



This Month's Matters...

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Keith's special-to-us cartoon of the month

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Hop on board! It's not just for Third World countries anymore!

First Time Client Coupon

So your friends can get to know us. Details on our website.





Tom's Tidbits

Get to know the Koch brothers, if you can stomach it.

Greetings!

We have all heard of the Koch brothers by now but how much do you really know about them, their money, [how they got it](#) and [how they use it?](#)

I consider the Koch Industries as enemies of the State; working against Democracy and the freedom of the American people. The Koch brothers are another example of absolute power corrupting absolutely. The Koch family made huge profits working for the Bolsheviks in the late 1920s and early 1930s, building refineries, training Communist engineers and laying down the foundation of Soviet oil infrastructure. The family's initial wealth was not created by creativity and unfettered capitalism, but by the grace of the centrally-planned economy of the Soviet Union.

The comrades were good to the Kochs and today Koch Industries is the second-largest private company in America. With annual revenues of \$100 billion, Charles and David Koch, who are worth about \$20 billion each are infamous as the largest sponsors of right-wing causes. Today, it operates thousands of miles of pipelines in the United States, refines 800,000 barrels of crude oil daily, it buys and sells the most asphalt in the nation, is among the top ten cattle producers, and is among the 50 largest landowners.

William Koch, the third brother who had a falling-out with Charles and David back in the '80s over Charles' sociopathic management style, appeared on ["60 Minutes" in November 2000](#) to tell the world that Koch Industries was a criminal enterprise. In 1999, William decided to take his brothers down. He sued Koch and accused the company of stealing hundreds of millions of dollars in oil from federal lands. The case was settled two years later, with Charles agreeing to pay \$25 million in penalties to the federal government to have the suit dismissed. It turned out to be a great deal for Charles and David, considering that in the 1980s their "adjustments" [allowed Koch Industries](#) to siphon off 300 million gallons of oil without paying. It was pure profit-free money—to the tune of \$230 million.

If you can stomach learning more about the Koch family and their involvement in Fascism in America here are two good places to start:

<http://www.observer.com/2010/daily-transom/how-libertarian-koch-bros-benefit-corporate-welfare>

<http://exiledonline.com/a-peoples-history-of-koch-industries-how-stalin-funded-the-tea-party-movement/>

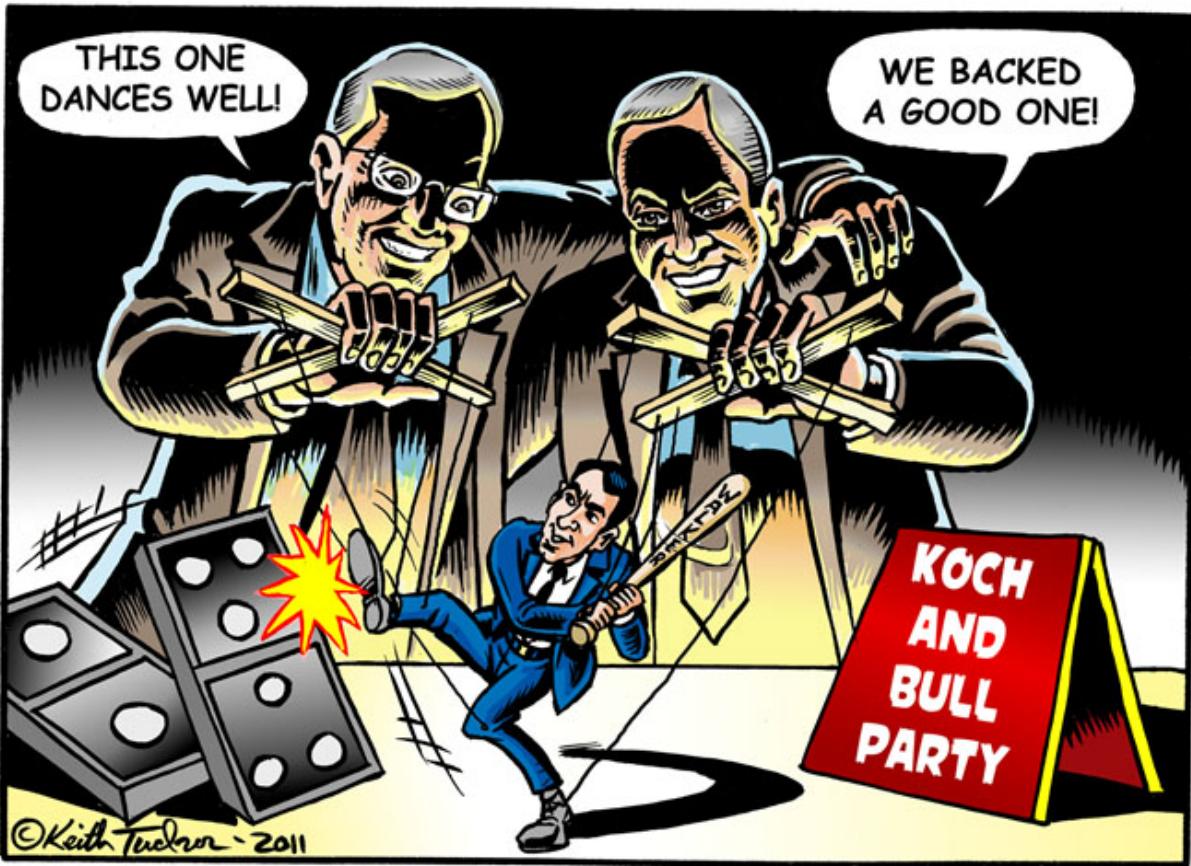
Make a great day,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom".



