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Tom's Tidbits

Finally... local radio returns to Portland's airwaves!



Greetings!

488 days... that's how long we've been without, informative, local, actual-over-the-air talk radio in Portland. 3 days... that's how long until it returns. In three short days, on March 15, XRAY-FM will bring community-based radio back to the Rose City airwaves and I, for one, am hopeful!

When radio began, it was all local. Radio broadcasting began in garages, but even as these micro-stations evolved into real commercial stations they served a local audience. The local radio station was a source (before TV, often the only source) of music, news, conversation, emergency information, and other features vital to daily community life.

100 years of technological progress, 27 years of political pressure, and 18 years of media consolidation have combined to make local radio an endangered species. ClearChannel, for example, owns over 1200 radio stations across the country. Aside from any other motivations, it costs money to staff a station and provide locally relevant content, but it's cheaper and easier to fire the staff and run an automated feed from New York. The economics are simple, but information, balanced thought, and the local community all suffer. Of course, they're the only ones who care.

XRAY.FM's mission may not be to change all that, but their very existence already makes a difference. As one of the new low-power FM stations created by the FCC in 2000, their power and coverage are small. Compared to stations in excess of 25,000 watts, low power FM stations are capped at 100 watts, giving them an effective broadcast radius of about 3½-5 miles. This means XRAY will cover the core Portland area and not much beyond. For people looking to build a money pump to corporate coffers that's bad, but for building a resource a community can depend on... it doesn't get any better. Their small footprint limits their attention and sharpens their focus to the people they serve. It DEMANDS they be a member of OUR COMMUNITY.

It will be up to the people of Portland to make this new station work. XRAY can offer new and exciting content, but it will only prosper with our active participation. Listening won't be enough; even contributing (critical as that will be) won't be enough. It will be up to us to spread the word, support the local hosts, and support the local businesses that step forward to support the station.

Portland is famous for our unique view of the world. Perhaps one of the values most representative of that view is the idea of community; that we're all in this together, and that our bond makes us stronger than we would be alone. XRAY will put that idea to the test, and I hope it will pass with flying colors.

On March 15, my radio dial will be tuned to 91.1 FM. I hope yours will be too, and I hope that XRAY will have an honored spot on the radio presets of our community for many years to come!

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

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

What NOW?!! Toons

Our monthly check in with Keith Tucker



"WHAT NOW?!!"

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WWW.WHATNOWTOONS.COM

Response to a bad YELP review

Our older-car policy draws some ire



We've had three bad online reviews from people that had never actually used our service! They were frustrated that we wouldn't work on their vehicles because we won't start NEW service relationships with people we don't know with older vehicles (currently 1998 or older). But why would any reasonable business ever turn down a new client? Are we just car snobs?

NO!

Every business decides what products and services it offers. It's not snobbery, we gladly care for the older vehicles of our existing clients, but the older-vehicle-new-client scenario often produced challenging situations we decided long ago to avoid...

We have many longstanding clients with older vehicles, and we plan to keep them happy for years to come! We are happy to inspect and accept older vehicles from existing clients when it makes sense as well. We have developed

good relationships with these clients, and both parties know the vehicle's current needs and conditions. We will continue to service an older vehicle as long as it makes sense, but years of experience taught us not to start new client relationships based around older, often challenged vehicles.

We do our best to maintain trusting, long-term relationships with our clients, but a new service relationship can be challenged by the quality and condition of the vehicle being serviced. Many first time older vehicles need so much work to make them safe or reliable that the cost of needed repairs exceeds the value of the vehicle. We offer solutions based on our client's best long-term interests and don't like to be in the position of prioritizing repairs on vehicles that are beyond proper repair. Also, one of our biggest values is letting clients know when the economic viability of their vehicle has passed and it's time to move on to a different vehicle instead of just fixing the current failure and getting it back out on the road. Once we've built a trusting service relationship with a client, they listen to us if there is a glitch in a repair or we tell them it's time to part with their vehicle. It's impossible to build that kind of relationship with a first time client around a vehicle that is already worn out.

Our maintenance programs will extend the life of your vehicle, but it's rarely worth playing "catch up" to get an older, poorly maintained vehicle running safely and reliably. We hate to say "no" to potential new clients, but we have too much respect to start a relationship that is not mutually beneficial. Vehicles will come and go, but the service relationship can last for generations.

In closing, as hard as we try to explain this policy, one of our clients may have done it best. Here's a [2012 review from Robb W. on Yelp](#) that puts it very succinctly...

"Tom Dwyer's is solid as hell across all fronts. They know most makes and models and bend over backwards to make your experience there the best you could ever imagine...seriously. Is your car less than 15 years old? Then they will be able to take care of you in all likelihood. Why 15 years? Their philosophy is that after 15 years, your money is better spent on a newer car...that the repairs will mount and it is no longer cost effective to continue to fix your old hooptie. And no, they don't sell new cars as a side business...it's just smart thinking and they're not trying to take your money doing a bunch of avoidable repairs.

Hell, sometimes they're not trying to take your money at all. I have been there on two separate occasions where they have put my car up on the lift, actually done some work and refused to charge me...not a single thin dime. This after taking me to work in their shuttle."

Thanks, Robb!

Healthcare Bluesfest is back!

