



September 2013 Newsletter

503-230-2300 TomDwyer.com

Tom's Tidbits

Dance to the beat of a different drummer

Popcorn Shorts



You'll kick yourself for not knowing these tricks already



10 simple things you can do to protect your privacy



Tom Dwyer enters the world of sports



Do you have what it takes to vote in 1965 Alabama?

Our Feature Articles



Getting Soaked By Your Water Bill?

We couldn't cut ours, but maybe you can cut yours



Don't Miss Out On The Talk Around The Shop

All the big events at the Dwyer shop are in one small column



Obama and Yemeni Journalism

What happens when foreigners talk smack about the US?

Our Monthly Columns

Drew's Kitchen

Jake's world-famous cedar plank salmon

Shop Talk

Automotive Amnesty is going on now!

Health Notes

Information-free nutrition labels

Sellwood Bridge Update

Construction takes a U-turn

Book Spotlight

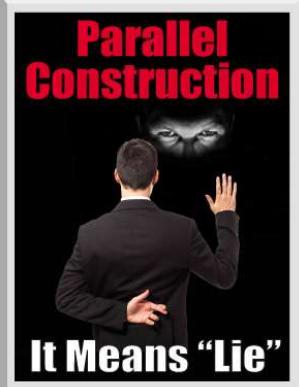
"Perfectly Legal"

by David Cay Johnston

Humorosity

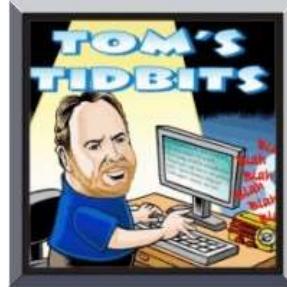
Signs, signs, everywhere there's signs

News To Make You Furious



Tom's Tidbits

Dance to the beat of a different drummer



Greetings!

What is the urgent force behind the latest pounding of the war drums for a strike on Syria?

The current challenge to Assad's rule has already cost over 100,000 lives and displaced one third of its population, but the recent chemical attack near Damascus, we're told, is different. The fountain of blood so far has been acceptable, but chemical weapons are an abomination that cannot be tolerated; crossing an international "red line". The US must "teach a lesson" so that it never happens again.

I agree with John Kerry that this chemical attack "...should shock the conscience of the world", whether it was launched with Assad's approval, a rogue commander under his leadership, or a false flag attack by rebel forces. Chemical weapons violate the world's standards, not just ours. There should be accountability, but if the world community cannot back a unified response, then it's not our job to do it for them. UN weapons inspector Hans Blix said unilateral US action "...would be the action of self-appointed global policemen." He's wrong. We would not be policemen, but self-righteous war criminals.

President Obama said he has "...no interest in any kind of open-ended conflict in Syria" but lobbing cruise missiles (at \$1.5 million apiece) into a sovereign country is an act of war. Syria has a political ally in Russia and very close ties with Iran. If they do not sit quietly and take the spanking we think they deserve, then there are likely to be dangerous and unpredictable consequences despite the President's fond wishes.

A coordinated effort by the world community with a rational chance of stopping more chemical strikes might have merit. Indeed, our morals, ethics, treaties, and laws might even compel us to act in that case. But that is not what we're facing. I would urge everyone to look deeper into the forces behind this recent rush to "surgery". I think there is more to the story than a crossing of the "red line".



Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin recently described western nations' behavior toward the Islamic world as a "monkey with a hand grenade"

Calls for peace rarely still the drums of war, but sanity may yet have a chance to prevail. President Obama acknowledged the Russian proposal for Syria to avert war by agreeing to destroy its chemical weapons stock as "a potentially positive development." It was quintessentially an un-Bush moment when this presidential "decider" suddenly seemed possessed of a brain capable of absorbing new information and changing course appropriately. This may still come to naught- as I write this, the President is preparing to address the nation. The situation is changing on a minute-to-minute basis, but we'll soon see if Obama can muster the wisdom and independence of a Nobel Laureate, or if he will mindlessly dance to the tune of others.

Complex [proxy wars](#), [historic religious divisions](#), [US-Israeli relations](#), a proposed [Iranian-Syrian liquid natural gas pipeline](#), [armament industry control](#), [war permanence](#)... all these intertwined factors and more are behind a rush to dethrone Assad. I think the "red line" is a simple story for simple minds to buy into an illegal action. Let's not be rushed into irreversible actions by the pounding of the drums. Only the drummers will benefit.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

Curious? Want to know more?

[General Wesley Clark- US plan to “take out 7 countries in 5 years” \(video\)](#)

[Syria profile and chronology of key events](#) BBC News

[Syria 'Red line' debate: Are chemical weapons in Syria worse than conventional attacks?](#) Josh Levs, CNN

[Opposition presses for weapons as Syria death toll tops 100,000](#), Ed Payne, et al, CNN

[Kucinich says US war on Syria could become WWIII](#), Dennis Kucinich, Press TV

[22 reasons why starting World War III in Middle East is a really bad idea](#), Michael Snyder, Press TV

[Does Obama need Congress to approve Syria strike? \(+video\)](#), Jennifer Skalka Tulumello, DC Decoder

[Chemical weapons 101: Six facts about sarin and Syria's stockpile](#), Howard LaFranchi, DC Decoder

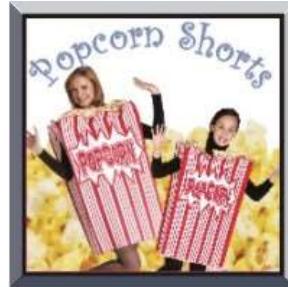
[Attack on Iran: A Looming Folly](#), William Rivers Pitt, Truthout

[Even if Assad used chemical weapons, the west has no mandate to act as a global policeman](#),
Hans Blix, The Guardian

[Obama decries 'paralysed' UN Security Council](#), AlJazeera

Popcorn Shorts

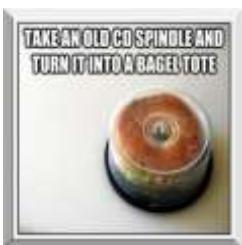
Cool stuff that's too small for a big article



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. By the way, much (but not all) of our delicious Popcorn comes from articles we've posted on [our Facebook page](#). If you're on Facebook, please stop by and "Like" us and we'll keep a fairly-constant-but-not-frequent-enough-to-be-annoying stream of these coming to your virtual door!

You'll kick yourself for not knowing these tricks already



We found a wonderful [article full of "lifehacks"; simple, inexpensive, creative ways to solve problems you might not even know you had](#). There are pages of these ideas, and most are simple enough to get across in a picture or a couple sentences. "CD spindle makes a great bagel tote" is a good example, but you'll also find out how to fold a shirt in under 2 seconds, how to Google effectively, how to make an iPhone speaker from a toilet paper roll, how to remove unpopped kernels from microwave popcorn, how to remove egg yolks using a plastic bottle, and much more.

