



## Coupons! Coupons! Coupons!

June 2010 Coupons



<p><b>\$69.95 Front End Inspection &amp; Alignment PLUS 20% OFF Labor On Repairs If Needed</b> (20% discount applies only to repairs identified in the inspection) If you've been weaving in and out of traffic more than you should, it may be your alignment. This coupon will get you driving on the straight and narrow again! Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 1JUN2010</p>	<p><b>AC Diagnosis FREE When You Do The Repair</b> (or \$25 Off Evacuation and Recharge) Summer is not just a dream you had as a kid. One day the sun will return and you'll find yourself reaching for the AC slider, so you want to make sure it works. This is just what you need to get it checked thoroughly and fixed cheap. Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 2JUN2010</p>
<p><b>Minor Interval Service PLUS Tire Rotate and Balance- ONLY \$54.95</b> (Includes lube, oil, and filter, tire rotation and balance, and more) This offer is for passenger cars with up to 5 quarts conventional oil. Check that window sticker... you know you're overdue for a visit! Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 3JUN2010</p>	<p><b>FREE Minor Interval Service with purchase over \$450</b> (Includes lube, oil, and filter, tire rotation and balance, and more. Up to 5 quarts conventional oil) You just had the big repair done, so now your vehicle is ready to run right. Seems a shame not to get the oil changed while you're here! Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 4JUN2010</p>
<p><b>20% OFF Labor on Recommended Repairs</b> (Applies to items in your service history before 6/1/2010. \$100 maximum coupon value) Remember when we said your rotational control module needed regressing? That was 2008. It's way past time to get it fixed, and this coupon makes it easy! Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 5JUN2010</p>	<p><b>FREE 1-day Car Rental (With any service over \$325)</b> It's hard being without your wheels, and our Courtesy Shuttle can only take you so far. Flip this coupon to your Service Advisor, and he'll set you up in a truly stylin' ride at a price you'll love. Coupons MUST BE PRESENTED BEFORE SERVICE, and CANNOT BE COMBINED with other offers. Sorry, but our coupons are VOID AFTER THE SERVICE IS PERFORMED. 1996 AND NEWER vehicles only. Expires June 30, 2010. Coupon Code 6JUN2010</p>

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## Tom's Tidbits

### **The BP atrocity**

Greetings!

I hate to punish you with back to back anti-corporate rants but I'm even more upset now with the BP oil flood than before. Please correct anyone who uses the word "spill" in conjunction with the Gulf Disaster. "Spill" implies a brief and minor incident with an end, a small accident like tipping over the milk glass at dinner-- don't cry, it's no big deal. Well this event is not a spill! It is a big deal and we should cry! It was no accident and it is not ending yet.

We now have a new gift, courtesy of corporate sociopathy; the damage from the Gulf oil flood won't be fully understood for decades. For now, we get to listen to wealthy criminals in suits dodge responsibility for the worst environmental crime in US history. How can anyone calculate the costs of this nightmare?

What is the value of a human life? 11 people died instantly and more lives are being cut short from this poisoning and its cleanup.

What is the cost of the loss of an entire species? This disaster has disrupted breeding season for well over 80 species. There will be generational carcinogenic and mutagenic impacts for all species exposed, including people.

What price do we place on the loss of a way of life? Families bound to the Gulf for generations will be forced to seek new livelihoods, as will the people around them.

We could face the loss of Florida's coral reefs... our ocean's lungs. Not only do the reefs act as a marine version of the rain forests; they are our ONLY source for some of the high-tech cancer, AIDS, and pain killing drugs we depend on; possibly destroyed forever.

Anyone who knows me knows how much I love Corporations and what they are doing to us economically, politically, morally and physically. The effects, left untreated, will end the American Experiment. A prosperous middle-class never existed before and may not survive now unless the majority gets serious about its survival. Large multinational, board entangled, soulless, corporations with loyalty to nothing but profit are killing us! They don't care about nations, the environment, or individuals. Sadly, billion-dollar corporations care only about their bottom line.

BP can't fix this. Even if BP's intentions were good, it is not possible to fix this. Even if they were willing to write the multitrillion dollar check, money has no equivalent to what has been lost. I believe BP fully deserves the corporate death penalty at a minimum.

