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## Tom's Tidbits

### Time to munch some popcorn

Greetings!

The BP gusher appears to have been stopped, and since I'm being told the 200 million plus gallons of oil have been lifted up on angel's wings there's nothing to be upset about there anymore. My Government assures me things will be just fine and that 75% of the oil has been collected or dispersed. Understanding the definition of "dispersed" and seeing the research done around the Valdez showing oil concentrations as low as a few parts per billion of sea water is toxic leaves me **far** from feeling good about things in the Gulf. Knowing that a pitifully small amount of the oil was actually collected causes me to extrapolate that about 75% of the oil remains, most of it hidden by the use of toxic dispersants. This hidden oil, now rendered uncollectible, posses a far greater long-term problem for the Gulf marine environment.

The American public seems to have the collective consciousness of a small child; live in the moment, out of sight out of mind and if mommy or daddy says it is so then it must be. We are now witnessing the power of a multi-national corporation over our media, our government, our people and our environment. When things seem to be just overwhelming it is good to take a break. Taking a moment to smell the roses, be thankful for the good things, and take a break to regroup or find distractions to get away. I offer you popcorn for this purpose.

Yes, popcorn. More specifically, the Popcorn Shorts section of our newsletter, where we put all the interesting stuff that doesn't really fit anywhere else. You might read the big headline articles each month, but when's the last time you munched some Popcorn? If you missed it last month you missed learning about the health effects of honey, about the free concerts in Sellwood Park, about the journey of Afghani vets and refugees to the Northwest, and about our \$100 Postcard Contest (deadline is August 31). Going back a few months, we've had articles on renewable energy, local commercials, local banking, free trees, and oddities about our shop, and much more. This month's kernels of goodness include the Conservative rewrite of the Bible, TWO updates on the Sellwood Bridge, and a new face on the Portland media scene. Don't waste your time this summer on politics and things that will affect your life for decades... spend some time munching our Popcorn. You never know what will be in the bag, but I promise you that it will be worth your time!

Make a great day,



## How Long Do You Want Your Car To Last?

### Sensible planning achieves your vehicle goals

For all the complexity in modern vehicles, there is one irreplaceable system that is more critical than any other to keeping you on the road confidently and safely... you. Each driver must take responsibility for the function of their vehicles. Anyone can drive a car, but the decision to keep it working for the long term requires conscious thought and active participation on your part throughout the life of your vehicle. You must accurately evaluate your transportation needs and driving habits to get the correct vehicle in the first place, and then you must decide how long you intend to own the vehicle and establish a budget and schedule for its maintenance. Then, it is your responsibility to keep on track with the maintenance plan you've established. Finally, you must be prepared for the day when your vehicle is ready for the "great highway in the sky" and be responsible about when to stop spending money and effort on a vehicle that can no longer return value. Let's look at those points a little closer.

#### **Make a Clear Plan**

You should have a clear plan when you decide to own a car. There are many types of ownership plans, and most people will tend not to have any plan at all. Two possible examples of ownership planning and behavior are the "use it up" and the "drive the wheels off it" scenarios. The first is to buy a vehicle with the intent to run 60,000 to 90,000 miles on it and do nothing but the minimum on maintenance or repair. We call this the "use it up" program, and this is fine as long as you follow through and get rid of a vehicle when you originally planned. You don't want to fall in love with a car and *then* decide to keep it *after* it's used up. The second extreme is to buy a **quality** new or low mileage vehicle and plan to keep it for the long-term; "drive the wheels off it". You plan to take impeccable care of it to make sure those wheels stay on for a long time.

Trouble comes when you try to combine these two opposites. We frequently hear the lament "It's always been such a good car. I never needed to do a thing to it, why am I having all these troubles *now*?" Complex as today's vehicles are, they are very robust mechanically and can keep going for quite a while before they show problems. If you "never do a thing" to your vehicle, it allows the larger, more expensive faults to set in and a list of wear and problems to quietly build up. By the time they become apparent the expense of fixing all the problems at once can outweigh the value of the car, a situation we call being "economically totaled". Whichever way you decide to go, make sure your Service Advisor here knows your intentions so they can give you the appropriate advice and service. If you don't have an ownership plan and would like to get some advice ask us.