Inner City Blues Fest returns for the third year



For the past two years, the hottest ticket in April has been the Inner City Blues Festival, “Healing the Healthcare Blues”, supporting single payer healthcare in Oregon and beyond. The Melody Ballroom has rocked late into the night to the music of Norman Sylvester, LaRhonda Steele, Lloyd Jones, and many others. This year they’re back again, but they’re bringing even more friends for an even bigger show! If you missed the last two shows, don’t cheat yourself again... on Saturday, April 5, join previous headliners along with Duffy Bishop, the Strange Tones, Jim Mesi, Too Loose Cajun & Zydeco Band, and (believe it or not) even more of the Northwest’s most talented Blues artists for a one-night blowout supporting the rational healthcare system we all deserve...

The 3rd Annual Inner City Blues Festival, “Healing the Healthcare Blues,” happens Saturday, April 5, at the Melody Ballroom in Portland. But beyond the festival, a growing group of statewide businesses is signing on in support of universal, publicly funded health care in Oregon.



“Healing the Healthcare Blues” is made possible by Health Care for All Oregon, partnering with the statewide small business network Main Street Alliance of Oregon to create a growing caucus of business owners supporting universal publicly funded health care in Oregon. In polling of business owners throughout rural Oregon, Main Street Learned that 61% of those polled support a “single payer” or “Medicare for All” model.



In the past several months over 100 businesses statewide have signed on in support of the HCAO campaign to achieve universal health care in Oregon. Reforming the healthcare system would benefit all Oregonians by replacing an expensive and complicated system which is dominated by a multitude of private insurance companies, with a single non-profit agency that would collect and distribute funds equitably and fairly according to the principle of universal, affordable healthcare for all Oregonians, “Everybody in—nobody out.”



Tom Dwyer, of Tom Dwyer Automotive, summarizes why so many business owners support the Inner City Blues Fest: “This festival not only showcases some of the best blues talent in the Northwest but it benefits advocacy on one of the most important policy issues of our time—getting to universal care!” Businesses supporting the event with in-kind donations, raffle prizes or other support (at press time for this blog)

include [Tom Dwyer Automotive](#), [Rusty Truck Brewing](#), [The Melody Ballroom](#), [Hollywood Impress Printing](#), [Portland TrailBlazers](#), [May Wallace Design](#), [Mississippi Pizza](#), [Music Millennium](#), [Ticket Tomato](#), [Bipartisan Café](#), [Clyde's Prime Ribs](#), [Galaxy Desserts](#), [Working Class Acupuncture](#), [Clear Path Hypnotherapy](#), [Nehalem Clayworks](#), [Gear Heart Kinetic Art](#), [Cosmic Hedgehog](#), [KBOO Radio](#) and [Rebecca Evans Photography](#).

A statewide, publicly funded, universal health care system would benefit small business owners in a number of ways. Universal care would relieve employers of all administrative responsibilities. Employers would not need to manage funds, determine benefits, or pay providers. It would allow every individual and business owner to know their share of costs as a taxpayer. These costs would not change regardless of health, family size, or employment status. By removing deductibles and co-pays, universal care would encourage employees to seek health care early. Employees would stay healthier and more productive, reducing sick time costs.



Universal care would also mean every employee would get the same comprehensive benefits regardless of employer. Entrepreneurs could start a new business and retain health care access for themselves, their families, and new employees. Employers would not need to split full-time positions into multiple part time positions to reduce health care costs.

All individuals and businesses would pay their fair share for providing universal health care. Oregon companies would have a strong competitive advantage over states with employer based health care and would be better able to compete internationally with countries already providing universal care.

"Health care should not be a burden on business," notes Bryan Setzler, a CPA, owner of [TriLibrium](#) in Portland and member of the [Main Street Alliance Statewide Leadership Circle](#). "A single payer system has the potential to be a real game changer for Oregon businesses by leveling the playing field among all businesses. It would drastically reduce the health care management burden on businesses our current system imposes and is expected to reduce overall costs, thereby leaving money for more productive uses and investments."

For information on [joining the small businesses supporting universal health care](#) being organized by [Main Street Alliance of Oregon](#) and [Health Care for all Oregon](#), [click here](#).



[A host of award winning Northwest blues stars](#) are returning for a night of music that will benefit the work of the state-wide coalition [Health Care for All-Oregon's](#) work to achieve universal, affordable healthcare for Oregonians. The line-up includes [Norman Sylvester Band](#) w/ [LaRhonda Steele](#) & [Janice Scroggins](#), Boogie Cat "Guitar Explosion" w/ [Lloyd Jones](#) and [Jim Mesi](#), [Too Loose Cajun & Zydeco Band](#) w/ [Reggie Houston](#), [The Duffy Bishop Band](#), [The Strange Tones](#) w/ [Volcano Vixens](#), [Chata Addy](#) & Friends African Procession, [Shoehorn "Tap Dancing Sax Man"](#) Floor Show, [Steve Cheseborough "Acoustic Blues,"](#) [Nico Wind Full Circle](#), [Tevis Hodge Jr. "Acoustic Blues."](#) [Mad as Hell Doctors](#) provide a message on healthcare in the comedy review, "Mad Minutes."