Please support responsible businesses!



## What Motivates YOUR Automotive Technician? Compensation Type Can Influence Perception and Performance

By Tom Dwyer

One of the major differences between Tom Dwyer Automotive Services and many other auto repair businesses is the fact that we do not rely on Flat-Rate Compensation for our Technicians. It may not sound significant, but I think it is and I think you should know why. Good income is a critical part of a job, but it's not the only component in a satisfying career.

Technician's wages increased in the 80's and 90's as vehicles became much more technologically challenging. Technicians now needed more than basic electronics and mechanical knowledge; they needed to master the concepts of computer control for each manufacturer's vehicle. The repair industry faced a workforce challenge; finding and maintaining the technicians required to take care of these techno-mobiles. How do new technicians move from the understanding of a lawnmower engine (the basics) to the level of ability to diagnose intermittent, no code, computer control drivability problems (a serious modern challenge)? The industry experienced a major downsizing as technicians unable to keep up with the rapidly changing vehicles dropped out. Goober doesn't work at the fillin' station anymore (no disrespect intended to Goober). Automotive technicians currently rank at the top of the charts for technically challenging careers; equipment, knowledge and synthesis intensive. Wages increased as the pool of skilled professionals dwindled. The vehicles became more expensive and packed with the latest electronic wizardry. There had been a serious shortage of technicians in general, and now especially of those that could quickly and accurately sort out the problems with these pre-OBD II (on board diagnostics first generation 1989 thru 1996) computer control nightmare cars. Shops performing technical repair still battle to keep the best of the best on board. "Unless all you do as a shop is basic maintenance, no real repair of any depth; then the skilled people that have the knowledge are required."

When I say "technician" I'm referring to experienced professionals that perform multi-carline, broad range, mechanical and technical services. Professional technician's expect and deserve good compensation for the demanding work they do. Technicians can be compensated in many ways; you will find hourly, salary, and commission based pay systems or combinations of them out there. "Flat-Rate" is a very common form of commission based compensation. **"I hate Flat-Rate".** I don't like the unintended consequences of Flat-Rate compensation. Production based pay plays a part in the mindset of the Flat-Rate technician, affects the work being done and brings problems to the work environment.

Flat-Rate compensation has been around since before I started turning wrenches in 1975 and seemed to be the most common form of compensation. It is very common for auto dealerships, retail chain service providers, independent facilities and others to pay their technicians Flat-Rate compensation. The system is designed to compensate technicians for the completion of specific labor or technical operations, piece by piece, to build a paycheck. Normally the operations are coded alpha / numerically and there may be little or no description, just a code or category number. Each operation is tracked with the corresponding "book time" used for calculating technician compensation. The estimated times used to calculate Flat-Rate pay are listed in labor estimate data bases like Mitchell, AllData, and Chilton. It's funny that the term "book time" is still used when the book has long faded away in favor of the computer data base estimates.

**Flat Rate technicians are paid using labor guide time estimates not the physical time they've invested.** Labor guide-driven pay systems may benefit the consumer by providing the data for good estimates and some potential price cap effect, but that's not my point. My point is not based on the financial fairness of the system but the negative effects that Flat-Rate pay can have on the technician's job perceptions, responsibilities and performance. Flat-Rate compensation can influence technician motivation, working speed, attention to detail, distractibility, and overall sense of responsibility to client and vehicle. Flat-Rate technicians are, after all, being paid to perform very specific labor operations; they are not being paid for sidetrack details. The Flat-Rate technician is paid for the completion of specific labor operations; PERIOD. The labor guide may dictate that a given alternator replacement requires 1.9 hours to perform. This time estimate will be used for technician wage calculation whether it actually takes the technician .9 hours or 2.9 hours; the mission is clear and the field of vision understandably shrinks. **The quick completion of individual labor operations becomes a focus, potentially at some sacrifice for the broader concept of taking care of someone's vehicle.** Craftsmanship and attention to detail are not rewarded by Flat-Rate compensation. Exactly the opposite effect is reinforced; speed becomes the basis for reward. There are technicians that can work successfully while being paid Flat-Rate but they are the exception.