#### **Vehicle Choice**

Shopping for a vehicle is the great paradox. We all love the excitement of a new (or new-to-you) car, but the hard work of research, comparison, and negotiation can take the edge off the fun. Entire books have been written on how to buy a car, but it's really a personal choice with no right or wrong answer. You may want the off-road monster, but you'll suffer in gas mileage. A mechanically dependable car may not be the best one for staving off a mid-life crisis. That little hybrid may be great for the planet, but your kid's soccer team may be cramped. From the point of view of taking responsibility for your vehicle, the most important thing to know is that your decision will govern every other decision throughout the vehicle's lifetime. The quality and choice of your vehicle affects the service relationship you will have no matter where you go. No one can turn a bad vehicle into a pleasure to own. It's your responsibility to know what's most important to you and make the right decision that will support

those priorities. We are here to help you with these choices; ask us for advice when you are shopping for a vehicle.

## Wise Budgeting

Once you've made the big decision, it's time to plan a maintenance schedule and budget. The most responsible way to get the most value from your transportation dollar is to plan appropriate care for the vehicle for the time you plan to own it. Depending on whether you bought a beater to get you through a summer of camping or a car to carry your kids now and when they're in college, you'll care for each vehicle in a different way. In most cases for a short term vehicle, it makes sense to try to stick to safety and function issues. No matter how briefly you intend to drive the vehicle, you want things like starters, brakes and tires to be working. For vehicles you intend to own for a long time, things like fluid flushes and seal integrity become more important. Talk with your Service Advisor so they understand your needs and priorities, and work with them to establish a yearly budget for your car's maintenance. Once you've made a plan, STICK TO IT! The only thing worse than spending money on your vehicle; is spending it in a way that doesn't accomplish what you're setting out to do.

## Setting Priorities

This brings us to the maintenance decisions you'll make while you own the car, and how we determine the priorities and recommendations we'll make to you about your vehicle. If your car is towed in with flames belching from under the hood, the need is clear and there's not much of a decision to make. For ongoing vehicle care, there are more options. We prioritize our recommendations in this order: safety first, then breakdown items, and finally maintenance.

- **Safety**- When we find a safety-critical system (brakes, tires, etc.) that has problems, we consider that a non-negotiable need. Aside from any liability issues, we don't want to put our clients out on the road if they could injure themselves or others. We bring these to your attention with our strongest possible recommendation that you fix the issue properly immediately.
- **Breakdown**- If you decided to own a car you want it to be safe AND reliable, so if there's some system that's hanging by a thread we let you know. Even if you decide not to repair it right then, you'll be aware of the situation and can plan accordingly.
- **Maintenance**- This is probably the wisest money you'll spend on your vehicle, because small investments in maintenance payoff in big savings on repair in the long run. It's also the easiest to let slide when the end of the month comes and you're trying to decide where to put those scarce dollars. However, if you budgeted for maintenance and have been sticking to it these maintenance needs won't be unmanageable.

It's important to note that we can't force you to do the repairs and maintenance we think you need. When we do our comprehensive inspections we tell you the list of issues and prioritize our recommendations, but you're the one who makes the decisions and writes the check. The vehicle is ultimately your responsibility.

## Follow advice for your vehicle's health

Caring for and maintaining your vehicle is much like caring for and maintaining your health. You know what your health needs are, whether they're running a marathon or living to 100. Your health-care provider knows what kind of things you should be doing to achieve those goals. When you're looking for someone to guide your health decisions, you ask around to find someone whose advice you can trust. Once you find them, you work together to make a plan for your ongoing care. You have checkups and a few routine things, and every once in a long while some big unexpected thing happens that you need to take care of right then. Keeping to recommendations may be difficult, but deep down you know it fends off the large, avoidable problems that will devastate your health and your pocketbook. You'll make some wise decisions and some not-so-wise decisions (how's that eat-right-and-exercise thing been working out for you?) but you at least know what you *should* be doing. Your health-care provider can advise, but can't *make* you do anything. It's up to *you* to do the things you need to do to stay healthy.

Whoever has the power to change a situation has responsibility for it. Remember that the safety and reliability of your vehicle is **YOUR responsibility**. We can help you make a plan, guide you when things are right, and fix things when they go wrong, but we can't make you do the things you planned on. When you accept the responsibility for

your vehicle, you'll proactively work to keep it on track and your vehicle will pay back your investment with many years of confident and enjoyable driving.



