



Tom's Tidbits

Football should stand on its own

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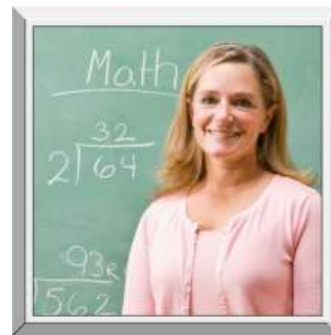
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Tom's Tidbits

Football should stand on its own



Greetings!

The SuperBowl is one of the few remaining events Americans all gather together for. 108.4 million people watched this year's game, while by contrast 125.5 million people watched the last episode of M*A*S*H (the highest rated TV show ever). It's an educational snapshot of our society; good, bad, and ugly. This year, we learned that buying beer supports our troops, that military=football=manhood, that irreversibly brain damaged players are just the cost of playing the game, and more. Here's what really strikes me, though... how can a highly profitable business like the NFL still be treated as a non-profit tax-free organization?

The fundamental reason for non-profits, the *only* reason for treating them differently from any other organization, is they exist to accomplish some social benefit unlikely to profit enough to support their work. The NFL is the league's "trade organization", with the apparent social benefit of promoting football. As the most lucrative sports league in the world their profit seems enough to support them for now. They do everything from creating and managing intellectual property to negotiating TV deals, scheduling games, and (surprise) lobbying Congress. Here are just a few stats on the NFL, [courtesy of CBSNews.com](#)...

- Revenue for the league, not counting the teams, was \$255.3 million.
- The top eight league officials made a total of \$50.1 million in 2011 from the NFL.
- In 2011, the NFL paid \$35.9 million for office construction, \$13.5 million in office rent, \$6.7 in IT consulting, and \$6.7 million in travel expenses.
- It had notes and loans owed to it of nearly \$620.8 million.
- The organization spent more than \$1.5 million on lobbying.

The absurdity of non-profit status is only the beginning. The story of NFL teams extorting cities to finance football stadiums is an old one. [The NY Times pointed out](#) that "as the N.F.L. prepare[d] to kick off its 2010 season, nearly all of the league's 31 football stadiums [we]re financed with public money. On average, more than half the reported building costs of all active stadiums has been paid for with tax dollars -- for a collective total of \$8 billion -- and in several instances, taxpayers have footed the entire bill."



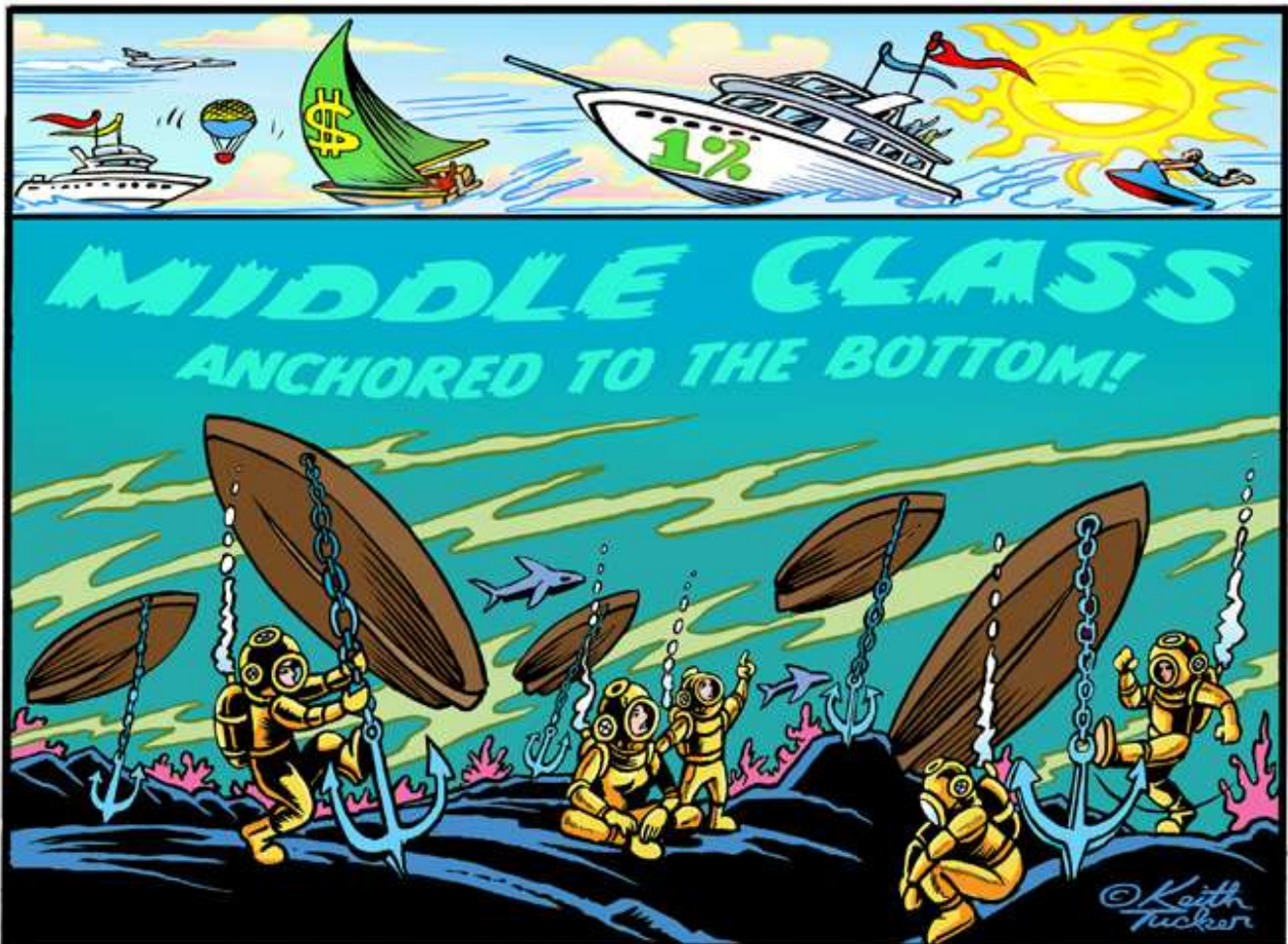
The NFL is one of many groups abusing non-profit status (I'm looking at you, dark money political groups!) but it's such an obvious abuse that even Representative Tom Coburn, the "godfather of the modern conservative austerity movement", has [written a bill to remove the NFL's tax-exempt status](#). If you're so inclined you can show support by joining over 354,000 people who [signed the petition at Change.org](#). If not, enjoy the football... you're paying for it!

