

Your Car Matters

Tom Dwyer Automotive Services May 2012 Newsletter

Tom's Tidbits

Bringing the Fukushima disaster home

What NOW?!! Toons

A blast from BP's past

Shop Talk

FREE Carwash Season is almost here!

Health Notes

A party in your gall bladder

Drew's Kitchen

Parmesean lamb chops

Sellwood Bridge Update

Goodbye for now, trees

Book Spotlight

"Doubt Is Their Product" by David Michaels

Humorousness

Philosoraptor, Success Baby, Courage Wolf, and more

Popcorn Shorts

Engine of the future

Should gravity be taught in schools?

Keeping up on Citizens United

Amazing tire sculptures

No Nukes Is Good Nukes

Nuclear news from John Bartels and Helen Caldicott



Driving On The Cheap

10 Cheapest cars to own and to insure



The BP Armageddon Anniversary

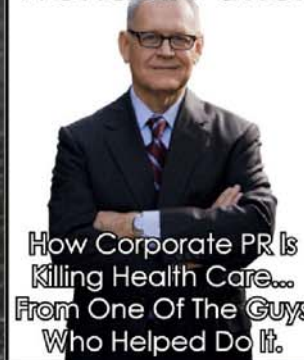
Current status on the spill



News To Make You FURIOUS

Wendell Potter... If you don't know him already, then strap in

Wendell Potter



How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care... From One Of The Guys Who Helped Do It.

530 SE Tenino St, Portland

503-230-2300

TomDwyer.com



This Month's Matters...

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"What NOW?!!" Toons

Keith Tucker's Special-To-Us Toon of the Month

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- Engine of the Future
- Should gravity be taught in schools?
- Keeping up on Citizens United
- Amazing Tire Sculptures

News To Make You Furious

Wendell Potter... If you don't know him already, then strap in.

Money Saving Programs
See our website for complete details

Carbon Neutral Program
Offset your vehicle's carbon emissions and save 10% off labor costs!

Labor Lock Program
Pay today's prices for the rest of your life!

Planned Maintenance Package
Get up to a 60% discount by buying your basic yearly maintenance services in advance

First-Time Clients ONLY!
Save \$75 to \$150 on our most thorough inspection!

Moneysaving Programs

To stretch your hard-earned dollars their farthest



Tom's Tidbits

Bringing the Fukushima disaster home

Greetings!

The United States has just licensed the first new nuclear plants since 1975, two reactors at Plant Vogtle in Georgia. Speaking against the licensing, NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko said “Significant safety enhancements have already been recommended as a result of learning the lessons from Fukushima... Knowing this I cannot support these licenses as if Fukushima never happened.” Jaczko’s caution didn’t matter, though, and the licenses were granted to “a consortium of utilities”. They aren’t frequently named in press releases, but one of the companies responsible for construction in this consortium is... TEPCO.

Who’s TEPCO? As the [Fukushima disaster quietly continues](#) so does the stream of revelations about TEPCO, the Japanese utility that constructed the reactors. From the beginning Fukushima-Daiichi has been the story of natural and man-made factors combining to create an unmanageable calamity, but it has also been the story of the worst kind of greed, malfeasance, lies, cover-up, and corruption.

Here are some of the things TEPCO has engaged in before and during the Fukushima event-

- falsification of inspection records over many years;
- covering up data about cracks in water circulation pumps and pipes which are critical for reactor cooling;
- failure to report cracks in reactor core shrouds (stainless steel cylinders surrounding the reactor core), steam dryers, access hole covers, and components associated with jet pumps (which circulate cooling water inside the reactor);
- in 1991 and 1992, tests of the leak rate of a Fukushima reactor containment vessel were faked by surreptitiously injecting compressed air into the containment building;
- written records of cracks in neutron-measuring equipment at Fukushima were deleted by contractor Hitachi at TEPCO’s request; and
- eight TEPCO reactors were still operating although required repairs had not been carried out

If that’s not enough, here’s what happened while building the reactor pressure vessel for reactor #4: The production process required that the pressure vessel be fired in a gigantic blast furnace using internal braces to support the structure while it cooled. The braces either collapsed or were forgotten completely (it’s unclear) but in either case their absence caused the walls of the vessel to warp. Undeterred, TEPCO decided to “...reshape the vessel so that no one would know it had ever been damaged...” by just popping out the warped area. Unfortunately, bending of any type weakens the structural integrity of a material, and there is no record of stress testing to determine whether the repaired vessel would function like the unmodified version. (You may want to read the [full article from UK Progressive](#) here.)

America may be lagging in many things, but I would have thought we had enough graft and corruption here at home without having to go to Japan to get more. If you care about the future of the nuclear industry then this month’s article about Helen Caldicott and John Bartel’s latest work will be particularly interesting, and as always I urge you to get involved!