## "The Man" Called. He Wants His Elections Back. Voter-owned elections are on the chopping block in November

On November's general election ballot, down below the candidates for U.S Congress, below candidates for governor and the Oregon legislature, and even below candidates for local office, there will be a ballot question asked only of Portlanders. Near the bottom of the ballot, Portland residents will be asked if they want to keep their city's campaign public financing program, Voter-Owned Elections. And even though it appears about a mile down the ballot, this might just be the most important decision Portland voters make the entire election.

Portland's Voter-Owned Elections program, enacted in 2005, gives everyday Portlanders a genuine role in choosing their leaders in City Hall. Under the program, candidates for Mayor and City Council can qualify for enough public funding to run viable campaigns by showing that they have broad-based community support. Participation is voluntary, and candidates who participate have to follow strict rules about how the money can be spent. But once candidates qualify, they spend their time talking directly to voters instead of raising money from big donors. This means candidates who are chosen by Portlanders and who are accountable to Portlanders.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Citizens United v. the Federal Elections Commission*, overturning a century of settled law and opening the floodgates for corporations and special interests to spend their way to power in political campaigns. Since then, organizations dedicated to healthy democracies from across the country have been calling for the Fair Elections Now Act, which provides campaign public financing at the national level. In Portland, we're already leading the way with Voter-Owned Elections, our local version of campaign public financing. But now it's more important than ever to protect our reform program when it comes to the ballot in November. Corporate lobbyists and downtown developers have already exposed their desire to kill the program before it goes to a vote of the people, so it's critical that we spread the word and make sure that Portlanders vote all the way to the bottom of their ballot.

Since 2005, Portland's Voter-Owned Elections program has dramatically limited the total spending in local campaigns and has given Portlanders from every neighborhood a true stake in their democracy. Amanda Fritz, only the 7<sup>th</sup> woman to serve on City Council in its 160-year history, was a Voter-Owned Elections candidate. And now that she's in City Hall, Amanda answers to voters, not big donors and special interests. If we want to continue to lead the way and keep elections in Portland transparent, accountable and voter-owned, we must vote to protect our reform program in November. Even if it is all the way at the bottom of the ballot, it might just be our most important vote.

To endorse Voter-Owned Elections go to [www.commoncause.org/Oregon](http://www.commoncause.org/Oregon).



## Improving Your Summer Gas Mileage

Stretch your dollars for that long family trip

With summer driving season here, we're all looking for ways to get the best possible millage out of our vehicles. Our friends at AC Delco *Intune* magazine suggest these easy tips below, and you can find more tips from the EPA when you visit [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov) and click "Tips."

**Drive the speed limit.** Many newer cars have cruise control, this is a great tool regulating speed and gas consumption. Fluctuations in speed simply uses more fuel.

**Drive sensibly.** Hard accelerating and braking wastes fuel, aggressive driving habits are also tough on your vehicles components.

**Avoid prolonged idling.** When a engine is running, it gets 0 miles per gallon.

**Keep your engine properly tuned.** Vehicle maintenance is important to keep your engine in top performing condition. Details like worn spark plugs, dirty air and fuel filters can add up and make a big difference in fuel economy. Poorly maintained vehicles can use more fuel and have higher than normal emissions.

**Remove excessive storage from car and trunk.** Carry only what you need, an extra 100 pounds could reduce fuel mileage up to 2 percent.

**Use only recommended grade of motor oil.** Your vehicle's manufacturer calls for a specific grade of engine oil, deviating could effect your gas mileage by 2 percent.

**Keep tires properly inflated.** This is a simple, proven method for maintaining optimal fuel economy. On most cars, the factory recommended tire pressure is listed on the inside of the drivers door. On European cars, this information in located on the inside of the fuel door. However, over inflated tires are dangerous, you risk the chance of a tire blow out, and also reduce tire traction.

**Avoid rooftop carriers.** Trendy racks and accessory pods add aerodynamic drag on your vehicle, causing your motor to work harder to maintain highway speeds.



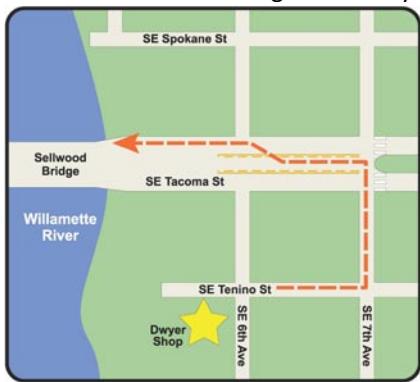
## Shop Talk

### Turning left onto Tacoma is a BAD IDEA!

We do everything we can to bring you in and keep you happy, but sometimes keeping you happy means making it easy for you leave. If you're planning to take the Sellwood Bridge, traffic can make a left turn frustrating to say the least. This month's Shop Talk brings you a couple tricks that will keep you from waiting all day.