10 incredibly simple things you can do to protect your privacy



Edward Snowden's revelations (among many others) pretty much confirmed that there is no such thing as privacy anymore. Whether it's Big Government Brother or Big Corporate Brother, there's a powerful entity peeking (or at least able to peek) over your shoulder at everything you do. While it may not be possible to ever rebuild the firewall between you and the world, there are things you can do to put up an attractive fence that could still keep out riff-raff like identity thieves. Here's [a list of 10 quick and simple things you can do](#) to get started.

Tom Dwyer enters the world of sports



Here's some breaking news from the world of sports... there's a new power in town when it comes to darts. Tom Dwyer Automotive Services has fielded a dart team to participate in this year's [Portland Area Dart Association](#) league play. Our dartists(?) are Andrew Mayer, Sarah Heidler, Matt McKenzie, and Charles Letherwood, and the team, named "The Mechanics", is chartered out of the [Sellwood Public House](#). No one knows how well (or even if) our players can play, but we'll find out over the 8-week season. Stay tuned... we'll keep you posted on the outcome!

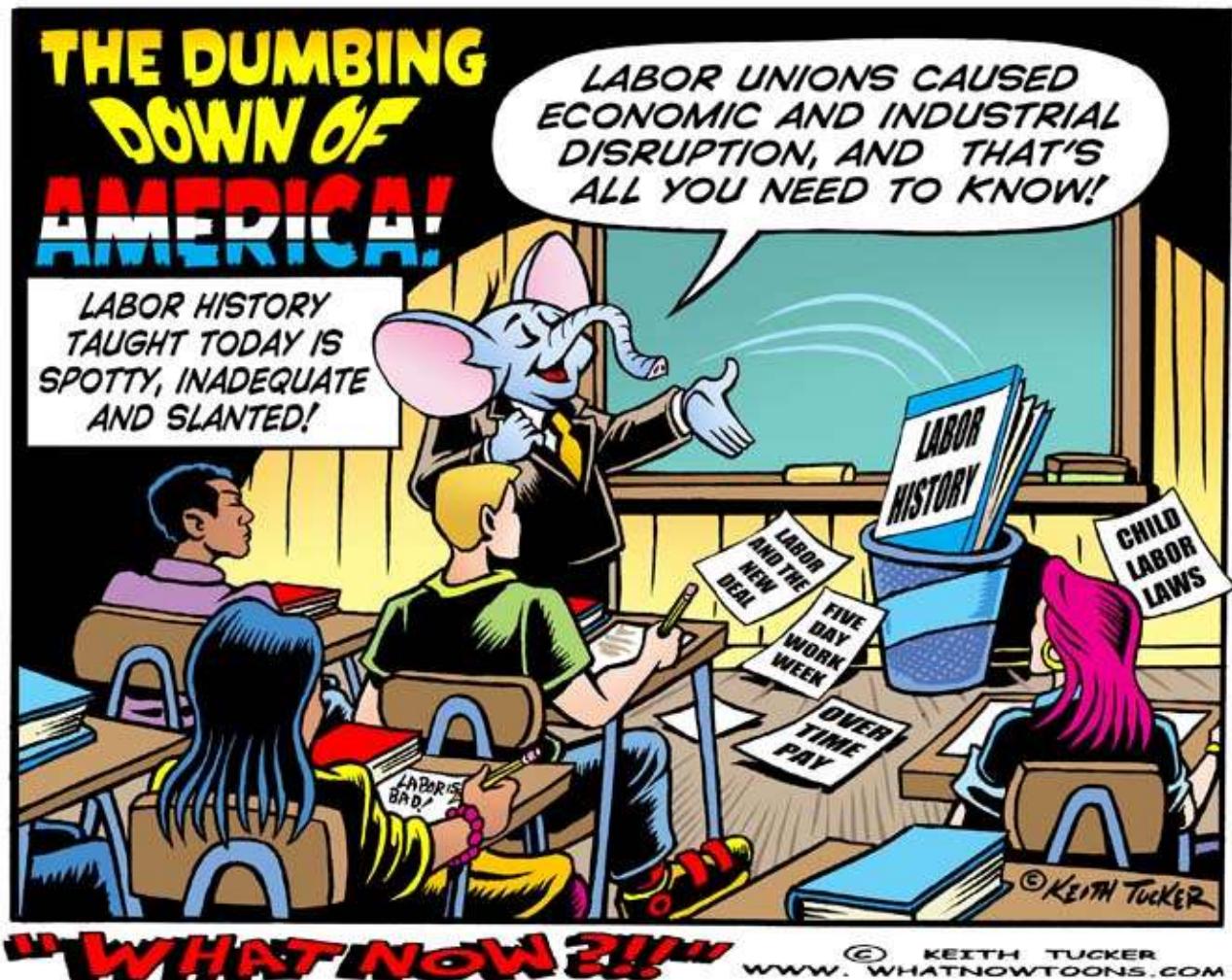
Do you have what it takes to vote in 1965 Alabama?



One of the most popular newsletter articles we've run in a long time was one in which you could [take the US Citizenship test](#). The point of the article was how shamefully illiterate Americans are in civics... when [Newsweek gave the test to 1000 US citizens, 38 percent failed](#). But this story is about another test, one that was amazing for the number of people who passed... [voters in the Jim Crow South had to take a literacy test to qualify to vote](#). There were different questions for Black and White applicants... how would you do if your right to vote was on the line?

What NOW?!! Toons

See it FIRST in Your Car Matters!



Want to know more?

[American Labor in US History Textbooks](#), The Albert Shanker Institute

Getting soaked by your stormwater bill?

We couldn't cut ours, but maybe you can cut yours

We're always trying to make our business more environmentally friendly. It's the responsible, ethical thing to do, but sometimes it saves money too. In the past we've looked at adding solar panels to the shop (too expensive to do the structural upgrades), but this month we were trying to handle our stormwater runoff. Like our foray into solar energy this didn't work out too well, but we did learn some fascinating things about stormwater management and a way you can save money on your water bill as well...

Portland is famous for rain but the story of rainwater doesn't end when it soaks your clothes. All that water goes somewhere. In Portland, much of it flows into a combined sewer system that carries both stormwater runoff and sewage to a wastewater treatment plant. A very heavy rainstorm can fill the combined sewers to capacity and cause some of the rain and sewage mixture to overflow to the Willamette River. But it takes a lot more rain than it once did to make that happen. Before November 1, 2011 – when the City of Portland completed a 20-year, \$1.4-billion program to control combined sewer overflows – combined sewers overflowed an average of 50 times every year. Now that the west side and east side big pipes are operating, combined sewers overflow no more than four times each winter and once every three summers.

The big pipes capture and store combined sewage and eventually transport to the wastewater treatment plant. Combined



sewers have overflowed only three times since Portland completed its control program in November 2011.

The combined sewer overflow control program reduced overflows, but it also contributed to increases in Portland's sewer and stormwater rates. When the program began in 1991, the average monthly residential sewer and stormwater bill was about \$14. Today it's nearly \$63. Although that makes sewer and stormwater charges in Portland among the nation's highest, that will change. "Other cities of Portland's size or bigger are realizing that they'll have to upgrade their own inadequate sewer systems," said Bob Fraley of the [Portland Bureau of Environmental Services](#). "These are big, expensive, long term projects that they'll have to pay for in some way and the only logical way to do it is to go to ratepayers, so those cities' water rates will be rising to match Portland's soon."