Make a great day,

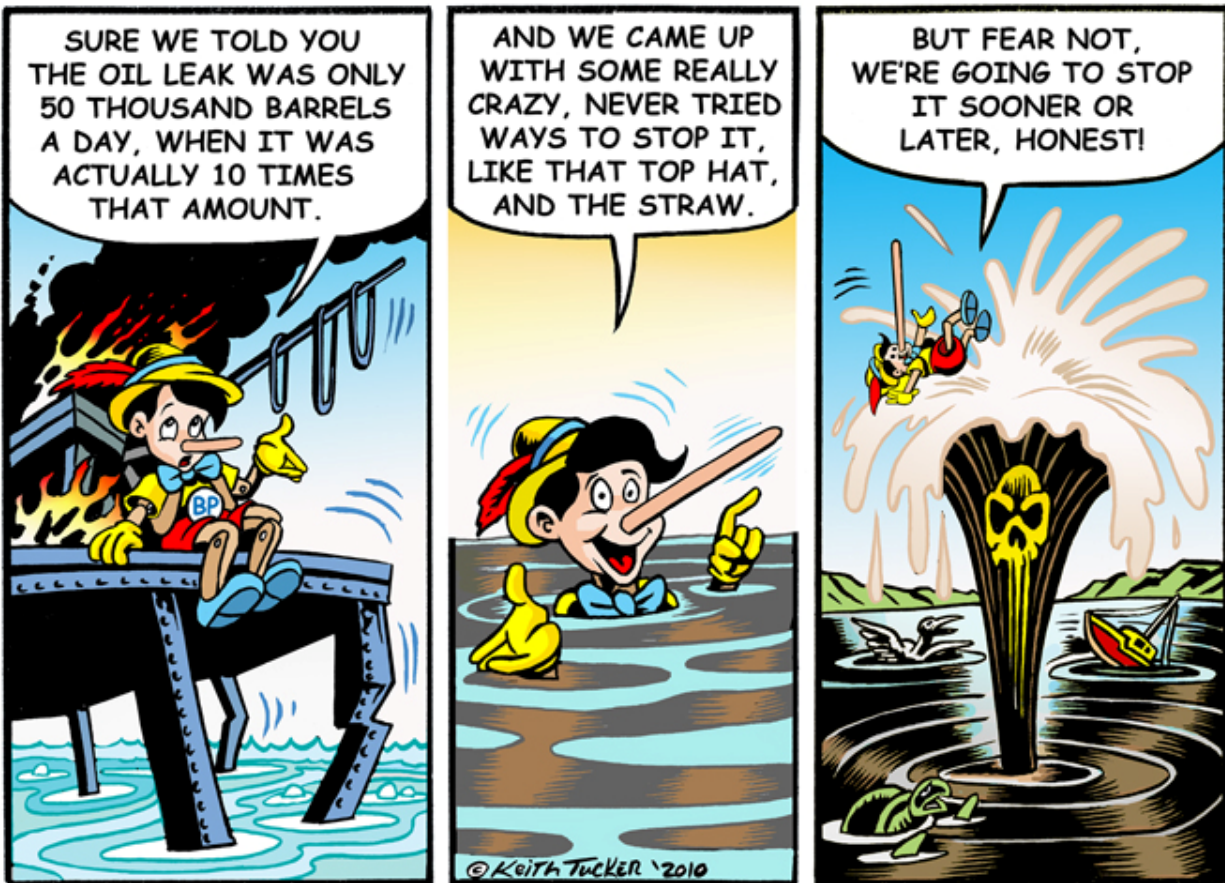
Tom



"What NOW?!!" Toons

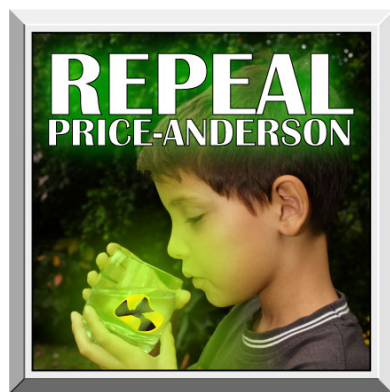
You can't see this one anywhere but here

Ahh, the memories. In honor of the BP disaster anniversary, we decided to run this blast from the past...



"WHAT NOW?!!!"

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No Nukes Is Good Nukes

Nuke News from John Bartels and Helen Caldicott

March 2011 marked the beginning of the Fukushima-Daiichi disaster, currently the second worst nuclear event in history (behind Chernobyl) and closing fast on the top spot. The nuclear industry in the US was quietly poised for a “renaissance” prior to Fukushima, but the events in Japan have put US nuclear energy in the spotlight again. Two of the people who think there is a window for the reconsideration of US nuclear power are longtime nuclear activists Dr. Helen Caldicott and John Bartels. Dr. Caldicott, a founder of Physicians for Social Responsibility, is author of “Nuclear Power is Not the Answer.” John Bartels was a member of the Eugene (Oregon) Water and Electric Board that owned thirty percent of the one million-kilowatt Trojan Nuclear Power Plant. He led the fight to refuse to accept electricity from a plant that avoided liability for shutdowns and potential nuclear accidents, causing the plant to be closed and decommissioned ahead of schedule. This month we bring you a plea from Caldicott and Bartels to repeal the Price-Anderson act and make the nuke industry stand on its own, if it can...

Price-Anderson is a 1957 law that limits the liability of nuclear operators in the event of accident. With atomic weapons a new reality in the wake of WWII, President Eisenhower instituted the “Atoms for Peace” program to find civilian uses for nuclear technology. Potential nuclear energy producers looked at the massive liability of any nuclear accident and saw financial disaster. General Electric said it would not proceed “with a cloud of bankruptcy hanging over its head,” and Westinghouse said, “...we could not proceed as a private company without ... government backing.” Price-Anderson capped the industry’s liability in event of accident at \$10.2 billion (today’s dollars) by creating a pool of insurance companies and industry contributions, and giving the fledgling nuclear industry the security they needed to grow. However, modern nuclear accidents have shown how inadequate this seemingly-large amount is. Chernobyl did about \$350 billion in damage, and the costs of Fukushima are expected to reach \$250 billion or more. A nuke accident at New York’s Indian Point could be 10 to 100 times more expensive than Fukushima. (please see our article [“The Price of nuclear power”](#) for a more detailed explanation)

Price-Anderson is the ultimate example of “socializing the risks and privatizing the rewards”. It’s a lynch pin of the US nuclear industry, because even with insurers and re-insurers the industry couldn’t exist in the “free market” espoused by Cons in every other arena. Caldicott and Bartels believe it’s time for this market-distorting law to go, and they’re joined by a surprising array of groups including the libertarian Cato Institute. Here is an open letter to Congress from Caldicott and Bartels to Congress, along with supporting information on why the repeal of Price-Anderson is so critical.

(An open Letter to Members of the United States Congress from Dr. Helen Caldicott, an experienced medical professional, and former Eugene Oregon Water and Electric Board member, John Bartels.)

This (Fukushima-Daiichi) is the nuclear power catastrophe we and countless others have anticipated since the nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl.

We call upon Members of the United States Congress and President Obama to repeal the Price-Anderson Act that throws liability for nuclear disasters onto taxpayers and utility ratepayers and legislates financial limits on that liability.

We are overriding our instincts, as an experience health professional and electric utility executive, to engage again in all the arguments against the basically misrepresented nuclear power industry. We know from all-too-familiar experience that this debate is unwinnable against the multi-billion dollar industry arrayed against us.

We insist elected representatives finally throw the debate into the marketplace where it belongs. Is nuclear power a good investment? Let the market mechanisms decide.

Our officials don't have to explain, rationalize or obfuscate. Just vote "yes" or "no." Let the truth come out so citizens of the world can finally judge on the facts.

Helen Caldicott and John Bartels

A succinct and powerful letter on a subject vital to our continuing national well-being. And here are some of the materials that led Helen and John to their stance...

[Nuclear liability: The market-based, post-Fukushima case for ending Price-Anderson](#)

By Mark Cooper, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, October 5, 2011

[Unsafe At Any Dose](#)

NY Times OpEd by Dr. Helen Caldicott, April 30, 2011

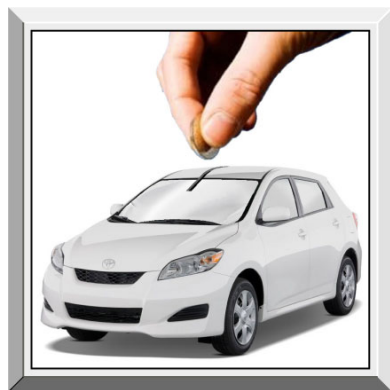
[The Price-Anderson Act: Is It Consistent with a Sound Energy Policy?](#)

CATO Institute Policy Paper, Barry Brownstein, April 17, 1984

[The NRC And Nuclear Power Plant Safety In 2011- Living On Borrowed Time](#)

Union of Concerned Scientists Report, February 22, 2012

(If you're interested in more data specifically on Fukushima, please see our own article [What's the latest on Fukushima? \(3/7/2012\)](#) for a general Fukushima update, and [Fukushima... the 'Japanese Chernobyl' a year later and politics still trump safety](#) for some of the latest on TEPCO from *UK Progressive*.



Driving On The Cheap

10 Cheapest Cars To Own and Insure

Lots of folks ask us for car buying advice. Our best advice is usually to buy something from Asia, America is good, stay away from Europe. Tom's overall pick year after year is the Toyota Corolla, a solid and reliable car that gets mileage competitive with the Prius, is reasonably priced, and will run for hundreds of thousands of miles if properly maintained. However, other people have more detailed advice and this month we thought we'd tell you what [Kiplinger's Personal Finance](#) has to

say about the best way to spend your new car dollars...

Kiplinger's actually has two lists of "cheapest cars" One to own and one to insure. We've given you the list they came up with but only the list. Kiplinger's has much more detailed info on any car you're considering. Just click the link on the list name and you'll find everything you need. If you'd like more auto info from [Kiplinger's their Car-Buying Guide](#) is here. Our own website also has several resources you can use to make your next vehicle purchase as painless as it can be.