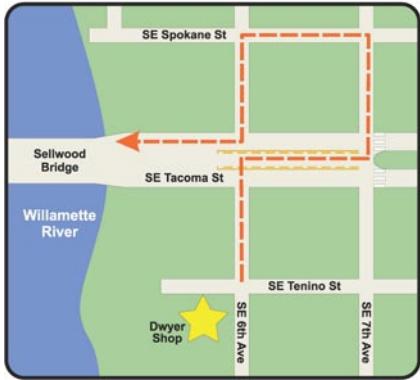
#### **Merge Lane**

If you head straight out of the parking lot and east on Tenino St, make a left onto 7<sup>th</sup>. Then, when you get to Tacoma, make a left turn into the protected center lane at 7<sup>th</sup> and Tacoma. This will give you a safe haven to merge onto westbound Tacoma and get on with your day.



#### **'Round the Block**

This is a little longer than using the merge lane, but works just as well. You can turn left out of our parking lot onto 6<sup>th</sup> and then make a right onto Tacoma. Get into the merge lane, and make a left at 7<sup>th</sup>. Now, go around the block... left on Spokane, left on 6<sup>th</sup>, then an easy right onto Tacoma and onto the bridge.





## Drew's Kitchen

### Picnic Pasta Salad

There are legends, passed down from generation to generation, that August weather is frequently warm and sometimes even borders on hot. You wouldn't know it from our weather so far this summer! However, if a summer picnic is still a possibility for you, then here's the recipe you'll need to make it perfect.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 2 cups dry rainbow corkscrew pasta                       | $\frac{1}{4}$ green onions                            |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Italian oil and vinegar salad dressing | $\frac{1}{4}$ shredded carrots                        |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ sliced celery                              | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup frozen sliced green and red peppers |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ chopped black olives                       | $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crumbled feta cheese                |

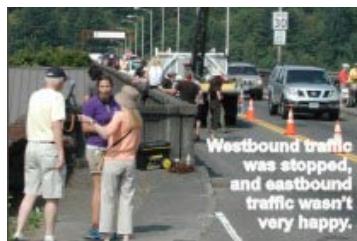
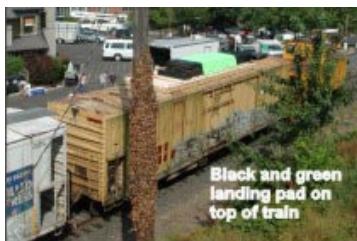
- Blanch celery and frozen peppers in boiling water for 2 minutes, drain and cool.
- Boil pasta until tender and drain.
- In a colander, rinse pasta until cool. Drain well.
- In a large bowl combine ingredients, add dressing and mix well.
- Let stand in refrigerator 1-2 hours before serving.

Recipe serves about four.



## Sellwood Bridge Update Fame visits our shabby neighbor

This month, the Sellwood Bridge stepped into the spotlight not as the most dilapidated bridge in the country, but as a Hollywood star. "Leverage", a TNT TV series in its third year, follows the adventures of a "...highly skilled team out to settle scores against those who use power and wealth to victimize others." The gang is led by "Mastermind" former insurance investigator Nate Ford (Timothy Hutton), and includes the "Hacker", the "Hitter", the "Thief", and the "Grifter". Since the series' second year, Portland has played the role of Boston. For the bridge's 15 minutes of fame, the Thief and the Hacker had to jump onto a moving train. Traffic on the Sellwood bridge and on the Springwater trail was shut down for about 5 hours as the crews moved in; just a glimpse of what will happen when (and if) the new bridge construction ever starts. Here's a peek behind the scenes...



