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PROTESTING WITH ACTIVIST YOUTHS is high school senior Pat Korte, 18, (left) at the World Can't Wait demonstration held in Washington, D.C. on Feb. 4, days after President Bush's State of the Union speech. Korte spearheaded a move to reform a national convention for the Students for a Democratic Society this summer.

— Photo By Joshua Lebovitz



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More GOP Loyalists Disapprove Of Bush

WASHINGTON — More and more Republicans disapprove of the Bush administration, according to an AP-Ipsos poll released last week. President Bush's overall approval rating is the lowest of his presidency at 37 percent.

President Bush's job approval rating dropped nearly eight percentage points among Republicans to 74 percent since February. More white males than any other group surveyed have lost faith in the White House, said the poll.

On domestic issues, Bush's approval among Americans has dropped three percentage points to 36 percent. On foreign policy, his performance rating decreased four percentage points to 43 percent, according to a survey of 1,000 people with a three-percent error margin conducted from Monday to Wednesday.

Although Bush has a steady 40-percent approval rating on the economy and Iraq, almost four out of five Americans, including 70 percent of Republicans, believe civil war is coming to Iraq, according to the poll.

The poll is a cause for worry among Republicans in Congress seeking reelection in 2006. Sixty percent of Americans and 53 percent of Republicans think the GOP-led Congress is performing poorly. Congress should be controlled by Democrats according to 47 percent of the people surveyed.

Among second-term presidencies, Bush's ratings are closer to President Nixon's, who sat in the high 20s at the height of the Watergate scandal in 1974, than Presidents Clinton, Reagan, and Eisenhower, who sat in the mid-to-low 60s.

In a related story, a Colorado school district put a teach on paid leave last week while it investigates him for comparing President Bush's State of the Union address to speeches made by former Nazi Germany leader Adolf Hitler in his Feb. 1 class lecture. Jay Bennish might have violated a Cherry Creek School District policy mandating that viewpoints be balanced in class.

Bennish's father, John Bennish of Beverly Hills, Mich., told *The Detroit News* that he and his family have received at least 12 death threats. John Bennish called the news reports of his son's lecture "totally lopsided and one-sided."

In his defense, Jay Bennish told NBC's "Today Show" Tuesday that his full lecture was not represented by a taped recording made by one of his students. In the course of his lecture, Bennish said, he was intending to persuade his students to teach.

Dubai Co. Drops Ports Deal

WASHINGTON — The Republicans in Congress breathed a sigh a relief last Thursday when a company owned by a Middle Eastern country dropped its intent to manage U.S. ports.

A top executive of Dubai Ports World said that his company would transfer its U.S. operations to an unnamed United States entity.

Earlier in the day, GOP leaders from both houses told President George W. Bush that Congress would block the deal; a House committee had already unanimously voted against it the day prior.

Up until the company's announcement, Bush still maintained that he

would veto any legislation that threatened to tank the deal. Now, he has less worry about continuing to inflame his party over a "war on terrorism" issue.

The decision for the United Arab Emirates to withdraw was a result of work between Congress and the company, not Bush administration officials. There is an apparent understanding among both groups that DP World will not lose money due to the broken deal that would have had the company lease and manage six major ports in the United States.

The controversy started when the Associated Press reported that a secret committee comprised of U.S. intelligence

agencies okayed the deal for DP World to purchase six leases from London-based Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co. for \$6.8 billion. The deal was finalized last Thursday.

The news story surprised Congress who received no word from the White House about the matter. Republicans urged the president to reconsider his approval of the deal over concerns the Arab-owned firm would compromise national security. Bush maintained his defiant stance even amid criticism of cronyism when it was revealed he appointed a DP World executive to a maritime committee that approved the deal.

Army To Investigate Tillman Death

WASHINGTON — After two years of criticism from the family of a former professional football player turned Army Ranger, the U.S. Army will soon open a formal criminal investigation into the

Colleges Must Allow Military Recruiting: Supreme Court

WASHINGTON — Whether college and universities accept federal money or not, they must give military recruiters access to their campus, according to a unanimous decision from the Supreme Court last week.

This ruling was the most recent attempt to test the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy, which allows homosexuals to serve in the armed forces if they choose to not disclose their sexual preference to others. Law schools represented in the case argued that because the policy is discriminatory, they have legal authority to prevent recruiters from working there.

The ruling was seen as crucial when the Defense Department is struggling to increase its military recruitment during conflicts in Iraq. At stake for public colleges was about \$35 million a year under a federal law — aka the Solomon Amendment — that requires public educational institutions to grant the military access to their campuses or lose federal aid.

The attorney for the challengers, Joshua Rosenkranz said that although the gays and lesbians lost this round for their civil rights, the overall movement is winning.

death of Pat Tillman, an Army spokesman said recently.

Fellow soldiers in Afghanistan shot Tillman, 27, to death on April 22, 2004. Previous Army reviews indicated that the shooting was accidental, but this new probe by the Army Criminal Investigation Command is said unofficially to focus on possible charges of negligent homicide.

The Army initially said that enemy fire contributed to Tillman's death, but later it showed that his unit knew that the former Arizona Cardinal died from friendly fire. A report revealed that officers destroyed key evidence and hid the truth from Tillman's brother who was also in the area with the Rangers.

Knowing Tillman's cause of death was that of "gross negligence," the Army

waited three weeks after his memorial service to announce Tillman died of wounds sustained from gun shots from his own troops.

Brig. Gen. Gary M. Jones, however, found that Army officials were not hiding the truth of the matter, and officials have since admitted that they could have done a better job informing Tillman's family.

Tillman turned down a multimillion dollar contract to play football for the Arizona Cardinals after terrorist attacks in New York City. He served with his brother in Iraq, but expressed doubts about the war on terror while there. Tillman had planned on visiting with Noam Chomsky, an antiwar advocate, when he returned from his last tour.

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Interview With Student Activist Pat Korte

SDS Rides Again

Student Groups To Organize Nationally

BY NATHAN DIEBENOW
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

PAWCATUCK, Conn. — The torch of 1960s radical politics is being handed to a new generation this summer when Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) will hold its first national convention in 37 years.

Although this convention has yet to find a location and a more specific time, a series of regional conferences will precede it on the Memorial Day weekend.

The official announcement of this reformation of the SDS came out on the observed Martin Luther King Jr. Day this past Jan. 16. SDS regional organizer Thomas Good said the timing seemed appropriate: "We have an anti-war movement that is addressing the issue of stopping the bloodletting in Iraq but the civil rights issue remains unaddressed."

This new SDS national organization wouldn't have been resurrected if it were not for the work of student anti-war activist Pat Korte who contacted other student and veteran organizers with the idea of linking nascent SDS chapters into a national structure.

THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST recently spoke over the phone with Korte at his home in Connecticut about his interest in radical politics, the make-up of the new

SDS, and the lessons learned from the old group's demise.

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ICONOCLAST: There's a lot of terms running around like how people define what liberal is and what progressive is, and what are the differences between liberals and progressives. But I wanted to get your definition of what a radical is in your own terms.

KORTE: In my own terms, I'd say a radical, in comparison to the Right or even to any political moderates, being a radical is taking real social and political change beyond the scope of just electoral politics.

ICONOCLAST: Let me put it this way: what do radicals consider that other people don't? I know you answered that with "beyond electoral politics" but can you be a little more specific?

KORTE: I guess it's the power of the individual in society. It only takes one for that spark, and seeing the possibilities of a better world being achieved by working in and outside the system. I'd be more prone to the idea of working outside the system. It's my opinion that the system does not work and that we're capable of changing things.

ICONOCLAST: What do you mean that "the system doesn't work"?

PAT KORTE, a senior at Stonington High School in Stonington, Conn., has led a move to reform the Students for a Democratic Society late last year with the help of the former members of SDS, Thomas Good, Paul Buhle, and Alan Haber.

KORTE: Well, for example, for the most part American electoral politics are not working. People are trying, but for the most part current American electoral politics are not drastically improving situations that need to be drastically improved whether that be poverty or ending the war or dealing with issues of civil liberties.

ICONOCLAST: Tell me a little about yourself and how you got interested in SDS?

PAT KORTE: I'm a senior at Stonington High School in Stonington, Conn. Since my sophomore or junior year, I've been very interested in radical politics, you know, the Yippies and Abbie Hoffman, Emma Goldman, Noam Chomsky, Howard Zinn — radicals throughout our history. I guess the more I learned about the current situation in the world and in America the more I felt compelled to take action, to get involved in the growing movement in the post-9/11 world I was growing up in.

I got involved in the American Civil Liberties Union and that was the first group I actually did stuff for. I distributed information and helped screen movies, like the Patriot Act. Then I moved to World Can't Wait, which is an organization calling for Bush to step down and it's a multi-issue organization, but I felt the need for a student organization. I didn't feel that there was any organization allowing stu-

dents to decide the fate of an organization, to play a truly active role in what that organization stood for, what were the goals of the organization, what were the values of the organization.

I think that students have to take control of this movement and be at the forefront of this movement. Students have always been a catalyst for change in America and the world. I guess I felt compelled to form a new organization that students would play a more active role in shaping its goals and values of a democratically organized activist group.

In the past year I began to look into the history of SDS, and realized that that to me was a very good example of a group of young idealists that had realistic goals. They came together and took action based upon their beliefs. I think going back to participatory democracy, a democracy as more than just a lever you pull once a year every four years, a democracy where you go out and do it everyday. That's what democracy is. Democracy is much more than voting.

ICONOCLAST: So as you researched the history of the SDS, you found that there were chapters still active?

KORTE: I got frustrated by the current anti-war movement, so that's when I started looking into the possibility of re-started SDS. I looked up to see if there was any network or if there were chap-

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SDS Rides Again

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ters. I did find several chapters. They either had been defunct for several years or at least a year. There were e-mails posted on listservs and on all the websites, so I contact them, and waited for a response. I just suggested the idea: "You know, I have this idea of re-starting SDS. What do you think?" I got a very positive response from people who said let's do this. That's how I met Thomas Good from New York City, a very active person in the current anti-war movement, and a group of us decided we'd put together a national network for SDS where we could hold a conference to help shape this organization, to decide what our goals and values are, what is wrong with the world right now and how we can change that.

That's how I found out. The Internet has proven to be a very powerful resource in organizing. At the same time, though, it's not that we just want to be a group based more on action.

ICONOCLAST: How many groups are there right now?

KORTE: The ones that existed are reactivating right now. Like I said, they seemed to be defunct for several months or years or whatever. I think the time is just right as far as suggesting this. Right now I think about 25 new chapters sprung up since our press release. Originally, the ones I found were fewer than 10 that I found website for. Aside from those 25 chapters, there are still people at universities or at their workplace that are involved with SDS but have not started a chapter yet or may have not listed their chapter on our website. There are a lot more popping up. We're getting e-mails from people saying, "I heard about SDS. I signed up. What do I do now?"

ICONOCLAST: So what do they do once they sign up and get going?

KORTE: One thing, you want to spread the word about it if you're planning on doing it in your community or on your high school or college campus. See if there's an interest, get people involved, and start discussing things like what are the problems facing our community, our nation, and our world and find how we can play a role in bringing about positive change.

We suggest you start getting a core group together and start holding meetings. Then you start organizing action. I'm pretty sure there's a group in New Orleans right now that's considering workers' solidarity. They're protesting in solidarity with the workers being denied jobs. Another thing we're planning in the New York City area are demonstrations on March 19, the anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. On a local level, it's the local chapter's job to figure out how we play a role.

Right now, we are building up for March 19. The other big priority in addition to the protests on March 19, we're going to be working on getting a conference together. In New England, we've do have a conference at Brown University on Sunday, April 23. We're going to be discussing and outlining our goals and values and how we can pull together to start organizing campaigns. There are also regional meetings taking place in Chicago, Michigan, and across the country where SDS chapters can get together and start pulling things together.

Then we're going to hold a national convention this summer in June or July. We're still deciding the location and the time. We're definitely going to have an SDS national convention. It'll be the first SDS national convention since 1969, since SDS's split in Chicago, but we're hopefully going to release a new SDS statement. The Port Huron Statement was a defining document for that generation. It's time for our generation to create a defining document. That is one of the things we want to come out of national convention. Anyone and everyone is encouraged and welcome to participate in playing an active role in shaping this organization because that's what democracy is all about.

