



Tom's Tidbits

The McCutcheon Fiasco

Our Feature Articles



You love the Grid. The Man says so.

The Man's fighting, but he may be losing



The Dirty Truth About Fuel Injectors

Why "canned magic" is no good



We sang the healthcare blues, and we liked it.

Report back from the Inner City Blues Festival

Our Monthly Columns

"What NOW?!!" Toons

Our monthly check-in with Keith Tucker

Drew's Kitchen

Louisville Hot Browns

Shop Talk

Save \$100 in April

Health Notes-

Your kids' diapers are full of s#!+

Sellwood Bridge Update

Computers power the reconstruction

Book Spotlight

"Dirty Wars" by Jeremy Scahill

Humorousness

Jokes for Smart People. Are you ready?

Popcorn Shorts

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

- An amazing technology that actually works. Try it now!
- 41 camping hacks that are borderline genius
- What scientists actually know about climate change
- Dad turns videos of his toddler into insanely cool action movies

News To Make You Furious

Shaun McCutcheon's brave battle to extend freedom of speech to people exactly like Shaun McCutcheon





Greetings!

One thing on my mind this month: the abominable Supreme Court decision in the McCutcheon v. FEC case. Shaun McCutcheon contributed to 17 candidates in 2011-2012, and wanted to support 11 more. His contributions were all under the per-candidate limits, but combined they would have exceeded the per-cycle limit. Shaun sued to prevent this muzzling of his free speech, and on April 2 the Supremes handed him the right to buy all the free speech he wants by striking down the per-cycle limits for Presidential and Congressional candidates. We have details on this story in our “News to Make You Furious” column this month, so I won’t dwell on the details here. Instead, I’d like offer a few thoughts on Chief Justice John Roberts’ majority opinion...

Among many other jaw-droppers, Justice Roberts said:

“Money in politics may at times seem repugnant to some, but so too does much of what the First Amendment vigorously protects... If the First Amendment protects flag burning, funeral protests, and Nazi parades—despite the profound offense such spectacles cause—it surely protects political campaign speech despite popular opposition.”

He’s right that the First Amendment protects those things, but it’s because stifling repugnant speech *defeats the idea of free speech!* This logic doesn’t apply to “money in politics”, which was not being restricted because it was repugnant. It was *repugnant* because it was (and is) *dangerous* to the very functioning of democracy! We *have no democracy* when our representatives only respond to the 1% who can write checks big enough to buy them!

McCutcheon is just one more look at what the power brokers think about democracy in America, and who has to pay the price for it. They have no problem if poor, elderly, or minority people lose their voting rights to solve a non-existent “voter fraud” problem. They solemnly intone that no law is perfect, and that if a few people (actually hundreds of thousands across the country) are adversely affected, that’s just the collateral damage of a secure voting system. But, when a few (the Sunlight Foundation identified about 20 people who would likely exceed the donation cap) rich guys can’t speak as loudly as they want in order to allow participation for the rest of the country, then democracy be damned.

Rights in a free society are a balancing act. I’m a huge believer in freedom of speech and I use that freedom but even I recognize it’s not absolute. “Shouting ‘fire’ in a crowded theater” is the classic example of how a balance can be struck, but the SCOTUS didn’t attempt to strike a balance of any kind in their decision. They held that ‘freedom of speech’ was not only *a* good, but they blindly, cynically, obstinately held that it was *the only* good. No other considerations mattered. Corruption? Doesn’t exist. Political access? Who cares. They shamelessly *used* freedom of speech as a fig leaf while they, through malice or incompetence, drove yet another stake into the heart of representative democracy.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

Our monthly check in with Keith Tucker



"WHAT NOW?!!"

© KEITH TUCKER
WWW.WHATNOWTOONS.COM

You love the Grid. The Man says so.

The Man's fighting, but he may be losing



More people are moving to sustainable, or at least less-wasteful, lifestyles. It makes environmental sense to reduce waste, but it makes economic sense as well. Why should cities fill landfills with materials that can be sold and recycled? Why buy Frankenfoods or tasteless goo shipped around the world when we could eat healthy from our own gardens? Why pay for electricity from dirty coal plants when we could get it free and clean from the sun? But more people unplugging from the Grid means fewer dollars flowing into the pockets of The Man. At first He thought it was just cute, but now it's beginning to get noticeable. And The Man doesn't like it, so now He's starting to fight back...

Our web of energy, food, and waste systems are built on fundamental assumptions about the way we live. When the energy grid was built there was no option for on-site power, so it relies on people staying plugged in to cover costs. People used to produce their own food, but migration to cities and improved transportation efficiency meant an increasing dependence on a food grid. The waste disposal grid assumed that it was cheaper and easier to throw things away than reuse them, but that assumption ignores economic externalities that can no longer be denied. There are thousands of these "grids", large in small, and all their assumptions are being questioned as changes in our society multiply and accelerate. The question is how these grids will (or can) accommodate the changing reality, how they will be funded going forward, or what will replace them.