It's not that I hate football, or success, or Amerka. But in times of budget shortfall, when politicians are cutting critical support to the neediest, why leave billions of taxable dollars in the pockets of the greediest? How can laws we make to encourage useful-but-not-profitable work be twisted to feed one of the most profitable purveyors of some of the least useful work imaginable? Because people are easily distracted by bread and circuses, even when the circus is stealing their bread.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

Our monthly check in with Keith Tucker



"WHAT NOW?!!!"

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Is Big Brother your co-pilot?

OBD-3 is on the way



In 1985 the California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved the first On-Board Diagnostic (OBD-1) systems, requiring an Engine Control Module (ECM) to flash a dashboard light when a critical system was failing. The more comprehensive OBD-2 system replaced OBD-1 in 1996, so it's probably an OBD-2 system flashing the annoying "maintenance required" light on your dashboard right now. But that was 18 years ago, and the new OBD-3 systems are coming soon. There are bound to be improvements over OBD-2, for example they'll undoubtedly store more detailed information to make diagnosis and repair easier. But it looks like they'll also be broadcasting a real-time analysis of your vehicle to Big Brother, enabling all sorts of nasty possibilities...

Rumors are flying about the next generation of OBD computer systems. For right now they can only be rumors because the actual systems haven't been designed yet, but CARB has issued an open request for proposals to develop the new system. Because California is such a huge automotive market, Federal regulations are frequently written to California standards... as California goes, so goes the Nation. The California RFP describes a system that would continually scan your vehicle, identify polluting malfunctions, upload your information, and efficiently issue you a ticket by mail. It describes an interactive system between your vehicle and an outside source, and if the hardware is installed to do that it could do *any* interactive task.

Rumors have already spread about transmitting passenger data by seat sensors, banks allowed to "virtually repossess" vehicles for late payment, and police able to shut down vehicles of suspected felons. One could imagine other, more nefarious uses for the technology... stalkers with access to the data? Pre-emptive shutdowns of traffic in protests of large events? Controlled access to publicly-paid-for roads? It's just like drone or NSA surveillance technologies... there may be sensible reasons to have the tech, but significant risks come with it as well. The future *may* not be pretty.

As technology advances we can always expect change, and it makes no sense to be scared in the face of change. On the other hand, it does make sense to be aware of powerful technologies that can fundamentally affect our society. OBD-3 is one to keep an eye on, and here are several sources to do so...

- The Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) is a trade association for auto-industry specialty manufacturers. [They've been watching OBD-3 and have set up a page about it](#). It probably has the most detailed information we found.
- The website for the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the agency that's writing the OBD-3 standards, is [here](#). On their FAQ page for OBD, they state

"There has been speculation about a new OBD program that would utilize remote transponders (like those currently used for automated bridges or toll roads) to send information indicating if any malfunctioning component is present in the vehicle in lieu of having the vehicle inspected at a Smog Check facility every one or two years. Many have referred to such a concept as OBD III. However, contrary to the rumors, no such program has been adopted by ARB nor have any decisions been made by ARB to pursue such an approach in California."

However, the CARB proposal request for "Incorporation of Radio Transponders into Vehicle On-Board Diagnostic Systems", taken from CARB and [reprinted on the SEMA page](#), seems to disagree with that statement. Included in the RFP is this line...

"If the inspection process could be automated through the use of transponder-assisted on-board diagnostic systems (in what could become an OBD-III requirement or program), the process could be made less costly and time-consuming."

- Eric Peters wrote a slightly paranoid [sketch of the possibilities of OBD-3](#). Slightly paranoid, yes, but as they say "When everyone is out to get you, paranoid is only common sense."
- This article by Bob Weber in the Chicago Tribune addresses [some of the legal issues surrounding OBD-3](#).
- Straight Talk Automotive has some examples of [OBD-3 repair and diagnostics](#) might look like.
- Tom Randall at Heartland.org has a good [article that goes into the EPA testing connection with OBD-3](#).

We're shocked... SHOCKED!

DoD catalogs hundreds of pages of ethical lapses



Pick up the paper these days and you're likely to read about the [latest military scandals](#). The Navy is dealing with bribery, lavish trips, and prostitutes, the Air Force and Navy have cheating scandals in nuclear training, the Army National Guard is explaining improper recruiting bonuses, and more. All the usual and appropriate noises are being made in reply. Defense Secretary Hagel is appointing an ethics officer, investigations are being started, blue ribbon panels are being appointed, blah, blah, blah. This would be just another sad litany of bureaucratic malfeasance if not for one stand-out response... [The Encyclopedia of Ethical Failure \(EEF\)](#). Written in everyday English rather than Pentagon-speak, the EEF documents hundreds of case studies of Federal workers, military and civilian, whose ethical senses inexplicably went on vacation. As you might expect, it makes some good reading...

The (EEF) was prepared by the Standards of Conduct Office of the Department of Defense General Counsel's Office, with the intent of "provid[ing] DoD personnel with real examples of Federal employees who have intentionally or unwittingly violated the standards of conduct." The goal is "ultimately to motivate federal employees to contact their agency's ethics counselors when in doubt about the right way to handle a situation." While it was prepared for DoD personnel and uses many examples from the military, the EEF could be used by any governmental or private organization as an excellent guide to what NOT to do.

Cautionary tales in the EEF are organized by categories like "Abuse of position", "Bribery", "Gambling violations", "Misuse of government equipment", etc. Here's two samples to get you started, but the rest... the rest, you'll just have to read for yourself.

Employees Fail to Profit from Red Tape

Two workers at the Veterans Affairs Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy, which mails prescriptions to veterans, were charged with taking kickbacks for purchasing a product from a supplier at more than twice the normal price. The product? Red tape. The employees were charged with purchasing 100,000 rolls of the tape, which is stamped with the word "security" and is meant to deter tampering, at \$6.95 a roll rather than its \$2.50 retail value. In return, they received kickbacks of more than \$1 per roll. The duo will have plenty of time to appreciate the irony of their situation, as they face a sentence of 15 years in jail.

"And they even pay me for doing this."

The Merit Systems Protection Board affirmed the decision by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) to remove a criminal investigator for willful misuse of a Government vehicle. The former official was engaged in a social and sexual relationship with a confidential source of information, who was also the wife of a convicted drug trafficker. The former official received daily gifts from the confidential source. He used his official Government vehicle to travel to the residence of the confidential source, and to transport her from her residence to the Miami airport and to the Café Iguana for purely social reasons. He even gave her some DEA-owned ammunition for use in her own gun.

Support your local Union Thug!