- Our [Information Archive](#) has everything. You'll find articles, links, and a full archive of our past newsletters that might have info you're looking for.
- If you like the car you're driving and want to keep it forever, our article on "[How can I get the most value from my vehicle?](#)" will be helpful.
- If you're set on buying a used car, make SURE you [avoid salvage title cars](#).
- We don't use it very often at all, but sometimes we can sell someone's used car on our [Used Car Trading Post](#).
- If your car's not running and you can't figure out what to do with it, we have several [Vehicle Donation Programs](#) listed that could help.

But enough about our incredibly useful website. Without further ado, here's Kiplinger's advice:

10 cheapest cars to own in 2012-

1. Nissan Versa S 4Dr
2. Hyundai Accent GLS 4Dr
3. Ford Fiesta S 4Dr
4. Toyota Yaris L 2Dr Hatch
5. Kia Soul L 2Dr Hatch
6. Kia Rio LX 4Dr
7. Scion IQ 2Dr Hatch
8. Honda Insight 4Dr Hatch
9. Mazda2 Sport 4Dr Hatch
10. Honda Fit 4dr Hatch

In specific categories, here are the winners...

- Compacts- Nissan Versa or Ford Focus S
- Family Sedans- Toyota Camry
- European- Volkswagen Passat S
- Luxury- Audi A3 2.0T TDI or Acura TSX
- Midsize/large crossovers- Dodge Journey SE or Honda Pilot LX

10 cheapest cars to insure (with their average yearly premiums)-

1. Chrysler Town & Country LX -- \$1,092 average premium
2. Toyota Sienna 4 cylinder -- \$1,101
3. Toyota Sienna LE -- \$1,108
4. Honda Odyssey LX -- \$1,115
5. Nissan Murano SL -- \$1,128
6. Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Sport -- \$1,131
7. Honda Odyssey EX -- \$1,138
8. Toyota Sienna 6 cylinder -- \$1,143
9. Ford Escape XLS -- \$1,150
10. Toyota Highlander -- \$1,154

The most expensive to insure? The Mercedes SL65 AMG, with a national average annual premium of \$3,544



The BP Armageddon Anniversary **Current Status of the Spill**

In the two years since the worst environmental disaster in US history, all the spilled oil has been removed from the Gulf, all the people and businesses have been compensated for their losses, and happy wildlife is performing Disney-esque dancing routines for returning tourists. Ha Ha! Just kidding. Even though it's not on the front page anymore things haven't returned to normal on our Gulf Coast. With the anniversary of the BP spill, we thought we'd let you look at the state of things today...

The Daily Green- This website has the most complete coverage we could find with 33 separate subcategories including the latest news, facts, and stats, pictures and maps for the BP oil spill, its size, its impacts on wildlife, and the efforts at containment and cleanup in the Gulf of Mexico.

As usual, Public Broadcasting has the best, most in-depth broadcast reporting on any subject. Click here for a **PBS report on the anniversary**, here for a **Frontline documentary** on the spill, and here for a **radio report from the coast**. For contrast, you can watch the 2:37 that CBS News did on the anniversary.

The environmental effect is probably the most serious and long-term impact of the spill. **TreeHugger.com** and the **National Wildlife Federation** have concentrated coverage of the environment. Also, when BP starts to say that it's impossible to separate their spill from regular environmental fluctuations they'll have problems. Scientists have been able to definitively link a "graveyard of coral" to BP oil from the spill.

Almost as important as the progress on the cleanup is the progress through the judicial system. Here is an update on the **legal action against BP**, and info on the **first criminal charges filed** in the case.

"Stick Your Damn Hand In It: 20th Birthday Of The Exxon Valdez Lie" - was an article by Greg Palast that was the seed for ongoing our **"News To Make You FURIOUS"** column

"BP Learned from the Valdez. Did we?"- Our FURIOUS article from August, 2010, this had some great links to various aspects of the spill, including video from an Alabama TV station whose testing of water samples from "safe" areas had to stop when the samples exploded.

Interactive Map of the Spill Area- This is an absolutely fascinating tool for "emergency responders and environmental resource managers who deal with incidents that may adversely impact the environment" like NOAA, EPA, DHS and others. It gives you the ability to map ANY aspect of the spill including overflight observations, sampling data, oil trajectories, fishery closures, administrative boundaries, and much, much more. Get this- it's so detailed that if you wanted to, you could even track the spill impact on the habitats of the Choctawhatchee Beach Mouse.

RestoreTheGulf.gov- This "Official Website of the United States Government" is "...intended to help individuals, small businesses and communities navigate the many different kinds of resources that they may seek to leverage as they plan for recovery and the future." The fact that the rollover graphics on the homepage are mostly from late 2011 and that the "latest news" was last updated Feb 6, 2012, might give you confidence that our government is treating the spill with the seriousness it deserves. Might not.

BP Website- Well, who knows? There COULD be something useful here.

[Politicians comment on BP spill](#)- The Times-Picayune called around asking for comments on the 2-year anniversary. Read responses from New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Plaquemines Parish President Billy Nungesser, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, U.S. Sen. David Vitter, BP Chairman Bob Dudley, Natural Resources Defense Council President Frances Beinecke, scientists Gary Cherr and Sean Anderson, ornithologist Melanie Driscoll, and the Ocean Conservancy.

What's it like living on the Gulf Coast? [Nicole Maurer will tell you the impact](#) on her family.

[Photo essay of the spill and the coast](#)- Beautiful photographs of a horrific subject



Photo by Ben Raines, Ft. Morgan, Alabama.



Shop Talk

Free Carwash Season Is On The Way!

The little people make do with only four meager seasons, but Tom Dwyer clients get one more... FREE CARWASH SEASON! As spring and summer parch our lot, the dust can get pretty annoying. We can't wash cars or pave the lot (see below) so instead, from May 15 to September 15 we offer our clients coupons for a FREE CAR WASH at WashMan. We can't do

it for every purchase so you won't get one for just an oil change, but for most things beyond that you can have your vehicle washed on us.

So why don't we just wash your car here or pave the lot so the dust isn't a problem? You're not the first to ask- it's actually one of the most common questions we get. Here's Tom's answer, taken from a letter to a client who asked the same thing...

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.

That's the story. Stop washing your car right now, and don't forget to take advantage of our yearly blowout... FREE CARWASH SEASON!



Health Notes- **A Party In Your Gall Bladder**

We were reading *Well Being Journal* when we ran across a couple articles on gall bladders. Realizing we didn't know what a gall bladder did, we thought an article on it might be educational for everyone. Here's some information on what a gall bladder is, how to perform a gall bladder flush, natural ways to support gall bladder function, and what foods to eat for a happy gall bladder.

What Is A Gall Bladder?

From WebMD, 2009

The gallbladder is a small pouch that sits just under the liver. The gallbladder stores bile produced by the liver. After meals, the gallbladder is empty and flat, like a deflated balloon. Before a meal, the gallbladder may be full of bile and about the size of a small pear.

In response to signals, the gallbladder squeezes stored bile into the small intestine through a series of tubes called ducts. Bile helps digest fats, but the gallbladder itself is not essential. Removing the gallbladder in an otherwise healthy individual typically causes no observable problems with health or digestion yet there may be a small risk of diarrhea and fat malabsorption.

Prevent Gallbladder Difficulties

by Dr. Jonathan Wright, The Well Being Journal, May/June 2012

James C. Breneman, M.D., discovered in the 1960's how to prevent gallbladder attacks: Keep away from things you are allergic to! Jonathan V. Wright, M.D., notes that doctors, if you are hospitalized with a gallbladder attack, take away all foods and give you IV fluids. You aren't allowed to eat anything until the pain goes away. Wright says of Breneman's method of removing allergenic foods from the diet, "If it was used as a first line of defense, this technique would make 99.9% of all gallbladder surgeries...totally unnecessary." Wright has used the technique (removing foods to which a person is allergic in the diet) for over thirty years and has never needed to refer anyone presenting a gallbladder problem for gallbladder surgery.