Portland's Big Pipe

The system will redirect 96% of the yearly combined sewer and stormwater flows to the Columbia Boulevard Wastewater Treatment Plant.



We can't reduce the amount of rainfall, but we can reduce the amount of rainwater flowing into the sewers. Rainfall captured by

gutters flows to the city sewer system, but breaking this connection lets the water flow through the ground and into the river, slowing the flow and using natural processes to filter it. You may think the flow from one house isn't enough to make a difference, and you'd be right, but when one house joins with others the cumulative effect is strong. Bob said Bureau of Environmental Services staffers once canvassed neighborhoods to encourage people to disconnect their roof drains from the combined sewer system. "So many people disconnected their downspouts that our engineers were able to reduce the size of the big pipes because the program kept so much stormwater out of the combined sewers. That a huge savings to our sewer ratepayers."

So how does all of this save you money? When you look at your water/sewer bill, you'll see a line for "On-site Stormwater". [Disconnecting your gutters from the city sewer system gives you a 75% discount on these on-site stormwater management charges.](#) This isn't a one-time deal either; it continues on as long as you manage stormwater on your property. It's not a 100% discount because some of stormwater

leaves your property and is managed by city facilities, but it still saves you some money. Environmental Services no longer actively encourages people to disconnect downspouts, but the discount is still there to take advantage of.

How did our own attempt to save money on our water/sewer bill come out? Not so well. We have four active downspouts that could theoretically be disconnected, but what then? What would happen to the water? Our shop is built out almost to the border of our property lines and the little area outside our walls is either paved or covered with packed earth and gravel. If we disconnected our downspouts there wouldn't be anywhere for the water to soak into the ground. It would either flow onto the streets and into the city sewer (no savings there) or down the hill and onto the Springwater Trail (no savings there either). So, while we couldn't make the changes we hoped for, maybe it's not too late to make a difference. If this article prompts you to disconnect from the city system then we'll know we made our city a little better and saved you a couple dollars, which wouldn't be a bad ending to the story at all.

Curious? Want to know more?

[Portland Bureau of Environmental Services](#)

[Portland's \\$1.4 billion Big Pipe project comes to an end after 20 years](#)

Beth Slovic, The Oregonian

[Map: 2012 Water Prices in 30 Major U.S. Cities](#)

Circle of Blue

[Why do Portland water customers pay so much? Because of big, needed projects -- and small ones that some question](#)

Ryan Frank, The Oregonian

[USA Today analysis: Water costs gush higher](#)

USA Today

Don't Miss Out On The Talk Around The Shop

All the big events at the Dwyer shop are in one small column

If you've read more than one issue of this newsletter, you know it's a little different from most others. Newsletters are business communication tools so they are, by nature, promotional pieces full of sale announcements or developments in their particular business field. But how many articles about bugs do you really want to read from your exterminator? If we want you to keep reading our newsletter (and we do) then we have to make it something you want to read! That's why we work so hard on the Feature articles, columns, and all the rest, but sometimes all the company-specific details can get lost in the sexier content. As just one example, this month our Automotive Amnesty program could save you as much as \$100 on repairs. If you want to know more, there's only one place to go... our Shop Talk column!



Shop Talk is the place we keep all the information on the happenings here at the shop. From our occasional service offers to community events, contests, automotive oddities, and more, if it only affects Tom Dwyer clients then this is the only place to read about it. This month we have a particularly full plate to share with you...

- **Email Reminder Notices**- Help us keep you current on your vehicle service as easily and conveniently as possible.
- **Nominate a group for our 2014 calendar**- You can help a non-profit that matters to you by letting us know about them for this year's Charitable Giving calendar.
- **Automotive Amnesty means 15% off labor charges**- We don't run service specials very often, but when we do this is the place to get all the details.
- **Free Carwash Season is ending**- If you were reading Shop Talk, you knew that there were free carwash coupons sitting here waiting for you. They're about to run out until next year, but Shop Talk tells you how to get on then.
- **Your reviews and referrals matter**- We thank you for your support, and make it easy for you to tell the world about what you've found with us.
- **Latest Automotive Recalls**- This is a newer feature, but there's a string of new automotive recalls every month. Is your vehicle listed? We tell you here.

But that's just a start. In the past few months we've said [goodbye to one of our long-time techs](#), shown you a [mouse that didn't fare well in an engine](#) and a [kitten that did](#), gave you an important [reminder on your oil](#), told you the [best time to schedule to get the most convenient service](#), and much more. And all this information doesn't just disappear into the vapor when it's done, you can always access older editions of the column by clicking the [Shop Talk](#) link at the bottom of each article or by checking out our [Newsletter Archive](#).

We hope our newsletter is something you look forward to receiving. We hope the articles bring you in, make you think, and maybe even make you act. Even though it's just a newsletter from an auto mechanic, we hope it helps keep you informed. But don't just click the headlines... take a few minutes to drop by the shop for Shop Talk. It may matter the most to you!

Big Brother Overseas

What happens when foreigners talk smack about the US?

It's common for some groups to build their own bubbles of reality. It doesn't matter what goes on in the real world as long as their warm little womb of lies is inviolate. The US has been wrapped in its own bubble of a peaceful arbiter, an occasionally aggrieved innocent, and a neutral bystander except in the wars we officially back. Despite official denials, people in Pakistan, Yemen, Tunisia, and elsewhere know real wars are being waged in their countries, and that real people are dying while Americans slumber peacefully in their bubbles. But what happens when someone tries to pop our bubble? They may find out that truth is not a complete defense; in fact it may offer very little defense at all...

On December 17, 2009, the government of Yemen announced a series of strikes on an Al Qaeda training camp in the village of al Majala. The target was Saleh Mohammed al-Anbouri, a known militant linked to al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) who had allegedly been 'bringing nationals from different countries to train them to become Al Qaeda members'. Al Anbouri lived with his wife, four young sons, and an extended family of mostly women and children with no known links to AQAP. While Anbouri and 13 other militants were killed in the attack, 41 civilians also died including 21 children and 14 women. While the Yemeni government claimed responsibility for the attack, rumors that it was actually a US strike surfaced almost immediately. This wasn't an unrealistic conspiracy theory since the US had conducted missions in Yemen seven years earlier, but the Yemenis maintained it was their action. The Yemenis held an investigation, approved the commission's findings, apologized to the families, and promised compensation. According to them, 'the American authorities did not get involved in this process in any way.'



Rather than debate whether to believe the Yemeni or the US government, a respected Yemeni journalist named Abdulelah Haider Shaye did the unthinkable... he actually went to the site and looked around. He found remnants of Tomahawk cruise missiles and cluster bombs, neither of which are in the Yemeni military's arsenal. He

took and distributed pictures of the missile parts and wreckage, some of which had the label "Made in the USA". When Shaye reported that this was actually a US strike the Pentagon refused to comment and the Yemeni government repeatedly denied US involvement. But he was later proven right when WikiLeaks (thank you, Bradley Manning!) released a US diplomatic cable in which Yemeni officials joking about how they lied to their own parliament about the US role, while President Saleh assured Gen. David Petraeus that his government would continue to say "the bombs are ours, not yours."