ICONOCLAST: Is there an age limit on how long you can stay with SDS?

KORTE: Absolutely not. We're all students because everyone is always learning. Anyone and everyone is welcome and, like I said, encouraged to get involved.

ICONOCLAST: How involved are the former members of SDS in this new organization?

KORTE: Thomas Good and Paul Buhle placed a high priority on making sure it is a student run organization, but at the same time, it is also SDS's counterpart for Radicals in the Professions.

ICONOCLAST: Oh, is that what it's called? Radicals in the Professions?

KORTE: Yeah. We're all linked through SDS. Radicals in the Professions is a chance for people to get involved in this movement. We're all students. We're all learning.

They're very involved, like Tom is always organizing and attending demonstrations in the New York area. And the same goes for all the former SDS members involved. They are playing a very active role. The most important role they're playing is what we have to learn from the mistakes and the achievements of the old SDS. I think their advice is very important on how to maintain the organization — what works well, what went wrong.

ICONOCLAST: How different is the new SDS from organizations like the Young Democrats of America, for instance?

KORTE: In comparison to the Young Democrats, we're an organization based on participatory democracy in that going out in the community and bringing about change directly to your community and on a national scale.

Also in comparison, we're the ones setting the agenda for this organization. We're not dedicated to any specific party. The issues taken up by SDS are issues decided by the students and most of the organizing and activism takes place on a grassroots level. The national SDS provides more of a network for other chapters to link up and get organized.

In comparison, we're not a party organization. We're an action-based organization. As an organization, we don't have a stance on voting right now or party politics for that matter. There's a wide range of people involved. There's Democrats involved. There's anarchists involved. Marxists involved. There's Libertarians involved. It's a group that encompasses "the left." A lot more people can get involved. And also

I'd say, we're more radical.

ICONOCLAST: I imagine it's not to say that the participants are involved with choosing political leaders. It's not as narrow as that, is what I'm hearing you say. There's a lot more to SDS than choosing your political leaders.

KORTE: Right. It's a lot more than that. SDS is choosing what issues are effecting us right now, how we can change them right now, and how we can work to change them in the future. Those actively involved in SDS are not working to have someone change our problems for us. We're working together to change our problems.

ICONOCLAST: Are there any misconceptions of SDS that you want to clear up? I mean, some people might confuse it with violent radicals like the Weather Underground.

KORTE: We have had people say things like that. One thing we should make very clear is that many of our ideas are coming from the early SDS, like the Port Huron Statement which came out in 1962. Obviously, that was pre-Vietnam era. That's one thing we need to make clear: in no way are we associated with the Weather Underground in that the Weather Underground for that matter weren't SDS. They were a faction of individuals who broke off from SDS.

I think for many people there's a negative history connected with the name SDS, but you know, I think there's a very positive history related with SDS. Yeah, towards the end, things fell apart. SDS was a strong organization that linked many different types of people together, a very diverse group of student and non-student activists with very different political ideologies with similar goals. That's what we want to do.

Right now, there aren't too many organizations that offer such a diverse opportunity. Many organizations, for example the Democratic Party, aren't doing a very good job. This is an opportunity for students to change things. I also think that lots of groups aren't diverse enough, radical or not radical. They're not providing solutions that are effectively working against many of the problems that plague the United States and the world today.

ICONOCLAST: From what you've gathered from your SDS mentors, what was the thing lacking the most towards the end of SDS's last run?

KORTE: I can think of a few things overall. One thing that we're trying to do is link up beyond the student community with different movements. Right now, for example, there are a lot of different movements we can get on whether it be women's issues, civil rights issues, and obviously the anti-war movement, but also getting involved with the working community.

Towards the end, it really hasn't come up a whole lot, but I'd say a lot of different things led to that. The escalation of Vietnam led to a lot of tension among many of the individuals who felt not enough was being done or the right things were being done.

Also a lack of unity (also contributed to SDS's end as well as) secretarian organizations to try and take over. That's one thing Alan Haber, the first national president of SDS spoke on. These secretarian organizations saw SDS as a recruiting ground. I think we're an organization focusing more on decentralized democracy and I don't think we're not going to allow other organizations to take over SDS. That's an organization run by the people.

ICONOCLAST: What's going on with you next year after this your senior year in high school?

KORTE: Well, I'm still waiting to hear from colleges, but I'll be going to college and continuing my work with SDS. I'm hoping to go to the New School in New York City and hoping to study political science. As far as career goals in life, I'm committing my life to activism. That's something I can't see myself in any other position than siding with the oppressed and working for radical change.

ICONOCLAST: And what are your final thoughts for this interview?

KORTE: As for final thoughts, it's exciting to see SDS take off again at such a rapid rate. I think it gives hope to the Left that there is a lot of potential to really change the society through participation of young and old.



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Activists To Screen Film On Falluja Wednesday

WACO — A film about a squad of American soldiers deployed during the final days of the U.S. attack on Falluja, Iraq, will be screened on Wednesday, March 15, at 6 p.m. at Waco Central Library in the downstairs conference room.

Occupation: Dreamland captures the experiences of the Army's 82nd Airborne before a final series of military assaults began in the spring of 2004 that effectively destroyed the Iraqi city.

In effect, filmmakers Garrett Scott and Ian Olds give voice to these soldiers — who were held under a strict code of authority — as they cope with an ambiguous, often lethal environment.

Free to the public, the screening is presented by Waco Friends of Peace as a part of its monthly program se-



Garrett Scott

ries. Refreshments will be served at 5:30 p.m. A group discussion will commence after the film. The library is located on the corner of Austin Ave. and 18th Street in Waco.

For more information, contact Waco Friends of Peace.

INFO
Waco Friends of Peace
www.friendsofpeace.org
(254) 744-1682

USA Patriot Act Renewed

WASHINGTON — After two hold-ups in Congress, President George W. Bush last week reauthorized the U.S.A Patriot Act, a group of laws that civil liberties advocates say further erode citizen's rights of privacy here.

The president and other U.S. officials have said the 16 provisions which were set to expire last Friday, were much needed tools to fight the so-called "war on terror." The original act was passed with little congressional scrutiny after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

New limits to the government's reach, however, were included in the new Patriot Act so that it would be passed. These protections included avenues to fight gag orders in court when people receive subpoenas under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

Other provisions include punishing crew members who stop officers from boarding ships, helping intelligence officers share information with domestic law enforcers, aiding federal officials to take "tangible items," such as the records of businesses, libraries and bookstores for terrorism investigations, and imposing restrictions on cold and allergy medicines in order to hinder the methamphetamine trade.

Critics of the Patriot Act, like Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.), say its new limits stop short of protecting civil liberties of every citizen.

The act's renewal is also seen as a way for Republicans to show their efforts to protect national security amid the controversial port deal between an Arab-owned corporation and the United States. The owner of the port company, however, withdrew its bid to purchase the lease late last week.

Rabbi, Author To Speak March 21

AUSTIN — Rabbi Michael Lerner, author of *The Left Hand of God: Taking Back Our Country from the Religious Right*, will be in Austin at a book signing on Monday, March 20, at 7 p.m. at BookPeople.

Rabbi Lerner will give an evening lecture at Congregation Beth Israel, 3901 Shoal Creek Blvd., on Tuesday, March 21, at 7 p.m. He is hosted in Austin by the Texas Freedom Network.

For more information, visit the TFN website <www.tfn.org/>.

Waco Protest Scheduled On Iraqi Invasion Anniversary This Saturday

WACO — Waco Friends of Peace will sponsor a protest on the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq on Saturday, March 18, at 10 a.m., in Waco on the corner of Waco Drive and Valley Mills Road.

"Please join our peaceful protest at the busiest intersection in Waco," said a spokesperson. "If you can take even an hour or two from your busy schedule, your effort will be worthwhile."

The group's intention is to speak out "against the illegal war, illegal spying, and torture" during the demonstration. Some large banners will be provided, but participants are asked to bring their own signs to express their own thoughts.

For more information, contact Waco Friends of Peace.

INFO
Waco Friends of Peace
www.friendsofpeace.org

Protests To Dot Texas On Iraq Invasion Anniversary

CRAWFORD — Protests, demonstrations, marches, and vigils marking the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq will dot across Texas from March 16-20.

Since the war in Iraq started March 18-19, 2003, more than 50,000 people have been killed — 2,300 of which were American — and over \$500 billion has been spent by the U.S. government on the war.

In Amarillo, there will be a vigil at the Washington Street Bridge over I-40 on Thursday, March 16, 4:30 p.m. Participants are encourage to bring signs.

In Austin, there will be a march and rally with music on Saturday, March 18, at 12 noon. The march will start from the Federal Building (8th & San Jacinto) and continue to City Hall. Speakers at the rally will include Diane Wilson (activist, co-founder of Code Pink, author of *Unreasonable Woman*) and Rev. Peter Johnson (civil rights activist). Musicians will include Guy Forsyth, Carolyn Wonderland and Steve Brooks. Participants are encouraged to bring instruments.

For more information, visit the Austin Against the War website <www.austinagainstwar.org>.

In Beaumont, there will be a candlelight vigil and speakers on Sunday, March 19, at 7:30 p.m., at the Jefferson County Courthouse.

In Dallas, there will be a rally and march on Sunday, March 19, at 2 p.m.,

at St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1816 Routh Strett. For more information, visit this website:

<www.meetwithcongress.com>.

In Denton, there will be a march and rally on Saturday, March 18, at 11 a.m., at the Courthouse Square. For more information, visit the Peace Action Denton website:

<www.peaceactiondenton.org>.

In El Paso, there will be a rally on Saturday, March 18, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. at San Jacinto Plaza. For more information, visit this website:

<www.epscene.com/epsrdp.html>.

In Houston, there will be a play reading on Monday, March 20, at 7 p.m. at First Unitarian Universalist Church, 5200 Fannin. Activists, artists and members of the peace and justice community will participate in a world-wide reading of Simon Levy's play, "What I Heard about Iraq: A Cry for Five Voices."

In McAllen, there will be an event which has yet to be announced on Saturday, March 19.

A march from Mobile, Ala. to New Orleans, La. Will take place March 14-19, as organized by Veterans For Peace, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Vietnam Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and Gold Star Families for Peace, at the call of the Mobile Veterans For Peace Chapter #130. For more information, visit its website <www.vetgulfmarch.org>.

Minority Students 'Left Behind,' Says New Harvard Study

BOSTON — A Harvard University study showed that President Bush's pet education program, No Child Left Behind, leaves students that are the racial and economically disadvantaged minority behind white middle-class students.

The study conducted by Harvard University's Civil Rights Project noted specifically that some white school districts are better able to maneuver around NCLB penalties due to political agreements between their home states and the federal government.

These bargains, therefore, circumvent the national standards the 2001 education bill was meant to combat to increase graduation rates for black and Hispanic Americans. Failure by school districts to comply with the federal guidelines of annual progress can mean sanctions and ultimately school closures.

The 60-page study concluded that NCLB "does not affect all schools equally," since each state can manipulate the law based on their own accountability plans.

The study's lead author, Gail Sunderman, told Reuters, "There's a very uneven effect. There are no clear uniform standards that are governing No Child Left Behind. If one state gets one thing, another state can do something else."

"No two states are now subject to the same requirements."

Or as Gary Orfield, director of Harvard's Civil Rights Project, explained in the report, "The policy is essentially a product of negotiation, of power and discretion, not law."

Education Secretary Margaret Spellings has said states that disapprove of NCLB, such as Connecticut and Utah, are afraid of the results of compliance.

Waco To Host Komen Central Texas Race For Cure April 8th

WACO — The 2006 Central Texas Race for the Cure will be held Saturday, April 8, in Heritage Square in downtown Waco. On-site registration begins at 6:30 a.m.; the one-mile walk/run is at 8 a.m.; and the 5K run/walk starts at 8:30 a.m.

The first Race for the Cure was held in 1983 in Dallas and had about 800 participants. Four countries now host Komen races, and more than 100 races were held in the United States last year.

Last year, Central Texas Race for the Cure participants raised more than \$266,000. This year, race officials hope to raise at least \$275,000 in donations, sponsorships, and race entry fees, and to have 10,000 participants this year.

