen. Jim, my husband, took off work early and

came home to begin making preparations on the house, and I took the rest of the week off work to do the same. We went to Home Depot, where there was a rush on plywood. We were fortunate enough that in our part of town, not everyone had swamped the store yet to board up their windows. We were able to get enough to cover all of our windows, but it cost us nearly \$400 to do it.

Earlier in the day Jaime and I went to the grocery store to stock up on supplies. The shelves were completely empty of any kind of water and most canned goods were sold out. Just before we left, a delivery of bottled water was brought into the store, and we were able to grab three cases. Later, we were busy trying to decide what was most important for us to take with us when we left home. My daughter, Jaime, and I were also busy packing irreplaceable possessions as best we could and putting them in the safest place in the house with the hope that they would still be there when we returned.

At the time Rita was only a category 3 or 4.

Wednesday morning we cancelled our plans to go to Washington DC for the peace rally. I made the phone calls I needed to make to let Gold Star Families for Peace members know we wouldn't be joining them for the rally. I sure wish we could have been there. All accounts report an awesome display of patriotism and peace. I am so very, very proud of the citizens of this country who are finally catching on!

We worked all day to get the house boarded up so we could get out of Houston as soon as humanly possible. Wednesday was an emotion packed day. Before my son died, he said "Mom, if anything happens to me while I'm in Iraq, I want you to take the life insurance money I'm leaving you and buy a house." Jeremy knew that I had never owned a home of my own and never, in my whole life, been able to settle anywhere for very long. So, the prospect of leaving my house, Jeremy's last gift to me, knowing that in all likelihood, we would return in a few days to nothing, was heartbreaking. When I am in my home, I feel Jeremy's loving arms around me, protecting me the best he could, just like he tried to do when he was alive.

By this time, Hurricane Rita had been upgraded to a Category 5 hurricane.

We fought the stifling heat of the day (100 degrees) to get the house boarded up. My husband was climbing up and down ladders all day trying to get the job done. I finally had to make him take a break when the hottest part of the day hit, worried that he would suffer from heat stroke. We figured we had plenty of time to get the house boarded up, the cars packed and head out of town to stay with our friend in the San Antonio area.

I cried myself to sleep in the wee hours of Thursday morning, thinking I was sleeping in my home for the last time and that I would never see it again.

Thursday morning we started watching the news. Sometime in the afternoon we realized that there was absolutely no way we could safely make the trip out of Houston and on to San Antonio and safety. My oldest daughter, Danielle, and her friends left our house at 11:00 p.m. Wednesday night headed to Killeen, Texas. A trip that should have taken, at the most four hours, took them eleven. Reports from other friends who had left the city told of being on the road nine hours and only traveling twenty miles. Others told stories of being in the car anywhere from 18 to 24 hours and longer to drive two hundred miles. Journeys that never should have taken more than six hours – even given heavy traffic conditions, took a toll on many. There was not so much as a gallon of gaso-

line to be found within a hundred mile radius of Houston. There were no food supplies left as grocery stores and convenience stores closed their doors. Banks and ATM's were running low on cash as customers withdrew money from their accounts.

Worst of all, there were no shelters along the way for travelers to take refuge. Weary refugees were running out of gas and abandoning their cars. Pets died from dehydration. There was very little to no help for hundreds of thousands of the refugees.

So, Jim, Jaime and I had to make the call as to whether or not we would be safer at home or on the road with a one-month old baby. Given the back up of traffic, we had no confidence whatsoever that we would make it out of harm's way before the hurricane came ashore. Our cars were full of gas, but we knew that with the back up of traffic, we could run out. To avoid overheating their vehicles and to conserve fuel, many refugees weren't running their air conditioners, had no water, and became dehydrated in the heat. We just couldn't put ourselves or, more importantly, Baby Aiden, in that kind of risk.

By this time, the predicted hurricane course had shifted to the East somewhat, so we felt relatively confident that we could ride the storm out. It had been downgraded to a Category 4, which made us feel a little less uneasy, but we were still all scared and stressed. After much discussion, we decided that we would be safer at home than we would be on the freeway. We knew that the hurricane could shift and come back to the west, but we felt that staying home was the only real option we had.

Now, I know that many people in Houston and the surrounding areas had to make the same kind of decision we did. Ours is just one story among hundreds of thousands. My family is among the lucky because our house was just on the very outside edges of the storm. The winds here were not damaging, we got very little rain and only lost our electricity for a few hours. For us, the storm ended up being only a minor inconvenience in our lives.

But what happens next time? Houston lucked out with Hurricane Rita, as we have all seen by the news reports far East Texas and Louisiana. What if Rita had come ashore at Galveston and on into Houston and the surrounding areas?

Today, as I sit at my keyboard, I feel it's time to start asking some really tough questions of our city leaders and of our federal government at the highest levels, which includes King George & Co. Why wasn't there a better evacuation plan in place and why wasn't it implemented sooner? Why weren't shelters of some sort set up across the city for residents to go to who were not able to escape the impending disaster we believed was coming?

King George's Department of Homeland Security is an utter and complete failure, as has been proven by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. FEMA is in shambles and the Red Cross isn't faring much better. Funds that should have been used to take care of the citizens of this country and make us safer have been siphoned off to other programs, leaving FEMA nothing more than a shadow of what it previously was. The citizens of this great country have been told over and over again that we are safer today than we were four years ago when terrorists struck our country. We have been lied to. We are no safer today than we were then.

The war in Iraq is a disaster that never should have been. Thousands upon thousands of lives have been lost for no good reason.