The US and Yemen praised this diligent search for the truth, and publicly congratulated Shaye on his correction of the public record... just kidding. Seven months after Al-Majala, Shaye was kidnapped by Yemeni intelligence, threatened, and warned against further statements on TV. "We will destroy your life if you keep on talking about this issue", he was told before being dumped on a street and released. Undeterred, Shaye returned to Al-Jazeera to discuss Majala and his treatment. This resulted in another arrest of both Shaye and his best friend, supporter, and political cartoonist, Kamal Sharaf. While Sharaf was taken by "tall and heavy" men "wearing American Marine-type uniforms", Shaye was again taken by Yemeni security. Shaye and Sharaf "were both taken blindfolded and handcuffed to the national security prison, which is supported by the Americans" and interrogated for over a month. Sharaf was released after promising to stop drawing cartoons of President

Saleh, but Shaye refused to back down. He was held in solitary and tortured for an additional 34 days without access to a lawyer or notification of his family. Shaye was finally tried after almost three months confinement. He faced a series of death-sentence charges, but was convicted of terrorism-related charges and sentenced to five years prison followed by 2 years of additional restrictions and surveillance.

By early 2011 Shaye's case had garnered notice in Yemen and beyond, and President Saleh decided, under pressure, to issue a pardon. When word got out, President Obama picked up the phone to "express concern". Without offering evidence that Shaye was a terrorist or a supporter of terrorism, White House spokesperson Bernadette Meehan confidently explained "We remain

concerned about al-Shaye's potential early release due to his association with Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula." Saleh's pardon was rescinded.

What's happening with Shaye these days? He was finally released after three years of imprisonment, but not allowed to leave Sana for 2 years. His case will be reviewed again at that time. And President Obama, whose "concern" kept Shaye in a prison for an extra 2 years for reporting reality? He's concerned again, this time because no one believes the US supports whistleblowers, no one believes our intelligence on Syria, and no one believes we stand for a free press at home or abroad. Once a bubble pops, it's a very hard thing to fix.

Curious? Want to know more?

[Abdulelah Haider Shaye, Yemeni Journalist, Freed From Prison](#) Huffpost Media

[Prominent Yemeni Journalist Lands in Jail; US Wants him to Stay There](#) The World

[US covert actions in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia](#), The Bureau of Investigative Journalism (with monthly updates)

[Why Is President Obama Keeping a Journalist in Prison in Yemen?](#) Jeremy Scahill, The Nation

[The dangers of reporting the 'war on terror'](#), Al-Jazeera

['I Am Still a Prisoner': Yemeni Journalist Jailed at Obama's Request Now Under House Arrest](#) Rooj Ahwazir, AlterNet

[Jeremy Scahill Recounts How the US Dirty Wars Killed Women and Children in a Yemeni Village](#), Jeremy Scahill, "Dirty Wars- The World Is A Battlefield"

[The civilian massacre the US neither confirms nor denies](#), Chris Woods, The Bureau of Investigative Journalism

[Images of munitions point to US role in fatal attack on terror training camp](#), The Daily Star

Drew's Kitchen

Jake's World Famous Cedar Plank Salmon



Drew's brought you a few grilling adventures this year, and as we move into Fall he's bringing you yet another mouth-waterer that proves it's not time to close the grill just yet...

Ingredients

- 1 fresh salmon fillet (2-4 pounds)
- 1 Jake's World Famous Cedar BBQ Plank
- Lemon
- Seasoning (optional)
- Brown sugar

Directions

- Soak cedar plank for at least 30 minutes. Heat grill to high.
- Place salmon on soaked plank, skin down.
- Squeeze lemon over top, season as desired.
- Spread brown sugar 1/8" to 1/4" thick across entire fillet.
- Place plank and salmon on grill; grill on high 5 minutes then reduce to medium or medium-low for 20-25 minutes.
- Close grill, checking occasionally that plank doesn't catch fire. (Keep water handy just in case!)

(Of course, in Portland, there's only one "Jake" the recipe could refer to. Drew would like to thank Jakes Famous Crawfish for this recipe)

Shop Talk

Automotive Amnesty is going on now!



Summer is our busiest season, so with the beginning of Fall we have time to catch up on a few very important things:

Email Reminder Notices



You've heard for a long time that we're planning to switch to an email format for our interval reminder notices, hopefully saving a few trees over the postcard format we have now. We've been trying out our new system in September, and a few clients have gotten reminder notices just after they came in for service. We apologize for any inconvenience, and we think most of the bugs have been ironed out now. One thing we'll need to be successful going forward is an accurate email address for you... please make sure we have your correct email so we can stay in touch. We promise not to sell your info to ANYONE, and we won't abuse the privilege of your email with spam. Please call us at 503-230-2300 or email charles@tomdwyer.com to confirm.

Nominate a group for our 2014 calendar



Our annual [Charitable Giving Calendar](#) is coming out in November, so we need your nominations now. Our calendar recognizes and publicizes the contributions of small, local, groups that do so much to help our community. National groups do tons of work worthy of recognition, but we want the groups that labor unnoticed, that work in the margins, and that could use a few more people to consider their cause. Is there a non-profit group you work with, contribute to, or benefit from that you'd like to see included? Call us at 503-230-2300 or email charles@tomdwyer.com to get your group on the list!

Automotive Amnesty means 15% off labor charges



It doesn't happen often, but it's happening now... Automotive Amnesty. We [don't have coupons for several reasons](#) although we do have several [moneysaving programs](#) to save you money throughout the year, but every once in a while we like to go even farther. If you've had recommendations on file that you need to take care of, then you can take care of them during Automotive Amnesty. Save 15% off labor charges on those stale recommendations if you have them fixed NOW!

And here's the fine print...

- Discount applies to labor charges only, not parts
- Discount is capped at \$100 maximum
- Recommendations must have been in your file before September 11, 2013
- You must tell us you want this offer **WHEN YOU SCHEDULE YOUR SERVICE!** Offer is **VOID AFTER SERVICE IS COMPLETE!**
- Service must be scheduled before October 11, 2013

It's just that simple. Don't put off the repairs critical to your convenience and safety... come in now!

Free Carwash Season is ending



If you hurry on the Automotive Amnesty you can also take advantage of another deal that's about to wrap up... September 15 marks the end of this year's Free Carwash Season. Every year from May 15 to September 15 we offer free coupons to WashMan Carwash to make up for our dusty parking lot (\$100 minimum service), but that September 15 deadline is coming like a freight train. Don't let these last few days go by without you- you deserve a clean ride!

Your reviews and referrals matter



We are constantly grateful for the supportive and loyal clients we have developed over the years. Your comments and appreciation keep us on the right road to providing the superior automotive service you deserve. Your reviews and referrals are not only the highest compliments we can receive, but they're the lifeblood of our new business. If you like what you've found at Tom Dwyer Automotive Services, please tell a friend or take a minute to write a review on [Yelp](#), [Angieslist](#), [Google](#), or the review site of your choice. Thank you!