Speaking of future construction, here's the skinny on the new design... they're still thinking. The final Environmental Impact Statement is ready for approval, which is needed to move ahead with the final design and construction. The basic positioning and traffic load were established in 2009, but the design itself is still under consideration. Key features of the preferred alternative include

- Two lane bridge with two sidewalks, two bike lanes, and a traffic signal at the Highway 43 connection. Bridge widens to four lanes at the west end.
- No raised center median.
- WILL REMAIN OPEN TO TRAFFIC AT MOST TIMES THROUGH CONSTRUCTION
- Minimize impacts to businesses and residents during construction. (Thanks, guys!)
- Cost of structure less than \$170 million, including river span, east approach, temporary construction, demolition of existing bridge and buildings, west hillside stabilization, design, construction engineering, contingency, and inflation through 2014. Full cost of the project is estimated at \$330 million.
- Design work and land acquisition will begin later this year, with construction starting in late 2012

Assuming the regional funding package remains intact, it includes...

- \$127 million from Multnomah County vehicle registration fee increase (\$19 per year)
- \$22M from Clackamas county vehicle registration fee increase (pending)
- \$100M from City of Portland from the Oregon Jobs and Transportation Act
- \$30M from the State of Oregon under the Jobs and Transportation Act for the Highway 43 interchange
- \$40M from the Federal Government under the Transportation Act
- \$11M from previous funding remaining after planning phase.

Since they're still undecided on the final design, there are pictures of all the competing options available on the web. Details are also available at [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://www.sellwoodbridge.org), the website the county maintains to keep everyone posted. You can still squeeze in your comments on the plans, but hurry- the public comment period closes August 18!



## Popcorn Shorts

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



### **Summer Postcard Contest- \$100 cash**

Have you sent your postcard contest entry? **Entry deadline has been extended to Labor Day, September 6<sup>th</sup>**, and the winner will be selected by our staff and announced in the next newsletter. Last year's winner, shown above, came to us from the Moon so you have a high mark to hit. Keep those cards and letters coming!



### **Free Carwash Season screeches to a halt on September 15!**

Don't miss out! It's still Free Carwash Season at Tom Dwyer's, but **ONLY until September 15**. You get a free carwash coupon for **ANY PURCHASE OVER \$100**. Better hurry, September is coming up on us like a freight train!



### **Plastic Video**

This link was sent to us by one of our clients- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8zh5lluTeE>. It's a video showing what happens to plastic after it's flashed uselessly through our lives, and how poorly we are dealing with it as a society. When you realize that all this plastic is made from petroleum, the images of plastic trash covering rivers or fouling birds makes the whole problem look like a slow-motion planetary oil spill. The soundtrack of Queen's "Who Wants To Live For Ever" makes the whole thing even more heartbreakingly.



## There's a new player on the Portland reporting scene

[EnzymePDX](#), an electronic guide to everything Portland, hit the intertubes last month. Sort of like a "greener" Willamette Week, EnzymePDX is a new on-line destination for local news and events with the latest on work, relaxation, politics, and everything else that brings color to your life. A great example of their off-the-wall take is their first-person video from Hood Bomb '09, where a group of brave souls tested Newton's laws of physics by coasting children's bicycles from Timberline Lodge down highway 26, running stop signs and weaving through traffic, all without brakes. You could try it yourself, but Enzyme makes it far less dangerous. Here's what they say about themselves...

"Enzyme is dedicated to examining the issues that influence how Portland citizens live. While avoiding the partisan noise that threatens to overwhelm the Internet, we will examine the challenges, innovations and trends that affect life in our seven-county market. Our goal is to point the way for a more prosperous community, an improved quality of life and the sort of innovation that will help Portland continue to be an agent of change. Proactive coverage will dominate: What are the challenges? Who has the best ideas? How do we move forward?

Our news website is designed for maximum user utility and engagement. Instead of offering routine coverage and recycled content, we will seek out the untold stories that matter and present them in ways that modern audiences use to access their news."



## Sellwood Park Concerts closed till next year

Every summer, the City puts on a series of concerts in many parks around town. They rely on the help of local businesses, and we've been proud to sponsor the series in the Sellwood Riverfront Park for several years. If you haven't made it out to the show, you're really missing a wonderful event. In the Tom Dwyer booth we run a "Car of the Future" coloring contest for kids (we'll show you the results next month.) However, the big attraction in this year's booth was Lisa Collins. We told you all about [Lisa in last month's newsletter](#), but you may have missed the fact that she set up a massage chair in our booth and gave FREE MASSAGES to the people at the show! Needless to say, she was a big hit! We're already making plans for next year's shows, and we hope you will be too.