This year's race will have additional attractions for children such as snacks, balloons, and inflatables, and there will be a bonus for the race participant who raises the most pledge money: round-trip air transportation on American Airlines or American Eagle to any destination in the contiguous United States. There will also be a drawing for another American Airlines ticket and a gift certificate from Coldwater Creek. All participants will receive a Race for the Cure T-shirt.

Kelley Barr from KCEN-TV NBC-6 and Darren Taylor from Clear Channel's 97.5 Radio will be the masters of ceremonies this year.

Jason Horn from Longview, a contest from this year American Idol, will be per-

forming three songs before the race, and will also be available for pictures and autographs after the race. Jason and his wife will be runner for his grandmother-in-law who passed away from Breast Cancer.

Early registration, which costs \$20 per individual, is available on-line <www.komencentraltexas.org > or by mail until March 24 (postmarked). Early walk-up registration, which costs \$22, is

from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. April 3-5 at Richland Mall. Teams (10 or more people) are \$18 per participant, and must be postmarked by March 17.

Sleep In for the Cure, for those who wish to register but not participate and will also receive a Race shirt and pillowcase, costs \$25. Kids are \$10, and will receive a special Kids for the Cure shirt. Race day registration costs \$25 for adults, and \$10 for children age 12 and

younger.

Registration will also be available at the Richland Mall MallWalk to be held on Saturday, March 25, for \$20. This event will be held from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, with activities including the Easter Bunny, door prizes, drawings, food, drink, and a Carter BloodCare Blood Drive from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information or to register, call (254) 753-3037 or visit the website.

Edwards' Amendment Ups Funding Available For 2006 VA Health Care By \$275 Million

Number of War Veterans Using the VA System Doubling Projections

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Chet Edwards this week increased the funding available for 2006 VA health care by \$275 million to help treat a higher than expected influx of veterans from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Edwards' amendment was unanimously adopted by the House Appropriations Committee late Wednesday night after he negotiated a deal with Rep. Jim Walsh to add the \$275 million to the \$92 billion emergency supplemental bill, which includes funds for Iraq and hurricane relief.

"Veterans' health care is a cost of war,

and we must meet our moral obligation to ensure that veterans receive the care they have earned through their service and sacrifice. It would be unconscionable to cut veterans' health care, especially during a time of war," said Edwards, ranking member of the Military Quality of Life and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Subcommittee.

As the House Appropriations Committee was preparing just-passed legislation to fund the Iraqi war, Edwards, a Member of the Committee, uncovered the fact that the actual number of Iraqi and Afghanistan war veterans needing VA health care in fiscal year 2006, which began on October 1, 2005, is exceeding original projections.

The VA projected they would treat 110,566 returning Iraq and Afghanistan veterans in fiscal year 2006. As a result, they budgeted \$464 million to treat those returning veterans. But at the end of January — the first third of the fiscal year — they had already treated 74,414 new vets, or 67% of the total projected for the entire year. Based on these numbers from the VA, Edwards believes it is more realistic to plan on over 223,000 returning veterans needing medical treatment this year. That means that, at present rates, the VA will provide health care for 113,000 more veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars than the VA had originally budgeted for in fiscal year 2006.

"Under-funding VA health care costs for Iraqi and Afghanistan war veterans, if left unchecked, would not just hurt those veterans, it would cause serious cutbacks in medical services for all veterans, and that is why I felt it was crucial for additional funds be authorized now for VA health care this year," said Edwards.

Edwards drafted an amendment that would add \$473 million in VA funds to the Iraqi supplemental appropriations bill and approached the VA Appropriations

Committee Chairman, Congressman Jim Walsh of New York with that amendment. After hearing from the Veterans Administration that the health care cost per patient might be lower than the original estimate of \$4200 per veteran, Edwards and Walsh worked out a compromise they co-sponsored and passed Wednesday night in the House Appropriations Committee. The amendment would allow the VA Secretary to spend an additional \$275 million this year on VA medical care to cover the extra costs of Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans' VA health care. The funding would come from the \$550 million budgeted for renovation of the New Orleans VA hospital, since plans for that hospital are not even close to being finalized and the \$550 million could not be spent this year for that hospital.

Last year Edwards spearheaded the successful effort in Congress to add \$2.5 billion to the original Administration request for the 2006 VA health care budget. In that fight he repeatedly pointed out that the VA was underestimating the number of Iraqi and Afghanistan war veterans needing VA health care. After initially opposing his efforts, the Administration admitted VA health care needed the additional funds to prevent serious cuts in veterans' health care.

"It has been understandably difficult for the Veterans Administration to accurately project during a time of war the net increase of approximately 250,000 veterans needing VA care each year, and I intend to work closely with the VA leadership in the months ahead to ensure that America's veterans are not short-changed when it comes to their health care," concluded Edwards.

The bill is expected to pass the U.S. House next week and be sent to the U.S. Senate.

Edwards represents the 17th district of Texas in Congress.

Edwards Votes To Block UAE Port Deal

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Representative Chet Edwards today joined his colleagues on the House Appropriations Committee in supporting an amendment to block the sale of U.S. seaports to Dubai Ports World run by the government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The bipartisan amendment passed overwhelmingly as part of the \$92 billion emergency supplemental bill, which includes funds for Iraq and hurricane relief.

"The UAE recognized the Taliban but not Israel. Two of the 9-11 hijackers were from the UAE. These facts raise deep concerns about the deal," said Edwards. "Yesterday, I supported passage of the Patriot Act because defending our home-

land should be our nation's top priority. I voted for this prohibition because I believe it will also advance the goal of protecting our homeland from terrorism," said Edwards.

Edwards initiated the effort three years ago to add \$84 million dollars to the budget to fund nuclear detection devices at foreign seaports since less than 5% of these containers were inspected. Edwards has also secured \$450,000 the past two years for Texas A&M University to conduct research and coordinate efforts with the U.S. Department of Energy and Russian universities to help curb the proliferation of nuclear materials and weapons across the world.

'Impeach Bush' Calls Grow 5 Vermont Towns Pass Resolutions

NEWFANE, Vt. — Five towns in Vermont last Tuesday passed resolutions calling for its sole U.S. House representative to file articles of impeachment against President George W. Bush.

The resolution, which passed in Newfane by a vote of 121-29, alleges that Bush lied to the United States citizens about heading into war with Iraq and then okayed an illegal domestic spy program.

At the same time, about four other Vermont towns endorsed similar resolutions last Tuesday, towns such as Brookfield,

Dummerston, Marlboro, and Putney. Newfane's rural population stands at around 1,600.

These towns are the latest in a string of cities nationwide, such as San Francisco, that have the impeachment of President Bush.

Pressure for impeachment, however, has been brewing slowly over the last year. Since the release of the Downing Street memos last year, Rep. John Conyers of Michigan (D-Michigan) launched two unofficial impeachment inquiries into the president's alleged high crimes and misdemeanors, all related to the Iraq war.

Although Conyers has downplayed the pace at which a real impeachment investigation would take place, pundits have still debated whether he would because the representative is in line to head the House Judiciary Committee, where articles of impeachment would originate, if Democrats control the House after the 2006 elections.

So far, roughly 26 of the current 201 House Democrats and 14 candidates aligned with a group of activists called ImpeachPAC support an impeachment inquiry.

The White House's refusal to disclose evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have only served to further inflame these groups in favor of Bush's impeachment.

This evidence may include 3,000 hours of audiotapes in which Saddam Hussein allegedly plans in defense of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq with his Revolutionary Command Council.

Sheehan Arrested Delivering Petition

NEW YORK — Intending to deliver a petition to the U.S. mission to the United Nations, anti-war activist and mother of a slain U.S. soldier Cindy Sheehan was arrested with three other demonstrators in New York last week.

About 20 protestors arrived to deliver the petition, which holds 60,000 signatures of people who want an end to the U.S. occupation of Iraq, but since no one from the mission took it, Sheehan and the others sat down and refused to leave.

Prior to their arrest, the demonstrators met with a group of women from Iraq at a rally at the United Nations in order to support the prevention of a civil war in Iraq. At the U.N. headquarters during a news conference, the Iraqi women thanked President Bush for liberating their country from Saddam Hussein, but asked that U.S. forces leave immediately.

DATELINE:
Crawford
Hometown of the President of the United States

Crawford FFA Benefits From Operation Round Up

CRAWFORD — Members of the Crawford FFA were presented a check for \$250 by McLennan County Electric Company (MCEC) recently as part of the Operation Round Up program.

Operation Round Up is a community service program that was adopted by the Board of Directors of MCEC and began on June 1, 2004. Operation Round up is just what its name implies. Each month, the electric bills of participating members are "rounded up" to the next highest dollar. A \$41.20 or \$41.95 electric bill would be "rounded up" to \$42.00, with the additional amount going into the

McLennan County Electric Trust Fund.

The average cost per member per year will be about \$6.00. These monies are then redistributed to local community organizations in Bell, Bosque, Coryell, Falls, Hamilton, and McLennan County. The intent of the Operation Round Up program is to aid the community and emergency service providers in their efforts to improve the quality of life for our less fortunate neighbors and support each community's health, safety, and well-being.

"As a cooperative committed to community involvement and customer focus, we are excited here at MCEC to find an effective and easy way to improve the quality of life within our community," reports MCEC personnel. "This program is the perfect way to put our co-op vision into action."



OPERATION ROUND-UP DONATION

A RECENT OPERATION ROUND UP DONATION check from McLennan County Electric Company in the amount of \$250 was presented to members of the Crawford FFA including (from left) Austin Behringer, Art Hunter, Bailey Witt, Cody Stevens, and Operation Round Up Board Members, Damon Boniface, Veronica Grusendorf, and Paul Edge.

Obituaries

Joe Reed Street

Joe Reed Street passed away on Tuesday, March 7, after several months of illness. Funeral services were held on Monday, March 13, at the Rhoton Funeral Home in Carrollton, with interment in Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery. Officiating are Dr. Ron McKinney of Dalton, Ga. and Dr. Sidney Roberts of Hurst.

Street was born on Jan. 6, 1924 in Ennis, to Forrest Crockett and Mary Margaret Cosgrove Street. After growing up in Troy and graduating in January 1941 from Crawford High School, he attended Baylor University from 1941 to 1943 and Mississippi College from 1943 to 1944.

In 1942, he enlisted in the Navy and attended Midshipman school in Plattsburgh, NY, attaining the rank of Ensign and later Lieutenant JG. During active duty he served in the Pacific/Philippine Theatre. He was commanding officer of LCT-1239. His divers participated in the recovery of silver bouillon dumped into Manila Bay by General MacArthur upon his departure.

Street graduated from Texas A&M in 1949 with a BS in Electrical Engineering. He was employed by Texas Employers Insurance Association and later principal of Street & Associates Insurance Agency, Inc.

He and his wife Betty recently observed their 60th wedding anniversary. Street initiated the Volunteers in Patrol organization in connection with the Hockaday Neighborhood Association in 1994. He was a member of the Cornerstone Baptist Church in Wylie.

Street was preceded in death by his parents and sister Martha Louise Street Garrett.

He is survived by his wife Betty Jo Street; son and daughter-in-law, Wilson and Pamela Street; daughter and son-in-law, Haven and Henry Allen; daughter and son-in-law, Carol and Stacy Beakes; grandson and wife, Nathan and Jessica Allen; grandsons Spencer and John Beakes; brother, Dr. Robert L. Street; niece, Dr. Patricia Blakeney; and five nephews.

Donations may be made to Cornerstone Baptist Church in Wylie, or an organization of choice.

RSVP Program Needs Volunteers

WACO —Heart of Texas Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) is seeking volunteers for work with the Food Stamp Outreach Program.