Wright notes, "Back in 1968 [Breneman] asked 69 individuals suffering from recurrent attacks of gallbladder pain to go onto an elimination diet to determine their food allergies. Six of these individuals had already had their gallbladders out but were still having attacks of gallbladder pain, a situation termed 'post-cholecystectomy syndrome'... Breneman reported that all 69 people (100%!) were completely free of gallbladder attacks when they avoided their individual food (and other) allergies. And all 69 had

their symptoms return when they ate the foods they were allergic to once more."

To determine the food or medication allergies, ask for assistance from the American Academy of Environmental Medicine at 316-684-5500 or www.aaem.com.

Wright also advises, for those who have had their gallbladders removed, that there is a natural way to make sure that the bile formerly released by the gallbladder can be replaced by supplementation to help the body take in the nutrients from the much needed essential fats and fatty acids- as well as the fat-soluble vitamins that are so essential (A, D, E, and K). Get a bottle of "bile salts" or bile in tablet form. Wright suggests taking one to three tablets or capsules with every meal containing more than a bit of fat or oil. Too much will cause a bowel movement to be too dark and loose; too little salts and the movement will be very light in color.

Gallstones

Wright also suggests that "sleeping" or "silent" gallstones are those not associated with any gallbladder attack. When allergy avoidance prevents the attacks, it does so whether gallstones are present

or not. If stones are present but are silent, then you should leave them alone. A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* confirms this advice: silent, or non-painful, gallstones should be left alone and not subjected to surgery.

Medical Savings

To do tests for allergies and to pay for several doctor visits to keep your gallbladder would cost about \$1000 (accounting for three doctor visits). Therefore it would cost only \$1000 to save a gallbladder vs.

\$30,000 for gallbladder removal. If all 430,000 people in the U.S. who doctors recommended for gallbladder surgery per year were to opt for the allergy-elimination route, the national health bill would decline by about \$12 *billion*.

(Full story in Dr. Jonathan V. Wright's Nutrition & Healing, October, 2004; 819 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21201; 203-699-3683; or www.wrightnewsletter.com.)

Natural Treatments and Remedies for a Bad Gallbladder

by Dr. David Williams, drdavidwilliams.com, 12/01/2011

Boost the function of a bad gallbladder naturally

Improper gallbladder function makes it difficult to digest any fats in the diet, which can cause a wide variety of [symptoms](#). Luckily, there are a few natural treatments you can try to boost the function of a bad gallbladder.

- [Flush the Gallbladder Out](#)
- [Foods and Nutrients to Promote Bile Flow](#)
- [Manipulation to Promote Bile Flow](#)

Flush the Gallbladder Out

To ensure a free flow of bile, both into and out of the gallbladder, you should clean this organ out with a [gallbladder flush](#). It's simple to perform, but if you have a history of [gallstones](#) or other gallbladder issues, I suggest you check with your doctor first to rule out the possibility that you have any large calcified gallstones that might not be able to pass through the bile duct during the flush. And, obviously, you don't need to perform the flush if you've had your [gallbladder removed](#).

Food and Nutrients to Promote Bile Flow

There are a number of foods and supplements that can stimulate the production and flow of bile, whether you have a bad gallbladder or even after the [removal of your gallbladder](#). Try:

- **Red beets and beet top extracts.** Several nutritional companies have developed very effective extracts from the beet plant, particularly the top, that enhance bile flow. Combining beet extracts with [bile salts](#) improves the overall effectiveness of the product. You can find these extracts at many health food stores.
- **Artichokes.** Leaves from the artichoke plant contain caffeoylquinic acids, which promote bile flow. The simplest and least expensive way to benefit from these compounds is to eat the artichoke leaves. They're easy to both prepare and eat. Place two artichokes in a shallow, glass baking dish with about 1/2 to 1 inch of water in the bottom. Cover with plastic wrap and cook in a microwave on high for four to five minutes. To eat, simply break off each leaf and scrape the flesh from the leaf between your teeth and throw the pithy part of the leaf away.
- **Sauerkraut and sauerkraut juice.** When used regularly, sauerkraut and its juice will promote bile output. A cup of the juice by itself taken once or twice a week before breakfast has worked wonders for dozens of my patients. And it's easy to make [homemade sauerkraut](#).

Manipulation to Promote Bile Flow

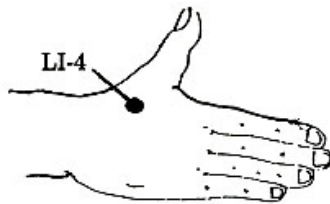
Stimulating certain reflex points can also help normalize the flow of bile, whether you have a bad gallbladder or even after the [removal of your gallbladder](#). The following technique is adapted from the brilliant work of Dr. Bertrand de Jarnette. It involves the use of a combination of acupuncture meridian points, as well as foot and neurolymphatic reflexes. Two or three sessions over the first week followed by a weekly session can make a dramatic difference in the way you feel. All you need is an able and willing assistant.

The four points you need to know are:

- Acupuncture point large intestine-4 or LI-4, located in the web of skin between the thumb and index finger on the right hand.
- The reflex point for the small intestine on the bottom of the right foot.
- The edge of the rib cage overlying the gallbladder, which also happens to be the acupuncture alarm point for the gallbladder or GB-24.
- The area where the gallbladder bile duct and the pancreatic bile duct meet before dumping into the small intestine (also called the Ampulla of Vater) is located 1 1/2 in. to the right of the bellybutton and then 3 in. below that.

There are five steps to the procedure:

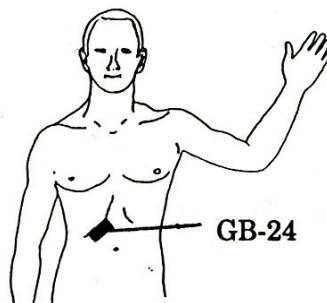
Grasp the LI-4 point on the patient's right hand between your thumb and index finger and apply a squeezing pressure with a circular-type motion until the pain in the area decreases.



Using your thumb, rub the bottom of the right foot in a circular motion until the pain begins to subside.

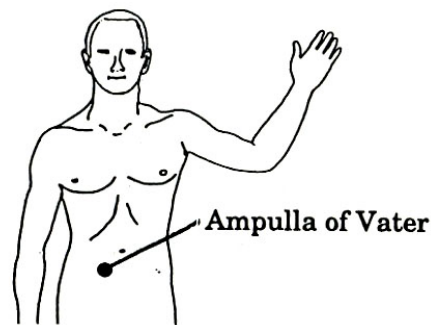


Cup your right hand so that the ends of your fingers are even and gently contact the bottom edge of the right rib cage. Hold just a slight pressure there for a minute or so to help relax the gallbladder. You may feel a gurgling or emptying of the gallbladder.

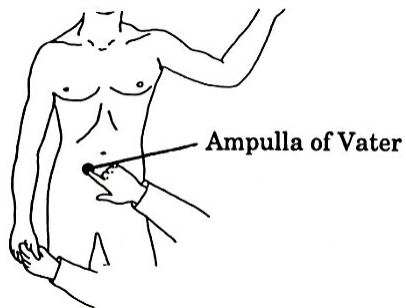


(Once you've performed the above three steps, then proceed with the next two.)

With your left thumb and index finger, again grasp the LI-4 point on the right hand. Place your other index finger over the Ampulla of Vater. Apply about 2 lbs. of pressure to each site and hold it for three or four minutes.