Flat-Rate pay issues are intensified in businesses with narrow areas of service coverage like tire and brake stores or chain store retailers where their specialization removes responsibility for complete vehicle care. They may not feel responsible to help the client make good,

prioritized decisions based on the knowledge of the condition of the whole vehicle. When you work in a business that doesn't do timing belt replacements, timing belts are not considered; they don't factor into any decisions that are made for sales recommendations. Timing belts can be very expensive, extremely expensive when they fail; before a budget is blown on things that can wait it's best to have the complete list needing consideration presented.

I have jokingly said before: "when you're a left-side of the car, specialized car shop; you can hardly be responsible for any of those pesky right-side details and how they relate to the integrated function of the vehicle can you?" Same for a technician; when you're being paid on Flat-Rate to perform a brake job, understandably you are not going to take time, unpaid, for other work; you need to draw the line somewhere! It is not the Flat-Rate technician's responsibility or concern that work is being performed on a vehicle that is economically totaled; the rolling illusion. (My term "the rolling illusion" describes the vehicle that is being driven despite its dilapidated and potentially unsafe state. The cost to perform a list of needed services and repairs outweighs the value of the vehicle.)

Flat rate makes sense to the numbers crunchers and has been used forever, it's great for businesses; overhead and cost of labor floats with business demand level. You don't pay a flat rate technician whilst he is idle. In fact you can have excess work force; the expense of having two flat rate technicians waiting for work to do is no more expensive for the business than one. When you're "on Flat Rate" you ebb and flow with the business, "no turn no earn". Sometimes there is more work than can be done and at other times you're going home early. There can be slow periods during the year that last for weeks. Flat rate pay competition can cause problems with the staff getting along as well. Competition for the distribution of good paying work can become quite political. These unpredictable pay variables can make it pretty hard on good workers; not the way to keep your best people happy and performing for the long-term.

Good income is an important part of worker satisfaction, but wage is only part of the picture to motivate long term performance and insure a steady competent work force. Everyone prefers to do a good job in a logical context. A professional would not remain happy in an environment that does not provide true value to the client. There is nothing worse than being forced to go thru the motions of an inconsistent, needless or poorly done thing. When things are done right there is a sense of purpose and satisfaction, it's not just about production; it's about value, craftsmanship and using expertise to help others. It is critical and technicians enjoy being involved with a comprehensive process; keeping a trained eye on the vehicle, helping determine the sales recommendations and involvement with the records management. Participation in a meaningful process is more fulfilling than fixing something that breaks and just sending a vehicle back out the door till the next thing fails. Technicians not paid by Flat-Rate are more likely to take the time to perform better service.

I believe working in an environment with steady compensation, an honest mission statement and clear job description serves the client best and can help keep staff loyal and happy. Salary or hourly pay helps reinforce the perception that each (complete) vehicle is our responsibility. Thru Industry leading inspections, honest advice, precise estimates, professional guaranteed service, records management, assuming the responsibility for the complete vehicle and making sure the client understands what is needed; we deliver. It is our job to keep our clients informed; what and when it's time to repair. It is also our job to tell a client when it is time to replace a vehicle and not to repair.

Would you prefer that your automotive service technician be compensated for how fast the work is done or for successful participation in a process with a deeper purpose than just profit?



## Get Ready For PHAME And Fortune

**The only theatrical group in the country for people with disabilities**

Imagine yourself on a stage. You scurry into position with other actors as the house lights dim, the main curtain opens, and a hush falls over the crowd. Suddenly one glaring spotlight slices the dark to fall on... you. The orchestra strikes the first notes of the opening song and you look out at the audience. All eyes are on you as they wait expectantly for you to open the show. Now add a twist... imagine that you have Down syndrome. Or cerebral palsy. Or Lou Gherig's disease, or autism, or that you're blind, or that you have one of the myriad other crippling conditions faced by the actors of PHAME Academy. It takes courage to be a live stage actor, but what kind of courage does THAT require?