RSVP is a state and nationally funded program by the Corporation for National and Community Service,

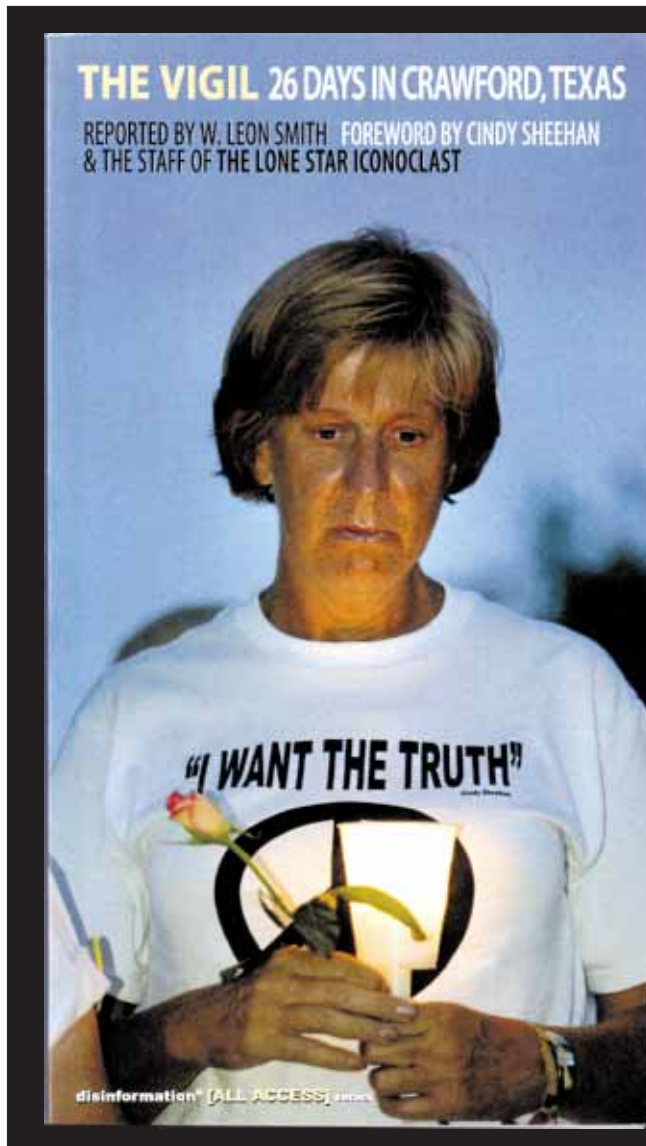
Texas Department on Aging and locally sponsored by McLennan Community College.

The Food Stamp program will require the volunteer to unite possible and eligible clients with the necessary paper work to help them apply

for Food Stamp Services, according to a spokesman.

Several sites need to be visited on a regular on-going basis and training is provided.

For more information, call 254-299-8766.



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THE VIGIL

In August of 2005, a grieving mother and her supporters laid siege to Crawford, Texas. Cindy Sheehan set up camp outside of President Bush's ranch, determined to find some answers. For 26 days, all eyes were on Camp Casey.

At the center of it all was Crawford's own *Lone Star Iconoclast*. In the heart of the reddest of Red States, *The Iconoclast* found itself caught between the public's (deeply conservative) expectations, and the paper's publisher, W. Leon Smith's, sense of journalistic duty to report objectively. **THE VIGIL** is an invaluable record of *The Iconoclast's* coverage, with Sheehan herself providing a scene-setting foreword.

The result is a high stakes, blow-by-blow account of the events as they unfolded. You experience this vigil right along with the writers and participants: the heat, the fire ants, the gunplay, the celebrity appearances, and the intense emotional rollercoaster that has yet to end. Smith and his crew demonstrated a level of professional virtue that—to quote Sheehan herself—"shines like a lone spark of integrity in the prairie darkness."

Enough To Fill The Nuremburg Amphitheater

As Uncle Hugh used to say, "A truly successful outlaw needs guile, cunning and a job in a bank."

We Texans owe about 5,000 people in Arlington, Texas, a beer.

They have rid this state of one Kent Grusendorf, Oberleutnant of the Stadt Haus Ausbildung Komintern, otherwise known as the Texas House Education Committee.

Grusendorf's education reform agenda includes paying teachers in script and requiring them to chop stovewood, sending the "good" students (as determined by some mystical star chamber proceedings revealed only to the Grand Order of Important People) to private schools on the taxpayer's nickel while cutting education funding back to Depression Era levels.

Can't imagine how this clown got elected?

Never lived in Arlington, Texas, have you?

More velvet paintings, vinyl furniture and dual CB antennae pickups per capita than a state that does not list tobacco as a major food group.

He lost to Dr. Diane Patrick, a UTA professor and school board member who successfully donned the required Texas political mantle of "Cunservtive Ruhpublikin."

In other words, she acted stupid. Note, I did not say, "She acted stupid-ly."

It's just that in the Dallas suburbs, one cannot appear too intelligent, lest you lose connection with the worker-ant mentality that would owe a quarter-million dollars to sleep nightly ten feet away from their neighbors in a brick veneer tornado trap, then count themselves wealthy enough to vote Republican.

Patrick did mount a coalition of parents and teachers to prove, once

Call To Mind

By Don M. Fisher



again, that we win elections in this country one box at a time.

Except in Florida or Ohio.

But Patrick is a real Republican, as opposed to a Bush Republican.

That would be the difference between Jay Gould and Benito Mussolini.

But there may be more at work here than mere weedy roots politics.

Back when Texas was a Solid South one-party state, the Republicans who voted in their own primaries couldn't have filled the "colored only" restroom in the Muleshoe courthouse.

Instead, they crossed over, picking dufuses (Or should the plural of "dufus" be "dufi?") like Alan Shivers or Coke Stevenson (Look 'em up if you care that much. I ain't got the space to complete the education of every Yankee who reads such ravings.) then voting for Ike, Nixon or the odd Tower or Bush in the general election (And the evil Dr. Trenchwalker promised me a free manicure if I can get one more parenthetical expression into this paragraph.)

Then the state filled up with refugees from the Reagan-Bush dust bowls, and all the thick-skulled, beetle-browed, gap-toothed Yuppies who refused to wake up when it was *really* morning in America and learn

we'd all spent the night in the political and economic dumpster outside the Petroleum Club, moved to Texas and voted for Dick Armev.

All Karl Rove had to do was marry them to the fish-dynamiters and snake handlers that Texas produces in greater abundance than prickly pear, and he had himself enough red voters to fill the Nuremburg amphitheater.

It was as simple to sell the voters a dried out simpleton who'd failed at everything but watching baseball as to sell the village idiot a bois d' arc plowhorse.

Now it's Greasy Grusendorf's turn. Could it be that a significant number of Democrats crossed the primary meridian to help bury the Ayatollah of Ignorance?

All that remains is the proverbial question: If Texas is, at its political heart, so venal, how was it so Democratic for so long.

The answer lies in the death of history.

The passing of the last generation with a direct, human connection to the War Between the States resulted in a political disconnect with the true nature of the Republican Party.

It is a nature that neither Diane Patrick nor Kent Grusendorf that not even George W. Bush has the political power or resolve to alter.

This is the party that is so insistent on enforcing its will that it would cast a million and a half of the nation's young into a buzz saw, then was unable and still unwilling to extract them from it, rather than exercise America's most enduring talent: compromise.

This country was and is made of compromise.

Casting aside trust in that heritage, the Republican Party chose to force its intentions on its opposition, then rewrite history to disguise that bitter carnage as a struggle for freedom.

If it were so, why then a century and six decades later are so many still unfree?

The Republican Party has presided over a hateful totalitarian idealism that has vilified half this nation and instilled an unmitigated, self-righteous arrogance in the rest of us.

Republicans first painted Southerners with the broad brush of bigotry, then exploited that very prejudice for its own political ends. It has played on a divisive, phony racist apprehension between the wage-impooverished who otherwise would have made extinct the privileged elite who own the party.

That same malignant uncompromising philosophy has been so forced

into our consciousness that we readily extend it to any among us who live or believe outside the propagandized norm.

It is the philosophy of wealth and privilege that promises the popular whim and blames the advocates freedom for the failures to deliver the bread and circuses.

I am the grandson of two Confederate soldiers and the great-grandson of abolitionists. I adhere to a lineage that has hated slavery since we have been aware of it. Only the rapacious gentry is more reviled.

We were Americans, but we never took arms against America.

I'm glad we fought against it, I only wish we'd won.

And I do not need no pardon, For anything I done.

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What The Dems Must Do To Win

Pundits are already looking ahead to the 2008 Presidential election, laying the framework for potential candidates that they plan to imbed in our minds.

Television propagandists drone the personae of their finalists for Most-Fun-To-Cover. Career image manufacturers roll packaged candidate news off the assembly line. Lobbyists spread around contributions like off-track hustlers on payday with hot tips on winning candidates.

It is a backdoor nomination process to condition the electorate toward a particular corral of ponies.

Actually, our preference lies with dark horses.

The Democratic Party is fumbling to find its identity. Its leaders are watching what the Republicans are doing in order to find an opening, a guffaw, a blasphemous slip-up.

Neglected is the element of active, continuous statesmanship.

To win in 2008, the party must do several things, and must begin now.

Missed opportunities to do what's right are killing the party. It must stand on principles of truth and freedom, not run scared when the President emcees the latest fear-athon.

The Democrats must find their candidates in the middle of the political spectrum, not at the far left. And these must be upstanding, no-skeletons-in-the-closet types, who have middle-class values yet who can act on behalf of extremists on both the far left and far right, making decisions based upon adherence to the Constitution and to the principles that emphasize truth and freedom.

The single-issue party cells have their place, but these are arguing points, not policy statements. So long as the strident voices of the lunatic fringe like PETA, NORML and advocates who confuse licentiousness with

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Editorial

liberty insist on forcing their narrow agendas on a disinterested public, Democrats are not going to be elected to anything. That may alienate some stalwarts, but it is reality. And where else are the extremists to go? Ralph Nader?

The candidates must not be corporate owned, which leaves out three-fourths of our legislators.

Let's do away with the bad habit of making the White House a kingdom, where certain "families" dominate time and again. Yes, that leaves out Jeb on the Republican side and Hillary on the Democratic side. There are millions of people in this country who could qualify as Presidential material. What are the odds that brothers, a father and son, or a husband and wife would rightly occupy that highest office within a 20-year span of time? Several million to one. Their ascendancy shows a strange lack of leadership depth in our lineup and indicates that something is severely wrong with our nation. Proof is in the pudding. Just look where we are now.

The Democratic strategy has been to sit back and let the Republican house of cards fall, which is happening. Sit back and watch them eat their young.

The guilt of gutting freedom in the United States lies not only with Republicans, but with Democrats who let it happen. Waiting to clean up the mess in the future is nearly as liberal as the Republicans trashing Constitutional freedoms.

Democrats are derided as "liberal" because they believe in conservation, because they dislike the intense record-breaking indebtedness in the name of corporate power brokering, and because they prefer honest elections and adherence to the Constitution.

They voted for an ill-conceived if not immoral war, for an insurance drug scam for the elderly, for a draconian "security" law they didn't even read and for a general export of America's jobs and industrial capabilities so that traitorous corporate thugs from Wal-Mart to Ford can raid our children's piggy banks to avoid paying taxes.

The labels need not be feared, for they mean nothing.

The cowardice of Democrats who valued their offices over their consciences is to be feared

Opportunities to do what's right have been squandered on poll reactions and issue handlers.

Where were the Democrats when independent investigators like Brad Friedman tried to hold the feet of voting machine companies to the fire to force them to hold honest elections?

Nary a voice was heard. Where were the Democrats when the Downing Street memos became known?

Hiding and waiting for the latest poll results.

Where are they now when it is becoming clearer every day that depleted uranium is destroying our planet?

Silent.

To win, Democrats need to find a language that middle-class, heart-and-soul America understands: Stop the war, cut taxes for you whose families must survive on your paychecks, increase your wages, educate your children without sinking them with debt.

In the words of Harry Truman: Be Democrats. If you run a Republican against a Republican, you're probably going to elect a Republican.

Democrats need to disrupt the Republican strategy of keeping the public and elected Democrats focused on non-issues.

If the Democrats want to win, they must capture the middle. Every Democrat left of that middle will vote for the Democrat in the middle.

Simply not being George Bush is hardly an adequate strategy.

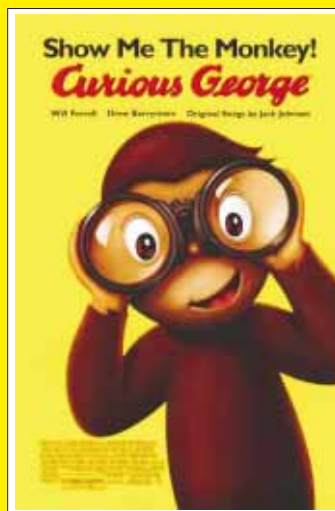
Disgruntled Republicans might even support a candidate, especially a Presidential candidate, who actually tells the truth.