In the meantime, King George is still running away from his problems, refusing

Continued On Next Page

# MAILBAG ICONOCLAST

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Continued From Previous Page

to acknowledge that he is wrong or to listen to those who do not agree with him. He has been crisscrossing the country, doing his best to prop his image up after the government badly mismanaged relief and rescue efforts with Katrina.

It's time for the American citizens to take back control of our country and our government. It's time to remind our public servants, and by that I mean the President and his administration, Senators, Congressmen and woman, et al. that we are their bosses, not vice versa. We put them where they are to serve the public good, and they have not done so. They have severely abused their power for way too long. Because of this, we now have a President who doesn't know how to lead the country and who has gotten his way every step of the way for way too long.

Every day more and more people are standing up and asking the tough questions, demanding the answers our leaders have not wanted to give. Americans are not stupid and we know what those answers are. We want to hear them come out of the mouths of the so-called leaders who have put us in this situation.

It's time to end the war in Iraq and use the money to rebuild our storm ravaged country. It's time to get King George & Co. out of the White House and hold them accountable for their unconscionable actions. It's time for a Revolution of the every day American citizen! Give our

country back to us and bring our soldiers home!

Amy Branham, Houston  
Mother of Sgt. Jeremy R. Smith  
Nov. 1981 - Feb. 2004

To The Editor:

Katrina and Rita may not kill us, they may *save* us. It is the following which may be our *doom*:

*Religion and Sex*: Why should that be in our government? Its benefit is to/for the one of the dominate religion or sex. The dominate, sex or religion is will flex their muscle or whatever. Do we need that kind of advantage or barrier for a government of the people?

Once "*we were*" the most intelligent nation in the world/on earth, but we have degraded our nation to the state it is today. Dumb! Dumb! Dee! Dumb!

Look at the religious leadership of this nation. When they stand up in front of people and say we are of intelligent design and the God created the Bible for our education, think about that. The Bible is guidance for the education of a particular religion. There is nothing scientific about it.

The only commit about sex that makes, any sense is that it was intended for reproduction. In that regard the advice for an intelligent and healthy country or world is; "if you

can't feed 'em don't breed 'em."

Mixing religion and sex in government means we have to satisfy the leaders of religion and sex. Unfortunately our science and similar matters of nature are screened by their lack knowledge of whatever, to satisfy them.

The *color* of "we the people" by the mere factor that God did it should be a natural mix, unfortunately it too is often used like religion and sex for a definite advantage.

Louis (Low) Freitag, Carbondale, IL

Dear Editor,

While flooded Gulf-state residents begin to reclaim their homes and communities, it looks like the inundation of Federal money is going very, very well for Bush's supporters and handlers. Look who's receiving \$100 million dollar no-bid contracts: The Shaw Group, KBR-Halliburton, Flour

Corp., Bechtel, and The Shaw Group (a double-dip for them!). These corporations are clients of Joe Allbaugh, lobbyist. Remember Joe? Bush's campaign manager in 2000, then Bush's appointee to head FEMA before passing the patronage to his buddy, Michael "Brownie" Brown. He got money shunted to these corporations before the ink was dry on Congress' approval of relief funds.

Something stinks, and it isn't just the fetid flood water in New Orleans. The administration that rivals Warren G. Harding's for incompetence has surpassed them in corruption. And where is the press? People were outraged when they learned about Teapot Dome. Taxpayers should take note of Bush's words when he hands such financial largess to the oligarchy, "it's your money."

Sincerely,  
Bruce Joffe, Piedmont, CA




## MUELLER, INC.

STEEL BUILDING SYSTEMS & COMPONENTS

Waco: 800-525-3814

Mark Noland (ext. 5426) - Roland Hicks (ext. 5427)

5591 N. Hwy. 6, Waco — 254-848-2560 • Fax: 254-848-9997

Temple: 800-525-3814 • Fax: 254-742-2947

I-35 N. between Exit #305 west side of I-35

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

# Services

For advertising  
information, call  
**(254) 675-3336**



**MARK KETTLER  
BUILDER**

Mobile (254) 709-7362  
Fax (254) 836-4620

H.O.T.B.A.

**Red Roof Storage**

**RV & Boat Storage**

Speegleville area  
10 x 20 Storage  
15 x 40 RV

(254) 848-7867

**WOOD MASONRY**

Building Texas since 1982

Custom Brick, Stone, Block  
Residential • Commercial • Remodel • Repairs

**FIREPLACE SPECIALIST  
STONE PATIOS & WALKWAYS  
CERTIFIED CHIMNEY SWEEP**

G. L. Insured

JAMES T. WOOD, Master Mason

Home 254-775-4112

Mobile 972-345-8339

Wrecker  
Service  
24 Hr.

Full Service  
Glass Work  
Service by Lynx

Foreign &  
Domestic

*Bill's Body Shop*

**REPAIR FACILITY ALWAYS OWNER'S CHOICE**  
Brewco Frame Machine & Measuring System

Highway 6 in  
Valley Mills, TX

phone: (254) 932-6536  
fax: (254) 932-6588  
cell: (254) 709-2235



*Leon's*  
**FLOOR COVERING**

Carpet & Vinyl  
Formica Cabinet Tops  
Wallpaper  
Eureka Vacuum Cleaners  
and Service

QUALITY MATERIAL SOLD AND INSTALLED WITH PRIDE  
302 West 5th Clifton, Texas **FREE ESTIMATES** Phone 675-8686  
Mike & Kim Prescher Home 675-8291