These are fundamental problems, and there could be a variety of valid approaches to solve them. Open, reasoned debate among competing interests might lead to solutions in the interest of people as well as industries. But The Man isn't interested in debate. He represents entrenched interests and the status quo and He's not interested in change; the way things work now are the way things work for Him. If He can't stop change completely he still has the money and power to make it extremely difficult for everyone else.

Here are several stories about how The Man is fighting back against people building sustainable lifestyles. These are just the tip of the iceberg of similar stories we'll see as society goes through painful and needed changes, but there is hope. The Man may be strong but he gets his strength from money, and when Money talks even The Man listens. The last story tells us that Money is beginning to talk, and it's saying that The Man's time may be limited.

[Living Off The Grid And The Assault On Personal Freedom](#)

Ann Werner, Liberals Unite

[ALEC's Assault On Homeowners Who Have Gone Solar](#)

Ann Werner, Liberals Unite

[Texas State Tried To Shut Down A Sustainable Community](#)

Joe Martino, Collective Evolution

[Florida Woman Evicted by Code Enforcement after sharing her story of sustainably living in the city without city power or water.](#)

David Webster, Off Grid Concepts

[How the Koch Brothers Are Hacking Science](#)

Frank Ackerman, Talking Points Memo

[ALEC calls for penalties on 'freerider' homeowners in assault on clean energy](#)

Suzanne Goldenberg and Ed Pilkington, The Guardian

[Largest Power Company in U.S. Joins ALEC in Plot Against One State's Solar Revolution](#)

David Pomerantz, GreenPeace

[The Campaign Against Net Metering: ALEC and Utility Interests' Next Attack on Clean Energy Surfaces in Arizona](#)

Gabe Elsner, Huffington Post

[Costs Down, Profits Up: Green Energy Looking Good, Says UN](#)

Jacob Chamberlain, Common Dreams

The Dirty Truth about Fuel Injectors

Why “canned magic” is no good



We've had many clients who have been sold fuel injection cleaning services by convenience oil change providers, in what seem to us a deceptive way. Fuel injector cleaning is definitely a valid service; clean injectors are critical to proper engine function and efficiency. But knowing why it's important, how it works, and when it should be done will keep you from paying for this service if it's not really necessary.

How fuel injectors work

Fuel injectors pressurize fuel and pump it through either a fixed or electronically-controlled aperture, delivering the fuel as a fine, cone-shaped spray to the engine. This mist is easier

to ignite than a solid stream, burning more evenly and efficiently. Over time, deposits from the burning fuel build up in the aperture, decreasing the injector's performance and turning the fine mist into an inconsistent dribble.

Symptoms of clogged injectors

Symptoms of dirty fuel injectors may include:

- hard starting
- rough idle
- throttle “tip-in” hesitation
- pre-ignition (sometimes heard as that ‘pinging sound’)
- poor overall performance
- decreased gas mileage

Do your fuel injectors need cleaning?

**SAVE \$100 on Fuel
Injector Cleaning**

If you schedule before April 30, 2014
Details in this month's Shop Talk

How to know if your injectors need cleaning

The business end of fuel injectors can't be seen while the engine is running. Since it can take well over an hour to access and evaluate fuel injectors, injector maintenance is done by time and mileage intervals rather than from direct inspection. **We recommend cleaning fuel injectors at least every 36 months or 45,000 miles.** Consider it a tune up for your fuel system- it's really amazing the difference people experience after having a fuel injection and throttle body cleaning on a car that has gone more than 60,000 miles without those services. Many engine parts can be replaced without noticeable improvement in performance, but when dirty injectors are cleaned there can be a distinct before-and-after difference!

How to keep your injectors cleaner longer

2004-and-newer vehicles are less likely to need fuel injectors cleaning as often; because newer designs and today's better fuel additives reduce fouling. Pre-2004 models benefit from the use of high quality fuel, as this decreases (but doesn't eliminate) the need for periodic injector cleaning. There are plenty of “cure-in-a-can” fuel system products, but you shouldn't waste money or risk

damage on these potions. The only do-it-yourself fuel system cleaner that works and won't damage your car is Techron from Chevron. We're not talking about relying on the low level they put in their fuel at the pumps, we mean dumping a 20oz bottle into the gas tank. For real benefit, Techron must be used at least every 4,000 miles or so. Unfortunately, even when used properly, Techron doesn't work as well as professional-grade cleaning systems. Your injectors will still need to be properly cleaned eventually.

How to clean your injectors properly

The best commercially available systems for cleaning fuel injectors use a self-contained fuel delivery system with a detergent-enhanced gasoline, pumped directly into the fuel injection system of the engine. [MotorVac](#) (the system we use) is just such a machine. This system circulates detergents thru your fuel rail and pressure regulator, using a venture action to remove insoluble material from the injector inlet screens, before cleaning the injector ports, rather than just spraying solvent thru the injector. The complete fuel rail (injectors, screens, hoses, and regulator) is scrubbed clean first, and then the engine is run for about 30 minutes to clean the injector nozzles. These systems hold many advantages over the pressurized-can cleaning setups from years past, (which actually never worked very well at all in our opinion).