Whoever wins will need to bring a pitchfork and plenty of trash bags.

The stench is starting to set in.

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

Curious George



The man in the yellow hat (Will Farrell) goes to the jungle to find a lost idol. During his misadventures he meets a loveable chimp. His safari into the jungle is less than successful when he finds the Idol is only a few inches tall rather than the anticipated 40 feet. He heads back to New York City, with the Idol in his pocket and a stowaway chimp on the ship. His life will never be the same.

Runtime: 1 hour 30 min.



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Family Road Trip? Make Your Reservations (at the mental institute) Early

By the time you read this, our family will be on its seventh day of a nine-day road trip to California.

This means, by now, I will have been institutionalized somewhere outside of Fresno for almost a week.

Yes, even with 15 years of marriage and 11 years of child rearing under our belts, our combined wisdom as parents couldn't save us from a plan that essentially locks us together with our children for nine days in a confined space roughly the size of an Altoids box.

Let me just say right now that this was my wife's idea, and she can be very persuasive when it comes to talking me into things I wouldn't normally do without consulting (1) a physician, (2) a lawyer, or (3) a micro brewery. In her defense, I did have an opportunity to avoid this situation by presenting my own "better-vacation" idea. And even though I think my idea WAS better, her presentation — which included highlighted maps, visitor's guides and a 10-minute virtual tour over the Internet — was more organized and flashier than my stick-figure



By
**Ned
Hickson**
Siuslaw News

drawing of a man (presumably me) sleeping.

After politely considering my vacation idea (Approximate time: three seconds), my wife added the word "Alone" next to the sleeping, stick-figure man who, at that point, didn't appear to be anyone I knew.

Preparing for a trip like this means determining your priorities.

Obviously, our first priority was to our children, and providing them with an experience that wouldn't include the memory of their parents leaping from the car and running headfirst into oncoming

traffic along the Santa Monica freeway. Doing this meant coming up with ideas to keep our children happy and content during those long hours they'd be spending in the back seat fighting over who has the larger half. We considered renting a fancy van with a DVD player and video games, but quickly realized it would defeat the point taking a road trip since, once we got to our destination, neither of our children would want to leave the van.

So, after coming up some alternative ideas to keep our children occupied, we decided to test them out during a short, two-hour trip before our vacation — the thought being that we could take what we learned from that trip and apply it to our California road trip.

One of the things we learned was that sedation was pretty much out of the question. Even taken in measured doses, it affected our driving ability too much to be considered a viable alternative. We also discovered that keeping our children occupied by singing songs was a huge mistake. Comparatively speaking, on the

mistake scale, it ranks right up there with the helicopter ejection seat. That's because, eventually, kids' songs have a mind-numbing effect that's even more dangerous than sedatives.

This discovery came an hour into our practice trip, when I suddenly realized I had no memory of the last 40 miles and was absently singing a hybrid-nursery rhyme that included a man named Old McDonald who had a farm. And on that farm he a dog named Bingo, who fell flat on his tuffet after drinking 99 bottles of beer.

However, it is this song that I plan to sing in order to gain admission to that institution located just outside of Fresno, where my stick-figure pictures should go over really well.

And let me just say
Before I go
Eeye, eeye, oh.

(You can write to Ned Hickson at the Fresno Mental Institute at P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR. 97439, or visit his website at <www.nedhickson.net>.)

To Italy, With Amore

A couple of years ago, my wife and I went to France. (In case anyone from the IRS is reading this, obviously, it was not a pleasure trip. I, uh, went there primarily to write some columns about France). Before going, we decided to take French lessons. I had taken French in college, and even though that was a long time ago (I was surprised to learn that France no longer had a King), it came back to me pretty quickly. The idea that I could speak some French made me feel more comfortable before the trip. I didn't want to be an "ugly American" who thinks everyone in the world should speak English. It worked out great. I was able to speak with some of the French people I met, and I wrote a couple of columns based on my conversations with them.

So now that we've started making vague plans about a trip to Italy — as a good place for me to write about — I felt we should take Italian lessons. I believe that when Americans travel, we aren't just seen as tourists — or in my case as a working writer — but we also represent America. The least I could do was make an effort to learn a little of their language.

So, we signed up for Italian classes. But these classes are not like the old-fashioned language classes I was used to. Our Italian class uses the "immersion method." In immersion classes, the teacher speaks almost totally in the foreign language. She doesn't say, "Today we're going to learn how to conjugate the verb 'to be' in Italian." She just starts to conjugate. It's terrifying and frustrating. Supposedly, it's difficult in the beginning, but after a while, it's a much more efficient way to learn a language. Since we're still in the early sessions, all I can say is that it's true that it's frustrating and difficult in the beginning.

When I'm in class, I understand why they call it "immersion." It's because I feel like I'm drowning. I'm gasping for air, I'm confused, I'm disoriented — and I'm actually paying to feel this way.

When our teacher gives us a homework assignment, she gives it to us in Italian, including the page numbers. So I'm furiously flipping through the book, looking for the page that tells me how to



Modern Times
By
**Lloyd
Garver**

saying numbers in Italian while I'm missing out on the specifics of what I'm supposed to do.

I haven't even bought the tickets yet, and I'm already an Ugly American in the classroom. I get angry with the teacher just as many American tourists resent the Italian shopkeeper who speaks rapid Italian to them. But in my case, I know with a certainty that she knows how to speak English, but just doesn't want to. I also know she could speak slower in Italian if she just felt like it. So, what do I do? Just like Ugly Joe American, without any apology, I ask my questions in English. And how does she respond? In Italian. So, I resent her even more.

In other words, this class has had the exact opposite effect than I had hoped. I thought it would make me beloved by every Italian that I ran into. I thought they'd appreciate my ability to order a salad and comment on the weather in their language. I thought they'd have a better feeling for America because of my ability to count to ten in Italian. Instead, I've only met one Italian, and I'm already wondering why she's so anti-American that she refuses to speak English to me.

I don't like this attitude of mine. I don't want to be an "Ugly American" tourist. I don't want to come off as boorish or as if I believe our culture is better than every other culture in the world. I'll leave that to our elected officials.

So it's a race against time. Will I learn Italian well enough to speak it before the process turns me into a complete American "boorist?" It's hard to say. But I've already decided that if I get in a conversation with somebody and I can't understand his or her Italian, I know exactly how I'm going to respond. I'm just going to smile, then ask, "Parlez-vous

Talking About Border Violence

By GREG MOSES
TEXAS CIVIL RIGHTS PROJECT

When you talk about the borderlands, what kind of language do you use? In Washington DC the language of violence is popular this election year. So March roared in like a lion as Senate sub-

**GUEST
COMMENTARY**

committees on immigration and homeland security took testimony from border sheriffs, the border guard union, and federal investigators.

The borderland they say has always been a place of violence, but conflicts are increasing. With big money at stake in smuggling of drugs and people, criminal cartels are shooting it out Godfather-style for control of the Mexican corridor known as "La Plaza."

Besides cocaine and marijuana, border traffic contains larger amounts of methamphetamine, thanks to northern restrictions on sinus medications useful for cooking speed. And human traffic, guided by so-called coyotes, is caught in gang wars where one coyote steals a truck full of people and another coyote attempts to steal it back. In the gunfire, people get killed.

When cargoes of drugs and people are exchanged for cash, the dirty cash has to find a friendly bank. Dirty cash going south is the USA's homegrown contribution to the smuggling trade. Federal investigators call it "bulk cash" and over the past few years, they have "officially reported" capturing 160 million dollars worth of it.

Occasionally, you hear reports of smugglers protected by units of the Mexican military. The border guard union therefore wants to see USA military at the border. It is not unlikely that the borderland will produce military conflict.

In the language of Senate hearings, you hear about a southern land of poison, corruption, and criminals, now

mixed with a tiny percent of infiltrators who may be organized for terror. Yet this language of the Senate chambers is strangely missing a few key words to

describe lessons we should have learned from prohibition. In the Senate chambers they talk about poisons that are coming toward our children from the south, but they never talk about where our children might be getting money to buy those poisons or how children could possibly account for all that dirty cash.

Somehow, in the language of Senate chambers, these almighty dollars fly into the hands of smugglers like miniature magic carpets, never ever touched by northern adults. So hypocrisy is another key word you don't hear in Senate chambers. They would have us believe that criminals all come from the South, that corruption stops at the southern border, and that nobody in the USA ever gets paid to look the other way. It's just a bureaucratic oddity you see, that border guards are required by federal regulations to park—and stay put—in plain sight.

Finally, you don't hear much about the Senate's role in setting conditions of economic hardship, prohibition, or anti-democratic corruption worldwide.

So you don't hear that prohibition could be lifted, that free trade could include free people, or that teeming masses could be massively educated by a federal governments that puts democracy first.

It's always a stash of words that you have to think with, but if you think with the words they are shoving at you from Washington during this election year, you'll never be able to speak about a future of peace at the borderlands.

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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

The One White Man The Comanches Trusted

Taking the trusted Texan at his word that the bargaining session was not a trap, the cautious Comanches met with U.S. negotiators on Mar. 5, 1846.

Seized by Santa Anna's soldiers during their raid on San Antonio in September 1842, Robert Simpson Neighbors spent the next year and a half in a Mexican dungeon. But he recovered from the ordeal in time to accept an appointment in March 1845 as agent to the Tonkawas and Lipan Apaches.

The 29 year old Virginian was the perfect choice for the challenging chore. Along with Sam Houston, he was one of the handful of Texans that believed Indians had any rights at all. While the vast majority of his countrymen viewed the original inhabitants as vermin, Neighbors always treated them as human beings.

The new agent's first assignment was to track down the remaining Tonkawas and to persuade the survivors of the once formidable tribe to adopt an agrarian life style. Caught in the migratory middle between the Comanches in the west and white settlers from the east, they faced inevitable extinction.

Finding and befriending the Tonkawas

This Week In Texas History

By Barte Haile



was surprisingly easy but overcoming their aversion to agriculture proved extremely difficult. The nomadic warriors had only contempt for stay-at-home farmers.

During his extended stay with the tribe, a roving band of 40 Comanches dropped in uninvited. The terrified Tonkawas waited on the haughty visitors hand and foot preparing their meals, watering their horses and offering them the most attractive maidens.

Although the Tonkawas' well-founded fear of their ferocious guests was infectious, Neighbors boldly introduced himself. The Comanche chief proclaimed his burning hatred of all whites but in the next breath professed his undying affection for the agent and his fine fur coat.

Taking the none-too-subtle hint, Neighbors pleased the chief by present-

ing him with the coat as a token of respect. One brave after another expressed admiration for different articles of the agent's clothing until at last he was left with nothing but his shirt.

Impressed by Neighbors' generosity, the Comanches immediately made him a member of the tribe. The comic encounter marked the beginning of a long and historic relationship.

Coinciding with the admission of the Lone Star Republic to the Union in February 1846, two commissioners came to Texas to hammer out a new treaty with the Indians on behalf of the United States government. But the Comanches, whose participation in the peace process was absolutely essential, refused to meet with the negotiators.

Neighbors saved the day by personally guaranteeing the safety of his skeptical friends. Putting their faith in the straight-talking agent, the Comanches attended a four-day get-acquainted session at the peak six miles from present-day Granbury which still bears their name.

Ten tribes — the Ionies, Keechies, Wacos, Lipans, Tawacanos, Anadarkos, Wichitas, Tonkawas, and Caddos, as well as the Comanches — were on hand two

months later for the final round of negotiations. The standard treaty, full of flowery phrases about the peaceful coexistence of red and white, was signed on May 15, 1846, near the banks of the Brazos south of modern Waco.

Neighbors took a delegation of Texas chiefs on the mandatory guided tour of Washington, D.C. designed to impress the supposedly simple savages with the power and majesty of the federal father. When the bored tourists asked to cut the trip short and head for home, the agent was happy to honor their polite request.

According to the terms of the treaty, the tribes that signed on the dotted line were entitled to an annual giveaway of \$10,000 in assorted goods. On the day the first payment came due, 3,000 Indians descended upon the designated trading post.