Complete info on the Portland Teacher's fight



On February 5, Portland teachers voted to authorize a strike in their current conflict with the Portland Public Schools (PPS). According to the most recent KATU report, "Both sides gave each other updated proposals on Monday, but neither side would talk about what's changed." Many of our clients are teachers who have told us how important this issue is to them, and they suggested we do an article on it. We obviously have little to add from a news point of view, but we do agree it's an important issue on many levels. What are our schools for? How do we accomplish those goals? How do we fund those choices? Who decides? These are the most basic, community-level, life-impacting decisions questions imaginable. Since the most important questions require the most information, the most valuable

contribution we can make is to gather these links to the most complete information available...

Portland Association of Teachers Website

Portland Public Schools Website

Note: This link will be updated with school information in case of strike

Nicole Dungca, Oregonian, January 27th
[What are Portland Public Schools and its teachers union still fighting over?](#)

Nicole Dungca, Oregonian, January 30
[Are Portland Public Schools teachers definitely going to strike? \(Q&A\)](#)

Nicole Dungca, Oregonian, Feb 6th
[Portland teacher who voted 'no' on strike speaks out](#)

Elizabeth Thiel, Labor Notes, Feb 7th
[Portland Teachers Vote to Strike](#)

Sarah Levy, Popular Resistance, Feb 8th
[Portland Teachers "Ready To Strike For The Schools We Deserve"](#)

Nigel Jaquiss, Willamette Week, Feb 10th
[PPS Hiring Replacement Teachers on Craigslist](#)

Dan Cassuto and Staff, KATU, Feb 10th
[Schools will be "holding tanks" during strike, says teachers union](#)

Fox 12, Feb 10th
[After snow and ice delay, Portland teachers head back to mediation](#)

Drew's Kitchen

Fried pasta with eggs, pepper, and Parmesan



Nothing beats a comfortable weekend breakfast; lounging around in your bathrobe, sipping coffee, reading the newspaper while the radio plays in the background. Ahhh! Drew's selection this month will help you make this idyllic morning happen, and there are plenty of tips for variations. Feel free to improvise, using your creativity to make the recipe your own. Makes 2 servings; easily scaled up.

Ingredients:

- ½ bag DeCecco Orecchiette pasta packs
- OR
- 4-6 cups oiled, leftover pasta
- Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2-4 large eggs
- Parmesan cheese

Preparation:

- Heat 2 tbsps of olive oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering; swirl to coat pan.
- Add pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, until pasta is well-browned and crispy in spots, 5-7 minutes.
- Season generously with salt and pepper; transfer to bowl and keep warm.
- Return pan to low heat and allow to cool for a minute or two.
- Add remaining 1 tbsp of oil; swirl to coat pan.
- Crack eggs in pan, season with salt and pepper, and cover pan.
- Cook until white is just set and yolk is warm but still runny, about 4 minutes
- Divide pasta between bowls.
- Place egg on top with plenty of fine-grated Parmesan. Serve immediately.

Tips:

- While this recipe for using leftover pasta will work with any chunky shape (or brand) of pasta, I prefer the flavor and texture of De Cecco Orecchiette pasta.
- Unless you are cooking pasta ahead of time specifically for frying, your volume of pasta will likely vary. Count on at least 2 cups of cooked Orecchiette per serving.
- I particularly like the addition of shredded prosciutto or country-style Virginia ham and chopped arugula added just before serving.
- It's best to cook the egg until just set so that the runny yolk can mix with the cheese and generate a sauce of sorts.
- If you haven't purchased a bag of Jacobsen salt yet, you really owe it to yourself. Its particularly crunchy, flaky texture and bright salinity contributes a terrific accent note to the pasta. And the salt is made right here in Oregon from Netarts Bay water.
- As for pepper, my favorite variety is the robust "India Special Extra Bold" from Penzeys Spices.
- Can't be beat with arugula and goat cheese. Bits of smoked salmon or smoked trout taste terrific with the peppery greens and/or avocado and thin-sliced Peppadew peppers (Both Fred Meyer and Whole Foods sell smoked salmon trimmings for a fraction the cost of whole pieces).
- Stick with soft, fresh herbs like sage, marjoram or thyme; rosemary comes on too strong when cooked that long (Cash-n-Carry carries large bundles of fresh thyme for around \$4 that keep for up to a month).

Shop Talk

A rare blizzard of special offers



We tend not to run service discounts very often, but we know everyone loves to save money. As it happens, though, we have two special offers going on right now that you might want to consider. One will help others and is going on all year, but the other helps you and has a short window to act...

NEW Referral Rewards Program- Donations to causes you care about

Year after year, referrals from our existing clients are our greatest source of the new clients our business needs to thrive. Referrals are the highest compliment we can receive, and we're grateful for every one. We're trying a new way to say "thank you" that may also help people who need it... our new Referral Reward Program gives money to the groups you care about everytime you refer a new client to us. Here's how it works...



- For every new client you refer **we'll donate 20% (up to \$50) of the qualifying purchases from their first invoice** to the non-profit group of your choice.
- Each quarter we'll highlight the client and group with the most referrals in our newsletter and **make an additional donation of up to \$200.00 to their cause.**
- At the end of the year we'll highlight the client and group with the highest total referrals in our newsletter and **make an additional donation of up to \$500.00 to their cause.**
- We're thankful for everyone you send us, but we can't count all their services toward their donation totals. **Oil changes, tires, and batteries won't count** toward their qualifying purchases.
- Referrals don't have to come singly; you can coordinate your group to come in as a whole. In fact, we have a [sample letter](#) you might want to use to tell them about the program.

There are some [basic restrictions we've posted on our website](#), but it's really just that simple. So please, keep telling your friends, family members, and co-workers about us, and thank you from all of us!

Sellwood Bridge Discount- 20% Off Labor!

Our second offer is to make up for an upcoming inconvenience caused by the Sellwood Bridge, as it closes for only the second time in its reconstruction. Traffic will be affected Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, Feb 17-19, and you should probably take the Ross Island to get across the Wilamette. What are we doing about it? Well...



If you schedule your vehicle for work during the week of Feb 16-22 we'll take 20% OFF YOUR LABOR CHARGES (up to \$200)!

This doesn't apply to oil changes or other services under \$100, but if you have a big repair like a timing belt, heater core, or brake job that you've been putting off then this may be the ideal time to do it. **YOU MUST MENTION THIS DISCOUNT WHEN YOU SCHEDULE SERVICE** because it is **NOT VALID AFTER COMPLETION OF SERVICE**, and it **CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER DISCOUNTS**, but that's easy. Come on in next week and save some money!