Forewarned is forearmed

The best possible reasons to recommend a fuel injection cleaning are appropriate mileage intervals or an attempt to resolve an existing vehicle symptom. If a quick lube tries to sell you a fuel injection cleaning because your air filter is dirty, or because they show you a finger full of dirt scraped from somewhere, don't be fooled, be angry! Unfortunately most convenience oil change providers try to up-sell services that they can get done in a hurry. ("Up-sell" means bringing in customers with a cheap deal and then selling them more profitable items that may or may not be in their best interest. Unfortunately, this is a very common practice in the automotive convenience market.) Convenience shops are also not equipped to deal with any of the very real problems that may crop up during cleaning. You should avoid buying a fuel injection cleaning service from shops that can't test your fuel pressure, diagnose or replace a damaged fuel injector, or offer any of the other services you might need as well... or instead.

So, the next time someone tries to sell you a fuel injection cleaning you'll know how to tell if you actually need the service. If you do need it, make sure that the facility has the best equipment and the expertise and will take the time to do the job right... it's a waste of your time and money to do it wrong!

We sang the Healthcare Blues, and we liked it.

Report back from the Inner City Blues Festival



April 5 was the third year for the blues festival with the longest name ever- the "Inner City Blues Festival Reunion In Support Of Single Payer Health Care." It was also our third year supporting the event, so we thought we'd give you a taste of what you missed. We've got pictures, and even a minute-and-a-half recording from the big blowout closing number. More importantly, you'll find a couple links to follow if you'd like to help bring Single Payer to Oregon. Don't spend the rest of this year kicking yourself because you missed the show... give a couple dollars to the Single Payer campaign, rock out on the video, and start making your plans for next year!



An amazing blues jam on the main stage



The crowd looking toward the stage



...and the rest of the folks in the main ballroom



People take time out to support SINGLE PAYER!

[Click here to go to the Health Care for All Oregon website so YOU can help support SINGLE PAYER HEALTHCARE in Oregon!](#)



Blues on the basement stage



Our newest client signs up at the Tom Dwyer table

Drew's Kitchen

Louisville Hot Browns



Ingredients:

- 8 strips bacon
- 1 stick unsalted butter
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3½ cups whole milk
- 6 tbsp grated parmesan cheese, plus more for sprinkling
- 1 large egg, beaten
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
- 8 slices thick white sandwich bread, toasted, crusts removed
- 1 pound leftover roast turkey, sliced
- 1 ripe tomato, sliced
- Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish

Preparation:

- Preheat the broiler. Cook the bacon in a skillet over medium-high heat until crisp, then drain on paper towels.
- Meanwhile, make the cheese sauce: Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Add the flour and stir with a wooden spoon to make a thick roux. Add the milk and bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens, about 5 minutes. Stir in the parmesan, reduce the heat to low and whisk in the egg until the sauce is thick (do not boil). Remove from the heat and season with salt and pepper.
- For each Hot Brown, place 2 bread slices side by side in a small baking dish. Cover the bread with about ¼ pound turkey and place 1 or 2 tomato slices alongside. Pour ½ to ¾ cup cheese over the turkey and bread. Sprinkle with more parmesan and broil until the sauce is bubbly and speckled brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the broiler, cross 2 strips of bacon on top and sprinkle with parsley and more parmesan. Serve immediately.

Shop Talk

Save some money in April



Save big now, and keep saving at the pump later

If you read our article this month, you know a real Fuel Injector Service means much more than adding a can of magic to your gas tank. We use a system that circulates a potent cleaning solution through the fuel rail and injectors, actively scrubbing away deposits and restoring proper atomization and combustion. You'll feel the effects... smoother engine performance and better gas mileage. We recommend cleaning fuel injectors every 3 years or 45,000 miles, so if you have a newer vehicle (2004 and up) or very low mileage your injectors may not need to be cleaned yet. But, if you can't remember the last time you had this important maintenance service done then here's a little incentive...



Schedule your vehicle for service before April 30, 2014 and you'll
save \$100 on your Fuel Injector Service.

A few restrictions do apply... 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.

So call us today (503-230-2300) and talk with one of our salaried Service Advisors if you'd like to take advantage of this offer. We hope to see you in the shop soon!

How's that Referral Rewards program going?

Our [Referral Reward program](#) has been going on for about 10 weeks now, and 32 clients have contributed a **total donation so far of \$1085.55!** Here are the latest groups to benefit (along with web links if you'd care to donate yourself)...



[Oregon Food Bank](#) (again)
[Rocky Mountain Elk Found.](#)

[Special Olympics of Oregon](#)
[The Salvation Army](#)

[Oregon Humane Society](#)
[Alex Rovello Fund](#)

We encourage you to 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!

Share our services with the world

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.



April 9 150,201 Volkswagen Passat vehicles from 2012-2013, Recalled for the low beam headlight bulb which may come loose, reducing visibility.