Food and drink will be available for sale, with a no host bar, 21 and over. A "Community Village" of information tables will feature information from [Health Care for All Oregon](#), [Main Street Alliance of Oregon](#), [Mad as Hell Doctors](#), [Musicians Union Local 99](#), the [Cascade Blues Association](#), and many others including Tom Dwyer Automotive.

Celebrity masters of ceremonies for the evening are [Paul Knauls](#), a NE Portland businessman and former owner of legendary blues/jazz clubs Geneva's and the Cotton Club & [Renee Mitchell](#), former columnist for the Oregonian and renowned poet and author.



[The 3rd Annual Inner City Blues Festival, "Healing the Healthcare Blues,"](#) will be held Saturday, April 5, 2014 at the [Melody Ballroom](#), 615 SE Alder, Portland. Doors open at 6:00 pm. Show 7:00 pm to midnight. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door (\$1 discount for [Cascade Blues Association](#) members). Tickets are available at www.tickettomato.com, at [Music Millennium](#), 3158 E. Burnside, [Geneva's Shear Perfection](#), 5601 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and at the [Musicians Union Local 99](#), 325 NE 20th

For more information about the [Inner City Blues Festival](#) and [Health Care for All-Oregon](#) go to: www.hcao.org or www.facebook.com/healingthehealthcareblues

Your X-RAYS Are Ready

A look backstage as the curtain rises on XRAY.FM



IT'S HERE! IT'S HERE! IT'S HERE! Ring the bells and pop the corks, XRAY-FM is finally here! Carl Wolfson's "Carl In The Morning" podcast has bravely carried the flag so shamefully dropped by KPOJ, but Portland has languished without accessible, over-the-air, engaging, community radio. No longer! Carl joins Thom Hartmann, Jefferson Smith, Adam Klugman, and an array of local music movers and shakers to create something totally new; a fusion of local news, community events, civic engagement, and cutting-edge music unique on the radio dial. And at long last, it begins pouring into the ears of Portlanders on March 15th...

The most popular articles we've written here at *Your Car Matters* have had to do with Portland Radio. Our readers care about alternative media. So, since the start of XRAY.FM is one of the biggest events to hit Puddletown in years, we just had to be there to cover it for you. We sent our intrepid reporting staff to visit their new studios and talk to the staff, so please join us in a peek behind the curtain before it rises in just four short days...

Our first impression when we pulled up to the 4-story XRAY studio building was disappointment that their \$103,000 in Kickstarter funding had already been blown on luxury office space, but an inquiry at the front office quickly showed us our error. The ActiveSpace building in Southeast Portland is home to many small companies and startups, and XRAY is just one of the many. Far from blowing their money, they're obviously nursing it wisely. XRAY's studio is just a tiny office in ActiveSpace, about 10'x20'.



The XRAY-FM studio complex. Their office is on the street under the awning on the left



The cavernous home of XRAY-FM. We're standing in the producer's room, looking into the studio

divided off to form a producer's area and the rear is where the hosts and DJs will be.

It may not take much space to run a radio station but it does take equipment, and that's where the new station's expenses lie. "We trying to stretch our dollars as far as possible" said Jim Sandberg, XRAY's operations manager. "Our biggest expenditures so far have been for the electronics we need to actually run the station." He pointed to a homemade electronics rack under a desk, where green LEDs blinked happily. "These units were probably the most expensive. They're state-of-the-art phone systems to handle callers, and cost almost \$8000."

When we visited, Arthur Rizzotto was busy in the next room running the boards for the Thom Hartmann show on their already-operating net feed of the show. Next to Arthur's mixing board was the pair of turntables XRAY's DJ's will use to add music to the station lineup.



Arthur Rizzotto manning the boards for the Thom Hartmann show

"Blending music into the talk format is something we're really excited about", said Jim. "Talk radio audiences are generally older, but music typically appeals to a younger demographic. We think that our mix of local, independent music will bring young people to the station who may not have heard us otherwise, but that once they get a chance to hear some of the talk hosts they'll migrate to that programming too. It broadens our potential audience, and gives people to stay with the station all day and into the evening." Jim mentioned one particular DJ who will have a show from 3-5am. "She says she'll be doing some more experimental stuff, something appropriate for the deep night crowd." He smiled broadly as he said "I'm really looking forward to hearing what that will be like!"

Along with Jim and Arthur, JD Stewart, producer of the current "Carl In The Morning" show, was at the studio to get a look at his new radio home. They'll be holding down the 7-9am Morning Show for XRAY. "It's a slot we're very familiar with, and we think it's a strong way to start the day for news junkies. We can bring everyone up to speed on the news of the day, and basically set the table for the rest of the day's conversation." The full schedule is still developing, but the basics are pretty well set. "After Carl finishes at 9am, we'll have a variety of people and programming in the 9-to-noon slot. This is where you'll hear Jefferson Smith, Bitch Media, Adam Klugman, Kickass Oregon History, and all the rest. It's a place where we can develop new talent and new shows. Then, Thom Hartmann comes on at noon, and we start music when he finishes at 3pm."



Jim Sandberg points out the features of the new state-of-the-art phone system

Even as they're approaching their opening date, the folks at XRAY are thinking about the future. "We'll be playing with the programming and schedule to see what works best for our listeners, and what kind of content we can develop" said Jim. And, though this one works for now, that huge Kickstarter response gives them money to grow on. "We'd like to eventually have a slightly larger space, maybe 1000-2000 square feet. We'd have better production capabilities, and more options to work with local bands."