"What NOW?!!" Toons

Keith Tucker's special-to-us cartoon of the month



"WHAT Now?!!"

© KEITH TUCKER
WWW.WHATNOWTOONS.COM



Drew's Kitchen

Bottom-of-the-box crushed cracker pork

Surprise your family with this easy recipe. Great as a tasty appetizer or add a few sides for a mouth-watering main dish. Kids never seem to tire of this recipe, my nieces and nephews love it every time!

Ingredients:

1 pound pork tenderloin (or sub. chicken breast)	1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 egg, beaten	1 cup finely crushed cheese crackers
1 tablespoon steak sauce	2 tablespoon vegetable oil, divided

Cooking Directions:

- Combine egg, steak sauce and garlic powder in a shallow dish.
- Cut tenderloin crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices. Pound or flatten slices with the heel of your hand to 1/4- inch thickness.
- Dip each slice first into egg mixture, then cracker crumbs, turning to coat.
- Heat one teaspoon of oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat until hot.
- Add half of pork slices and cook 4 to 5 minutes per side or until browned.
- Repeat with remaining oil and pork slices (or use 2 skillets at one time).
- Serves 4.



Health Notes

Neotame is a new spin on toxic AminoSweet. Love it, eat it.

Monsanto, one of the corporate juggernauts responsible for bringing us the things that now pass for food, is back with something new. With their patent running out on Aspartame ([see our News to Make You Furious article "Nothing Sweet about AminoSweet"](#)), they added a molecule to AminoSweet/Aspartame to create Neotame. Neotame is an artificial sweetener that is 7,000 to 13,000 times sweeter than sugar. Sounds good, but let's think about it.

Aspartame, which has been linked to multiple cancers, lupus, multiple sclerosis, memory loss, and more, was only tested by in-house Monsanto labs before being approved by the FDA. Virtually every independent analysis of aspartame not conducted by Monsanto partners has revealed a long list of disturbing side effects. While critics say neotame is even more toxic than aspartame, Monsanto has a great argument: It's less toxic because you need to use so much less to sweeten things, and less poison is less toxic.

Neotame is already jumping into our food supply. With so much less needed to achieve the same sweetness it is cheaper than existing sweeteners, so food producers are already including it in their production. **In fact, Neotame has even been approved for use in certified organic foods!**

There's way too much info to give you in just a short article, so if you're interested in the details of this wonderful new chemical here's just a few places to find out more...