Next, apply direct, steady pressure of about 4 lbs. to the reflex point on the bottom of the right foot while at the same time applying 2 lbs. of pressure with your opposite hand to the Ampulla of Vater.



Priming your gallbladder for fats

by Lori Lipinski, The Well Being Journal, May/June 2012

Is your gallbladder ready for fat? If you're an American, chances are you've experienced problems with your gallbladder at one time or another. Typical gallbladder symptoms include: gas (especially burping after meals), a full or heavy feeling after meals, bloating, "acid reflux" (after meals and at night when lying down), pain in the right side radiating into the right shoulder blade, and loose or light colored stools that float.

Two things that the gallbladder doesn't like are bad fats and no fats. Bad fats, like heat processed or hydrogenated vegetable oils, are difficult to digest and put a lot of stress on the gallbladder. The gallbladder is shaped like a little sack that sits alongside your liver. The liver produces bile, a substance made from cholesterol that emulsifies fat and makes it easier to digest.

The gallbladder stores and concentrates bile, then secretes it into the small intestines when fats are present. If you don't eat fat, the gallbladder won't get any exercise and can begin to atrophy.

If you've eaten mostly bad fats in your life or have spent many years on a low-fat diet, chances are your gallbladder will need a little work before you will be able to completely digest generous amounts of good fats in your diet. Start by practicing good digestive habits, and enhance your digestion with raw apple cider vinegar. Mix 1 teaspoon with 2-4 ounces of water and drink with meals. A nice acid environment in the stomach stimulates the gallbladder to do its job. For additional support, I recommend Dr. Schulze's formula to clean the liver and

gallbladder. It's called the L/GB-AP formula; call 800-HERBDOC to order.

Other helpful remedies include Swedish Bitters, 1 teaspoon in water taken just after meals, and lacto-fermented foods such as sauerkraut and beet kvass.

Coconut oil is very easy on the gallbladder because the preponderance of short- and medium-chain fatty acids it contains do not require bile salts for digestion. If you are just beginning to add fats to your diet after many years of low-fat foods, your best choice at the start is coconut oil.

How To Perform a Gallbladder Flush

by Dr. David Williams, drdavidwilliams.com, 11/8/2011

Clean out your gallbladder for optimal function

To ensure a free flow of bile, both into and out of the gallbladder, you should clean this organ out with a gallbladder flush. It's simple to perform, but if you have a history of [gallstones](#) or other gallbladder issues, I suggest you check with your doctor first to rule out the possibility that you have any large calcified gallstones that might not be able to pass through the bile duct during the flush. And, obviously, you don't need to perform the flush if you've had your [gallbladder removed](#).

Boost the function of a bad gallbladder naturally

Improper gallbladder function makes it difficult to digest any fats in the diet, which can cause a wide variety of [symptoms](#). Luckily, there are a few natural treatments

The gallbladder flush requires one week, beginning on a Monday and ending on a Sunday. Before you begin you'll need to purchase:

- Plenty of apple juice or cider (not concentrate, but the real thing, without added sugars)
- Standard Process Disodium Phosphate Capsules (you can purchase these online)
- Citrus fruits for fresh-squeezed juice (you can substitute canned or bottled citrus fruit if you prefer) and to eat whole
- Unrefined olive oil, which is available at most health food stores
- Lemon juice

Then, starting on Monday morning, follow these instructions:

- Monday morning through noon on Saturday, drink as much apple juice or apple cider as your appetite will permit, in addition to your regular meals.
- At noon on Saturday, eat a normal lunch.
- Three hours later (at 3 p.m.), take 1 serving (3 capsules) of disodium phosphate with 8 ounces of water.
- Two hours later (at 5 p.m.), repeat step 3.
- Limit your evening meal to grapefruit or grapefruit juice, or other citrus fruits or juices.
- At bedtime, take **either**:
 - ½ cup of unrefined olive oil followed by a small glass of grapefruit juice
 - ½ cup of warm, unrefined olive oil blended with ½ cup of lemon juice.
- Go immediately to bed. For the first 30 minutes, lie on your right side with your right knee pulled up close to your chest.
- The next morning, one hour before breakfast, take 1 serving (3 capsules) of disodium phosphate with 8 ounces of water.
- Continue with your normal diet and activities.

What You Can Expect During the Gallbladder Flush

Some people feel slightly nauseated while they're drinking the olive oil and citrus juice mixture. If you do, don't fret. The feeling will disappear soon enough. You may also feel some discomfort in the area of your gallbladder—what's known as the upper right quadrant, on the right side of your abdomen just below the rib cage. This is actually a good sign because it indicates your gallbladder is being stimulated. This feeling will also pass with time. On Sunday, you'll likely feel the urge to defecate and may notice a change in the nature of your bowel movement. This is natural and is a result of the increased amount of bile released after the gallbladder flush. Some people report the presence of what look like dark green peas or even marbles in their stool. This is softened material from the gallbladder that has not yet become calcified. Again, it's not cause for alarm, and indicates that the gallbladder cleansing has been effective.



Drew's Kitchen

Parmesan Lamb Chops

Here's a simple dish when you don't feel like pulling out the grill this Spring.

Time: About 30 minutes; Yield: 2 to 3 servings

- 1 small rack of lamb, Frenched by a butcher, about 1 ½ pounds, or (8) 3-oz rib chops
 - Salt and pepper
 - ½ cup bread crumbs, preferably homemade
 - ½ oz grated Parmesan (about ½ cup)
 - ½ teaspoon powdered fennel seed (use an electric spice mill or mortar & pestle)
 - 1 teaspoon finely chopped rosemary
 - ½ cup flour seasoned with ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon black pepper and a pinch cayenne
 - 2 small eggs, lightly beaten
 - Olive oil for frying (or substitute clarified butter or vegetable oil)
 - Parsley sprigs for serving
 - Lemon wedges for serving
1. With a sharp knife, cut between bones to divide the rack of lamb into 8 chops. Trim chops of any excess fat. Season with salt and pepper on both sides.
 2. In a small bowl, mix together the bread crumbs, Parmesan, fennel seed and rosemary.
 3. Dip each chop into the seasoned flour, then into the beaten eggs. Lay the chops on a baking sheet and sprinkle both sides of each liberally with the crumb mixture. Press any remaining mixture evenly over the chops to coat well.
 4. In a wide skillet, pour the olive oil to a depth of ½ inch. Heat over a medium-high burner until the oil looks wavy. Add the chops without crowding. They should begin to sizzle, but not brown too quickly. Adjust the heat so they fry gently for about 2 ½ minutes, until crisp and golden. Turn with tongs and fry on the other side for about 2 minutes. (The interiors should be pink and juicy, but not rare.) Blot on paper towels. Serve with parsley sprigs and lemon wedges.



Sellwood Bridge Update

Goodbye For Now, Trees

It's still quiet around the Sellwood bridge as we wait for the salmon migration to finish so in-water work can resume again on July 1. However, there is current activity both visible and invisible.

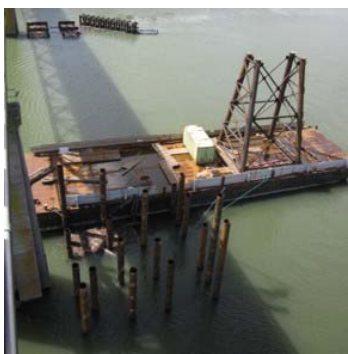
On the invisible front, the bridge is still serving as a touchstone for learning. In our February newsletter we told you about [Lois Cohen and how she works with project team to develop lesson plans about the bridge](#). This month, the Sellwood Bridge project website has more detail about [how elementary, middle, and high school students are integrating the Sellwood into their lessons](#).