April 8: 198 Winnebago motorhomes from 2014-2015, Recalled for accelerators that may get stuck in wide open throttle position, causing uncontrolled acceleration.

April 8: Certain Land Rover XF and XJ vehicles from 2013, Recalled for missing certification labels regarding weight, which could result in overloading of the vehicle.

April 7: 1,368,649 Evenflo car seats, including Maestro and Snugli All-In-One 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.

April 7: 708 Keystone RV trailers and fifth wheels from 2014, Recalled for inner wheel bearings that may become overheated and cause the wheel to seize or separate from the vehicle.

April 7: 94 Zero motorcycles from 2014, including Zero DS and Zero SR models, Recalled for a possible manufacturing defect that may cause the rear wheel to lock up.

April 4: 42,000 Mazda Mazda6 vehicles from 2010-2012, Recalled for potential fire risk.

April 4: Certain Gates Corp. Tru-Flow Water Pumps, serving as after-market replacements for various VW vehicles from 1999-2013, Recalled for possible failing of the timing belt, resulting in a shutdown of the engine.

April 2: 644,354 Chrysler vehicles from 2011-2014, including Jeep Grand Cherokee and Dodge

Durango models, Recalled for brake boosters that may allow water to get inside and limit the braking ability.

April 1: 1,340,447 GM vehicles from 2004-2010, including Chevrolet HHR and Saturn Aura models, Recalled for the electric power steering which may suddenly fail.

April 1: 489,936 GM vehicles from 2014-2015, including Chevrolet Suburban and GMC Sierra models, Recalled for the transmission oil cooler line that may not be secured, causing potential leaking that could start a fire.

April 1: 174,046 Chevrolet Cruze vehicles from 2013-2014, Recalled for the right front half shaft which may fracture, causing the vehicle to lose power.

March 31: 119,140 Toyota Avalon vehicles from 2003-2004, Recalled for the potential inadvertent deployment of the front air bags.

March 31: 9,816 Honda Civic LX vehicles from 2014, Recalled for potential tire damage during assembly, resulting in loss of air to the tire.

March 28: 656 Cadillac ELR vehicles from 2014, Recalled for potential loss of directional control due to a failure of the ESC system.

March 28: 209 Porsche 911 GT3 vehicles from 2014, Recalled for potential damage to the engine crankcase, causing oil to leak onto hot components of the engine which may cause a fire.

March 27: Updated: 2,190,934 Chevrolet Cobalt, Pontiac G5 and Solstice, Saturn Ion vehicles from 2003-2011, 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.

March 27: 989,701 Nissan vehicles from 2013-2014, including Nissan LEAF and Infiniti Q50 models, Recalled for passenger seat sensors that may not detect when an adult is seated, causing the air bag to not deploy properly.

March 27: 43,452 Chrysler Dodge Charger vehicles from 2011-2012 equipped with halogen lights, Recalled for the sub-harness on the headlights which may overheat, causing the low beam headlights to go out.

March 27: 657 Newmar recreational vehicles from 2013-2014, including Canyon Star and Essex models, Recalled for microwaves that may start on their own, increasing the risk of a fire.

March 27: 564 Tucker Rocky Distribution Cyber U-72 motorcycle helmets, size large, Recalled for failing to conform to Federal Safety Standards.

March 27: 343 Landi Renzo modified Ford vehicles from 2011-2014 made to operate on compressed natural gas (CNG), including E-150 and E-250 models, Recalled for the brackets that support the rear CNG cylinder which may fail, increasing the risk of a fire.

March 27: 195 Chrysler Dodge Ram 5500 trucks from 2014, Recalled for an incorrect Gross Vehicle Weight Rating, which could lead to the truck being overloaded.

March 21: 355 GM vehicles from 2014, including Buick Regal and Chevrolet Impala models, Recalled for gear shifts that may not shift, increasing the risk of rollaway and injury.

March 21: 18 Jayco Jay Flight Swift travel trailers from 2014, Recalled for tire sizes labeled incorrectly, which could cause uneven wear and towing instability.

March 18: 1,176,407 GM vehicles from 2008-2013, including Buick Enclave and Chevrolet Traverse vehicles, Recalled for faulty side impact air bags and seat belt pretensioners.

March 18: 886,815 Honda Odyssey vehicles from 2005-2010, Recalled for a potential fuel leak, increasing the risk of a fire.

March 18: 303,013 GM vans from 2009-2014, including GMC Savana and Chevrolet Express models, Recalled for increased risk of injury to unbelted front seat passengers in the event of a crash below the air bag deployment threshold.

March 18: 63,903 Cadillac XTS vehicles from 2013-2014, Recalled for potential corrosion of

the brake booster pump relay connector, increasing the risk of a fire.

March 18: 18,690 Dodge Durango and Jeep Grand Cherokee vehicles from 2012-2013, Recalled for a potential hard brake pedal feel, lengthening the distance needed to stop the vehicle.

March 18: 18,092 Fiat 500L vehicles from 2014, Recalled for the transmission gear which may not shift in certain temperatures, increasing the risk of a crash.