As a strong supporter and active participant in the Special Olympics, Carol Stady noticed that many young people who were eligible to participate chose to "sit on the side lines". Drawing on her own professional experience in music, theater, and dance, Carol had the idea for the reluctant sports participants to try live performance instead. Despite the obvious difficulties, December of 1984 saw the premiere of "The Nativity Story" at The Old Church in Portland, featuring an entire cast of special needs performers. The only people more amazed than the audience were the actors themselves, who had discovered talents and abilities they never suspected. That was the beginning of PHAME (Pacific Handicapped Artists, Musicians, and Entertainers), created by Carol to provide art and theater opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

Since that first small performance, an army of students, volunteers, parents, and supporters have brought a new production to the stage every year. While you might expect these to be low-level grade school productions, they aren't. They are full-scale productions of major musicals including *Titanic*, *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and many more. Each show comes complete with full scripts, lavish costumes, and exotic sets. That's where the Tom Dwyer connection comes in... our outreach coordinator, Charles Letherwood, has been working with PHAME since 1998. "I'm responsible for designing and building the sets for the shows. Each show takes about 8 days of construction time. It's impossible to build stage sets of this caliber in that short of time, but the students and volunteers don't know that so they do it anyway. Year after year the curtain opens on an incredible performance. PHAME is like that... when they get the opportunity to try, people find that they're capable of things even they never dreamed were possible."

PHAME Academy has grown beyond just the big annual show, and is currently the only program in the country that offers a full arts curriculum for people with special needs. They offer classes throughout the school year including visual arts, writing, acting, musical presentation, dance, photography, and more. Each term concludes with an "End of Term Recital" that is open to the public. PHAME's Choir performs across the Portland and Vancouver area, and has done performances in Canada and Belgium as well. Amazingly, even after 25 years, PHAME still doesn't have a permanent facility. Instead they offer all their programs from a small room in a church annex in East Portland and rent a large theater for the big show. A long-term home has been a long-term dream for faculty and students alike, but like everything else about PHAME they believe it's a dream that will one day come true.

This year's PHAME production, *Once Upon a Mattress*, is almost ready to open. The final frills are being added to the costumes, the paint is drying on the sets, and the actors are polishing their lines. The curtain rises on Saturday, June 12, at 730pm and Sunday, June 13, at 2pm at the PCC Sylvania Theater. We'd like to invite you to come, help support this sparkling jewel of Portland, and experience a night of theater we promise you'll never forget.



## KIVA Microlending Network

### **Micro-loans making micro-businesses possible**

"In late 2008 I was sitting at the Gym Bar in Cambodia's capital of Phnom Penh, listening to the English Premier league blaring from the ample supply of satellite TV's," said Ian Park, a Tom Dwyer employee. "After a few pints I learned that the people next to me were field organizers for a San Francisco based company called [KIVA](#)." "What's that?" I asked. "It's a micro-finance/credit company based in San Francisco," replied Sanjay (San for short). "We make low-interest loans to poverty-stricken entrepreneurs across Cambodia and around the world." KIVA was sending them out into the rural provinces from Takeo to Ratanakiri to conduct business reviews and gather information on potential borrowers. Over the course of the evening I came to understand their mission and more importantly their impact. From the Jeeps that took them out to the families they dined with, their stories sounded more like a job for Indiana Jones than inner-city accountants, which many later admitted they had previously been on track to become. All shared a fervent passion for what they were doing. I knew they had been bitten by something other than the malaria-ridden mosquitoes this region was rampant with. This group had been struck by the amount of real change they had been tasked to bring to this country. KIVA intended to leave a legacy here... not to teach people to fish, but to help them provide their own bait, poles, and nets to feed them for life."

KIVA offers their micro-loans to businesses in the developing world for a fraction of what traditional banks would charge. They link individual lenders to borrowers in a person-to-person business model, offering loans as small as \$25USD to be repaid as the business matures. Using in-country field workers, KIVA links with micro-finance institutions to seek out people and businesses in need. They post the pictures and profiles to the KIVA.org website and act as a clearing house for charitable giving overseas.

KIVA relies heavily on "*reputational collateral*", the social pressure not to default on a loan, to make its operation successful. Lenders, borrowers, and field workers are all relying on each other for success, honesty and transparency. These characteristics make it possible for loans to be distributed in some of the most corrupt counties- without fail.