On the visible front, a bunch of trees have disappeared from the westside of the river. 813 trees were removed from the Riverview Cemetery property along Highway 43 to prepare for stabilization of the hillside and construction of the westside bridge interchange. (It was important to bring these trees down before Spring kicked into gear; if a bird had nested in one of the trees the tree would have had to remain until the birds were gone.) What do you think happened to the trees that were removed? Under the Willamette Valley Treaty of 1855 the area tribes have the right to harvest natural resources in the area of the Sellwood Bridge, so all the trees are heading north. [The whole story is on the Indian Country Media Network](#).

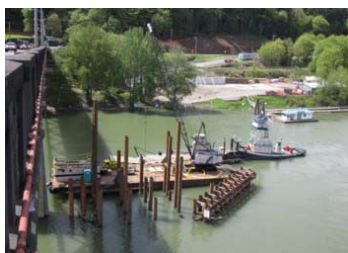


ACE Academy student Josh Coon shows models of the old and new Sellwood Bridges built for his senior project.

Here's our monthly gallery of construction images...



Barge near the East side supports. We have no idea what that big metal tower thing is, but we'll try to have info for you next month.



Tugboats work on the West side supports near the old Staff-Jennings site



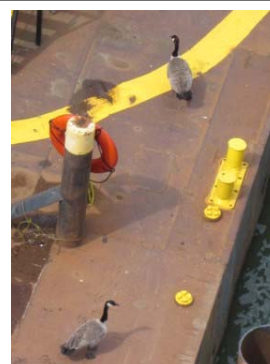
Treeless hillside on Highway 43 looking toward Lake Oswego



Newly bald hillside on Macadam Avenue

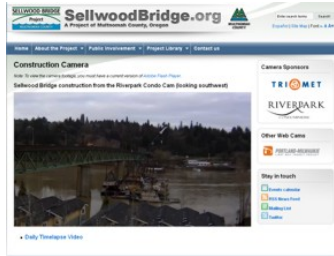


Workers move trees destined for the Grand Ronde Tribes



Geese inspecting the construction equipment. Everything was OK

...and don't forget ...



Multnomah County is set to keep you updated on the bridge construction 24/7. Their website at SellwoodBridge.org has full project information, archives, and other resources. Probably the most interesting thing on the site are the cameras set up to cover the new bridge construction. The link at left takes you to the [live camera](#), and there's also a [time-lapse video](#) that will condense the each day's construction progress into just a few minutes.

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Book Spotlight

"Doubt Is Their Product" by David Michaels

Tom Dwyer Automotive is a proud sponsor of the Illahee Lecture Series, an ongoing lecture series that you're long overdue to check out. Their speaker in April was Wendell Potter, a health insurance PR executive who quit the industry and is explaining how the industry works behind the scenes to create doubt and fear about any change to the existing health care system. In his lecture, Potter (also the subject of our News To Make

You Furious column this month) described a reality that is worse than the conspiracy theorists can imagine, and it's hard to believe it's not some sort of exaggeration. Although his comments were restricted to the insurance industry, coordinated plans have been in place for years in many industries to not only shape public opinion, but to evade, distort, and blind it. To back up Mr. Potter's assertions, our Book Spotlight this month shows you how this campaign is carried on in other industries, and how to fight back.

Doubt Is Their Product: How Industry's Assault on Science Threatens Your Health

by David Michaels

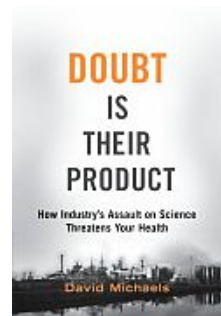
Publisher Comments:

"Doubt is our product," a cigarette executive once observed, "since it is the best means of competing with the 'body of fact' that exists in the minds of the general public. It is also the means of establishing a controversy."

In this eye-opening expose, David Michaels reveals how the tobacco industry's duplicitous tactics spawned a multimillion dollar industry that is dismantling public health safeguards. Product defense consultants, he argues, have increasingly skewed the scientific literature, manufactured and magnified scientific uncertainty, and influenced policy decisions to the advantage of polluters and the manufacturers of dangerous products. To keep the public confused about the hazards posed by global warming, second-hand smoke, asbestos, lead, plastics, and many other toxic materials, industry executives have hired unscrupulous scientists and lobbyists to dispute scientific evidence about health risks. In doing so, they have not only delayed action on specific hazards, but they have constructed barriers to make it harder for lawmakers, government agencies, and courts to respond to future threats. The Orwellian strategy of dismissing research conducted by the scientific community as "junk science" and elevating science conducted by product defense specialists to "sound science" status also creates confusion about the very nature of scientific inquiry and undermines the public's confidence in science's ability to address public health and environmental concerns. Such reckless practices have long existed, but Michaels argues that the Bush administration deepened the dysfunction by virtually handing over regulatory agencies to the very corporate powers whose products and behavior they are charged with overseeing.

In *Doubt Is Their Product* Michaels proves, beyond a doubt, that our regulatory system has been broken. He offers concrete, workable suggestions for how it can be restored by taking the politics out of science and ensuring that concern for public safety, rather than private profits, guides our regulatory policy.

Named one of the best Sci-Tech books of 2008 by *Library Journal*!



About the Author

David Michaels is a scientist and former government regulator. During the Clinton Administration, he served as Assistant Secretary of Energy for Environment, Safety and Health. He was the architect of the historic initiative to compensate nuclear weapons workers who developed cancer and lung disease. He is currently Research Professor and Associate Chairman of the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health at The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services and Professor, Albert Einstein School of Medicine, Mount Sinai School of Medicine. He lives in Bethesda, MD.

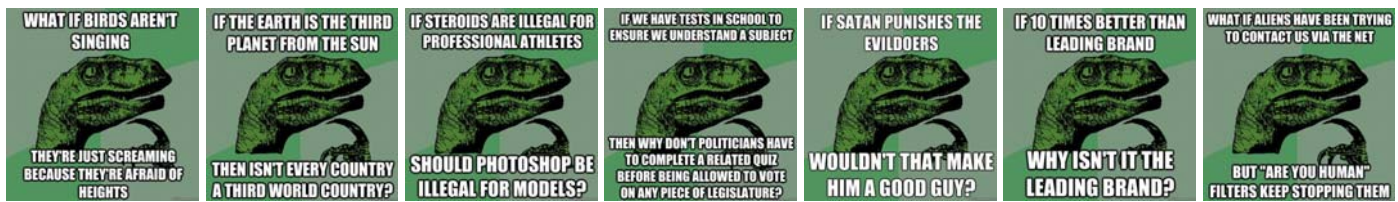


Humorousness

Philosoraptor, Success Baby, Courage Wolf, and more

Like you, we get a few emails each month that make us smile... of course, we get a lot more that don't, but you won't see those here. You'll see jokes and riddles, cartoons and pictures, pretty much anything that will bring a giggle. We'll stay away from the raunchy or obscene, but humor is very subjective and if we DO run something that offends you, please remember that we probably weren't trying to. And of course, if you have any chuckles you'd like to share with our audience, just email them to TomDwyer@TomDwyer.com. And now, without further ado, we bring you this month's Humorousness! (And please, remember to tip your waiters and waitresses!)

This month, it turns out that being extinct for 100 million years isn't enough to make you unpopular. We began running across internet sites featuring a pensive Velociraptor with pithy little sayings. Philosoraptor has taken the net by storm, and now there are hundreds of these things. You can see collections of them [here](#) and [here](#), with the [Philosoraptor history](#) here.