FDA approval for Neotame- <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2011/02/08/neotame-receives-fda-approval-but-is-not-widely-used-yet.aspx>

Neotame approved for organic foods- <http://www.sodahead.com/united-states/monsantos-neotame-molecule-allowed-in-usda-certified-organic-foods/question-1434861/>

Aspartame safety network- <http://www.aspartamesafety.com/web/press-releases/july-2002/>

Neotame website- <http://www.neotame.com/>

Neotame toxicity information center- <http://www.holisticmed.com/neotame/>

Neotame abstract- <http://www.feingold.org/PF/neotame.html>

Dangers of Neotame <http://www.karinya.com/neotame.htm>



A REAL Look Under The Hood

Our proprietary Inspection Process is one reason we're different.

The Auto Repair Industry is full of “free inspections”. “Deals” like free brake inspections, free safety inspections, or the classic “free multipoint inspection” abound. In most cases these inspections are superficial or otherwise less-than-complete. Although there are some good inspection processes, for far too many shops inspections are inconsistent once-overs (they may only look for the things they can sell) offered to get you in the door so you can be sold repairs that, even if they’re needed, may not be the priorities your vehicle has.

Should you trust a “Free Brake Inspection”? What if the vehicle is not road tested, the wheels aren’t pulled off, the rotors are not measured or the calipers are not inspected? Can a technician without ASE-certification give you competent advice about your computer control problems? What kind of in-depth, conscientious evaluation can a technician who is paid flat rate give if he’s not being compensated for his inspection time? We have developed our industry-leading, multi-level inspection processes based on a simple idea:

No one can make intelligent decisions about their vehicle unless they know precise mechanical conditions...

...and a sensible inspection program helps you understand your vehicle’s precise needs and priorities. We have 3 levels of inspection, (as well as a Pre-Purchase Inspection) each designed to play a unique role in mechanical maintenance and upkeep...

40-Point Inspection (Post-Service Checkout)-

We perform a specific critical systems inspection and double-check our work after every vehicle service, but many of our clients don’t even know we do it. Here are just some of the over 40 key points we check: engine oil and other vital fluid levels are checked (and documented if abnormal) and topped off, under-hood inspection, check and replace any lights or signal bulbs (labor free, in most cases), and check and set tire pressures. We even try to make sure your clock is set right. Having another set of eyes on your vehicle is just one more opportunity to reduce errors, and another way to ensure that every vehicle that leaves our shop is in its best possible mechanical condition.

90-point Inspection (Basic Inspection)-

This is our first-level inspection; what many other shops typically call an “in-depth or “multipoint” inspection. An ASE-Certified Technician checks all the major systems of your vehicle that are accessible

without taking things apart or using technical tools. Combined with regular Minor Interval Services and a yearly Comprehensive Inspection, it's a good way to proactively stay on top of your vehicle's needs.

130-point Inspection (Deep Inspection)-

Also called our "Comprehensive Inspection" or "Inspection-For-Repair", this is our Cadillac-level procedure (no pun intended). When we're done, you'll have a complete mechanical picture of your vehicle so you can make informed choices to meet your goals based on your ACTUAL VEHICLE NEEDS. We recommend this inspection to all our New Clients to establish a baseline for their vehicle, and also recommend it be repeated yearly to catch developing problems before they become serious and expensive. Your vehicle will be assigned to an ASE-Certified Technician, who will evaluate the following areas...

- Road Test- 33 points
- Tires- 12 points
- Brakes/Axle- 14 points
- Fluids- 34 points
- Chassis Inspection- 7 points
- Under-hood Inspection- 36 points
- Battery- 6
- Miscellaneous- 10 points