KIVA offers a relatively safe and easy way to make real change abroad. The loan repayment rate at KIVA is just shy of 100 percent, with the majority of those loans being closed within 9 to 12 months. A loan of \$25 to a rural farmer in Uganda, or a watch repairman in Cambodia, or anyplace where many live on two dollars per day or less can make all the difference. With a support system of field workers and a network of volunteers from the 1<sup>st</sup> world, KIVA offers something very rare in this day and age; the ability to provide a chance for small gains in places that have been all but forgotten. In many areas where charity is only given with fiduciary or religious caveat's, [KIVA](#) is answering the call for people to improve their standard of living in a dignified manner.



## Shop Talk

### **Plan ahead for summer trips; don't help Murphy's Law ruin your vacation**

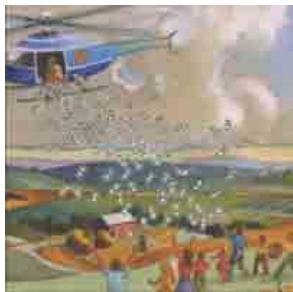
As our existing clients know, Tom Dwyer Automotive Services is not your typical automotive repair shop. We are lucky enough to have many new clients throughout the year, and it's easy to assume that everyone knows all about the individual quirks and features that make us so unique. We're starting this column to answer some of the recurring questions and make sure that everyone has all the information they need to take full advantage of our service. Last month we talked about why we don't wash or vacuum cars (it's for your privacy and security) but offer wash coupons instead, and this month we'd like to talk about why planning ahead for your auto service can make or break your vacation.

Many people are thinking about big summer trips as we enter the summer driving season, and they very prudently want to get their vehicles checked out before they go. We recently had a client who wanted to get his vehicle in on a Thursday before he left for a Friday trip. We may at times be scheduled 2 or 3 days out on our appointment calendar and we were not able to help in this instance, but there are bigger concerns this raised. There can be potential problems with having service done on your vehicle under a tight schedule, or done right before a big trip.

Having the vehicle serviced on a must-deliver-that-day deadline leaves no room if anything goes wrong. Suppose we find the leak that's going to leave you stranded, but it's a two-day repair? There's no time to fix it, much less fix it right. Suppose the faduben modulation control valve breaks, and the nearest replacement has to come from Seattle? Now your car is up on the rack and your vacation plans are morphing.

Hopefully you have never experienced having a vehicle repaired only to find out later that the original problem wasn't fixed or another has developed. That's not something you want to experience on vacation, you should plan time for a good local road-test before heading out of town. Sometimes the parts used in a repair can be defective, but the fault might not show for several days. For example, a replacement alternator may test OK and work fine for days and then fail. Also, there's also the potential we could make a mistake. At Tom Dwyer Automotive Service we work hard to insure this possibility is remote, but if it does our warranty covers you nationwide, but we really don't want you to spend your vacation getting towed into a new town and tracking down a repair shop.

We take in emergencies and break downs without an appointment at any time, but if you have the option you should always schedule as far in advance of your departure date as practical. Having your vehicle serviced 7 to 10 days before a trip would be a good goal. You planed the trip way in advance; plan to have the vehicle serviced way in advance too. When scheduled in advance, there is ample time for parts procurement, services can be completed without pressing deadlines, and the vehicle can be road tested locally long before the vehicle hits the road.



## More Free Money From The State It's still raining MONEY in our soggy state

Clean Energy Works Portland is a pilot program to help up to 500 qualified Portland homes finance and install energy efficiency upgrades. The pilot offers homeowners access to low-cost financing for energy efficiency home improvements, like new insulation or the installation of a high efficiency furnace or water heater. To help decide which upgrades and financing options make sense, participants will receive the assistance of a qualified Energy Advocate throughout the process. If you apply, you can expect to hear within 3-4 weeks, or sooner, whether your home has been accepted into the pilot.

In April 2010 the City of Portland was awarded \$20 million from the US Department of Energy to expand Clean Energy Works beyond Portland. With this additional funding we are working to expand our services to thousands of participants in metro and rural Oregon with this funding. Stay tuned for more details about Clean Energy Works Oregon.