They're off to a strong start, but the success of XRAY will depend on the continued strength of the community response. They'll be counting on you to listen starting March 15 on 91.1. Listen, tell your friends, and support the station! This station is a new resource, a new strength for Portland. It will be up to us all to see what we can make of it.



JD Stewart, producer of "Carl In The Morning", settles into his new home

Drew's Kitchen

Grilled Cheese with Spinach



This simple addition puts an interesting spin to a standby favorite. Feel free to play with other vegetables like onions, peppers, summer squash and zucchini. You might need to use a fork and knife to eat it, if the vegetables are watery. Approximate cost for the recipe: \$0.72

Ingredients: (Per sandwich)

- 2 slices bread, whole wheat or whole grain best
- 1-2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chopped, frozen, defrosted spinach (or two cups baby spinach)
- 1 slice cheese (American, Provolone, Swiss)

Preparation:

1. Heat about half of the olive oil. Add the spinach and cook 3-5 minutes.
2. While the spinach is cooking, put the cheese on one half of the bread. When the spinach is cooked, place on top of the cheese and cover with the other slice of bread.
3. Add the rest of the oil to the pan and let it heat a minute or so. It is important that you heat the oil. If the oil is not heated, the bread will stick. Place the sandwich in the heated pan and use a weight or a small pan filled with water to hold down.
4. Heat until the bottom slice of bread is browned (should be 2-3 minutes but the time will depend on how hot the pan is). You can check after about 1 minute by removing the pan with water and carefully lifting the bottom slice.
5. Using a metal spatula or a fork, carefully turn the sandwich over and brown the other side.

Shop Talk

Our first Referral Reward groups



How's that Referral Rewards program going?

The [new Referral Reward program](#) is off to a great start, so we thought we'd tell you about it. It's only been going on for about 6 weeks, but 18 clients have already used it for a **total donation so far of \$640.12!** These are the groups our clients have picked for donations (along with web links if you'd care to donate yourself)...



[Surfrider Foundation](#)

[Act Blue](#)

[XRAY-FM](#)

[KBOO](#)

[Planned Parenthood](#)

[Best Friends Animal Society](#)

[Multnomah Animal Control](#)

[Oregon Food Bank](#) (twice)

[OPB](#)

[Wild Salmon Center](#)

[MoveOn.org](#)

[Feral Cat Coalition](#)

[Wendy Davis for Governor](#)

[PETA](#)

[PHAME](#)

[Operation Nightwatch](#)

[Artichoke Community](#)

[Music](#)

We certainly hope you'll take part, too. It's simple... for every new client you refer to us 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 and make an additional donation of up to \$200.00 to their cause. Then, at the end of the year we'll highlight the client and group with the highest total referrals and make an additional donation of up to \$500.00 to their cause. You can get the full details on our [Referral Reward webpage, located here](#).

Although we'll be thankful for anyone you refer, oil changes, tires, and batteries don't count toward donation totals. And remember, referrals don't have to come singly- you can coordinate your group to come in as a whole.

Thank you to everyone who has participated so far, both for your loyalty and your generosity! We're calling our next group of referrers this week, and we hope to see your group on the list next month!

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.