But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Turns out that Philosoraptor is just one of many of exactly this type of humor, (sometimes called "image macro" or "internet meme", although the word "meme" actually means any discreet idea that is transmitted within a culture) and like most things internet there are sites everywhere for you to create your own. There are no strict rules about any one macro, but the type of saying appropriate for each one sort of evolves from the combination of the central image and the people playing with it. Here are several of the more interesting memes making the rounds now...



If Image Macros sound like your thing, then there's help available. A site called "CheezBurger" has a [section called "Know Your Meme" with galleries and histories of 1,211 internet memes](#) and a [section where you can start captioning your own memes](#) right away. Got time to waste? Get started!

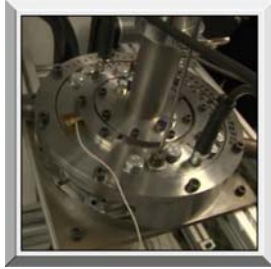


Popcorn Shorts

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

Just like it says, Popcorn Shorts is about the kind of things we think are really interesting, but don't really need a large article to explain them. From the sublime to the ridiculous, check in here for crunchy bits of info you'll love to munch. Bet you can't eat just one!

Engine of the Future



Engine Of The Future

Researchers at Michigan State University, led by Norbert Mueller, have developed a prototype engine that could replace old-fashioned internal combustion dinosaurs. The Wave Disk Generator is about the size of a crock pot, and uses wave-shaped chambers to compress and ignite fuel. Whereas conventional engines use 15% of their fuel for propulsion, the Disk uses 60% for propulsion with a 90% drop in emissions and potentially a 1000 pound drop in vehicle weight. Michigan State has received \$2.5 million in funding, and hopes to have a car-sized version ready by the end of the year. You can read stories on the engine [here](#) and [here](#), and see a video with Dr. Mueller [here](#).

Should Gravity Be Taught In School?



Should Gravity Be Taught In Schools?

Most people believe that school should be a place of learning, and that students should be learning facts. It's no place for untried theories or shaky science. So, in answer to one of the most important questions of our time, reporters went out to get [the opinion of experts \(Miss America Contestants\) on whether the shaky theory of gravity should be taught in school](#). These ladies were unequivocal, and their firm answers should stand as an example for any politicians who have to answer similar questions. By the way, any resemblance between the "theory of gravity" and "theory of evolution" in these interviews is purely coincidental.

Keeping up on Citizens United



Keeping up on Citizens United

Two years out from the Citizens United (CU) decision and it's no more popular than it was on day one, but it's still the law of the land. However, there are real people making progress on changing it, and you can track their progress here. Click these links for a [primer on CU from Truthout.org](#) and a [video describing the backlash against CU](#). Check here for the [city, state, and federal proposals to overturn the ruling](#), and here for a cool interactive [map showing the places that have passed resolutions against CU](#). Finally, if you want to get involved, you can check out any of the organizations leading the fight- [People For The American Way](#), [Oregon Common Cause](#), and [Move To Amend](#) are great places to start.

Amazing Tire Sculptures



Amazing Tire Sculptures

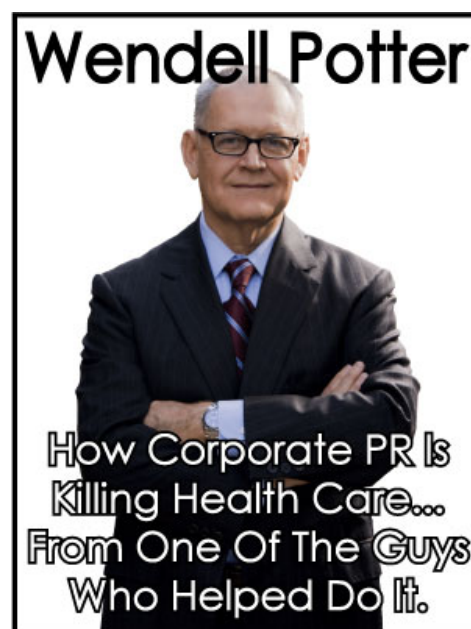
You may have seen a lot of recycled art out there, and some of it is even pretty good. When it comes to recycled tire art, most of us think of the half-buried tires that become flower beds in trailer parks and the ubiquitous hobby-horse tire swing, but [Korean artist Yong Ho Ji](#) will take you down a whole new road. He uses recycled tires on steel frames to create animals, humans, and hybrids. Realistic, dynamic, and powerful, his work will shock you with the possibilities of a material few of us ever give much thought to.



News To Make You Furious

Wendell Potter- If don't know him already, then strap in.

This month's Furious is all about one book. One book that can make you mad enough to last for years. Have you ever heard the phrase "Government takeover of health care"? It comes to you from a gentleman named Wendell Potter, a retired PR executive for the health insurance industry. He, and people like him, spend their careers figuring out ways to drop people's insurance when they get sick, mislead them about what their insurance covers, and lie to them about the state of health insurance and the implications of reform. Wendell retired from the industry "...because (he) could no longer serve in good conscience as a spokesman for an industry whose routine practices amount to a death sentence for thousands of Americans every year", and now he's telling the behind-the-scenes story the insurance industry doesn't want you to know. If you haven't heard about Wendell Potter already, then settle in. You won't soon forget him.



Here's an excerpt from Wendell's book ["Deadly Spin- An Insurance Company Insider Speaks Out on How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care and Deceiving Americans"](#), followed by our "News To Make You Furious" article from October, 2009, on ["Stories from Health Care Hell"](#). Enjoy!

"Deadly Spin"- The Beginning

"My name is Wendell Potter and for twenty years, I worked as a senior executive at health insurance companies, and I saw how they confuse their customers and dump the sick—all so they can satisfy their Wall Street investors."

That is how I introduced myself to the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee on June 24, 2009. The committee's chair, Senator Jay Rockefeller, D-W. Va., had asked me to testify as part of his investigation into health insurance company practices that for years had been swelling the ranks of the uninsured and the underinsured in the United States.

I explained how insurance companies make promises they have no intention of keeping, how they flout regulations designed to protect consumers, and how they make it nearly impossible to understand—or even obtain—information needed by consumers. I described how for-profit insurance companies, in their constant quest to meet Wall Street's profit expectations, routinely cancel the coverage of policyholders who get sick, and how they "purge" small businesses when their employees' medical claims exceed what underwriters expected.

I knew that as soon as I said those words my life would change forever. It did—but in ways I never could have imagined.

I had quit my job as head of public relations at CIGNA—a job that had paid me deep into six figures—because I could no longer serve in good conscience as a spokesman for an industry whose routine practices amount to a death sentence for thousands of Americans every year.

I did not intend to go public as a critic of the industry. But it gradually became clear to me that the industry's duplicitous PR strategy was going to manipulate public opinion and likely shape health care reform in ways that would benefit insurance company executives and their Wall Street masters far more than most other Americans.

I was eventually compelled to pull back the curtain on the industry's deception-based PR strategy, which comprised two active fronts. One was a highly visible "charm offensive" designed to create an image of the industry as an advocate of reform—and a good-faith partner with the president and Congress in achieving it. The second front was a secret, fearmongering campaign using front groups and business and political allies as shells to disseminate misinformation and lies, with the sole intent of killing any reform that might hinder profits.

I had left my job at CIGNA in May 2008, but it wasn't until 10 months later that I realized I couldn't stay on the sidelines.

As it turned out, it would be a fellow Tennessean who gave me one of the final shoves off the sidelines and into the spotlight and the new role of whistle-blower, as many people have called me.