There was one small problem. Congress, in its usual haste to adjourn, had neglected to appropriate the necessary funds. The owner of the inundated post, who undoubtedly was scared out of his wits, tried his best to explain the bureaucratic bungle to the disappointed chiefs.

They informed the trader that since his skin was the same color as the men who made the promise, he would be held responsible for keeping it. The Indians gave him three days to come up with the goods.

The hostage, which was the only way to describe the miserable merchant's status, contacted Agent Neighbors, who in turn got off an emergency telegram to the Washington office of Senator Houston. Sam was quick to respond and on his own authority told the trader to go ahead and give the irate Indians whatever they wanted.

As much as most Texans hated to admit, there were times when "Indian lovers" like Robert Simpson Neighbors sure came in handy.

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

Houston Travel Madness

We recently returned from Houston, a brief trip to attend a family event. As my daughter says, "Mom, you really need to get out more." The traffic and crowds in Houston made me deliriously happy to return home to our little ranch in our little town. It didn't help that this weekend was the All-Star Basketball game in Houston. (At least I think that's what it's called. "I don't follow sports," she said smugly). Anyway, the population and traffic swelled to gargantuan proportions, way worse than the usual big city reality.

Thankfully, we left before the game started, well before most of last night's late night revelers even awoke. There were parties all weekend, including a real big one (1500 - 2000 in some lounge) last night at our hotel, the Hilton Post Oak. The rooms were booked to capacity all weekend. It was a zoo, and like being dropped into some kind of cultural other dimension/nether world. Anyone not in town for the Big Festivities (like us) stuck out like a sore thumb. The traffic was horrible, gridlock, and I hear it was even worse at the downtown area. It took hours to go anywhere in a car. Yeah, I sure miss the excitement of the big cities. NOT.

I don't know where all the money that fuels these kinds of events comes from. Mostly "kids" fly in from all over the place, shop at Gucci and Tiffany, rent pricey hotel rooms, limos and often women. They take cabs, eat out, hit the bars, party all night, drink good liquor, and buy expensive tickets to pre game parties and the game itself. What theater! How does anyone afford this?

We walked (in cold, gusty wind) several long blocks to the Galleria on Saturday afternoon. The volume of pedestrian traffic inside the mall rivaled the vehicular traffic on the streets (regular cars and trucks plus a vast assortment of stretch limos, a stretch bus, stretch and regular Hummers, Jags, Porsches, Rolls Royces,

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.

Bentleys, etc. I thought I was back in New York or Miami. It was difficult to walk in the mall, because the crowd was so dense. We finally ducked into a Barnes and Noble on the walk home. Zach predicted it would be the only empty establishment in the area, and he was right. Reading definitely wasn't a top priority for the majority of Houston tourists this weekend.

At the airport, we watched government employees justify their jobs thwarting terrorist activity. They performed a random search on a woman who had to be over 80 years old and obviously arthritic. I guess their bosses tell these homeland security employees to throw in at least one or two ridiculous choices every few hours to avoid being accused of profiling.

They even searched ME at the small airport from which we departed. —Me!!! OK, I guess they're just doing their jobs. And of course I want to be safe in the air. But can any of this possibly be of any real help? The shoe removal scene looks like some kind of bizarre science fiction. (Metallic, monotone voice: "Move slowly through the line. Show your photo ID. Take all laptops from their cases. Discard all lighters. Remove your shoes and clothing. Walk naked, single file, one at a time through the metal detector. Deposit all gold teeth in the container at the right").

This is so ridiculous, and there's something completely unnerving in the

similarity between being herded into the restricted airport lounge these days and the Nazi death camp gas chambers. Airports in this country are turning into what looks like futuristic movie fodder that was conceived about 1940 and only now being made public. But who could have made this stuff up?

The announcements (that cause me to shake my head each time I fly) still run something like, "Blah, blah, blah, and any jokes, remarks or impure thoughts detected by the thought police — who are dressed in plain clothes and walking undetected in your midst at this very moment — may result in your arrest and imprisonment. . . ." It really does feel like a police state controlled by idiots and staffed by frustrated, power hungry little people, the kind who probably go home and kick the cat.

In a way, the "trained security personnel" make me as nervous and uneasy as the possible terrorist in our midst. You don't dare say a word about anything while going through the security checkpoint. Surely there's a better, more efficient, humane, sensible, sane way. But no, what was I thinking? I forget, this layer of government and additional payroll has already been added, and people are making money off of it at various levels.

Just think of the orders to various businesses for equipment, both the sophisticated X-ray and metal detecting machines and things like the trays in which to place our shoes. There's probably even a brisk black market business in gently used manicure scissors and lighters that have been confiscated over the last few years. (Didn't you ever wonder where all those things GO?) Our taxpayer dollars are hard at work providing many unnecessary jobs. (I'm not saying they're ALL unnecessary). Like so many other layers of government, this one will probably be with us in perpetuity, whether it works or not.

'The Odd Couple' Coming In March

WACO — Waco Civic Center will present *The Odd Couple* beginning March 24 at 7:30 p.m. Performances will take place on March 24, 25, 31, April 1 at 7:30 p.m. and March 26 at 2:30 p.m.

Felix, the neatest man in the world, moves in with Oscar, the world's biggest slob. As these two divorced men try to make a home together, they begin to get on each other's nerves as the patterns of their own disastrous marriages begin to reappear in this arrangement. Can their friendship survive the battle between cigar smoke and air freshener?

The Odd Couple is appropriate for PG audiences. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors and can be reserved by calling the box office at 254.776.1591.

"You will not want to miss this exciting production," said organizers, "which is made possible by the generous support of the Season Partners of the Waco Civic Theatre," which includes A1 Banner & Sign Co.; Authentic Granite & Marble, Bloomingal's; Culligan; Professional Building Maintenance Service; THE WACO CITIZEN; and WACO TRIBUNE-HERALD.

So, Who Cares About Apathy Anyway?

So, this year's primary elections have just ended. And I have to say, being a reporter covering this area's local elections for the first time has been quite an experience. I've never seen so many white people as happy to have been given a passive, unenthusiastic half-nod of the head. I am amazed at how disengaging our brand of (mostly) Republican politics can be. Oh, don't hate me. I just call it like I see it. And if the official results of last night's vote are any measure, 94.97% of my county agrees.

Okay, so there is always something to be said of low voter turnout. Most folks are just sick of the games being played with our tax dollars. And I cannot fault our local politicians for that; at least, not entirely. We've got a pseudo-fascist flinging money, blood and oil around in Washington like a child hitting himself on the head with a rattle. And our governor, whom I can only think to refer to as Jeremy Hilary Boob, Ph.D (c'mon, you've seen *Yellow Submarine* - The Nowhere Man???), cannot seem to accomplish anything with his own roadies running the circus.

Damnit, we need to shake things up a bit.

Now, hear me out. We live in Texas. By very definition, we are weird, and most of us are quite proud of that fact. I have called this state my home since I was born. The word Texas, interestingly enough, is not of Spanish origin. It comes from the Hasini Indian word "tejas," which means friends. That being said, we don't have very many of them right now.

We're first in executions, property taxes and toll roads. Seventeen percent of Texans live below the poverty line. Worse still, that number accounts for 10 full percent of the nation's poorest. And like a rotten olive on top of a sludge sunday, we've found our way to the bottom of the education racket.



The Webster Retort

By
Stephen
Webster

Texas schools are an embarrassment, and the good teachers are bailing out en masse. And who could blame them? Gov. Boob is about as effective as a rodeo clown with no makeup or legs!

Until I reached my 20s, I was never very proud to call myself a Texan. I could not read this land's subtext. I failed to appreciate the strange charm of a hot summer night amongst the cicada calls and highway traffic. I've always liked pecans, but I've never appreciated cracking 'em. And those roadside outposts we call towns ... well, I spent most of my childhood bouncing between several of those.

Months ago, I attended a Kinky Friedman campaign rally in Ft. Worth. I came away with a smile and a T-shirt, knowing full well that Kinky is the man for the job. Though, it should be said that it is easy to persuade a thirsty man with a glass of water.

Let's be perfectly honest here: I am a liberal, straight up, with a shot of whiskey. I do not like the parties, though, and I hate inflated government pork-barrel spending. I say, a man can't survive unless he learns to balance his checkbook. You could say I was pre-conditioned to like Kinky, even though I disagree with about half of his opinions on the issues.

For instance ... The guy voted for Bush in 2000 and 2004, supports placing religious artifacts in government buildings ("We'll call 'em the 10 Suggestions"), wants to construct a wall between Texas and Mexico, and has been quite fuzzy on whether he supports a woman's right to



choose. So, he straddles the divide on different issues than I, but that is *still* okay with me. One thing we do agree on is the monopoly both parties have on this process.

Texas politics are governed by the Three P's: Party People Pay. Just like that, they're on the ballot. Independent candidates for Governor are forced to collect over 45,000 signatures from registered voters over the course of two months. To make things more complicated, those signing the petition cannot have voted in the primaries. But, for better or worse, nobody cared enough to vote in those.

It is not often that a politician says something like, "We have a government of the money, by the money and for the money. That's not the American dream." Honesty of that caliber is a rare commodity. Any man willing to stand in front of the press and stick his finger directly

in the eye of our national oligarchy is good enough to get not just my vote, but my signature and personal endorsement. C'mon folks, sign The Kinkster's petition! How hard could it be? You can find the petition drive location nearest to you on the web at <KinkyFriedman.com>.

As Friedman says, "Why the Hell Not?" If you can think of a good answer to that question, congratulations: you're a bigger nerd than I.

Stephen Webster is an Investigative Reporter and Syndicated Columnist with The News Connection, a Staff Columnist with George W. Bush's hometown weekly The Lone Star Iconoclast, and a former Contributor to The Dallas Morning News' Science & Technology section. For more of Webster's musings, visit GonzoMuckraker.BlogSpot.com.

Maybe Non-Voters Have Good Reasons?

I'm getting a bit weary of the "holier than thou" letters that are prejudging non-voters in a negative light. Because of the absurd and party racist laws governing the state of Texas, those voters who want government reform by voting in more ethical and talented Independent candidates have little choice of voting in primaries. The Texas law states that voters who opt to support and sign a petition of signatures for an Independent candidate are PROHIBITED from voting in either the Republican or Democrat primaries. While voting turnout is generally low anyway, I know that these laws interfered with more people voting in this year's primaries.

As a Republican who always votes in a major or minor election, this year I want to support and vote for Carole Keeton Strayhorn for Governor.

I believe in order to promote positive change in Texas it is imperative that we vote-out incumbent Rick Perry as governor so that positive government change will flow from top down.

Since the laws in Texas obviously were



Commentary

By
Peter
Stern

written to protect Republicans and Democrats, in order to sign Strayhorn's petition so that she may get the 45,000 signatures needed for placement on the ballot as an Independent, I was prohibited by state law from voting in my party's primary.

I'm sure I'm NOT alone in NOT voting for a GOOD reason!

If all those folks complaining about low voter turnout want more people to vote, perhaps they need to get the party-biased and antiquated laws changed so Texas voters aren't penalized for supporting alternative positive Independent candidates and for wanting positive change in our government.

Peter Stern of Driftwood, Texas is a political writer well-known and published frequently throughout the Texas community and nationwide. He is a Viet-

nam-era Disabled Veteran and holds three post-graduate degrees. You may contact Peter Stern at: <pstern@austin.rr.com>.



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Football Is Life? Bah! Humbug!



Out Of The Blue

By
Jerry
Tenuto

The reason, I suspect, why so many football fans find baseball “too slow” is that the concentration factor makes their heads hurt.

As difficult as it is to be accomplished at baseball, most players and coaches seem to be lightheartedly philosophical. Generally speaking, they kind of take it in stride that a guy only has so many playing days in him, and once those have been used up it's time to hang up the bat and glove.

I have never heard a Yogi Berra, a Dusty Baker, any other manager, coach or player equate the game of baseball with life. Sure, there's the slogan, “I Live for This.” Many people have iterated the sentiment of love of the game. Wrigley Field has been referred to as the “Shrine” to the game.

And baseball's been “berry, berry gud” to many guys. Some hang around after the knees go in various field and front office positions; others opt for the broadcast booth. Most, like old soldiers, just fade away.