- [March 7: 6,954 Honda CB500 and CBR500 motorcycles from 2013](#), Recalled for engine bolts that may have been manufactured incorrectly, which could result in loss of power and engine stalling.
- [March 7: 130 Freedom Motors wheelchair accessible vehicles from 2008-2010, including converted Dodge Grand Caravan and Chrysler Town and Country models](#), Recalled for the rear axle which may develop cracks and result in axle failure.
- [March 6: 7,067 Toyota Highlander vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for the third row middle seat belt which may not be properly anchored, increasing the risk of injury in the event of a crash.
- [March 6: 30 Trailers USA horse trailers from 2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, locking individuals inside without an exit.
- [February 28: 5,664 Chrysler Ram ProMaster vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for potential brake fluid leakage, resulting in a reduction of brake performance and increasing the risk of a crash.
- [February 28: 2,453 Four Wheel & Six-Pac truck campers from 2006-2013](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, locking individuals inside without an exit.
- [February 27: Updated: 1,367,146 Chevrolet Cobalt, Pontiac G5 and Solstice, Saturn Ion vehicles from 2003-2007](#), Recalled for ignition switches that may move out of the run position, turning off the engine or causing the air bags to not deploy in the event of a crash.
- [February 25: 47 Heartland Recreational Vehicles fifth wheel travel trailers from 2014](#), Recalled for incorrect tire labels which could result in wrong tire size replacement or wrong tire pressure, causing tire failure.
- [February 24: 24,000 Yamaha motorcycles from 2009-2013, including YZFR1 and XTZ12 models](#), Recalled for headlight bulb sockets that may overheat or melt, causing headlight failure.
- [February 24: 13,535 Nissan Frontier vehicles from 2012-2014](#), Recalled for a potential electrical short which may cause a fire.
- [February 21: 1,440 Vail Sport tubeless trailer tires recalled by Double Camel, in cooperation with Lionshead Specialty Tires and Wheels](#), For potential failure under prolonged usage.
- [February 21: 733 Mitsubishi Outlander Sport vehicles from 2013](#), Recalled for driver side seat mounted air bags that may have been incorrectly wired, which could result in the air bag not deploying when needed.
- [February 20: 444 Spartan Gladiator emergency vehicles from 2008-2011](#), Recalled for the engine fan which can potentially shatter and cause injury to those nearby.
- [February 19: 452 Spartan motorhomes from 2010-2014](#), Recalled for potential breaking of the sway bar, resulting in poor vehicle handling.
- [February 19: 247 Trails West recreational trailers from 2010-2014](#), Recalled for the plastic furnace intake fan which may melt, causing the furnace to overheat.
- [February 18: 11,961 Kia Sportage vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for incorrect labels regarding tire pressure, which could result in tire damage.
- [February 18: 264 Nu Wa fifth wheels and trailers from 2011-2013, including Hitchhiker LS and Discover America models](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.
- [February 14: 700,000 Toyota Prius vehicles from 2010-2014](#), Recalled for transistors that may become damaged from high-operating temperatures, which could shut the vehicle down while in operation.
- [February 14: 261,114 Toyota vehicles from 2012-2013, including Tacoma and Lexus Rx350 models](#), Recalled for various systems that may become inoperative, including Antilock Brake System and Vehicle Stability Control, increasing the risk of a crash.
- [February 12: Nearly 3.8 million Graco toddler and booster car seats from 2009-2013, including Comfort Sport and Argos models](#), Recalled for the harness buckle which may become stuck, causing difficulty removing the child and increasing the risk of injury in the event of an emergency.
- [February 11: 5,839 Winnebago trailers and fifth wheels from 2011-2014](#), Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.
- [February 10: 7,935 Chrysler Ram ProMaster vehicles from 2014](#), Recalled for accelerator pedals that may get stuck, resulting in uncontrolled acceleration.
- [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.

Health Notes

7 “unhealthy” foods that aren’t



Last month, we passed on a list of 7 Drugs Whose Dangerous Risks Emerged Only After Big Pharma Made Its Money. This month, to keep a Healthy balance, we want to pass on the other side of the coin...

7 Foods Experts Said Were Bad For Us That Turned Out To Be Healthy

Evelyn Nieves, AlterNet, February 20, 2014

In the future, when we're zipping around the biosphere on our jetpacks and eating our nutritionally complete food pellets, we won't have to worry about what foods will kill us or which will make us live forever.

Until then, we're left to figure out which of the food headlines we should take to heart, and which should be taken with a grain of unrefined, mineral-rich sea salt. Low-fat or high-fat? High-protein or vegan? If you don't trust what your body tells you, remember that food science is ever evolving. Case in point: The seven foods below are ancient. But they've gone from being considered healthy (long ago) to unhealthy (within the last generation or two) to healthy again, even essential.

1) Coconut Oil

Old wisdom: Coconut oil is a saturated-fat body bomb that should be avoided.

New wisdom: Coconut oil can cure what ails you.

Talk about an about-face. Anyone who grew up eating such nutritious fare as SpaghettiOs, Nestle Quik and Bisquick—actually, anyone old enough to vote in the United States—probably doesn't remember a jar of coconut oil in the cupboard, or anywhere in the family diet.

Why? Coconut oil was stigmatized after flawed studies decades ago tested partially hydrogenated coconut oil for its ill effects. Now, of course, we know that the chemical process of hydrogenation is what does a body ill. That's true whether the oil consumed is coconut, corn, canola, soy or any other.

It turns out that unrefined coconut oil offers terrific health benefits. Yes, it is a saturated fat. But the scientific consensus on whether saturated fats are bad for us is changing. Now researchers are stressing that saturated fats like coconut oil actually lower bad cholesterol in our bodies. Studies of people in countries that consume high amounts of coconut oil have found fewer instances of heart disease than in nations, such as the United States, where coconut oil has not been a staple. Coconut oil is rich in lauric acid, which is known for its antiviral, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial properties. Coconut oil, the new wisdom says, is good for our bodies inside and out. Studies and anecdotal

evidence across the blogosphere tout coconut oil as a wondrous beauty aid, which can and should be used as a moisturizer to reduce lines and wrinkles, a moisturizer for dry hair, a soap and mouthwash.

2) Coffee

Old Wisdom: Coffee equals caffeine equals bad for you.

New Wisdom: Coffee is loaded with antioxidants and other nutrients that improve your health. Plus, a little caffeine makes the world go round.

Why? Actually, most of the world never bought into the whole caffeine/coffee scare that made so many Americans start to swear off coffee, or heaven help us, switch to decaf. But these days, the U.S., chock full of Starbucks, has come around. Several prominent studies conducted over the last few years unearthed a bounty of benefits in the average cup of joe. As everyone knows, caffeine boosts energy. Based on controlled human trials, it has also been proven to fire up the neurons and make you sharper, with improved memory, reaction time, mood, vigilance and general cognitive function. It can also boost your metabolism, lower your risk of Type II diabetes, protect you from Alzheimer's disease and dementia, and lower the risk of Parkinson's. Whew.

3) Whole Milk

Old wisdom: High-fat milk lead to obesity. Exposing children to lower-fat options keeps them leaner and healthier and instills the low-fat habit.