Latest Automotive Recalls



Automobiles are just like any other product; occasional flaws in manufacture or design can cause problems once they leave the factory. When an issue is identified the manufacturers and government work hard to bring the vehicles back in for refit or repair, but not all recalls make the front pages. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration maintains a constantly updated list of recalls from every manufacturer. The last month's recalls are below, but clicking the button at right will take you to the full list at the NHTSA website.

Breaking Recall News (sort of)-

Before we move on to this month's recall list, we found a [short story that can affect your used car shopping](#). From the Tom Krisher AP article-

"Starting next summer (2014), U.S. consumers will be able to search a giant database to find out if their cars or motorcycles have been recalled and if the vehicles have been fixed. Only about 70 percent of recalled vehicles are taken to dealers for repairs, leaving thousands of cars on the road with potentially critical safety flaws. The database will let car owners search for free to see if they missed a recall notice, and used car shoppers will be able to see if all recall work has been done on cars they want to buy."

Some car makers (like Ford) already do this, and while CarFax offers a recall list it only covers vehicles where the manufacturers are currently making repairs. However, August 14 is the deadline for everyone else to get on board. And now, back to this month's recall list...

- [September 9: 780,584 Toyota Vehicles from 2006-2011, including RAV4 and Lexus HS250h models](#), Recalled for possible failure of the rear tie rod, which could cause a loss of vehicle control.
- [September 9: 133,081 Toyota hybrid vehicles from 2006-2010, including Highlander and Lexus RX400h models](#), Recalled for potential shutting down of the hybrid system, causing the vehicle to stall.
- [September 9: 101,584 Toyota Lexus vehicles from 2006-2011, including GS350 and IS350 models](#), Recalled for loose bolts on the Variable-Valve Timing system gear assembly, potentially causing the engine to stop while driving.

- [September 6: 270 Honda Pilots and Odysseys from 2013](#), Recalled for premature wear of engine pistons, which could cause the engine to stall.
- [September 6: 5,042 Bombardier Can-Am Spyder RT and ST series motorcycles from 2013](#), Recalled for brake fluid which may leak onto a heat source and possibly cause a fire.
- [September 5: 7,767 various Volvo vehicles from 2014, including S60 and XC70 models](#), Recalled for malfunctioning wipers and headlights.
- [September 3: 355,000 various Ford vehicles from 2005-2011, including Crown Victoria and Mercury Grand Marquis models](#), Recalled for potential loss of steering due to corrosion.
- [August 29: 1,931 Crossroads RV Redwood recreational vehicles from 2012-2014](#), Recalled for uncovered switch that may cause awning to unfurl while in transit.
- [August 28: 44 Kawasaki Concours police motorcycles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for a faulty electrical system that could lead to engine stalling.
- [August 28: 129 DRV recreational vehicles and travel trailers, including Tradition and Elite Suite models](#), Recalled for awning motor assembly screws that may shear, causing the awning to unfurl while in transit.
- [August 28: 125 Navistar recreational trailers from 2013, including Trail Express and Traveler models](#), Recalled for awning motor assembly screws that may shear, causing the awning to unfurl while in transit.
- [August 26: 292,879 Chevrolet Cruze vehicles from 2011-2012](#), Recalled for faulty electric vacuum brake-assist pumps. When the pump fails, there is a loss of braking assistance, increasing the risk of a crash.
- [August 26: 488,144 Continental Aftermarket ATE Super Blue Racing DOT 4 Brake Fluids](#), Recalled for failing to comply with federal safety standards for brake fluids, leading to potential brake failure.
- [August 26: 419 Chrysler Fiat 500e electric vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for half shaft joins that may loosen and separate, potentially causing a loss of driving capability.
- [August 23: 159 Spartan ERV Star Series emergency vehicles from 2005-2012](#), Recalled for a hydraulic ladder rack which may collapse.
- [August 22: 141 Airtex fuel pumps for certain GM vehicles from 2004-2008](#), Recalled for potential fuel leaks that increase the risk of a fire.
- [August 21: 9,345 Kia Sorentos equipped with 2.4 liter engines from 2014](#), Recalled for a manufacturing issue that may cause the right front axle shaft to shatter.
- [August 16: 239,000 Hyundai Azera and Sonata vehicles from 2006-2011](#), Recalled for potential damage to the rear control arms that may cause a change in alignment of the rear wheels, increasing the risk of a crash.
- [August 16: 20,300 Hyundai Santa Fe Sport vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for a manufacturing error that may cause the right front axle to shatter.
- [August 16: 1,540 BMW X5 xDrive35d vehicles with a diesel engine from 2009-2010](#), Recalled for potential loss of battery power and vehicle fire.
- [August 16: 269 Kaufman trailers from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for possible cracking of the kingpin, causing the trailer to detach while in transit.
- [August 16: Certain Chalet truck campers and travel trailers from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for awning motor assembly screws that may shear, causing the awning to unfurl while in transit.
- [August 15: 940 Jaguar XF 2.0L GTDi vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for possible engine stalling and loss of brake and steering.
- [August 15: Chrysler Dodge Ram 3500, 4500, and 5500 trucks from 2012](#), Recalled for potential loss of power transfer from the transmission to the wheels.
- [August 14: 1,989 Jaguar XK convertible vehicles from 2011-2014](#), Recalled for failing to comply with federal standards for power operated windows, increasing the risk of injury.
- [August 14: 139 Morgan 3 Wheeler motorcycles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for potential reduction of brake performance.
- [August 12: 6,308 Ford Focus vehicles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for side marker lamps that may not function, resulting in less visibility and increasing the risk of a crash.

- [August 12: 2,336 Keystone RV Bullet and Passport trailers from 2013](#), Recalled for mounting fasteners that may fail and cause the jack to detach from the trailer.
- [August 12: 549 Cequent Performance electric trailer brake controllers for Dodge Ram 1500 trucks](#), Recalled for incorrect wiring, increasing the risk of a crash.
- [August 12: 202 Subaru vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for potential transmission problems which could result in rollaway.
- [August 12: 66 Columbia Somerset Niagara trailers with 14" wheels from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for wheels that may fall off during transit.
- [August 12: Various GM vehicles from 2014, including the Chevrolet Suburban and GMC Sierra](#), Recalled for loose brake caliper bolts that may reduce braking.
- [August 9: 342,451 Toyota Tacoma Access Cab vehicles from 2005-2011](#), Recalled for faulty seat belt pre-tensioners.
- [August 9: 11,097 Kawasaki Ninja 300 and 300 ABS motorcycles from 2013](#), Recalled for potential stalling during deceleration.
- [August 9: 268 Zero motorcycles from 2011-2012](#), Recalled for front caliper mounting bolts that may corrode and cause the front wheel to stop.
- [August 8: 680 various Piaggio motorcycles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for a manufacturing fault that could cause the rear suspension to suddenly collapse.
- [August 7: 2,864,670 Fastec door handles for recreational vehicles from 2006-2013](#), Recalled for deadbolts that jam, making it impossible to exit the vehicle.



Nutrition Labels Aimed to Dupe Consumers—And How to Tell What You're Really Eating

When a sugary cereal like Count Chocula appears to be a healthy choice, you know something has gone terribly wrong with nutrition labels.