March 13: Updated: 4.1 million Graco car seats from 2006-2014, including Ready Ride and My Size 70 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.

March 13: 4,453 BMW motorcycles from 2013, including C 600 Sport and F 800 GS models, Recalled for potential shutdown of the motorcycle while it's being ridden.

March 10: 1,330 Aisin World transmissions, models A465 and A466 and placed in Isuzu and Chrysler vehicles, Recalled for potential loss of power transfer which may increase the risk of a crash.

March 10: 480 Three Feathers cargo trailers and campers from 2006-2014, Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

March 10: 185 R&M enclosed cargo trailers from 2012-2013, Recalled for door locks that may jam, leaving individuals inside without an exit.

March 10: Certain Monroe Trucks modified vehicles from 2005-2009, including Chevrolet C7500 and Ford F-350 models, Recalled for a battery epoxy sealing that may melt and start a fire.

Health Notes

Your kids' diapers are full of s#!+



Toxins in Huggies and Pampers Aren't What You Want to Put Near Baby's Skin

Jill Richardson on Alternet, Feb 18, 2014

The disposable diaper industry sells products containing endocrine disruptors, carcinogens, and sometimes even heavy metals.

When parents pull a box of diapers off the shelf, how many of them are aware of the risks to which they are exposing their children: cancer, asthma, hormone disruption, and others. Dioxins, sodium polycrylate, dyes, fragrances, and phthalates are some of the ingredients credible scientific researchers have found in disposable diaper brands including Huggies and Pampers used by millions of parents. It's even been discovered that the dyes used to put decorations on diapers are known to cause diaper rash. Fortunately, there are much healthier alternatives.

Dioxins are a class of potent carcinogens (cancer causers) that are not made on purpose but are created as a byproduct of industrial processes like chlorine bleaching of paper pulp and some natural processes like volcano eruptions. The name "dioxins" refers to hundreds of chemicals, out of which about 30 are the most toxic. The most toxic, TCDD, was the contaminant in the infamous Agent Orange that made it so deadly. They are considered persistent pollutants because, once created, they hang around for a long time without breaking down and they stay in the human body for a long time, too.

Phthalates, on the other hand, are classed as endocrine disruptors. This means that they mimic human hormones and send false signals to the body.

A 1999 study tested emissions from three brands of diapers on mice and concluded, "some types of

disposable diapers emit mixtures of chemicals that are toxic to the respiratory tract. Disposable diapers should be considered as one of the factors that might cause or exacerbate asthmatic conditions."

The anatomy of a disposable diaper is pretty simple. There's the inner layer touching your baby's skin, the waterproof outer layer and the absorbent core in the middle. The diaper might have some fragrance and dyes as well. When your baby does his or her business, the liquid is supposed to be trapped and distributed within the absorbent core.

The inner layer is often made from polypropylene (and maybe some aloe and vitamin E), the absorbent core from wood pulp and sodium polyacrylate.

The website BabyGearLab, which was founded by a pediatrician and mother, tested the absorbent cores of a number of diapers and reported that, "every one of the diapers we tested includes a matrix of fluff material and chemical crystals known as Super Absorbent Polymer (SAP) to soak up and trap fluid [more on this below]. The role of the fluff, usually made from wood pulp and may also include wheat/corn based materials, is to distribute the fluid, while the SAP is intended to absorb fluid and locks it in the core away from baby."

Within that relatively simple structure, the most common chemicals causing alarm are dioxins,

sodium polycrylate, dyes, fragrances, and phthalates. The previously mentioned 1999 study also named other chemicals it found in diaper emissions, such as toluene, which depresses the central nervous system; ethylbenzene, a potential carcinogen; dipentene, a skin and eye irritant; and styrene, which harms the nervous and respiratory systems. Many of these chemicals are commonly used in manufacturing plastics and other industrial products, so it's not too surprising to find them in a diaper with an outer liner made of plastic.

The easiest chemicals to skip are fragrances and dyes. Buy fragrance-free diapers that don't have cute cartoon characters or teddy bears depicted on their outsides. In 2005, Pediatrics found that the dyes used on diapers were often the cause of diaper rash. Some dyes can even contain heavy metals — and heavy metals are not what you want near your baby's skin.

Next up, dioxins. Nobody disagrees over whether or not dioxins are bad. They are bad. Period. Dioxins are such potent carcinogens that they are measured in the parts per trillion. In diapers, they come from chlorine used to bleach diaper material. Even chlorine-bleached diapers only emit trace amounts of dioxins, but why risk even that when chlorine-free diapers are available?

For a scientific look at the dioxin picture, check out a 2002 study that tested four brands of diapers and four brands of tampons. The study found dioxins in all samples, although in much lower concentrations than the amount of dioxin exposure from one's diet. While some believe that the tiny size of dioxin exposure from diapers means it's nothing to worry about, others feel it's worth it to reduce dioxin exposure even by that little bit.