New Wisdom: Ha!

A study at Harvard University found that despite recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics that children drink skim or low-fat milk after age two, doing so did not make for leaner or healthier children. In fact, the study found the opposite. Kids who consumed skim milk were likely to be fatter than those who drank it whole. Turns out that skim drinkers were more likely to indulge in junk food, which spiked their blood sugar levels, leading to more cravings for junk. And so on and so on.

4) Salt

Old Wisdom: Salt kills. It raises blood pressures, causes hypertension and increases the risk of premature death.

New Wisdom: Salt is essential to health. Too little salt can actually lead to premature death.

The new wisdom is actually older than the old wisdom. Long before it became the number-one evildoer in the Department of Agriculture's hit list, worse than fats, sugar and booze, salt was considered so valuable to body and soul that it was literally used as currency. Homer called it a "divine substance." Plato described it as dear to the Gods. The Romans considered it the spice of life; a man in love was *salax*—in a salted state. Only fairly recently, in that oh-so-wise 20th century, did salt become the bad guy at the dinner table.

It turns out that high-sodium processed "food" is the real villain in our diets. Unrefined salt, such as Himalayan salt or raw sea salts, contain 60 or more valuable trace minerals. It supports thyroid function and a faster metabolism and speeds the elimination of cortisol, the stress hormone that causes weight gain. Did you know salt is also a natural antihistamine (a pinch on the tongue may stem an allergic reaction). Finally, unrefined salt is needed for good digestion.

5) Chocolate

Old Wisdom: Chocolate gives you pimples, makes you fat and creates heartburn.

New Wisdom: Dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidants.

Chocoholics of the world rejoiced when the food scientists started doing an about-face on chocolate. After a few decades on the vilified list, in 2001, scientists began doing a double take, with the New York Times reporting that the science on chocolate was up in the air. Ten years later, chocolate had moved squarely into the good-for-you column. A 2011 Cambridge University study concluded that chocolate "probably" lowers stroke rates, coronary heart disease and high blood pressure. A more recent study has found that regular chocolate consumers are often thinner than non-chocolate eaters.

No one is advising you to grab a Snickers bar for lunch, though. Eating chemically laden, sugar-bombed milk chocolate is still a no-no...for now, anyway.

6) Popcorn

Old Wisdom: Popcorn is junk food.

New Wisdom: Popcorn is a whole grain, loaded with nutrients.

Like most of the foods on this list, this one has caveats. If you consider popcorn something to douse with "butter-flavored topping" and shovel in your mouth at the multiplex, then keep it on the "bad" list. A study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest has concluded that movie theater popcorn—a medium tub, mind you—has 1,200 calories and 60 grams of the worst kind of saturated fat. And that's before you add whatever it is that is supposed to taste like butter. That calorie count is the equivalent of three McDonald's Quarter Pounders.

Microwave popcorn, laden with chemicals, is also bad. But homemade, air-popped (let's add organic, for good measure) or made with good oil popcorn, well, that's a snack of a different color. Last year, researchers at the University of Scranton revealed that homemade popcorn has more antioxidants—known as polyphenols—than fruits and vegetables. Polyphenols have been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancers.

If that isn't enough to make popcorn addicts rejoice, popcorn is a great source of fiber (it's a whole grain) and is low in calories. Air-popped popcorn is the healthiest of all, with only 30 calories per cup.

7) Eggs

Old Wisdom: Eggs clog your arteries and increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, diabetes and early death.

New Wisdom: Nonsense! Eggs are very nearly the perfect food.

How did this one happen? A century ago, when our grandparents gathered their eggs from the backyard hens, there was no controversy. Then cholesterol became the big bugaboo, and all of a sudden, we were being lectured to limit our consumption of eggs to four a week, if any.

Last year, scientists decided to settle the matter once and for all. A meta-analysis of 17 studies on egg consumption and health discovered that eggs did not contribute—at all—to heart disease or stroke in healthy individuals. On the contrary, eggs raise our good (HDL) cholesterol numbers and change the bad (LDL) cholesterol from small and dense to large and benign. Eggs are also high in iron and protein and two antioxidants, lutein and zeaxanthine, which protect against age-related eye disorders like macular degeneration and cataracts.

The key is to eat eggs from free-range, happy and healthy chickens, just like in the old days, and avoid eggs that come from sickly, antibiotic-soaked, factory farm hens.

Sellwood Bridge Update

Movin' smooth... come on down!



For the fans of our Sellwood Bridge Update, there's just not too much to tell you. The bridge is still safe, open, and traffic is flowing freely. There are occasional brief delays from the flaggers, but if you're relaxed in our Free Courtesy Shuttle, being softly wafted from our shop to your business day by our most popular shuttle driver ever, Doug, then even those don't matter.