Employee of the Year



Dave Gettmann was chosen as the 2013 Tom Dwyer Employee of the Year. Dave is an ASE-Certified Technician who has spent more than 14 years of his 39-year career with Tom, and now handles all our undercar service needs. Dave was picked because of his outstanding technical abilities, productivity, and contributions to the entire Dwyer team. Congratulations, Dave!

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.



[February 5: 399 EverGreen recreational vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[February 4: 5,001 Aston Martin vehicles from 2008-2014, including Rapide and Vantage models](#), Recalled for a manufacturing error that may cause the accelerator pedal arm to break, causing the engine to go to idle.

[February 4: 31,581 B&W Tow & Stow Adjustable Mounts](#), Recalled for securing pins that may fracture, causing the trailer being towed to separate from the vehicle.

[January 29: 2,800 Triumph motorcycles from 2012-2014, including Tiger Explorer and Trophy models](#), Recalled for the electronic control unit hardware and software which may cause the motorcycle to unexpectedly shut down.

[January 29: 61 Roadtrek RSCM motorhomes from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for potential damage to the brake line, increasing the risk of a crash.

[January 17: 4,532 Ford vehicles from 2011, including E-150 and E-250 models](#), Recalled for bubbles in the windshield that may hamper vision.

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!



[January 17: 300 Ford replacement steering gears installed on Ford Explorers from 2011-2012](#), Recalled for potential locking of the gears, preventing the driver from steering.

[January 17: 50 Starcraft Comet recreational vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for a label that incorrectly states the load capacity of the tires, which could result in sudden tire failure.

[January 17: 47 Newmar motorhomes from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for potential loss of steering due to loose castle nuts.

[January 15: 27,933 Ford Edge vehicles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for a potential fuel leak.

[January 14: 300,000 Chevrolet Silverados and GMC Sierras from 2014](#), Recalled for exhaust components that may overheat in colder temperatures, which could lead to an engine fire.

[January 14: 29,222 Tesla Model S vehicles from 2013, equipped for and delivered with certain NEMA 14-50 Universal Mobile Connector adapters](#), Recalled for potential overheating of the adapter, cord, or wall outlet while charging.

[January 14: Certain GM vehicles installed with new software for Allison A1000 transmissions](#), Recalled for causing the transmission indicator to incorrectly display the gear position, which could limit speed and increase the risk of a crash.

[January 13: 1,975 Sharp cargo trailers from 2006-2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[January 13: 1,440 Cargo South enclosed trailers from 2006-2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[January 13: 986 Riverside travel trailers from 2006-2014](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[January 13: 667 Zero motorcycles from 2012-2013, including XU and DS models](#), Recalled for controller firmware that may shut off power to the motor.

[January 13: 623 Airstream Flamma-brand Flying Cloud accessory bike racks](#), Recalled for blocking the secondary emergency exit of the trailer, leaving individuals unable to exit the trailer in the event of an emergency.

[January 13: 552 Airstream Interstate recreational vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for a potentially damaged regulator which could cause propane to leak and increase the risk of a fire.

[January 13: 37 Spartan emergency response vehicles from 2006-2010, including Diamond and Gladiator models](#), Recalled for welds on the independent front suspension which may crack.

[January 13: 183 Nissan Titan vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for an incorrect label that overstates the maximum load and passenger carrying capacity of the vehicle, which could lead to tire damage.

[January 10: 222 Tiffin Allegro 33AA motorhomes from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for fireplaces that may

ignite an exposed piece of wood inside the fireplace, which could set the rest of the motorhome on fire.

[January 8: 38,434 Skyline recreational vehicle travel trailers from 2006-2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[January 8: 7,387 Acura RLX vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for loose rear lower control arm bolts that may reduce steering ability, increasing the risk of a crash.

[January 8: 28 Hyundai Santa Fe vehicles from 2014 with P235/65R17 103T Continental Crosscontact LX tires](#), Recalled for potential damage to the sidewall of the tire.

[January 6: 50,185 BMW motorcycles from 2005-2012, including R and K models](#), Recalled for potential fuel leaks that could result in a fire.

[January 6: 409 Genera aftermarket replacement tail lights sold for 2012-2013 Toyota Prius V vehicles](#), Recalled for reversed wiring that causes the brake lights to not illuminate when the brake is pressed.

[January 3: 33,139 Combi car seats, including Coccoro and Zeus models](#), Recalled for harness webbing that may not keep a child secured.

[January 3: 9,733 Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra vehicles from 2012-2013](#), Recalled for the fuel tank transfer pump that may cause inaccurate fuel gauge readings, which could cause the vehicle to stall

[January 3: 3,912 Jaguar Range Rover vehicles from 2013-2014](#), Recalled for air bags that may not function.

[January 3: 3,175 Monaco recreational vehicles from 2008-2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

[January 3: 444 Contract Manufacturer trailers from 2006-2012](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

Health Notes

7 drug dangers we learned about too late



7 Drugs Whose Dangerous Risks Emerged Only After Big Pharma Made Its Money

by Martha Rosenberg on AlterNet

Have you ever noticed how warnings about dangerous prescription drugs always seem to surface after the drug is no longer marketed and its patent has run out? Whether it's an FDA advisory or a trial lawyer solicitation about harm that may have been done to you, the warnings are always belated and useless. If a drug you took four years ago may have given you liver damage, why didn't the FDA tell you then? Why didn't the FDA recall the drug or better yet, not approve it in the first place?

The official answer from the FDA and Big Pharma is that problems with a drug are only seen after millions begin using it, which is why post-marketing surveillance is conducted. In other words—who knew? But in a startling number of cases revealed in court documents Pharma *did* "know" and clearly misled medical journals, the FDA, doctors and patients, hoping to get its patent's worth before the true risks of a drug surfaced. In other cases, Pharma and the FDA should have known before rushing a dangerous drug to market and making money at the expense of patients.

It is the business model for new drugs that provokes Big Pharma to bury risks and exaggerate benefits. A new drug under patent has a high price and no competition, and will make millions or even billions every year it is under patent. A settlement for death or injuries down the road is a nuisance and just the cost of doing business. Needless to say, the "forgiveness is cheaper than permission" business plan breeds shameless repeat offenders since the company makes money and no officers go to jail.

Hidden and unforeseen risks in new drugs are such a danger that some medical professionals advise patients to wait up to [seven years](#) before they try a new drug. Of course, the drug is no less risky when made by a generic drugmaker except that it has been in use longer and is not accompanied by slick advertising to push demand and even "sell" the condition it treats. But generics have their downside, too. Unlike branded drug companies, a 2013 Supreme Court ruling says generic drug makers [can't be](#) sued.