Jill Richardson, AlterNet, August 27, 2013

Diane Cary still chuckles when she remembers the scene she witnessed in a supermarket cereal aisle. A mother and her child were haggling over which cereal to get. The mother insisted on Grape Nuts because she felt it was healthy, but the kid desperately wanted Count Chocula. Exasperated, the mom put both boxes side-by-side and proposed they review the nutrition labels and buy the more nutritious of the two.

When Cary passed the family again in another aisle, they had two boxes of Count Chocula in their cart. As it turns out, in a 100-calorie portion, sugary Count Chocula actually packs more of many vitamins than Grape Nuts (although it does have less protein and fiber).

Like the Grape Nuts-loving mom, many health-conscious Americans rely on nutrition labels to inform their food choices. The number of calories, fat, protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals on the label can determine which box of cereal, loaf of bread, or energy bar one chooses to buy. Unfortunately, sometimes even the most conscientious label-reader can be misled.

Calories

A calorie is a calorie is a calorie. Calories in minus calories out equals weight gain or weight loss. Right? So what's the difference between an equal amount of calories worth of fresh fruit, and, say, Doritos? Or for a more equivalent comparison, between a whole food like oatmeal and a processed food with similar ingredients like Cheerios?



Melanie Warner, author of *Pandora's Lunchbox: How Processed Food Took Over the American Meal*, points out even though the foods have the same number of calories, they often provide different levels of satiation. "Say you're eating an equivalent amount of calories of potato chips versus a banana," she says. "There's no question that you'd feel a lot fuller if you eat the banana. So the calories aren't the same, because you're probably going to have to eat more later in the day to compensate. And then there is also the nutrients. You're getting a phenomenal number of nutrients from the banana. You're not getting any of that from the potato chips."

Warner refers to a study published a year ago revealing that humans don't absorb all of the calories in almonds. According to new estimates, almonds have 20 percent less calories than previously thought. What happened to the other 20 percent? They come out our other end, so to speak. Almonds are hard and brittle and a lot of the energy in them is packed within their cell walls, making it partially inaccessible to our digestive systems.

Compare that to many processed foods, which are so easy to chew, swallow and digest that David Kessler, author of *The End of Overeating*, derides them as “pre-chewed” and “adult baby food.” Warner agrees, saying, “As a general statement, it’s a lot easier for your body to access the calories from processed foods than it is from whole foods.”

Fat

Nowadays, label-conscious consumers are privy to a lot of information about the fat in their food. Total fat, calories from fat, saturated fat, unsaturated fat—split into mono- and polyunsaturated fat—and trans fats are all listed. Once upon a time, understanding this might have seemed simple. Fat was bad and saturated fat was really bad. Then we learned about trans fats, which are the worst kind of fat of all.

Today the picture is more nuanced. Packaged foods advertise good fats: omega-3s. But this is still overly simplistic, and unfortunately, food labels do not provide enough information to make informed choices about fats. The good news is that a look at ingredient lists can help you make better decisions, provided you know your way around fats and oils.

Take saturated fat. Some people believe coconut oil is so healthy they take it as a supplement. But it’s a saturated fat!

“The science is definitely shifting on saturated fats,” concludes Warner. “There was a big negative association to saturated fat and now if you look at a lot of scientific literature...I don’t think there’s science yet that shows that saturated fat is good. But I think it’s a neutral position. There has been a number of meta-studies that show that saturated fat in the diet doesn’t contribute to heart disease.”

The term “saturated fat” actually encompasses many different chemicals, chains of carbons that are “saturated” with hydrogen atoms. These chemicals differ in the number of carbons in the chain. Usually when we think of saturated fat, we are talking about long-chain saturated fatty acids with 16 or 18 carbons (palmitic and stearic acid, respectively).

Coconut oil is touted for health benefits because it is rich in medium-chain saturated fatty acids like lauric acid. Yet nutrition labels do not discriminate between palmitic, stearic or lauric acids. All three are lumped together as saturated fats. And nowadays, even stearic acid, found in chocolate, is seen as okay for heart health.

On the other hand, there are the supposedly good polyunsaturated fats. We now know we should eat our omega-3s. But what about the more common type of polyunsaturated fats, omega-6s?

It’s not the total amount of omega-3s or omega-6s we eat that matters, per se, it’s the ratio of the two to one another. The optimal ratio is somewhere around twice as much omega-6s to omega-3s. The amount of omega-6s Americans eat is simply off the charts. Most of our omega-6s come from soybean oil, often labeled as vegetable oil, but other common oils with unhealthy ratios include corn, sunflower, safflower, sesame, cottonseed, and peanut oil.

So you go to the store, you find a bag of organic tortilla chips, and you read the label. How about some Xochitl Mexican-style corn chips? According to the nutrition label, they contain six grams of fat per serving, and of that only one gram is saturated. Presumably, the other five grams are unsaturated.

What kind of unsaturated fat exactly? According to the ingredient list, the chips contain “one or more of the following: canola oil expeller pressed non-hydrogenated and/or safflower oil and/or sunflower oil and/or palm oil.” Great. That’s no help at all. Of the possible oils in the chips, canola has an excellent omega-6 to omega-3 ratio, whereas the others have rotten ones. And you don’t know which of those you are eating.

Fiber

We all know we need to eat more fiber. Women need 25 grams a day and men need 38 grams, but Americans eat roughly 15 grams each day. Good thing there are Fiber One bars, right? A 90-calorie bar packs five grams of fiber and it’s chocolate-flavored to boot! Yum!

But where's that fiber coming from? Check the ingredients. Most of it comes from chicory root extract, although whole-grain oats contribute a little bit, too. Food manufacturers like chicory root because it does not negatively impact the food's taste or texture, and it can even replace fat as it lends a smooth, creamy "mouthfeel."

The only problem? Chicory root, also known as inulin, "actually does cause gastrointestinal problems with some people," according to Warner. But, she adds, some processed foods touting high fiber use soluble corn fiber or oat fiber instead. "It's better than not getting fiber," she concludes. "But the problem is that if you're just relying on these added fibers for your fiber content, it's not ideal because our bodies really need a whole diversity of different types of fiber."

In other words, your diet might contain your requisite 25 or 38 grams of fiber based on those nutrition labels, but if it all comes from one homogenous source then you aren't giving your body what it needs.

Michael Pollen wrote about these recently, explaining how fiber is indigestible to us but it feeds our gut microbes, and they break it down into short-chain fatty acids. This feeds our gut lining, called the epithelium. According to a current theory, an improperly nourished epithelium cannot function properly, leading to inflammation and disease.

Vitamins and Minerals

Let's circle back to the Grape Nuts vs. Count Chocula dilemma. As noted above, if one compares 100-calorie portions of the two cereals, Count Chocula actually packs more of many vitamins and minerals. (Grape Nuts wins out on a few, like potassium.) So does that make it healthy?

Even before we address the vitamins, it's worthwhile to note that Count Chocula is utterly packed with sugar and little else of value (healthy fats, protein or fiber). The second most prevalent ingredient in the cereal is sugar, and that doesn't even include the sugar in the marshmallows,

which appears separately. It also contains a controversial preservative called BHT.