Phthalates are chemicals that make plastics more flexible. In diapers, they are most likely used on the waterproof outer liner. As Pediatrics notes, these chemicals are bad news for endocrine and reproductive systems. They found that "Phthalates are not chemically bound to these products and are therefore continuously released into the air or through leaching into liquids, leading to exposure through ingestion, dermal

transfer, and inhalation. Children are uniquely vulnerable to phthalate exposures given their hand-to-mouth behaviors, floor play, and developing nervous and reproductive systems."

Last up, sodium polyacrylate, also known as Super Absorbent Polymer (SAP). The jury is out on whether or not this chemical is actually harmful. In the 1980s, it was linked to Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) in tampons. However, this might be because it allowed women to keep tampons in for longer periods, creating a breeding ground for bacteria as a result.

While the link to TSS may be nothing to worry about, there are viewpoints on both sides about whether or not SAP is actually bad for your baby. One study linked superabsorbent diapers to urinary tract infections in girls. If you want to play it safe, go with cloth diapers. One site makes the point that — if nothing else — SAP might contribute to diaper rash by allowing you to change your baby's diaper less frequently.

However, even some conscious parents out there do believe SAP is safe and continue using disposables that contain it. The brand gDiapers, which combines reusable diaper covers with disposable inserts that contain SAP, has a page explaining why they feel SAP is safe for babies.

Taking all of these criteria to mind — plus, of course, the additional criteria that a diaper must do its job as a diaper — BabyGearLab recommends three diapers based on its tests: Bambo Nature, Earth's Best and Attitude. Other "conscious" brands include Honest Diapers, gDiapers, and — for an economical choice — Target's Up & Up.

The winners tend to be fragrance- and dye-free, or use dyes that are free of heavy metals. They also eschew phthalates and chlorine bleach. However, they still contain SAP — you'll probably have to switch to cloth if you want to avoid that. Of course, yet another study — this one on the impact of diapers on walking — recommends allowing infants to go naked. While it has its obvious problems, it's certainly one way to avoid any potential chemicals found in diapers.

Sellwood Bridge Update

Computers power the reconstruction



There's a saying that 'the best vacations make the worst stories'. If nothing goes wrong on your vacation, what do you tell your friends about? You sat undisturbed on the beach for 6 hours before going inside to a good meal and a pleasant night's sleep? BORING! The Sellwood Bridge construction presents the same problem. We started this column to keep you up-to-date on major inconveniences or announcements you needed to know about, but there really hasn't been much to talk about. Construction just keeps percolating along without a hitch. The bridge is open, traffic is flowing, and it's completely safe. It makes a very BORING story!

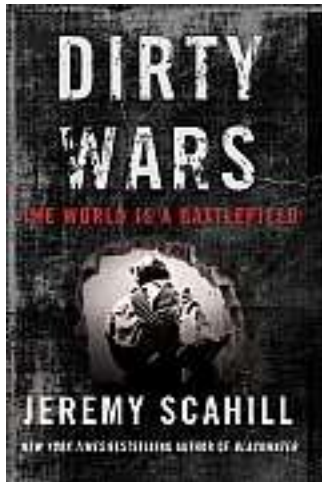
This month we decided to give you a glimpse behind-the-scenes at one of the things helping keep the project so blissfully boring. The Sellwood Bridge reconstruction is mind-bogglingly complex, and uses state-of-the-art Computer Aided Design (CAD) systems in every aspect of the project. It's such a high-profile, in-depth CAD utilization that AutoDesk, the makers of the systems involved, is using it as a showpiece to highlight their product's capabilities. They created a [6-minute video showing the role CAD is playing in the design, simulation, scheduling, and communication of the project](#). It's well worth a look!



Multnomah County continues to maintain the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project at 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 (<mailto:mike.j.pullen@multco.us>, 503-209-4111) or visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.

Book Spotlight

“Dirty Wars” by Jeremy Scahill



[“Dirty Wars- The World Is A Battlefield”](#)

By Jeremy Scahill

In *Dirty Wars*, Jeremy Scahill, author of the New York Times best-seller “*Blackwater*”, takes us inside America’s new covert wars. The foot soldiers in these battles operate globally and inside the United States with orders from the White House to do whatever is necessary to hunt down, capture or kill individuals designated by the president as enemies.

Drawn from the ranks of the Navy SEALs, Delta Force, former Blackwater and other private security contractors, the CIA’s Special Activities Division and the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), these elite soldiers operate worldwide, with thousands of secret commandos working in more than one hundred countries. Funded through “black budgets,” Special Operations Forces conduct missions in denied areas, engage in targeted killings, snatch and grab individuals and direct drone, AC-130 and cruise missile strikes. While the Bush administration deployed these ghost militias, President Barack Obama has expanded their operations and given them new scope and legitimacy.

Dirty Wars follows the consequences of the declaration that “the world is a battlefield,” as Scahill uncovers the most important foreign policy story of our time. From Afghanistan to Yemen, Somalia and beyond, Scahill reports from the frontlines in this high-stakes investigation and explores the depths of America’s global killing machine. He goes beneath the surface of these covert wars, conducted in the shadows, outside the range of the press, without effective congressional oversight or public debate. And, based on unprecedented access, Scahill tells the chilling story of an American citizen marked for assassination by his own government.