No sport is life.

Ted Williams knew this when he took time out of his superior baseball career, putting it as well as himself in extreme danger by joining up during World War II.

NFL player Pat Tillman knew this when he joined the U.S. Army after 9/11, leaving behind a multi-million-dollar contract with the Arizona Cardinals to serve his country.

He believed there was far more to life than football. So much so, he trained to be the best of the best — a Ranger.

For his efforts, his diligence, his patriotism, Pat Tillman was slaughtered by his own unit. Now, friendly fire deaths are most often the result of misplaced artillery, mortar or airstrike ordnance, originating from a site unseen by the receiver.

This was not the case with Cpl. Tillman. He was in plain view of his own platoon, huddled behind a rock with them on his clear side.

I wrote about the travesty of Pat Tillman's death, its immediate and subsequent cover-ups, first by his unit then

by the U.S. Army, right here in the May 11, 2005 issue (“Military Follies”). Now, four investigations later, following continued pressure from his survivors, the Army has announced it is re-opening the case for a fifth look into the incident.

Well, if I were to hold my breath for truth from any branch of the Military the result would probably be permanent blindness (which, due to a lack of funds, would not be treatable at a VA hospital).

As I am writing this, Dark Lord the Dick Cheney is being beamed to America (and the World, I suppose) via C-Span after crawling out of his secret bunker to speechify at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee. It frightens me when a Jewish organization consorts with the likes of Cheney, because it's doubtful that deep in his heart he's even remotely pro-Semitic.

At one point Dark Lord stated in his unemotional monotone, and I quote, “Ladies and gentlemen, one of the basic truths of the world we live in today — George W. Bush is a man of his word.”

Having shivered when he said that, I will write the sentence once more to let it sink in: “Ladies and gentlemen, one of the basic truths of the world we live in today — George W. Bush is a man of his word.”

A basic truth of today's world? A man of his word? When was George W. Bush ever truthful? When did he ever keep his word?

Still, the scariest part came when the audience rose and applauded in blind allegiance. Like a snake oil salesman Cheney's peddling fear of Iran and Hamas to cover what this Jewish organization has forgotten they should really fear — Fascism.

He then used the magic word “democracy,” and everyone dutifully stood and applauded. He reminded those in attendance that George promised to keep Israel a free state — stand, applause. This exercise was repeated with practically every sentence from the side of Dark Lord's mouth.

This was eerily reminiscent of the masses cheering on Der Fuhrer, and underlings such as Albert Speer who would incite crowds praising the accomplishments of Germany's great leader, lined up like lemmings at party rallies that predated that nation's collapse. Only now it's the Jews, the victims, trusting the new purveyors of “Fuhrerprinzip” and other New World Order doublethink mindsets to “trust us.”

According to Cheney's rosy scenario, the Bush-led policies have, in the past five years, infested democracy, sic Bushocracy, into at least four Middle Eastern nations. Thus, thanks to Bushocracy it's spreading like wildfire throughout the region. The audience rose and applauded.

He spoke in mostly simplified gibberish of extremely complex situations, with the preponderance of the truth left out. From Herr Obst Rove on down, this regime is masterful in its non-communicative ability to mention laundry lists of “informational” one-liners, usually at best half-truths, not elaborate on anything at all, yet get the audience to infer by these mere statements that the regime has accomplished, or shall actually do, something of positive note.

To their credit, some of people in the seats were not rising to hail Dark Lord's ideological baloney. These were older individuals who could remember the hor-

rors of the Shoah, and youths who are too smart for Cheney. The major points that most of the others seemed to be missing are that it is not the province of the U.S.A. to ram democracy down the throats of the rest of the world's sovereign nations, nor is democracy the solution for all nations.

And who in the hell are Karl Rove, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice and George W. Bush to think they are the chosen few who should lead the Planet Earth to total democratic unity? Considering that they act far more like totalitarian dictatorial despotic nabobs, possessed of the most callous disregard for human life and suffering, it certainly isn't this gang.

I checked out AIPAC's website. It seemed innocuous enough on the surface, but that worried me a bit. They have no representatives on college campuses, yet there is a strong push to recruit Jewish college students. Why are there no AIPAC people on campuses? Do the schools not want them slinking through the student body?

Or, could it be AIPAC would prefer to avoid the scrutiny of a background check any college would require of an organization requesting bona fide on-campus status?

Between Dark Lord Cheney crawling out to face this group, their overenthusiastic approval of his every utterance, and the huge emphasis on college recruitment sans school sanction, AIPAC has all the earmarks of a Jewish version of the Federalist Society.

The more I scanned the AIPAC website, the stronger the sense that this organization was very big on pressing us into a war footing with Iran. The Dark Lord's speech, which came on the heels of a typically bellicose speech by John Robert Bolton the previous day, was nothing less than a call to arms against Iran. He even included an assurance that the Bush regime had “all the options on the table” to keep Iran in line with whatever the U.S. and Israel demanded.

What's worse, this miniscule segment of the Jewish community gets so much focus in the news that to many Christians, Muslims and others they represent all Jews. Just as the small minority of radical Muslim fanatics become the face of Islam to the uninitiated, so too do these hardcore Right-wing AIPAC members become the face of Judaism.

It wasn't all that long ago that these same putzes used that same “all the options” phrase to let Saddam Hussein know he had better give up his weapons of mass destructions...

So, here we go again, the climate of fear over a situation that is non-existent mixed with rumblings of war to satisfy small interest groups, as an illegal coup d'etat continues along its path of imperialistic Total World Domination.

Meanwhile, King George XLIII and Queen Laura were in India and Pakistan screwing with the delicate balance of worldwide nuclear policy, bringing us ever closer to the brink of total annihilation. I wonder if you caught any of his diarrhea of the mouth. Since all of the photo and sound ops came in the middle of night, America time, we weren't privy to most of them. But here are a few choice tidbits of which I happened to make note:

“Democracy...”

“Freedom...”

“Democracy...”

Continued On Next Page

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What You Can Do March 18

By HADI JAWAD
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

On March 19, the third year of the U.S. attack on Iraq, Americans who feel betrayed by the policies of the Bush Administration, should march in the streets and roadways of the nation.

Holding banners and signs that express their indignation, hope and despair, they should shout their discontent until they are hoarse. In snow and ice, rain or shine, over and over again must we do this if our leaders are to pay attention. It is not only our duty as citizens of a democratic society to question our leaders, it is our moral obligation as human beings to speak for those who cannot. It is also a common sense question of self preservation. The world has become a global village. With our homes as vulnerable straw huts close to each other, to set fire to a neighbor's home and not expect to be consumed by the same fire is to live in delusion.

Both Americans and Iraqis are paying a steep price for the actions of our leaders in Washington and the downward spiral will continue if nothing changes. U.S. casualties are over 2,300 and the tragic figure will continue to rise. Thousands of young American soldiers have been maimed for life. The cost of the war is approaching \$400 billion and will rise \$100 billion every year. The plight of Iraqis is unimaginable: 30,000 dead, according to even George Bush (100,000 according to a 2005 John Hopkins University study), 70 percent unemployment in urban areas, day-long gasoline lines and only a few hours of electricity every day. Living conditions are worse for Iraqis today than under the hated Saddam Hussein.



Hadi Jawad

GUEST COMMENTARY

The sun will soon set on the Bush era, but many answers must be demanded before this administration leaves office: Why did we attack a nation that had no ties to Al Qaeda or 9/11? What made our military planners believe U.S. troops would be greeted by flower throwing Iraqis, that the war would be easily financed by Iraqi oil and would be over in a few months? When no weapons of mass destruction were discovered, by what logic did the stated rationale for declaring war, Iraq's possession of weapons of mass

destruction, become completely irrelevant? What sort of moral gymnastics one has to engage in to accept the death of 100,000 Iraqis as unavoidable road-kill? What role did U.S.-Israeli policy play in the drum beat that led to war against the beleaguered Iraqi people, reeling from 13 years of harsh U.S. backed and instigated U.N. sanctions?

The U.S. has not only lost the battle to win the hearts and mind of Iraqis, it has suffered a military defeat. The U.S. occupation of Iraq is now untenable. The only honorable option left for the U.S. is to consider the wishes of 80 percent of Iraqis who want all foreign troops to leave. History will likely judge Bush, Cheney, Rice and Rumsfeld harshly. It remains to be seen if the American public will demand accountability while they are still alive.

Hadi Jawad is a co-founder of the Crawford Peace House in Crawford, Texas. For more information on the Peace House, visit its website <www.crawfordpeacehouse.org>.

• TENUTO

Continued From Previous Page

"Liberty..."
"Democracy..."
"Free elections..."
"Democracy..."

"See, in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult the propaganda." George W. Bush, on the 2004 campaign trail.

What, exactly, is his "line of work?" Fearless Leader? Dictator? King? Speechifier? (He even sucks at that.)

History has shown us, and we cannot — we must not — close our eyes, our ears, our minds to the fact that the more a "leader" spouts words such as "democracy," "freedom," "liberty," and "free elections," the less those words mean to him. Especially when said "leader" can't lead, and instead is a puppet who was not elected but one installed for name value while others make the decisions.

If you don't know by now that Herr Obst Karl Rove and Dark Lord the Dick Cheney are in charge, you've been in a coma since 2000. Every member of the Republican Party, either currently in an elected position or planning to run for one, is unable to make any decision without clearance from Rove!

A true, honest leader need not repeat the sacred words over and over and over again. A real president just governs by them. This faux president, who thinks he's King George, is unable to govern so it's necessary for him to steal power

while eradicating the rights of good folks as he goes along.

We're supposed to fear the "enemy," unseen and unknown. You know, those rotten "evildoers." The "enemy" and "evildoers" are neither unseen nor unknown — they control our Government.

"Today the world faces a single man armed with weapons of mass destruction, manifesting an aggressive, bullying attitude, who may well plunge the world into chaos and bloodshed if he miscalculates. This person, belligerent, arrogant, and sure of himself, truly is the most dangerous person on Earth. The problem is that his name is George W. Bush, and he is our president..." Jack M. Balkin, Knight Professor of Constitutional Law and the First Amendment, Yale Law School, Sept. 22, 2002 (compliments to Information Clearing House.com)

We, my fellow Americans and citizens of Planet Earth, are sinking rapidly into quicksand while this Fascist Regime continues its imperialistic march toward world domination. Grab onto a tree limb or root or something!

It has been 1,921 days since the Rehnquist Supreme Court illegitimately allowed this takeover of our Government by the RoveBushCheney cabal. It's high time we call for Impeachment, and an end of the entire regime.

(Jerry Tenuto is an erstwhile Philosopher and sometime Educator. A veteran with seven years of service in the U.S.

Silver Blankets

Everyone has vulnerabilities. Silver, for example, harms werewolves. Garlic and sunlight hurt vampires. Frankenstein had problems with fire. The Wicket Witch of the West couldn't stand water.

Good guys have vulnerabilities, too. Superman's nemeses used kryptonite against him. The power ring of the silver age Green Lantern had no effect on the color yellow. Magnets troubled Marvel Comic's Wolverine because of his atomantium-metal skeleton.

And if you want to stress out Dave Chappelle, give him his own sketch comedy show, fame, and \$50 million.

Me? Well, snakes won't work on me because, I mean, hey, do I look like Indiana Jones to you?

If you want to take me out of commission, though, all you need to do is feed me cheese and stop me from taking the kids to the pool, if you catch my drift.

I warn you: it won't be pretty. But there are a lot more other things that scare us white people than milk products.

Clothing, for instance, freaks us out. If you wear baggy pants, you're suspect.

If you wear a turban, you're suspect. If you wear diapers, dude, that's just gross!

Obviously, there's a double standard here because if we were to follow the rule "No white after Labor Day" literally, you'd see a lot more orange-painted white folks.

But what are we afraid of, really?

I mean, are big entertainment companies really afraid of people stealing their movies and music on the Internet? Are big software companies really afraid of people stealing their codes? Are big biogenetic companies really afraid of people stealing their secrets to life?

Oooo! Now we're getting somewhere. It's all about who controls our

The Rubber Cement Index

By Nathan Diebenow



destiny. You know, this whole U.S./U.A.E. port deal controversy is silly in a way because terrorists don't need to bomb a boat or a port to do damage to our economy.