But then check out where the vitamins and minerals come from. Because the ingredients are nutritionally lacking, the manufacturers fortify them with most of the vitamins and minerals they contain. Count Chocula is fortified with calcium, zinc, iron, and an entire alphabet of vitamins. Grape Nuts' list of fortifications is almost as lengthy.

"The cereal packaging can be incredibly misleading," Warner says. "One of the rules that I've applied to grocery shopping is that if you're really trying to buy the healthiest processed products out there, do not buy anything that has added vitamins and minerals." Why? Because if the vitamins and minerals were in the food in the first place, the manufacturer wouldn't have to add them.

"For breakfast cereal," she says, "It's usually the case that either they are not starting out with whole grains that have the vitamins, or the manufacturing process ends up destroying nutrients... They are also adding vitamins that would never exist in cereals as a marketing ploy. It can be very confusing for customers."

So, you might say: They destroyed the nutrients in the cereal manufacturing process so they added back in. What's the difference?

"For vitamins that are grown in nature," explains Warner, "you don't get them in an isolated form. You get a whole package that goes with them. You're getting phytonutrients—these plant chemicals that are beneficial. A number of them look to be extremely important... And so far there have been about 10,000 of them identified. Scientists are just starting to study all of their properties and how they are broken down in the body."

As examples, she names resveratrol, the antioxidant in red wine, and lycopene, a beneficial compound found in tomatoes. One might also add the cancer-fighting chemicals called isothiocyanates we get from broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables. "It's likely to be the case that these phytonutrients within whole

foods are responsible for vitamins that we know being better absorbed by the body, that they all work in concert,” Warner adds.

You average multivitamin or box of fortified cereal might give you every vitamin with a letter of the alphabet assigned to it, but it’s not giving you many of these 10,000 other phytonutrients you get when you eat whole foods like blueberries, tomatoes, apples, or kale.

Believe it or not, Warner is not absolutely against eating all processed foods, or even all breakfast cereal. But given all she knows, she says, “The biggest difference in terms of people’s health is that if you’re just consuming processed foods or taking a multivitamin and thinking ‘I’ve got it

covered,’ I think that’s a mistake. You’re just getting a subset of what your body needs.”

The common theme here is that nutrition labels do not tell the full story about a food’s nutrition. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is. A low-calorie chocolate bar is not the answer to all of your fiber needs, and a fortified cereal is not an excuse for skipping out on fruits and vegetables.

When it comes down to it, the bottom line is the same as ever: opt for a wide variety of whole foods when possible. While it might be fun to eat some junk now and again, don’t fool yourself into thinking it’s a health food—even if the label claims it is.

Sellwood Bridge Update

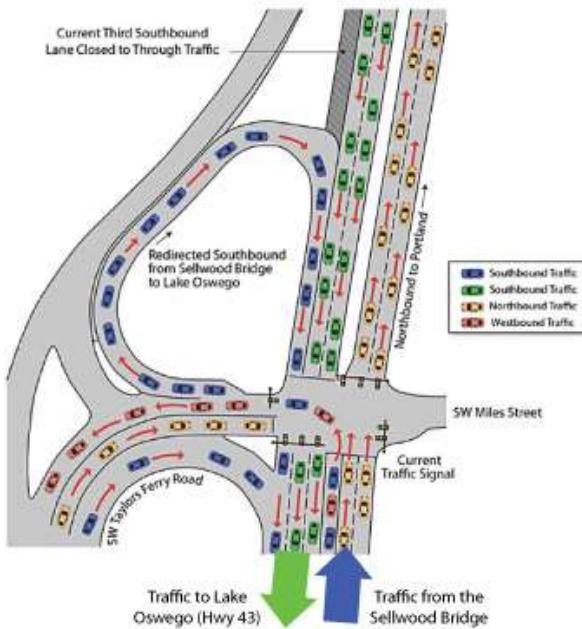
Construction makes a U-turn



There's a forest of cranes and construction equipment around our crumbly neighbor as crews rush to complete their work before this year's window for in-water work closes. (In-water work is only allowed from July through October to avoid disturbing the river bottom and disrupting the salmon migration). The important thing to know is that the BRIDGE IS OPEN and will stay open until the new bridge is complete in 2016. In the meantime, there's a major traffic change you should know about as well.

If you are crossing the Sellwood Bridge going west and intend to go south to Lake Oswego, you'll have to make a slight detour. The loop that carried bridge traffic to the south has been permanently closed, but the new interchange at the west end of the bridge isn't built yet. Since space in the construction area is limited, engineers had to get traffic out of the area to turn it around until construction is finished. If you plan to head toward Lake Oswego you'll now have to head north on Macadam to Taylor's Ferry Road. The County has built a dedicated loop road just off the Taylor's Ferry Road signal. You'll take that, loop around, and be headed back south on Highway 43. That's all the basics, but if you want to see a video then [KATU has a full report on the U-turn](#).

Hwy 43/Taylors Ferry Intersection
Starting 9/3/2013



This is a view looking north on Macadam at the Taylor's Ferry Road signal. You'll turn left like you're going onto Taylor's Ferry, but then break right, go around the trees, and into the loop.

You'll be tempted to make a U-turn at the first break in the median, but DON'T DO IT! While we were out taking these pictures, an impatient driver in a yellow MR2 decided to take this shortcut. He was almost creamed by the Stratus in front of us, and many drivers loudly expressed their displeasure at his creative driving. Aside from the safety and consideration issues, your wallet can be hurt as well. Traffic fines double in work zones, and this entire area is a designated work zone.



Views of the hillside construction looking south toward L.O. and north toward downtown



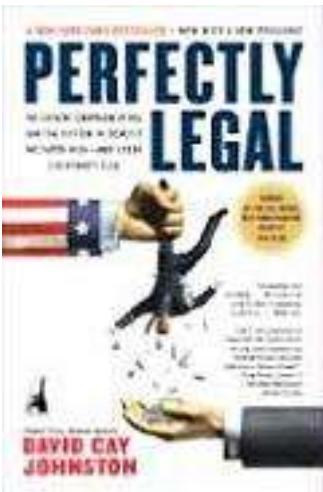
As always, Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project, www.sellwoodbridge.org. Construction and closure alerts, archived information, and other resources are all available 24/7 for your convenience. Their two constantly updated live webcams of the bridge cams are available [here](#). If you're looking for something that's not on the website, you can contact Mike Pullen (mike.j.pullen@multco.us, 503-209-4111) or visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.

Book Spotlight

“Perfectly Legal” by David Cay Johnston



More than five years on, and there still have been no prosecutions of any major figures in the financial meltdown that almost destroyed our country. There's been a lot of reasons floated as to why... societal disruption, the banks own the government, complexity of the crimes, and more. But perhaps the most galling reason is that prosecutors were unable to find “any evidence of illegality”. The prosecutors may just be lazy, or worse, they may be right. It might very well be that nothing that happened in the meltdown was illegal. The process of making the illegal legal, of making foul into fair, has been a conscious effort over many years. It's the subject of this month's Book Spotlight...