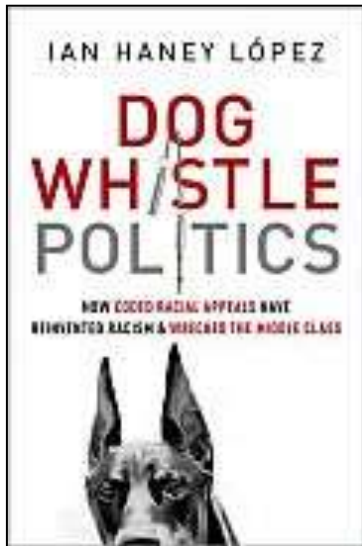
About the only new thing was some brief excitement in our parking lot. A new group of tall cranes are coming in to work on the East Side of the bridge, and the power line over the railroad track presents some problems for them. PGE came in to install some poles, and the power will be routed from the railroad track, between our parking lot and the Bridge Trailers, down 6th and across Tacoma, and then back to the railroad track. It didn't cause much disruption, but it was cool seeing them put in poles that tall. Here's the pictures...



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. 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

"Dog Whistle Politics" by Ian Haney-Lopez



[Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class](#)

by Ian Haney-Lopez

Campaigning for president in 1980, Ronald Reagan told stories of Cadillac-driving "welfare queens" and "strapping young bucks" buying T-bone steaks with food stamps. In trumpeting these tales of welfare run amok, Reagan never needed to mention race, because he was blowing a dog whistle: sending a message about racial minorities inaudible on one level, but clearly heard on another. In doing so, he tapped into a long political tradition that started with George Wallace and Richard Nixon, and is more relevant than ever in the age of the Tea Party and the first black president.

In *Dog Whistle Politics*, Ian Haney López offers a sweeping account of how politicians and plutocrats deploy veiled racial appeals to persuade white voters to support policies that favor the extremely rich yet threaten their own interests. Dog whistle appeals generate middle-class enthusiasm for political candidates who promise to crack down on crime, curb undocumented immigration, and protect the heartland against Islamic infiltration, but ultimately vote to slash taxes for the rich, give corporations regulatory control over industry and financial markets, and aggressively curtail social services. White voters, convinced by powerful interests that minorities are their true enemies, fail to see the connection between the political agendas they support and the surging wealth inequality that takes an increasing toll on their lives. The tactic continues at full force, with the Republican Party using racial provocations to drum up enthusiasm for weakening unions and public pensions, defunding public schools, and opposing health care reform.

Rejecting any simple story of malevolent and obvious racism, Haney López links as never before the two central themes that dominate American politics today: the decline of the middle class and the Republican Party's increasing reliance on white voters. *Dog Whistle Politics* will generate a lively and much-needed debate about how racial politics has destabilized the American middle class — white and nonwhite members alike.

About the Author

Ian Haney López is the John H. Boalt Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley. An incisive voice on white identity since the publication of his path-breaking book *White by Law* (1996), he remains at the forefront of conversations about race in modern America. A past visiting professor at Yale and Harvard law schools, in 2011 he was awarded the Alphonse Fletcher Fellowship, given to scholars whose work promotes the integration goals of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Humorousness

Meet Bill Hicks



We recently passed an anniversary that was barely noticed at all. Bill Hicks died on February 26, 1994, just over twenty years ago. Who is Bill Hicks? Well, we're pretty big fans of George Carlin (in fact, we have several [prime Carlin cuts on our website](#)) and Bill Hicks was frequently described as an heir to Carlin. Incisive, profane, iconoclastic, intellectual, Hicks brought a sharp editorial wit to his humor when that was still a new and dangerous thing. Bill was still on the way up when he died of pancreatic cancer at the age of 33. There's no way of knowing how far he may have gone, but we hope you enjoy this taste of his work while he was still around...

(PS- Like Carlin, Bill could be a little rough when it came to language. Most of these clips have words that may be new to innocent ears. Be careful.)



Bill's banned performance on David Letterman



1989 show at Laft Stop in Austin, Texas



1991 show at Montreal's Centaur Theatre



Bill lets his hair down in a Cable Access Interview

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!



Congratulations to Lu Beck and Tryon Creek!



One truly underappreciated feature of Portland is Tryon Creek State Park, the only Oregon state park within a major metropolitan area. Friends of Tryon Creek is the group organized to support the park, and Friends wouldn't exist without the efforts of one of our clients, Lu Beck. We'd like to invite you to the Tryon Creek Trillium Gala to honor Lu and the other park founders for their work in preserving this community jewel. Enjoy dinner, cocktails, a silent auction, and socializing at Lewis and Clark College, starting at 530pm on March 15. [Click here for more information](#).

Buy new or used? Neither. Buy wisely!



We're frequently asked for our advice on buying used cars (and we've collected it all [here](#), if you're interested), but what about other products? If you're out cruising the thrift shops, though, is there a guaranteed way to tell what items are golden investments and which are white elephants? Maybe not, but there are some guidelines. [This article from AlterNet tells you some general categories of products that are good bets for wise secondhand investment](#), along with some vital pointers in each group. Good bargain hunting!

You ain't from around here, are you?



We can all tell the difference between a Boston accent and a Georgia accent, but can you tell the difference between a Georgia accent and an Alabama one? Can you zero down to North Alabama vs South Alabama? [This computer program can](#). It's based on information from the Harvard Dialect Survey, and it can pick your birthplace based on your pronunciation of certain key expressions. It guessed our guinea pig correctly... can it get you too?