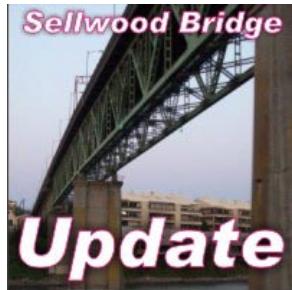
Pre-Purchase Inspection-

We also offer Pre-Purchase Inspections for our clients who are trying to buy a used car with confidence. We use our full Comprehensive Inspection process, with some added concerns and inspection points specific to used cars. You can rest assured that we won't spend your inspection money completing the process if we find a "dealbreaker" problem! We try our best to weed out lemons early on beginning with a data analysis and a parking lot exam to make sure a further inspection is even worth doing at all. For instance, we recommend never buying a car with a reconstructed title! (Reconstructed-title cars have been repaired after being "totalled" in major accidents. Overwhelmingly, these cars look nice but have serious safety, structural, and/or mechanical problems. We will not even inspect or support these cars here at the shop.) A vehicle's title status can show up on our data analysis if selected (Carfax is extra), so if it is questionable at all we'd check with you before going any further. If the vehicle makes it past the data exam and parking lot inspection we move on to the road test and full 130-point list, again stopping if we find a major flaw. If we make it through our entire Pre-Purchase Inspection process, you can be sure you're aware of any issues (not hidden or non-symptomatic at the time of inspection) that your potential new ride might have.

Summary

We have developed these unique, proprietary inspection processes through over 30 years of use and refinement. Our goal is to deliver exactly the services you need to meet your individual vehicle needs and goals, and a rational, consistent inspection program is the best way to do that.

Bad inspections are more than just useless- they can be expensive if you buy a used vehicle that is beyond repair, or even dangerous if you have false peace of mind about a critical system that's actually about to go bad. We want to insure that your budget is directed precisely at your priorities. Our inspection and repair process is designed to give you accurate information so you can drive more safely and confidently, and get the most value from your vehicle maintenance dollars.



Sellwood Bridge Update

The Sellwood Bridge wins an award. No joke!

The lowest rated bridge in the country has been recently honored by the Oregon chapter of American Council of Engineering Companies for engineering excellence. Not for its current condition, of course, but for the reconstruction and planning phase by Colorado-based CH2M HILL, Inc.

http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2011/01/sellwood_bridge_engineering_co.html



Shop Talk

Why don't we pave the lot or wash your car?

For this month's Shop Talk, we thought we'd let you look over our shoulders at a letter we wrote to one of our clients. You probably know about the comment cards we leave in each vehicle after service. (Please fill them out; we actually read them and we care what you have to say!) In filling out their comment card, this client hit on two of the most frequent comments we get...

Dear [REDACTED],

Thanks for your comments on our Post-Service comment card. We're glad you chose us for your vehicle needs, and we hope to continue to earn your loyalty in the future. Your suggestions for improvement hit on two of the most frequent questions we get: paving the lot and washing the cars. We've looked at both these issues in the past, and unfortunately there are roadblocks to doing either one.

Our parking lot is actually the end of SE Tenino Street, and the City has no intention of doing anything to improve the street at their cost. We looked at doing the improvements ourselves, and spent about \$5000 getting engineering estimates to improve it to City code. The cost would have been well over \$60,000.00 in drains, sumps, curbs, etc., which is well beyond our capability. Another complication is the matter of the Sellwood Bridge Project, which could mean changes that would destroy any improvements we made. Finally, although I definitely see the advantages of a paved lot, I have a contempt for pavement in general. There is too much pavement in the world as it is. It keeps water from absorbing into the ground, reflects heat back to our already heat-soaked atmosphere, keeps vegetation from acting as a carbon sink, and adds no beauty.

The obstacles to washing cars are a little different. Because we're so close to the river, we (and the city) closely monitor our discharges. If we washed more than 7 cars a week we'd have to install capture systems for every drop or risk damaging the environment. During the summer months when our parking lot is dustiest we offer free coupons for WashMan, because they've already made the investment to do the cleaning right without environmental damage. Even just vacuuming cars presents problems. Although we used to vacuum, we stopped out of respect for our client's privacy. You wouldn't believe the things people leave in their cars, from fragile breakables to money to weapons. There are also liability and damage issues that outweigh the benefits of a clean carpet.

Although in this case we can't make the changes you suggested, we'd like to thank you for your thoughtful input. I've enclosed a coupon for one of those environmentally proper carwashes at Washman. Please enjoy it with my compliments, and remember there's more for you during this year's Free Carwash Season (May through September). Thank you so much for your continued patronage and support!