“Perfectly Legal” by David Cay Johnston

One of the country's top investigative reporters reveals how the richest people within the top 1 percent of the country has rigged the tax code and other laws in its favor.

Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter David Cay Johnston has been breaking pieces of this story on the front page of the *New York Times* for nine years, work for which one business school professor calls him "the de facto chief tax enforcement officer of the United States." With *Perfectly Legal*, he puts the whole shocking narrative together in a way that will stir up media attention and make readers angry about the state of our country. And he has sound advice on what to do.

Since the mid-1970s, there has been a dramatic shift in who benefits from the American economy and bears the burden of taxes. CEOs, big investors and business owners can delay paying their taxes for years and sometimes escape them almost entirely, while wage earners have theirs taken from each paycheck. Discreet lobbying by the political donor class has made tax policies and enforcement a disaster. Because of obligations to these donors Washington has been unable, or unwilling, to fix these problems. The news media have largely ignored official favors to those who are supposed to pay the corporate income tax, the estate tax, and the gift tax. Millions of families expecting tax cuts are losing some or all of them to a stealth tax that was originally enacted only to apply to the tax-avoiding rich, but that now stings single mothers making as little as \$28,000. But the cumulative results are remarkable: the 400 richest Americans pay a smaller share of their income in taxes than someone making \$100,000. The 400 richest pay less and less of their income in taxes while the middle class pays more and more. And while the incomes of the very rich skyrocketed over three decades, the average income for the bottom 90 percent fell.

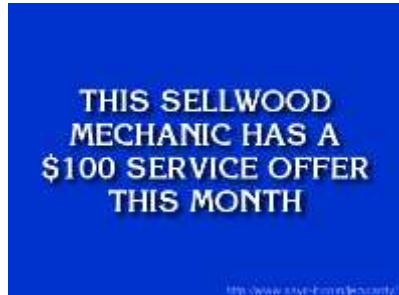
Humorousness

Signs, signs, everywhere there's signs

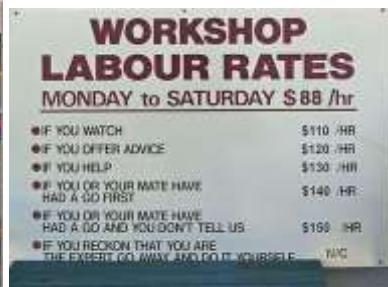


This month we got one of those emails with a string of pictures and a request to forward it on to 10 friends or we'd die alone. The signs in the picture were actually pretty funny though, so we added a few more and made it into this month's Humorousness. There's a gallery of our picks below. Passing these along to you breaks the email curse, but only for us. If you've read this far, you now have to forward this link to 10 friends or death awaits you as well.

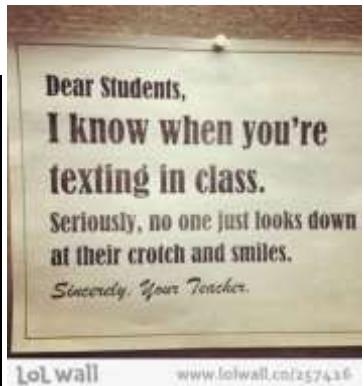
So we thought these were pretty good, but there's thousands of them out there. We found two great sign sites at FunnySigns.net and SignSpotting.com, but then we found something that blew our minds. There's a site called Says-It.com that lets you program your own sign in a variety of venues. From church announcement boards (in many different denominations) to Jeopardy clues, concert tickets, cassette tape housings and vinyl records (remember those?), Uncle Sam posters, movie marquees, and much more, all you have to do is type in your message to see it displayed in all its glory. (After seeing this site, we're a little suspicious of some of the other signs in this article. Oh, well. No guarantees on the authenticity of any of them.) Here's three we came up with, but we bet you can do much better...



And now, our gallery of drop-dead-funny signs!







News To Make You Furious

Parallel Construction? It means "lie".



This month's News To Make You Furious comes from unwilling Russian tourist Edward Snowden. Facile politicians are trying to wave away his accusations as simple exaggerations from an excitable press, but Snowden didn't just find one program gone awry. He uncovered a massive trove of interconnected abuse and malfeasance that continues to grow like a cancer. As these revelations continue to drip out it's harder to keep them all straight so we'll shine the spotlight on just one... Parallel Construction. What's that? It means "lie".

Parallel Construction is a technique brought to us by the fine folks at SOD (Special Operations Division), an agency founded in 1994 to fight Latin American drug cartels. Housed in a secret location in Virginia, it's made up of two dozen agencies including the NSA, FBI, CIA, IRS, and DOH. SOD shares information with its partner agencies as well as state and local law enforcement, and Parallel Construction is its primary technique to cover up its existence.

Here's how it works. Let's say there's a drug dealer (we'll call him Bob). Bob's an American citizen, and the NSA has been watching him for a while despite the government's assurances that they do no such thing. NSA thinks Bob will be moving some drugs at a particular time, so they call SOD who calls the FBI and tips them off. The FBI calls the state police and tells them to be at a certain truck stop at a certain time with a drug dog and to find an excuse to talk to Bob. The cop pulls Bob over for making an illegal left turn and surprise... the drug dog smells something. Bob is carted off to jail.

Now here's where you'll get Furious. The existence of SOD must be kept secret or our country will crumble. A training document for agents says "Remember that the utilization of SOD cannot be revealed or discussed in any investigative function", in fact, the exact location of SOD in Virginia is not even known. But if the law enforcement agencies tell where they got the tip to arrest Bob then the SOD cat would be out of the bag. The solution? Lie about it. "It's just like laundering money - you work it backwards to make it clean," said Finn Selander, a ex-DEA agent. (Good example, Finn, money laundering is illegal too!) Police are told to "recreate" the investigative trail leaving out the SOD information. In Bob's trial the cop's story would start with his illegal left turn instead of the tip that really mattered.

Let's see, what does this violate? Constitutionally, it trashes the 4th amendment on warrantless search, 5th amendment on self-incrimination and due process, and the 6th amendment on informed accusation, right to confront witnesses, and compulsory process for obtaining witnesses. Some state constitutions have stronger protections than the US constitution, so violations there vary by district. It suborns perjury from every police officer, prosecutor, and judge who is aware of it. It deprives Bob of his right to a fair trial, to review exculpatory evidence, and even the right to a defense (because his counsel cannot function effectively without accurate information). Then there are the intangibles... the concept of a fair trial, basic justice, the idea that the police and justice system are on "our" side. Finally, now that the truth is out, it endangers all the convictions touched by the policy. This "spoliation" of evidence is affirmative grounds for appeal, and anyone convicted with Parallel-Constructed evidence will go free on appeal.

"Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past"
George Orwell, 1984

Furious? Here are three articles to dig even deeper...

[Parallel Construction Get-Out-of-Jail-Free-Card](#), Chriss Street, Chriss Street and Company

[U.S. directs agents to cover up program used to investigate Americans](#), John Shiffman and Kristina Cooke, Reuters

[DEA and NSA Team Up to Share Intelligence, Leading to Secret Use of Surveillance in Ordinary Investigations](#), Hanni Fakhoury, Electronic Frontier Foundation