You and your home may qualify for the pilot if:

- You own and live in your home
- Your home is within the City of Portland
- You have lived in your home for at least 12 months
- Your home is a single-family, site-built dwelling
- Your Home is not a mobile or manufactured home
- You heat your home with electricity from Pacific Power or Portland General Electric or with natural gas from NW Natural
- Your home was built before 1993
- Your home is not more than 4,500 square feet in size
- Your home is not on any "historic registry"
- You are ready and willing to make upgrades in the next 60-90 days
- You are not participating in another Energy Trust of Oregon program
- You authorize Clean Energy Works Portland to access your utility usage and payment history, and to perform a credit check

Homes with the greatest potential for energy savings will be given priority for inclusion in the pilot. If you apply, you can expect to hear within 3-4 weeks, or sooner, whether your home has been accepted into the pilot.

Clean Energy Works Portland<sup>SM</sup> participants pay nothing until after their home improvements are completed, when they begin monthly payments on their heating utility bills. The cash incentives Energy Trust offers homeowners through its regular program are used in this program to cover the cost of the home energy assessment and Energy Advocate services. Any remaining incentive is used to lower the amount of the loan. A loan fee is rolled into the loan principal and paid back over the 20-year life of the loan. For more information, click [here](#).

This pilot is small and cannot enroll everyone who may be interested and eligible. Possible future funding may enable more homes to participate beyond the 500 expected in the first pilot.



## Popcorn Shorts

Cool and important stuff that's too short for a big article



### Sticking it to the Man

You may have missed the party, but the fun's still going on. "Move Your Money Day" was Saturday, May 22. Local banks came together in Pioneer Courthouse Square to make it easy for people to move their money from the large, impersonal, corporate juggernaut banks to banks and credit unions based in our community. Why? The six largest US banks now have assets in the trillions... equal to 63% of our exports, consumer, business, and government spending combined! This isn't the sign of a healthy economy!

While these mega banks need to be broken up and regulated, with the congressional corporate whores in control no one expects it to happen soon. In the meantime, there's no reason they need to have your money to play with! Every dime you take from their pockets is a dime that can't be bet on collateralized subprime derivative option trading instruments. And these dimes add up in our community! There is a multiplier effect of money that stays local, as it is spent in local salaries, loans to local businesses, and support for local community life.

While you may have missed the big party at Courthouse Square, the big banks still have your money, they're still abusing it, and you can still make a change. Go to <http://moveyourmoney.info/> for lists of local banks, ratings on their "locality", criteria for evaluating them, brochures on why to move your money, and much more. This is a way to literally "vote with your dollars" that you should really consider!



### Real, Live Art In Lake Oswego

Like art? Here's a chance to pick up some gorgeous pieces at reasonable prices. The 41st Buffalo Grass Society Sale will take place on Sunday, June 6, from 1 PM to 5 PM in Lake Oswego at the Mt. Park Recreation Center, 2 Mt. Jefferson Terrace in Mountain Park. You'll find original watercolors and mixed-media pieces on just about any subject by some of the finest artists in the area. One of the displaying artists, Vicki Mintkeski, has been a Dwyer client for many years (that's her painting of "Backyard Beauties" pictured above.) She has a section in the Portland Art Museum's Artist Directory at <http://portlandartmuseum.org/visit/rsg/artists/Vicki-Mintkeski/> where you can see more of her work. If you'd like more details, give Walt Mintkeski a call at 503-984-4136. Come on out for a great day of art!



## Obscene Videos On The BP Disaster are "Must Sees"

In one of the most famous phrases ever taken from a Supreme Court decision, Justice Potter Stewart said he couldn't offer a definition of obscenity, but "I know it when I see it." By that standard, these two live video feeds of oil vomiting into the Gulf of Mexico as a result of BP's disastrous malfeasance are the first obscene videos ever to appear in "Your Car Matters". Enjoy!

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/2010/05/newshour-oil-widget-2-including-spillcam.html>

(Includes the downloadable leak-counter widget with the video. Share it with your friends!)

<http://globalwarming.house.gov/spillcam>

(A video without the widget; on the website of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming)



## Sellwood Bridge Update

Following last month's groundbreaking report on the plastic wrap to keep concrete from falling on fishermen, there's even more to tell you about the Sellwood Bridge this month. Now that Multnomah and Clackamas counties have finally decided to raise \$249 million from vehicle registration fees and gas tax revenues, the Taxpayer Association of Oregon is sponsoring an initiative for the November ballot that would require voter approval of all new vehicle taxes. If the initiative passes and the voters vote thumbs-down on the vehicle fees, then everything except the federal funding would be lost, and our fabled new bridge would be even more of a fable. Click [here](#) to read the full article from the *Daily Journal of Commerce*.