ALEC is on its way to a village near you



ALEC, The American Legislative Exchange Council, is one of the most dangerous perversions to ever crawl across the American political stage. Right or left, the idea that legislators should rubber-stamp bills they didn't read, written for them by representatives of corporations we didn't elect is deeply wrong. ALEC has concentrated on the state level so far, but their investments have paid off so well that they're expanding to cities and municipalities. [Get all the details on how affordable these smaller legislators can be here](#).

News To Make You Furious

Media Consolidation- One-stop-shopping for ideas



The opening of XRAY-FM is a small victory for the free flow of information, but why? Why should a small, community radio station matter at all? It's because the overwhelming trend in media since 1996 has been consolidation... six companies now control almost all the information we receive through all media. They've taken a vibrant, chaotic marketplace of ideas and forced it through a single spigot as a putrid slurry of corporate propaganda. Why, it's enough to make you Furious, if you check out these stories or even just this chart on MEDIA CONSOLIDATION!

[The Media Brokers- Concentration and Ownership of the Press](#)

Ben Bagdikian, The Multinational Monitor

This prescient article by Ben Bagdikian appeared in 1987. He lays out a terrifying future of media stranglehold.

[NOW webpage on Media Consolidation](#)

Excellent starting point with timelines, rule changes, and ownership records. Constantly updated.

[Citizens Speak: The Real World Impacts of Media Consolidation](#)

Common Cause

[Former FCC Commissioner Warns About Comcast-Time Warner Merger, "Mindless" Media Consolidation](#)

Video- Democracy Now

[These 6 Corporations Control 90% Of The Media In America](#)

Business Insider

Includes excellent infographic if you'd like to share it around

[The changing face of local TV: Impacts from media consolidation](#)

St. Louis Post Dispatch

[Timeline of media consolidation laws and events](#)

Moyers on America

[Deregulation Has Created Monopolies – And That's Why Your Internet Sucks](#)

Ring of Fire Radio

[Media Consolidation holds Journalism at Knife point](#)

Kytoh blog

[Cease to Resist: How the FCC's Failure to Enforce Its Rules Created a New Wave of Media Consolidation](#)

Free Press report

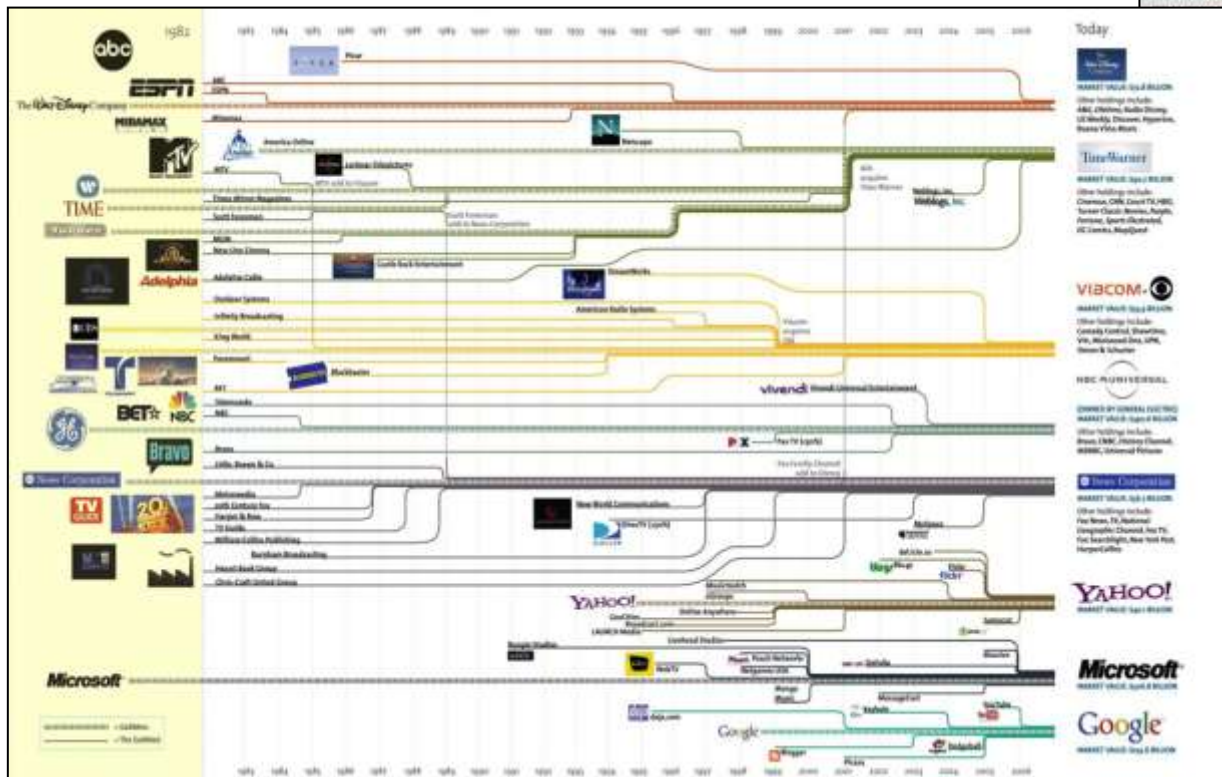
[Sustaining Democracy in a Digital Age](#)

New America Foundation

[Free Press webpage on Media Consolidation](#)

[Visualization map of media takeovers, 1996-2013](#)

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