Sincerely,



Popcorn Shorts

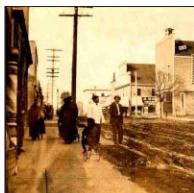
Cool and important stuff that's too short for a big article



How Fast Are We All Becoming Stupid?

Did you know the amount of technical information is doubling every 2 years? This means that for a student starting a 4-year technical degree HALF of what they learn in their first year of study will be outdated by their third year of study? This 5-minute video will blow your mind with a series of statistics telling you exactly how fast the world is leaving us behind. Watch quick; we're getting dumber.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL9Wu2kWwSY>



Archive Pictures Of Old Sellwood

PdxHistory.com is a portal into the past, as immortalized in post cards and pictures. Starting with a few glimpses into Portland History and that of the Oregon Coast, the experiment has grown to include a glimpse into the past for places like New York, Yellowstone, San Francisco and Seattle.

Their goal is to document and create a historical record of times past by sharing something inanimate with you and bringing it to life. History can tell us a story if we let the images speak. You will see a glimpse into life in the early days of Portland, and its surrounding communities. [Clicking here will take you to several pages dedicated to our own Sellwood Neighborhood.](#)



How To Be A Lie Detector

OK, you know the joke... "How can you tell when a politician's lying? His lips are moving!" While that will guarantee success in 99% of politicians, there are other people in our lives, and they might lie as well. How can you tell if your kid ate that last cookie, or your spouse is sneaking out for an extra round of golf instead of cleaning the garage? Here are two websites that can give you the clues you need to spot liars in every day situations.

Basic posture and interaction cues: <http://www.blifaloo.com/info/lies.php>

Eye movement and position cues: http://www.blifaloo.com/info/lies_eyes.php



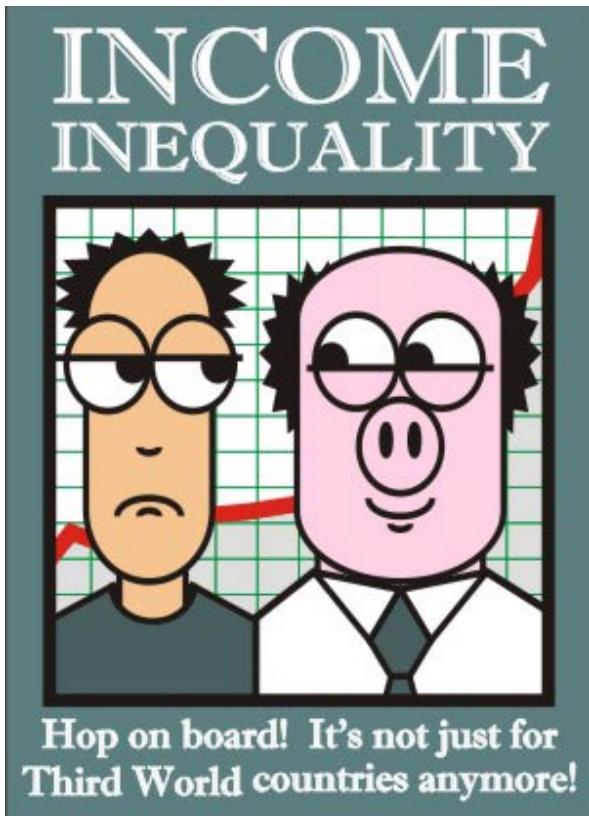
How Many People Have Died In Bush's Wars?

It's been going on for years now, and the end isn't in sight. But how many people have actually died in Afghanistan and Iraq? Not just American soldiers, but soldiers from other countries, contractors, journalists, or civilians? Here's a site that breaks it all down, along with their methodology and critiques of other death count methods. Unfortunately, it will be updated constantly for a long time to come.

Deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq: <http://www.unknownnews.org/casualties.html>

News To Make You Furious

Income Inequality... It's not just for Third World countries anymore!



You've heard about the staggering differences in income between the upper echelons of our society and the rest of us. In fact, if you **are** one of the rest of us, you're probably feeling a little bit of the squeeze as an increasing number of people compete for a diminishing slice of pie. But is there anything really **wrong** with unequal income? Aside from a vague feeling of "hey, that's not fair", does it actually **hurt** our society to have this disparity? Is the jealousy of those not blessed the highest price we pay, or is it more expensive than that?