**BONUS UPDATE:** If things seem to move glacially when it comes to the Sellwood Bridge, here's a way to speed it up a little. We found [this posting on YouTube](#) of 5 days in the life of the bridge compressed into 5 minutes. It's a pleasant change.



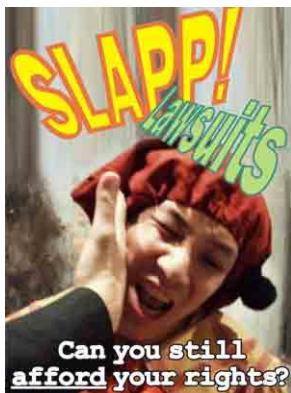
## Drew's Kitchen

### **Sun-Dried Tomato Casserole**

With all the rain we've been having, it may be hard to believe that anything at all can be dried, much less dried by the sun. But Drew's June recipe uses actual tomatoes that are actually dried by the actual sun. Amazing!

(2) 9-oz packages of refrigerated four-cheese or beef ravioli	½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
(½-1) 8oz jar of oil-packed dried tomatoes, drained and chopped	8 eggs, beaten
1 ½ cups shredded cheddar cheese (6 oz)	2 ½ cups milk
1 ½ cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese	1-2 Tbsp snipped fresh basil or Italian flat-leaf parsley

- Grease a 3-quart rectangular or oval baking dish
- Place uncooked ravioli evenly in dish
- Sprinkle evenly with tomatoes
- Top evenly with cheeses; set aside
- Whisk eggs and milk together until combined
- Pour over layers in dish
- Cover, chill overnight
- Preheat oven to 350degrees
- Bake, uncovered, about 40 minutes or until top is golden and center is set
- Let stand 10 minutes before serving
- Sprinkle with basil just before serving
- Makes 12 servings



## News To Make You Furious

Let's suppose you read one of our "News To Make You Furious" sections and get furious. You decide that you're "mad as hell, and you're not going to take it anymore", so you exercise one of those unused Constitutional rights and do something like

- write a letter to a newspaper editor
- circulate a petition
- call a public official
- report police misconduct
- erect a sign or display a banner on your property
- complain to school officials about teacher misconduct or unsafe conditions in the school
- speak at a public meeting
- report unlawful activities
- testify before Congress or state legislatures
- speak as an officer of an active public interest group, or
- file a public interest lawsuit

You may be surprised to find that truth is NOT a complete defense when you are served with a SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) lawsuit. These are frivolous lawsuits designed to make it too expensive to speak out against anyone who can afford to file one. The plaintiff alleges defamation, slander, loss of income, or damages of some type and puts together a suit. The suit is never intended to win on its merits, but to drag on for months or years and bleed the person or organization to death financially. Faced with the possibility of tens of thousands of dollars in lawyer's fees, many people have no choice but to be quiet and get back in line.

### What can you do...

Many states (notably California, and fortunately Oregon) have some type of legislation to protect against SLAPPs, but not all. New legislation being considered by Congress would create federal-level protection, but it's not law yet. There's a surprisingly cheap way to defend against these in the meantime... insurance. A rider that covers SLAPPs can be added to most umbrella insurance policies, but it has to be done before a SLAPP is served. There are several organizations that are forming to fight SLAPPs, and they have great information. Here's all the links you need to find out more than you ever wanted to know...

#### **7 minute audio report from NPR on possible new federal SLAPP legislation**

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125511670>

#### **Anti-Slapp Resources from the First Amendment Project**

<http://www.thefirstamendment.org/antislappresourcecenter.html>

#### **"SLAPP Happy: Corporations That Sue to Shut You Up"**

<http://www.prwatch.org/prissues/1997Q2/slapp.html>

#### **States with anti-SLAPP statutes**

<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/about.aspx?id=13565>

#### **List of some interesting SLAPP cases**

<http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/petition/topic.aspx?topic=slapp>