Here are some drugs whose risks did not did not keep them from getting their "patent's worth."

1. Vioxx

Remember the "super aspirin" Vioxx, that was [heavily marketed](#) by Merck and athletes Dorothy Hamill and Bruce Jenner 15 years ago? Vioxx was a wonder drug that treated everything from arthritis pain to menstrual cramps, its ads claimed, sparing users the gastrointestinal problems caused by older drugs like aspirin. It turned out that Vioxx was super at something else, too: it [doubled the risk](#) of cardiac events, causing [27,785](#) heart attacks and sudden cardiac deaths according to news sources.

While Merck pleaded ignorance, the [New England Journal of Medicine](#) in 2006 accused Merck of concealing "critical data on an array of adverse cardiovascular events" caused by Vioxx. It was withdrawn in 2004. In 2007, Merck agreed to pay \$4.85 billion to patients or survivors' families which represented less than one year of Merck's profits, computed the [New York Times](#). Vioxx made Merck an estimated [\\$2.5 billion a](#)

[year](#) from its 1999 launch to its 2004 withdrawal. Who says crime doesn't pay?

2. Fosamax

Vioxx was not the only Merck drug demonstrating that forgiveness is easier and cheaper when it comes to marketing new drugs. Merck's Fosamax, the first of an anti-osteoporosis drug class called biphosphonates that included Boniva and Actonel, was [linked to](#) heart problems, intractable pain, jawbone death, bone fractures and esophageal cancer—only after its patent ran out in 2008. Court-released documents reveal that Merck scientists knew about Fosamax' link to jawbone death as [early as the 1970s](#) in animal studies.

There was even a subplot to Merck's mendacity. The company installed bone density scanners in medical offices across the US to scare women into taking Fosamax if their scans revealed thinning bones, reported National Public Radio. The subterfuge of "selling" the disease of thinning bones to sell Fosamax did not make a big dent in sales when it came to light: Fosamax was already off patent.

3. Lipitor

What is the best-selling drug in the history of pharmaceuticals? What made [\\$125 billion](#) in 14 and a half years and as much as \$11 billion in a single year? Lipitor, Pfizer's blockbuster statin drug, owed its success to two factors. It was launched in 1997 when direct-to-consumer drug advertising was just beginning and it harnessed the growing national fear of cholesterol-linked heart attacks. Thanks to Lipitor's "Know Your Numbers" TV ads and Pfizer reps who saturated medical offices with free samples of the white pills and [sometimes lunch](#), more than [29 million people](#) were prescribed Lipitor.

But in 2012—the same year Lipitor's patent expired—those 29 million people (and millions taking other statins) got a surprise from the FDA. The agency made a label change warning that Lipitor and other statins could cause [diabetes](#), [liver injury](#), muscle damage and memory impairment. Who knew? The quartet of concerns "should not scare people off statins," said Amy G. Egan, deputy director for safety in the FDA's

Division of Metabolism and Endocrinology Products. Right.

4. Nexium

What is the second bestselling drug, after Lipitor? The Purple Pill. Like statins, Nexium and the other Proton-Pump Inhibitors (PPI) to treat gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), became household medications thanks to direct-to-consumer advertising. Before Proton-Pump Inhibitors, people took over-the-counter treatments like Tums or Tagamet when they had heartburn or indigestion. As the afflictions were upgraded into the "disease" of GERD, Nexium made almost [\\$5 billion in the US](#) in one year and the class of PPIs made \$13.6 billion in one year, translating into 119 million prescriptions.

In 2012, the same year the FDA warned about statins, the FDA warned the public that Nexium and the whole class of PPIs are linked to Clostridium Difficile, a stubborn and sometimes deadly intestinal infection that is becoming increasingly drug-resistant and hard to treat. In 2013, medical literature linked PPIs [to fractures](#), [calcium and magnesium](#) deficiencies, community-acquired pneumonia and [vitamin B-12 deficiencies](#). Research by John P. Cooke, clinical professor at Houston Methodist Hospital, found in 2013 that PPIs [might cause](#) blood vessels to constrict and cardiovascular risks. Not a great ending for the blockbuster Nexium, whose patent runs out in 2014.

5. Adderall

It is no secret that doctors, parents and teachers are calling millions of children ADHD. Thanks to Pharma marketing, ADHD is now the second most common long-term diagnosis in children after asthma, says the [New York Times](#), often conferred for "childhood forgetfulness and poor grades." While some critics of the massive dosing say kids are being penalized for being kids and that "treatment" used to be recess, Big Pharma's spin campaigns maintain that daily stimulants do not hurt children.

But in 2009, the same year Adderall XR went [off patent](#) (and two years before Concerta, a time-release version of Ritalin went [off patent](#)) a study in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* found the drugs were actually killing kids. There was "A

significant association of stimulant use with sudden unexplained death emerged from the primary analysis," wrote the authors who looked at 564 cases of sudden death in children 7 to 19.

Pro-stimulant Pharma doctors [disputed the study](#), saying the drugs might spare users death by improving their driving skills. Why didn't anybody test that?

6. Paxil

Few SSRI antidepressants have the checkered safety profile of GlaxoSmithKline's (GSK) Paxil. In 2007 the [BBC revealed](#) that Paxil's Study 329 showed adolescents six times more likely to become suicidal on the drug but the results were buried. (GSK [settled related](#) charges in 2012 for \$3 billion.) Rumors had circulated for years about suicide and toxic withdrawal symptoms with Paxil and they were evidently true in some cases.

In 2005, the FDA revealed birth defects associated with Paxil including [heart malformations](#). (Babies may also have "seizures, changing body temperature, feeding problems, vomiting, low blood sugar, floppiness, stiffness, tremor, shakiness, irritability or constant crying," warned the Paxil website.) Commensurate with the "forgiveness is cheaper than permission" business model, by the time the Paxil risks surfaced, GSK had taken the money and run. In fact, Paxil made [\\$2.12 billion](#) for GSK in 2002, the last year it was under patent, and was the preferred method of treating returning Iraq war [veterans' PTSD](#).

7. Ambien

One of Big Pharma's cash cows has been insomnia pills, because everyone watches TV

when they can't sleep—and they see sleeping pill ads. Leading the sleeping pill category was Sanofi-Aventis' Ambien, which netted [\\$2 billion a year](#) before it went off patent in 2006. But even as the patent expired, stories began to circulate about deranged behavior committed in an Ambien blackout. [People drove](#) and made phone calls on the drug with no memory of it; dieters woke up amid mountains of pizza and Häagen-Dazs cartons, and one woman drank a bottle of black shoe polish in an Ambien blackout. (Sanofi-Aventis was forced to publish ads telling people if they were going to take Ambien, to get in bed and stay there.)