As US leaders draw the country deeper into conflicts across the globe, setting the world stage for enormous destabilization and blowback, Americans are not only at greater risk — we are changing as a nation. Scahill unmaskes the shadow warriors who prosecute these secret wars and puts a human face on the casualties of unaccountable violence that is now official policy: victims of night raids, secret prisons, cruise missile attacks and drone strikes, and whole classes of people branded as “suspected militants.” Through his brave reporting, Scahill exposes the true nature of the dirty wars the United States government struggles to keep hidden.

Review:

“*Dirty Wars* is the most thorough and authoritative history I’ve read yet of the causes and consequences of America’s post 9/11 conflation of war and national security. I know of no other journalist who could have written it: For over a decade, Scahill has visited the war zones, overt and covert; interviewed the soldiers, spooks, jihadists, and victims; and seen with his own eyes the fruits of America’s bipartisan war fever. He risked his life many times over to write this book, and the result is a masterpiece of insight, journalism, and true patriotism.”

Barry Eisler, novelist and former operative in the CIA’s Directorate of Operations

Humorousness

Jokes for smart people. Are you ready?



Humor, like fashion, has fads. It seems the recent fad is for “smart people” jokes; not jokes about smart people but jokes you supposedly have to be smart to understand. We found an amazing list of them when we went looking, and bring them all for your consideration here. Admittedly, the smart-threshold varies from low to high, but some of them are pretty challenging. We included an explanation for some of them at the end, but if one of them really stumps you just give us a call here at the shop and we’ll go out and find someone smart to explain it for all of us...

It’s hard to explain puns to kleptomaniacs because they always take things literally

What do you get when you cross a joke with a rhetorical question?

Three logicians walk into a bar. The bartender asks “Do all of you want a drink?” The first logician says “I don’t know.” The second logician says “I don’t know.” The third logician says “Yes!”

Einstein, Newton, and Pascal are playing hide and seek. It’s Einstein’s turn to count so he covers his eyes and starts counting to ten. Pascal runs off and hides. Newton draws a one meter by one meter square on the ground in front of Einstein then stands in the middle of it. Einstein reaches ten and uncovers his eyes. He sees Newton immediately and exclaims “Newton! I found you! You’re it!” Newton smiles and says “You didn’t find me, you found a Newton over a square meter. You found Pascal!”

A rubber-band pistol was confiscated from an algebra class, because it was a weapon of math disruption.

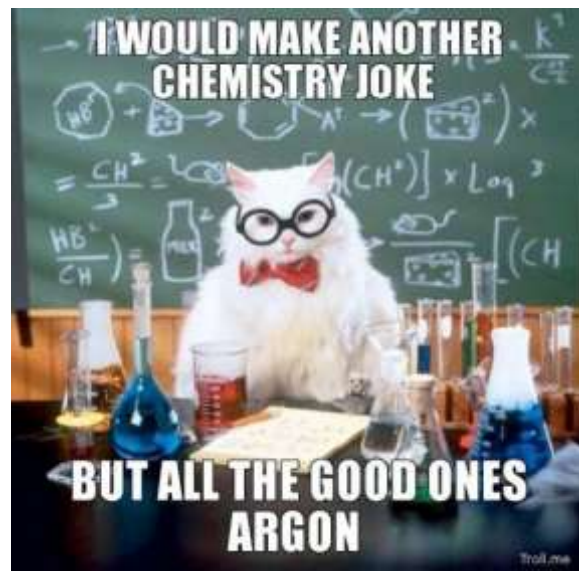
A mathematician and an engineer agreed to take part in an experiment. They were both placed in a room and at the other end was a beautiful naked woman on a bed. The experimenter said every 30 seconds they would be allowed to travel half the distance between themselves and the woman. The mathematician said “this is pointless” and stormed off. The engineer agreed to go ahead with the experiment anyway. The mathematician exclaimed on his way out “don’t you see, you’ll never actually reach her?” To which the engineer replied, “So what? Pretty soon I’ll be close enough for all practical purposes!”

Apple has announced today that it has developed a breast implant that can store and play music. The

device is priced between \$499 and \$699 depending on cup and speaker size. This is considered a major social breakthrough, because women are always complaining about men staring at their breasts and not listening to them.

A recent finding by statisticians shows the average human has one breast and one testicle.

A philosopher says to a linguist “What if, instead of periods, women had apostrophes?” The linguist replied, “They’d be more possessive and have more frequent contractions.”



A Roman walks into a bar and asks for a martinus. “You mean a martini?” the bartender asks. The Roman replies “If I wanted a double, I would have asked for it!”

Another Roman walks into a bar, holds up two fingers, and says, “Five beers, please.”

A logician's wife is having a baby. The doctor immediately hands the newborn to the dad. His wife asks impatiently: "So, is it a boy or a girl?" The logician replies: "Yes."