## Conservatives Fix God's Bible Mistakes

It's hard to tell if that sound you hear is George Orwell turning over in his grave or laughing his head off. A hyper-conservative group is fixing God's mistakes in the Bible by rewriting the whole thing to fit Conservative doctrine. And that's just the start.

Run, do not walk, to [http://www.conservapedia.com/Main\\_Page](http://www.conservapedia.com/Main_Page), where you will encounter... Conservapedia. Andy Schafly, son of Phyllis, started Conservapedia to fight the liberal bias in places like Wikipedia and the rest of Western Civilization. The [Bible Retranslation Project](#) is just one of their activities. The whole thing is propaganda in the worst tradition of Pravda, but you'll get unending hours of jaw-dropping entertainment as you surf through the 33,784 pages in this Conservative view of the world. A few choice bits to get you started...

Here's a translation example from the Bible Retranslation Project (also called the Conservative Bible Project):  
The King James version of Luke 11:53-4 reads:

**"And as he [Jesus] said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things, laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him."**

I'm sure we can all agree on the obvious liberal bias there, but the new translation (done by Andy himself) makes it safe for everyone:

**"As Jesus told them off, the scribes and Pharisees furiously interrogated Him about everything, plotting and seeking to quote Him for a politically incorrect remark to use against Him"**

Or here's a good one from the [Guidelines](#) page for article submissions. The first guideline says "Unlike Wikipedia, we do not block for ideological reasons." Then, *just three lines further down*, we find that "...argument without end, on points contrary to the Conservapedia philosophy" is a reason for blocking!

Or try this one... [http://www.conservapedia.com/Best\\_of\\_the\\_public](http://www.conservapedia.com/Best_of_the_public)

Or this one... [http://www.conservapedia.com/Essay:Best\\_New\\_Conservative\\_Terms](http://www.conservapedia.com/Essay:Best_New_Conservative_Terms)

Or this one... <http://www.conservapedia.com/Evolution>

Everywhere you turn in Conservapedia is like that. Just pick a random page, and you'll be rewarded with a terrifying glimpse into the yawning gap that passes for thought in the conservative movement. Enjoy!



## News To Make You Furious

### Our very first "News To Make You Furious" feature is still sickeningly relevant

A little over a year ago, we read a [story by investigative reporter Greg Palast about the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Exxon Valdez disaster](#). This article about the criminal response of Exxon to the destruction caused by their greed and malfeasance was so infuriating, but so important, that we had to share it with our readers. Unfortunately, there's no shortage of news like that and our "News To Make You Furious" section was born.

Now that history has repeated itself with the spill in the Gulf, will it also repeat itself with BP's response? The Valdez had lessons for all of us on the environment, corporate control, and the oil industry, but it also had lessons for BP on how to respond to disasters of this type. We apparently didn't learn any of the lessons we should have, but was BP paying closer attention? Are we watching the same scenario play out again? Shockingly, agonizingly, sadly, but perhaps inevitably, this article is still relevant today.

#### Links on the BP disaster

There's already too much information for anyone to assimilate on the BP spill, but here are some things that we ran across that you might find interesting...



Video from Fort Morgan, Alabama, June 1910 by Ben Raines, including the image above.

[http://blog.al.com/live/2010/06/lots\\_of\\_sharks\\_and\\_lots\\_of\\_oil.html](http://blog.al.com/live/2010/06/lots_of_sharks_and_lots_of_oil.html). Ben also has more coverage that's just as compelling at <http://connect.al.com/user/braines/index.html>.

An Alabama TV station collected samples of sea water in various places around Mobile Bay, including beaches re-opened because they were "safe". With the cutoff for safety at 5ppm, WKRG found levels of 221ppm where a child was digging at the beach. That was the highest level they could document, because their final sample exploded while they were testing it.

<http://thedailybite.wordpress.com/2010/07/18/local-alabama-news-outlet-tests-gulf-water-with-explosive-results/>

BP is paying Gulf scientists big bucks for contracts that require their silence

[http://blog.al.com/live/2010/07/bp\\_buys\\_up\\_gulf\\_scientists\\_for.html](http://blog.al.com/live/2010/07/bp_buys_up_gulf_scientists_for.html)

Health hazards of the BP spill, in detail

<http://www.sciencecorps.org/crudeoilhazards.htm#Exec>

Gulf Oil Blog of Marine Biology department at University of Georgia

<http://gulfblog.uga.edu/>