In 2012, the Mayo clinic in Rochester announced it was no longer prescribing Ambien to inpatients because of its [fall rate](#)—four times that of patients not on Ambien and greater than falls caused by age, mental impairment or delirium. In 2013, the [FDA warned](#) about Ambien hangovers, in which the drug has not left the body, and recommended lower doses, especially for women. The warning came too late for Kerry Kennedy, daughter of Robert F. Kennedy and former wife of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. Witnesses said she had been weaving for miles when she swerved into a tractor-trailer and [kept driving](#), during the summer of 2012. Kennedy told police she may have taken an Ambien thinking it was her daily thyroid med.

For a weekly roundup of news and developments in the drug reform movement and the injustices stemming from prohibition, sign up to receive [AlterNet's Drugs Newsletter here](#). Make sure to scroll down to "Drugs" and subscribe!

Sellwood Bridge Update

Rare bridge closure, February 15-19



The Sellwood Bridge Project is huge, no doubt about it. We've been lucky to have a front-row seat for it, and the most amazing thing we've seen is that they've been able to build the new bridge while the OLD ONE REMAINS OPEN! With that in mind, it shouldn't be too surprising that there would be an occasional closure, and we're coming up on only the second full bridge closure next week. Here's all the nitty-gritty from the county's website for the project, www.SellwoodBridge.org...

February bridge closure: The Sellwood Bridge will close at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, February 15 and reopen by 5 a.m. on Thursday, February 20 to allow work on a retaining wall for the new interchange at the west end of the bridge. (We adjusted the start date by one minute to avoid confusion about the date.) The closure will affect all traffic modes, including bicyclists and pedestrians. Hwy. 43 will remain open. The contractor will work around the clock during the closure. The noise level will be similar to the west side night work last month.

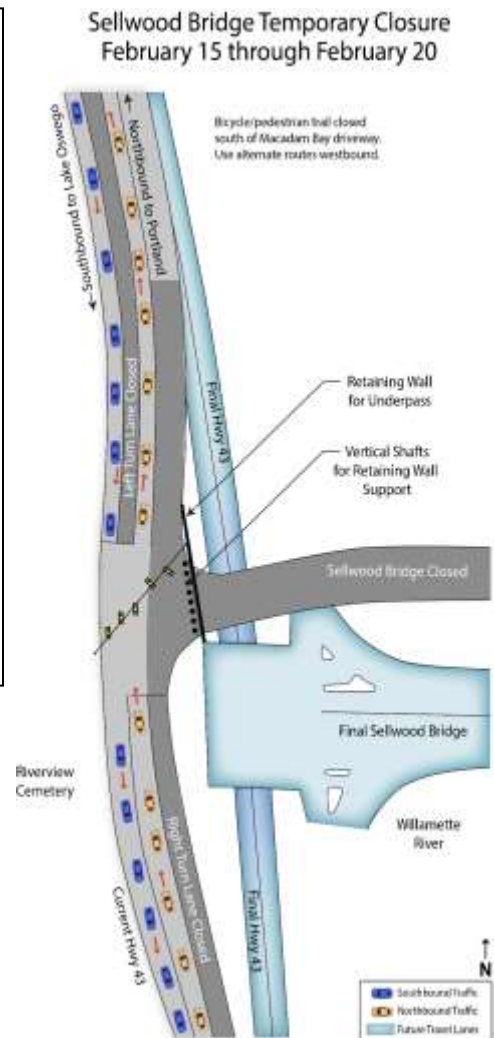
Hwy. 43 weekday lane closures: The outside southbound lane of Hwy. 43 is closed weekdays (except from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.) between SW Taylors Ferry Road and the project limits south of the bridge while the contractor works on retaining walls. A northbound lane is also closed weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. north of the bridge due to work on the retaining walls. The City of Portland has adjusted the traffic signal at the west end of the bridge to improve traffic flow.

The only weekdays that will be affected are Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, February 17-19. Most people will end up using the Ross Island bridge as an alternative. You should have no problem if you're planning to visit our shop during this period, but we know there may be some added inconvenience. To offset any annoyance you may encounter, we're doing our part...

If you schedule your vehicle for work during the week of Feb 16-22 we'll take 20% OFF YOUR LABOR CHARGES (up to \$200)!

This doesn't apply to oil changes or other services under \$100, but if you have a big repair like a timing belt, heater core, or brake job that you've been putting off then this may be the ideal time to do it. **YOU MUST MENTION YOU WANT THIS DISCOUNT WHEN YOU SCHEDULE SERVICE, and THIS OFFER CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER DISCOUNTS**, but that's easy. Come on in next week and save some money!

So what's the closure for? The pictures on the next page from Multnomah County will give you an idea.





"Angel Wing" at Bent 6 after pour



Lowering perched box caisson



Placing forms for wall fascia



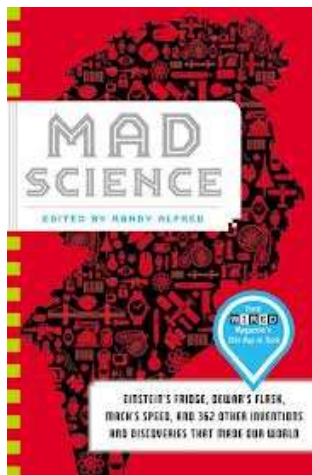
Excavating west retaining walls

Book Spotlight

Two must-reads from our clients



When you have to wait with us for your vehicle's repair it's a mixed blessing. You're know you're going to be stuck in our marginally comfortable waiting room for an undefined period, but you also know you'll have our ever-growing Book and Bumper Sticker library to keep you company! We always appreciate book suggestions from our clients, so this month we'd thought we pass along two client recommendations that made their way onto our shelves this month. Feel free to check out either or both on your next visit, or just click the link to be taken to the Powells.com site for each book.



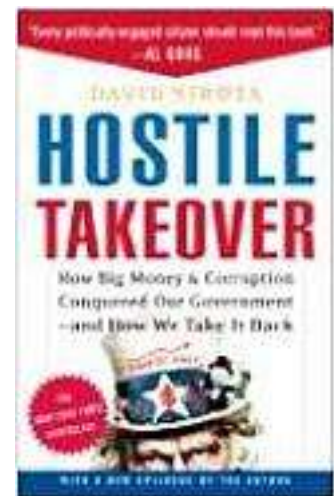
["Mad Science" by Randy Alfred](#)

Our first book comes to us from Andy X. "Mad Science" has an impressive subtitle- "Einstein's Fridge, Dewar's Flask, Mach's Speed, and 362 Other Inventions and Discoveries That Made Our World" . Each day gives the story of a different scientific discovery or technological achievement. In a world where 28% of Americans are scientifically literate, where a member of the House Science Mommittee can be applauded for saying "All that stuff I was taught about evolution and embryology and the Big Bang Theory, all that is lies straight from the pit of Hell", it's easy to see why this book is so valuable. And, it's fun!