No, all they'd need to do is mess with one or two shipments of our beer and liquor.

That's all. But, of course, the reactions of your typical white American male wouldn't be pretty; they'd probably cheerlead their children to war like it was, well, the last war we fought in Iraq.

And I'm sorry to say to all you American parents that no amount of security can prevent terrorism, especially when the United States sells the most weapons in the world than any other country —

— so why don't we just lite a couple hundred thousand bottle rockets inside the White House while we're at it?

Then again, why don't we save the bottle rockets, stitch together a couple hundred thousand burkas from our security blankets, and mail them to wolf-criers like Ann Coulter and the arms manufacturers that pay them?

Heck, is there a better gift to give in the spirit of International Women's Day?

— that is, other than more rights for more ladies around the globe —

Then again, women don't need another Prince Charming (or even a regular, old frog like me) to kiss them awake.

Just test those apples before you eat them, ladies, because when one of you falls asleep, we all have a tendency to follow suit.

Everyone has vulnerabilities, remember?

The Most Expensive Vote Of All

By TRISH BOWCOCK
SPECIAL TO THE ICONOCLAST

Going to the polls is a life-long tradition. I loved going to the polls.

But, when I moved to Oregon 4½ years ago, I got over it (OK, I do still miss it).

In Oregon we "vote by mail." A really good process once I learned how to do it.

I heard today that President Bush traveled from Washington D.C. to Texas to vote in person.

Not because Texas prohibits vote-by-mail (aka "absentee voting"), but because "he likes to do it."

... Yikes!!! No offense here, but, HELLO!!! To vote in person, President Bush had to order a staff of dozens to jump into a plane to fly him. I have no clue what a staff of dozens costs. Nor do I know what it costs to fly a huge commercial style jet airplane from Washington D.C. to Texas. But I can guess it costs A LOT OF MONEY!

President Bush could have voted in Army, he holds a BS and MA in Communications from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Depending upon your taste in political stew, you can ei-

GUEST COMMENTARY

total private for the cost of a couple of letters via the U.S. Postal Service.

He could have requested a ballot be sent to him (cost of letter — 39¢) and he could have mailed his ballot back, (cost of mail — 39¢).

His 78¢ vote would have been just as valid.

America is in serious financial trouble.

Our President — America's CEO — decides that it is better to pay tens of thousands of dollars versus 78¢ to vote because

"he likes it."

Who pays for this? You and me — Us Americans — \$50,000 (guessing here, folks) or 78¢ to make our President "happy"?

No offense, but I would prefer that we all chip in on a box of chocolates.



Trish Bowcock

ther blame or thank Jerry for his weekly "Out Of The Blue" feature in THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST. Visit his blog BLUE STATE VIEW at illinoiscentral.blogspot.com)



LSI,

I have never had a particularly warm feeling about Texas . . . until now: (re: articles on depleted uranium).

DU of course is a WMD unleashed NOT just by Bush but the Clintonistas as well.

America is taking a huge cerebral shower at the hands of the corporate controlled media, partially at the behest of the Death Star (Bush) that hails from Texas (even the phony Texas come New England drawl is not lost on some of us).

Thank you!

Bjorn Rafto, Fmr US Naval Officer
Dear Editor,

I commend your excellent articles on DU.

Dr.Helen Caldicott is another expert authority on DU.

Perhaps you may consider some articles on - WTC 7 building NYC 911. Imploded by Larry Silverstein. Hunt the Boeing. Pentagon. Reopen911.org. Karl Schwarz 911. Flight 93 Tom Kovach articles. <<http://thewebfairy.com/killtown/pentalawn.html>>, etc., etc.

Respectfully,

John Cameron, Australia.

To The Editor:

Your DU issue was great!

Now I hope you will get onto the 9-11 coverup. potentially much more dangerous. Do you have the guts?

I hope so.

Michael Korn

G'day Leon,

Thanks, mate, for your paper's bold expose of the DU threat.

An Aussie film 'Blowin in the Wind' encompasses this threat, on our shores: <<http://www.bsharp.net.au/htm/the-film.htm>>.

I will email your Lone Star DU articles to the two Australian Senators, Minister of Defence, Senator Hill, and Environment Minister Senator Campbell.

Reading the synopsis of 'Blowin in the Wind' reveals their complicity.

Keep this DU page bumped. <Rense.com> has a direct link.

Yours sincerely,

Rod Strad, Australia

Mr. Smith,

You and your staff deserve the highest awards in journalism for your issue devoted to DU. It puts even Stephen King to shame. I am a Viet Nam vet who suffered no ill effects from Agent Orange that I am aware of but the government's treatment of my comrades was the seminal event which started a critical review of everything I'd been taught in my youth and beyond.

When Major Rokke and then Dr. Durakovich went public it was apparent to me there was a serious problem which was reinforced over time mostly by articles in the foreign press. Then I read an article by Leuren Moret which was published in another distinguished paper, THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY VIEW. This article for the first time described the unequivocal link between the DU and the, by then, catastrophic damage it had done to veterans of the first gulf war and their families.

Each article or interview I have encountered by or with Ms. Moret has been more frightening than the last and the one in your most recent issue was not a dissapointment. I read your first foray into this forbidden subject some time ago.

Even more horrifying was the interview with Dr. Ernest Sternglass which revealed a nearly complete picture of the unimagined nightmare of nuclear radiation /and/ nanoparticles.

There have been credible allegations that your most revered neighbor's learning difficulties were the result of nuclear testing back in the fifties.

It is my sincere hope that your paper will be responsible for forcing this dreadful subject into the mainstream media.

Oddly, on Friday morning I was listening to Don Imus as he was being praised for raising the additional money needed to finish the Fallen Heroes Project when it occurred to me that maybe he had the balls to bring this story mainstream. I drew upon my archive of information on the subject and sent it to him by email with an entreaty to reveal it.

The next morning I found your masterpiece on Jeff Rense. When I had recovered sufficiently from the shock of the additional revelations I took the liberty of sending it on to Imus. We can only hope.

I am, with admiration and heartfelt thanks,

Jeffrey M. Irving

To The Editor:

Problems with port security can be easily corrected.

Just let our Nation manufacture it's own goods.

That would solve most of the problems we have here.

Depending on other countries for goods, not so great.

All our eggs are in one basket....

Give it some thought; you'll come up with plenty of reasons why we should bring manufacturing back to the US.

Bob Sample, Oakridge, Oregon

To The Editor:

You have done a great service to the world by publishing the special issue on depleted uranium. The silence in the mainstream media on this most pressing of issues is tragic and apparently contagious. Thank you for having the courage to give DU the coverage it deserves.

Your choice of interview format was also excellent.

There is no shortage of people with untouchable credentials who are furious about this ongoing travesty.

Please leave the full issue freely available on the Internet for all the world to link to.

Peter Dearman, Taipei, Taiwan

To The Editor:

My Congressman brags about misbehavior. Even after Congress promised to reign in their pork barrel spending, Congressman Chet Edwards recently wrote a boastful article touting the federal tax dollars he procured for McLennan County in the past year. \$1.25 million for Waco International Aviation Park, \$2 million for an Animal Waste Removal Program at Texas A&M, \$1 million to the Waco Police Department, \$1.6 million for renovation and upgrades to Paul Quinn Campus, and \$5.6 million for McLennan County transportation projects. That's \$11.5 million of federal tax dollars spent on local projects.

With each of the 435 House members and 100 Senators doing the same thing, it's no wonder they cannot balance the

budget and have such a growing appetite for taxes. Instead of thanking Chet Edwards, we need to send a strong message that our taxes are too high and we demand fiscal responsibility. Stop approving pork.

Steve Harris, Waco

To The Editor:

I am appalled at this administration's constant lying.

The latest videos of torture are only the tip of the iceberg. The rest has been confiscated and hidden away in secrecy like everthing else related to this administration.

Mister Rumsfeld says they are taught to say they were tortured, trying of course to get us to beleive we don't torture. When if fact they have time and again tried to skirt around the international laws of the Geneva convention. The evidence speaks for itself. For the 30 somthing percent that still support this junta do you realize we are breaking the law?

Do you not know over a 100 prisoners had **DIED** in our custody. Don't tell me they were taught to be killed also. I'm not that gullible.

These so-called "Christians" that support them still are beyond my comprehension.

Have we forgot "for what you do to the least of these you do to me." That included the prisoner incase you can't recall. God help us see the truth even when we were wrong.

Charles Bowen, Sachse, TX

To The Editor:

Keep Um Busy, Smokey Joe!

Personally, I think it is rather silly that the constituents of the 6th District and other Texans rant and rave about the conduct of their Corporate Congressman, Rep. Joe Barton (R-TX). Barton is a career politician and thus obtains funds for re-election from corporations. In return, his contributors receive the protection of the powerful Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. Barton serves a broad spectrum of unethical corporations.

In 1997, when the FDA targeted tobacco, Barton attacked the FDA's Commissioner, David A. Kessler. Admitting defense of the attacks required most of his time, Kessler finally resigned out of frustration.

Barton's press secretary, Ms. Modlin, recently stated that Barton refuses tobacco money. While Barton does not allow direct deposits from RJR or Philip Morris, contributions from all other divisions of the tobacco-executive run RJR-Nabisco, Kraft/Phillip-Morris corporations are greedily accepted.

As for Barton's protection of big oil; in 2005 Barton wrote letters to scientists who see the oil industry and global warming as a threat. As is typical of his defense of unethical corporations, Barton has requested so much information that the scientists have little time to do anything else. This is the same tactic used on Kessler.

It should be clear to the voters of the 6th District that Barton works for unethical and immoral corporations and not for his constituents. It is past time to vote Barton out of office.

Leonard Jensen, Fort Worth

To The Editor:

Sent this memo to Howard Dean:

Why should I send you money???

You don't need me to send money till the Dems already in power start supporting each other. Howard Dean and the Dems couldn't help a real Texan - Rodriquez beat a fake Dem Bush kisser Cuellar. How sorry is that?

Did Pelosi or Hillary show up to help? NO!!!

Also, Houston/Galveston had voting problems AGAIN, in the Republicans favor - AGAIN!!! Imagine that. You fake Dems are just millionaires ripping off poor people for money. You couldn't win a high school election against a tenth grader who isn't elgile to vote.

Oh yeah, why should I vote for Dems who sold us out on war, bankruptcy, health care, veterans benefits, wiretapping, Katrina, port security, outsourcing, insourcing, immigration, pensions, Supreme Court, and the un-patriot act?

And you had the gall to vote yourself a pay raise. Vote yourself fundraising while you're at it, why don't you?!? You sure you Dems aren't closet Republicans?

Karl Rove kicks your sorry asses every election. No amount of money is gonna stop that. Get a job like the rest of us.

Signed,

C. Edwards

Disgusted in Texas

To The Editor:

GREAT EDITION on "depleted uranium." WHAT A NIGHTMARE.

Now that the UAE ports deal may be over, how can we motivate the citizens of the USA to stop this war using similar citizen ire?

In awe of THE LONE STAR ICONOCLAST. Thanks for all you do.

Alexis Barlows, Kansas City

To The Editor:

Time and again House and Senate controlled Repubs blame Democrats for all their mistakes.

Investigation into 9/11 by Re-pubs found our government to be at fault, investigation into Katrina by Re-pubs, found our government to be at fault. Corruption of the Re-pub party out of control.

Tom Delay who is under investigation for money laundering and fraud and five times had his hands slapped by the ethics committee, is re-elected by lock-step Nazi-pub Texans.

President Bush has not vetoed one bill in the 4½ years in office, blaming Congress for slow financing of La, Miss. and Ala. yet signed that very bill.

Now he wants unconstitutional in-line veto, for what?

Billions of U.S. dollars stolen, missing, or misused in 9/11, Katrina, and Iraq and not one investigation by the Re-pubs in to the over-site.

Someone needs to tell Rumsfeld that Iraq does not have enough forces to put down a Civil War. Our ports and borders are still open to terrorists and, to top it off, the Great Deal with India that Bush is patting himself on the back for allows India to make as many nuclear bombs as they wish. For everyone knows that a Democratic society would never sell WMD to other non-Democratic countries. I have a warm fuzzy feeling of safety under this regime.

CeCe

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