It was March 5, 2009, and I was channel surfing for some news about the health care reform summit that President Obama was holding at the White House that day. Of the 120 or so people at the summit, many were from special interests that had the largest stakes financially in a reformed health care system: doctors, hospitals, drug and medical-device manufacturers, and, of course, insurers. Knowing that these groups had played a lead role in killing Bill and Hillary Clinton's reform plan 15 years earlier, Obama wanted to keep them from doing the same this time around. Having campaigned as someone who could bring people with diverse points of view together to work toward the common good, Obama had brought the top lobbyists of each special interest group to his kickoff reform "table"—which the Clintons had not done—and openly solicited the groups' support and cooperation. To win their support, his administration would eventually cut side deals with some of them, most notably the drugmakers.

I flipped to MSNBC just as Tamron Hall was getting ready to interview Republican representative Zach Wamp, from Tennessee's Third Congressional District. I'm also from east Tennessee, although I have lived in Philadelphia since CIGNA relocated me to the company's headquarters there in 1997. I grew up in Mountain City and Kingsport, both in the northeastern part of the state near the Virginia line. Wamp lives in Chattanooga, in the southeastern part of the state near the Georgia line.

When Hall asked Wamp about his views on the president's ideas for reform, he just about called Obama a Marxist: "It's probably the next major step toward socialism. I hate to sound so harsh, but ... this literally is a fast march toward socialism, where the government is bigger than the private sector in our country, and health care's the next major step, so we oughta all be worried about it."

He then started accusing the Democrats of wanting to redistribute wealth in the country by taking money away from those who already had health care to pay for those who didn't have it, many of whom, in his view, were just irresponsible bums waiting for a handout.

"Listen," he said. "The forty-five million people that don't have health insurance—about half of them choose not to have health insurance. Half of 'em don't have any choice, but half of 'em choose to, what's called 'go naked,' and just take a risk of getting sick. They end up in the emergency room, costing you and me a whole lot more money. How many illegal immigrants are in this country today, getting our health care? Gobs of 'em!"

As I listened to Wamp's rant, I knew exactly where he'd gotten his talking points: from me.

He was using the same misleading, intentionally provocative and xenophobic talking points that I had helped write while serving on the Strategic Communications Advisory Committee of the insurers' biggest trade group, America's

Health Insurance Plans (AHIP). We PR types had created those talking points, with help from language and polling experts, and given them to the industry's lobbyists with instructions to get them into the hands of every "friendly" member of Congress. Most of the friendly ones were Republicans, and most were friendly because they had received a lot of money over the years in campaign contributions from insurance company executives and their political action committees.

(In spirited remarks on the House floor shortly before the vote on final reform legislation in 2010, Representative Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., called the Republican Party a "wholly owned subsidiary of the insurance industry." As someone who had managed CIGNA's PAC contributions for several years, I knew Weiner's remark had the ring of truth. CIGNA and other big insurers have contributed considerably more to Republicans than to Democrats.)

I was dismayed to hear Wamp's demagogic remarks— and not just because I'd had a hand in writing his script, but also because I know his district well. If anybody in America could benefit from the Democrats' vision of reform, it would be those who live in the counties he represents. Many are rural and remote, with high percentages of people who are either uninsured or underinsured. The per capita and house hold incomes in most of his counties are far below the national average. Yet the Third District's representative—contrary to the best interests of his constituents— was saying exactly what the insurance industry wanted him to say.

Later that evening, I saw a couple of TV reports about the summit. One of the clips featured Karen Ignagni, AHIP's president, standing up at the summit and telling the president he could count on her and the health insurance industry.

"Thank you, Mr. President," she said. "Thank you for inviting us to participate in this forum. I think, on behalf of our entire membership, they would want to be able to say to you this afternoon and everyone here that we understand we have to earn a seat at this table. We've already offered a comprehensive series of proposals. We want to work with you. We want to work with the members of Congress on a bipartisan basis here. You have our commitment. We hear the American people about what's not working. We've taken that seriously."

Turning in one of her best performances to date, she added, "You have our commitment to play, to contribute, and to help pass health care reform this year."

The president— having just been played like a Stradivarius by one of the best lobbyists ever to hit Washington—said, "Good. Thank you, Karen. That's good news. That's America's Health Insurance Plans."

The crowd cheered and applauded. They all seemed to be buying it—but I wasn't, not by a long shot. I wasn't surprised, either, at the president's and the crowd's reactions to what she had said.

Ignagni is one of the most effective communicators and— with a salary and bonuses of \$1.94 million in 2008—one of

the highest-paid special interest advocates in Washington. I've known her since she left the AFL-CIO in the early 1990s to lead one of AHIP's predecessors, the Group Health Association of America, an HMO trade group of which Humana was a member when I worked for that insurer. I knew from the first time I met her that she was the perfect choice to lead the insurance industry. She is smart, telegenic, articulate, charming, a strong leader, and a brilliant strategist. Following her success in shaping to her industry's liking the legislation creating the Medicare prescription drug program, Princeton economist Uwe Reinhardt commented, "Whatever AHIP pays her is not enough."

I realized after watching the exchange between Ignagni and Obama that I had seen both sides of the industry's duplicitous PR campaign in a single day. Ignagni was saying what she knew the president and the inside-the-Beltway crowd wanted to hear, while Wamp was saying what the industry wanted him to say to the rest of the world. He was a tool in the industry's effort to use "third parties" to kill key elements of the president's plan, if not all of it, by scaring and lying to the public.

But it was another televised interview the following Monday

that pushed me from the sidelines and into the fray. Four days after the White House summit, Chris Matthews was interviewing Mike Tuffin, AHIP's executive vice president of strategic communications, on his MSNBC show, Hardball. "The same people who helped kill the Clintons' efforts back in the '90s are on the other side now," Matthews said in introducing Tuffin. "Times have changed. The worm has turned. The cosmos has shifted. Some of the bad guys are becoming perhaps the good guys."

There was no doubt about it: Tuffin was on the show as part of AHIP's charm offensive.

"This time," he told Matthews, "we're coming to the table with solutions. We want to be part of the process. We pledged that to the president. We're calling for new regulations on our industry to make sure everyone has guaranteed access to coverage." He thus joined Ignagni in spinning the fiction that, for the first time ever, insurers were willing to accept more regulations and change their ways so that everybody in America could "have access to affordable, quality care" (a favorite term of industry leaders).

And just like Obama, Matthews seemed to be falling for it.



(From October, 2009) This month's NEWS TO MAKE YOU FURIOUS comes from the healthcare debate, where reasoned and rational people calmly debate the merits of various well-considered and comprehensive plans, weighing the rights of people to live healthy lives against...well, whatever weighs against that. Here's a few mouth-dropping stories about real people and their interactions with the Insurance Board Death Panels. Unfortunately, if you're interested, it's easy to find more.

This American Life- Always good on any subject, they really get going on this one. "Fine Print" has a great story about [how pharmaceutical companies manipulate you \(and your insurance company\) into paying high prices for brand name drugs when generics are available](#). You probably don't even realize it's happening.

Yes!- Personal stories from patients, doctors, and activists

DEAD LINK (4/24/12) - WFAA - Dallas TV Station with story of a 27-year-old whose plug was pulled -

The Agonist- More stories in nice little boxes

Firedoglake- Fun with medical bills

Commonwealth Fund Top 10 Health Policy Stories

DEAD LINK (4/24/12) - Committee on Energy and Commerce - Actual testimony before our Congressional overlords -

Los Angeles Times- Heartwarming article on Blue Cross employees getting good performance reviews.

Baseline Scenario- Fun facts about rescission. How could this possibly be legal?