["Hostile Takeover" by David Sirota](#)

Hostile Takover" has another impressive subtitle- "How Big Money And Corruption Conquered Our Government And How We Take It Back". From the publisher's notes...

"In *Hostile Takeover*, David Sirota seeks to open the eyes of ordinary Americans to the fact that corporate interests have undermined democracy, aided and abetted by their lackeys in our allegedly representative government. At a time when more and more of Americas major political leaders are being indicted or investigated for corruption, Sirota takes readers on a journey that shows how all of this nefarious behavior happened right under our noses; and how the high-profile scandals are merely one product of a political system and debate wholly owned by Big Money interests. Sirota considers major public issues that feel intractable; like spiraling health care costs, the outsourcing of jobs, the inequities of the tax code, and out-of-control energy prices; and shows how in each case workable solutions are buried under the lies of lobbyists, the influence of campaign cash, and the ubiquitous spin machine financed by Big Business."



Humorousness

Our in-depth Olympic coverage



The world is in the grip of Olympic Fever, and every news outlet worth its salt is giving their take on the games. Well, *Your Car Matters* is worth nothing if not salt, so we're covering the Olympics in the only place that makes any sense to us... our Humorousness column. Yes, when you're done with the amateurish dreck ladled out by NBC, click on over here for Olympic jokes, cartoons, and videos you just can't get anywhere else! (Well, unless you go to the websites we stole all these from.)

"There are 12 new events in this year's Winter Olympics, 12. The new events include women's ski jumping, luge-team relay, and finding a working toilet." –Conan O'Brien

"I guess it isn't going well over there. In fact, I heard there's even a shortage of pillows. The shortage is so bad that visitors are being asked to give their pillows to the Olympic athletes, because there's nothing more comforting than waking up in Russia to see a stranger coming at you with a pillow. 'How was your sleep, Mr. Bond?'" –Jimmy Fallon

"Tomorrow night the Olympics begin from Sochi. A lot of people over there say the hotels stink. The problem is there are only three hotels in Sochi. Of course, you have the Ritz Chernobyl. You have the Sheraton Gulag. And really the best one over there, The Two Seasons." –David Letterman

"The hotels are lousy. The Olympic village is a mess. The food is horrible. And, well, that's what happens when you tick off gay people." –David Letterman

"While attempting to light the Olympic flame, Vladimir Putin's body oil caught on fire." –David Letterman

"The games haven't even started yet and already there are people complaining about the horrible accommodations at the Sochi Olympic village. Toilets don't flush. The faucets spew



discolored water. They say it's like being on a Royal Caribbean cruise." –Jay Leno

"The Olympics start Friday and Russia's implementing the most intensive security in Olympics history. The government will monitor every email. They will monitor every social media message and they will listen in on every phone call. In fact, people are now comparing Russia to the United States. That's how bad it is." –Jay Leno

"Today, the Olympic torch arrived in Sochi. But Vladimir Putin immediately put it out because he thought it was too flaming." –Conan O'Brien

"In their hotel at the Sochi Olympics, the Canadian hockey team has to squeeze three players to a room. Even the bobsledders are like, 'Isn't it a little cramped?' When you scare off all the gay people, interior design goes to hell." –Jimmy Kimmel

"In advance of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, the Russian government announced that, contrary to popular belief, people in Russia will be allowed to protest. But only in a special protest zone – known as 'Siberia.'" –Jay Leno

"On Friday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said gay people at the Olympics should not fear for their safety despite the country's anti-gay laws. He said they should fear for their safety because they're in Russia." –Jimmy Fallon



"The mayor of Sochi in Russia where they're having the Olympics says there are no gay people in Sochi. Well, we can't expect too much from the opening ceremonies then. Who will be working on the choreography?" –Jay Leno

"The mayor of Sochi is now saying that there are no gay people in Sochi. So the only thing that is flaming over there now is the Olympic torch." –David Letterman

"Tomorrow marks the one-month countdown to the Winter Olympics in Russia. Vladimir Putin said, 'Athletes, you got one month left to train — and gay athletes, one month left to stop being gay.'" –Conan O'Brien

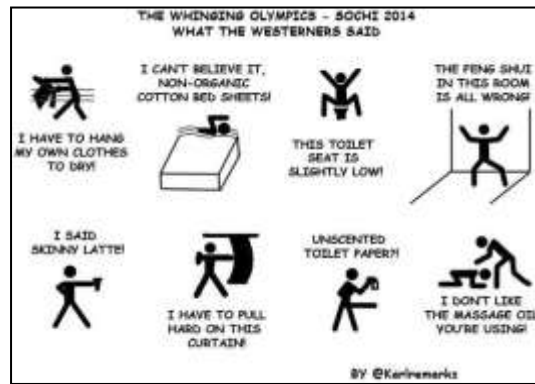


"The Winter Olympics are around the corner. President Vladimir Putin says people

will be allowed to protest the Winter Olympics as long as they stay in a designated protesting zone. When they asked where the zone is located Putin said, 'Poland.'" –Jimmy Fallon

"The Olympic torch arrived in Sochi yesterday, after going on a four-month relay around the world. That's when you know things are bad – when even the TORCH is putting off going to Russia." –Jimmy Fallon

"So the winter Olympics are right around the corner, and this is cool - the U.S. Olympic team just announced that its new uniforms are all made in America, after last year's uniforms were criticized for being made in China. Which got awkward when they realized the "Made in America" tags were actually made in China." –Jimmy Fallon



"In anticipation of the Winter Olympics, a female curling champion released some sexy photos of herself curling in lingerie. When asked for comment, Americans said they're still not going to watch curling." –Conan O'Brien

"Germany just unveiled its rainbow-colored Olympic uniforms, which seem to be a subtle protest against Russia's

anti-gay laws. You can tell how much the world has changed when Germans are the ones who are saying, 'Discrimination is just wrong.'" –Jimmy Fallon

"Cher has turned down an invitation to sing at the 2014 Olympics in Russia because of Russia's anti-gay laws. Their anti-gay laws are so strict, men can be arrested just for showing up at a Cher concert." –Jay Leno