Turns out that there **are** implications for the society at large far beyond an individual's pocketbook. Societies with large differences in income distribution have increased problems with their physical and mental health. ...and with drug abuse, education, and imprisonment. ...and with obesity, social mobility, trust and community life, violence, teenage births, child well-being, and even global warming. ...and more.

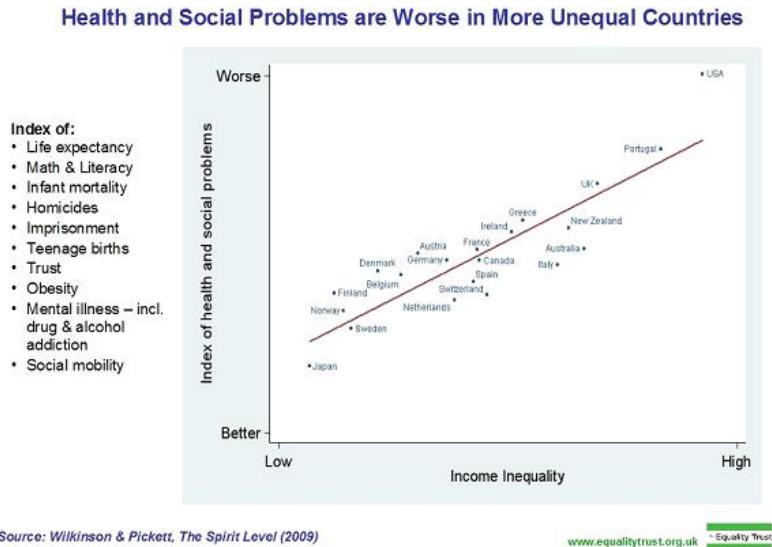
As the wealth of a society becomes concentrated in a diminishing percentage of its population, problems pop up in every area of the citizens' lives. And it's not just the poor citizens, either... these **problems extend across all levels of a society**, even to the wealthy class with all the cash. In the end, it seems that you can't diminish someone else without diminishing yourself.

This issue's News To Make You Furious takes you down the road of Income Inequality, mainly focusing on one website, [The Equality Trust](#). It's put together by two British researchers and is a rigorous, peer-reviewed research project correlating statistical data from countries around the world, as well as from each of our 50 states. They find direct, strong associations between the spread of wealth in the countries (or states) and each of the social problems mentioned above. Here's an excerpt from their "brief overview" section....

(a sample from The Equality Trust website...)

Our thirty years research shows that:

- 1) In rich countries, a smaller gap between rich and poor means a happier, healthier, and more successful population. Just look at the US, the UK, Portugal, and New Zealand in the top right of this graph, doing much worse than Japan, Sweden or Norway in the bottom left.



2) Meanwhile, more economic growth will NOT lead to a happier, healthier, or more successful population. In fact, there is no relation between income per head and social well-being in rich countries.

3) If the UK were more equal, we'd be better off as a population. For example, the evidence suggests that if we halved inequality here:

- Murder rates would halve
- Mental illness would reduce by 2/3
- Obesity would halve
- Imprisonment would reduce by 80%
- Teen births would reduce by 80%
- Levels of trust would increase by 85%

4) It's not just poor people who do better. The evidence suggests people all the way up would benefit, although it's true that the poorest would gain the most.

5) These findings hold true, whether you look across developed nations, or across the 50 states of the USA.

But wait, there's more!

When you're done in England, there's more Furyosity to be found around the world. Here are three websites that will give you more details on national and worldwide wealth.

World income distribution (You know the the top 2% owns half, but where is it?)

<http://www.gizmag.com/go/6571/>

Wealth distribution in the US (from WhoRulesAmerica, a website about power and the use of power in the US.) <http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html>

Analysis of income distribution from the last economic expansion (from the Center on budget and policy priorities, a think-tank that analyzes budget and spending proposals)-

<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=2908>