"Russia also has the Winter Olympics, and that's a big mess too because, you know, Russia is really, really anti-gay. You know this? Seriously, they said they would arrest any Olympic athletes for "promoting" homosexuality. In a related story, figure skating has been canceled." –Bill Maher

"A Russian official announced that gay athletes attending the 2014 Olympics there will be



arrested. This is good news for the world's three straight male figure skaters. Just show up, get a medal, you're done. No competition." –Conan O'Brien

"Russia has announced that, for the 2014 Olympics, it will send the Olympic torch up to the International Space Station. They've also announced a new Olympic Event – 'Watching Six Astronauts Have All Their Oxygen Used Up By a Burning Torch.'" Conan O'Brien

Tryouts for the U.S. Olympic women's marathon swim team were to be held. The first was in California; a swim from Santa Monica to Catalina doing only the breaststroke. Three women signed up for the

tryouts - a brunette, a redhead and a blonde. The race started, and after approximately 14 hours, the brunette staggered up on the shore and was declared the winner. About 40 minutes later, the Redhead crawled ashore and was declared the second place finisher. Nearly 4 hours after that, the blonde

finally came ashore and promptly collapsed in front of the worried onlookers.

When the reporters asked why it took her so long to complete this regulation breaststroke race, she replied, "I don't want to sound like I'm a sore loser, but I think those two other girls were using their arms."



Saturday Night Live's "Space Olympics"



Jerry Seinfeld



Rob Cantrell



Aaron Woodall



Winter sports gone horribly wrong



Bryson Kears

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!



Deny KPOJ- Epilogue



KPOJ as we know it is dead, but as you probably know we filed a protest of its license renewal with the FCC. 335 people signed, and [KPOJ's lawyers told us to stuff it](#). But, before we move on to the possibilities of XRAY-FM we thought we'd give you the good news that there are other people trying to hold radio stations to the "public interest" standard. As we posted our petition, we got a call from Sue Wilson, a wonderful lady who is fighting the renewal of KDND in Sacramento (a woman died during their "Hold your wee for a Wii" contest) and WTMJ in Wisconsin (a mouthpiece for Scott Walker during the Union-gutting and recall days). Her organization, [Media Action Center](#), has been active for years in bringing attention to issues of media ownership, consolidation, and abuse. She has an interesting story to tell, and we think you might enjoy hearing it. So check out Sue first, but then, on to XRAY!

Clever tricks to make life easier



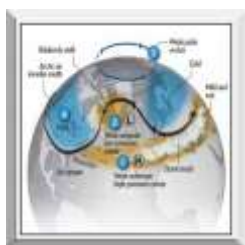
Last September we did a Popcorn Short on LifeHacks, clever tricks that you can use to make your life easier. These are great little ideas collected from all over the Web, most of which can be explained with only one picture or one sentence. We just ran across another batch of them we thought we'd share, so here are [15 more LifeHacks you need to know](#). There's always at least one stand-out idea in these things, and the winner this time is the easy method to cut grapes, olives, or grape tomatoes. It involves two tupperware lids and an absolute minimum of sliced fingers!

Enter the after-life in style



Death isn't fun, but it doesn't have to be silly. We spend thousands of dollars embalming our loved ones and building elaborate, cabinet-quality wooden homes for their eternal rest. But the beautiful boxes are buried and rot along with the body, and it turns out that the formaldehyde used in embalming is a carcinogen that eventually leaches back into the environment. What a waste, when our loved ones could use [Jae Rhim Lee's Infinity Mushroom Death Suit](#) instead. She's developing this suit to take advantage of mushroom's amazing ability to break down and recycle organic material, inexpensively and with no environmental downside. It's an elegant idea that may make you rethink your own plans!

The Polar Vortex explained



Don't know what the weather is like where you are, but most readers of Your Car Matters have recently been buried in snow. With all the snow blanketing the US, the climate change deniers have been trumpeting how this somehow disproves the idea of global warming. Blessedly, actual science has answers for anyone who takes the time to listen. In this case it takes about 2 minutes to hear [White House science advisor and physicist John Holdren explain what the Polar Vortex is](#), what it does, and why it is just one of many expected results of global climate change. Next?

News To Make You Furious

West Virginia Water Disaster



In November 2010, "News To Make You Furious" started as a focus on the 20th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez disaster. It is appropriate, therefore, that we augment your anger this month with another story about a spill, this time an ongoing one in West Virginia. On January 9th a chemical storage facility operated by Freedom Industries was discovered to be leaking. Initial estimates said 5,000 gallons spilled, but more recent numbers indicate 10,000 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol (MCHM, a chemical mixture used in the coal production process) spilled into the water of 300,000 West Virginians.

The handling of this wholly-man-made disaster has followed an all too familiar pattern.. leak discovered, initial estimates wrong, corporate malfeasance, coverup, and political corruption. But this one has twists all its own as the company responsible for the disaster declared bankruptcy, putting into doubt its ability to be held accountable at all. It's an ongoing story, so more hilarity will undoubtedly ensue.

In this month's Furious we'll give you all the links to keep up with slow-motion train wreck as it careens through the lives of 300,000 innocent people. The spill itself will make you Furious, the incompetence that led

to it will enrage you, the bungling response will make you crazed, but the thing that should truly make us all livid is the fact that we can see it all coming but there's precious little anyone can do about it.

[The Complete Guide To Everything That's Happened Since The Massive Chemical Spill In West Virginia](#)

Kiley Kroh on Think Progress, Feb 9

***** An excellent primer on the whole spill, with a day-by-day accounting. Updated constantly.**

[The Company Behind West Virginia's Chemical Spill Skips Congressional Hearing](#)

Kate Sheppard on Huffington Post, Feb 10

[The Many Disasters Behind the West Virginia Chemical Disaster](#)

Zoe Schlanger at Newsweek, Jan 31

[Freedom Industries Files Bankruptcy](#)

Ann Ali, The State Journal, Jan 17

[How dirty coal foretold West Virginia's disaster](#)

Jeff Biggers at Al Jazeera America, Jan 14

[That West Virginia chemical spill? It's likely a bigger scandal than Bridgegate.](#)

Ana Marie Cox at TheGuardian.com, Jan 13

[West Virginia residents cope, with days of water woes still ahead after chemical spill](#)

Joel Achenbach at Washington Post, Jan 12

[West Virginia water disaster continues; online fundraising effort targets help for residents](#)

Martin Reed at AL.com, Jan 12

[Chemical levels in West Virginia water drop, but still no end in sight to ban](#)

Greg Botelho and Tom Watkins at CNN, Jan 11