Jean-Paul Sartre is sitting at a French café, revising his draft of Being and Nothingness. He says to the waitress, "I'd like a cup of coffee, please, with no cream." The waitress replies, "I'm sorry, Monsieur, but we're out of cream. How about with no milk?"



Entropy isn't what it used to be.

How can you tell the difference between a chemist and a plumber? Ask them to pronounce "unionized".

Why do engineers confuse Halloween and Christmas? Because Oct 31 = Dec 25

Werner Heisenberg, Kurt Godel, and Noam Chomsky walk into a bar. Heisenberg turns to the other two and says, "Clearly this is a joke, but how can we figure out if it's funny or not?" Godel replies, "We can't know that because we're inside the joke." Chomsky says, "Of course it's funny. You're just telling it wrong."

Pavlov is sitting at a pub enjoying a pint, the phone rings and he jumps up shouting "oh crap, I forgot to feed the dog!"

Helium walks into a bar and orders a beer, the bartender says, "Sorry, we don't serve noble gasses here." He doesn't react.

Schrodinger's cat walks into a bar. And doesn't.

A Buddhist monk approaches a hotdog stand and says "make me one with everything".

A Higgs Boson walks into a church and the priest says "we don't allow Higgs Bosons in here." The Higgs Boson then replies "but without me, how could you have mass?"

Two kittens are on a sloped roof. Which one slides off first? The one with the lowest mew.

The programmer's wife tells him: "Run to the store and pick up a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, get a dozen." The programmer comes home with 12 loaves of bread.

There's a band called 1023MB. They haven't had any gigs yet.

A photon is going through airport security. The TSA agent asks if he has any luggage. The photon says, "No, I'm traveling light."

The bartender says "Sorry, we don't serve faster than light particles here." A neutrino walks into a bar.

Pretentious? Moi?

Two women walk into a bar and talk about the Bechdel test.

Heisenberg was speeding down the highway. A cop pulls him over and says "Do you have any idea how fast you were going back there?" Heisenberg says "No, but I knew where I was."

If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the precipitate.

How easy is it to count in binary? It's as easy as 01, 10, 11!

If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the precipitate.

Like what you see? May we also recommend these postings from our monthly [Humorousness](#) column...

["Jokes that make you go Hmmm..."](#) (8/2013)

["Engineering humor... the ultimate oxymoron"](#) (6/2013)

So a hydroxide ion asks a potassium ion out. The potassium ion says no, because the hydroxide ion is a bit of a HO.

How do you know when you're being approached by the Quantum Mafia? They make you an offer you can't understand.

Once I saw this guy on a bridge about to jump. I said, "Don't do it!" He said, "Nobody loves me." I said, "God loves you. Do you believe in God?" He said, "Yes." I said, "Are you a Christian or a Jew?" He said, "A Christian." I said, "Me too! Protestant or Catholic?" He said, "Protestant." I said, "Me too! What franchise?"

He said, "Baptist." I said, "Me too! Northern Baptist or Southern Baptist?"

He said, "Northern Baptist." I said, "Me too! Northern Conservative Baptist or Northern Liberal Baptist?"

He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist." I said, "Me too! Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region or Northern Conservative Baptist Eastern Region?"

He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region." I said, "Me too! Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1879 or Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912?"

He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912." I said, "Die, heretic!" And I pushed him over.



Did you hear about the jurisprudence fetishist? He got off on a technicality.

Three violin manufactures have all done business for years on the same block in the small town of Cremona, Italy. After years of peaceful co-existence, the Amati family decided to put a sign in their shop window saying: "We make the best violins in Italy." The Guarneri family soon put a sign in their window proclaiming: "We make the best violins in the world." Finally, the Stradivarius family posted this sign outside their shop: "We make the best violins on the block."

A backward poet writes inverse.

What does a dyslexic, agnostic, insomniac do at night? He stays up wondering if there really is a dog.

Atheism is a non-prophet organization.

Why did Karl Marx dislike Earl Grey Tea? Because all proper tea is theft.

A linguistics professor says during a lecture that, "In English, a double negative forms a positive. But in some languages, such as Russian, a double negative is still a negative. However, in no language in the world can a double positive form a negative." But then a voice from the back of the room piped up, "Yeah, right."

Three mathematicians go hunting and shoot at a deer. The first mathematician misses to the front, the second misses to the back, and the third one yells, "We got 'em!"

The fattest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.

I thought I saw an eye-doctor on an Alaskan island, but it turned out to be an optical Aleutian.

Why did Mr Ohm marry Mrs Ohm? Because he couldn't resistor.

Why do chemists call helium, curium and barium the medical elements? Because if you can't helium or curium, you barium!

No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.

C, Eb, and G into a bar. The bartender says, "Sorry, no minors."

Knock-knock. Who's there? Knock-knock. Who's there? Knock-knock. Who's there? Philip Glass.

Two scientists walk into a bar. The first one says "I'll have some H₂O." The second says "I'll have some H₂O too." The second scientist dies.

Did you hear about the man who got cooled to absolute zero? He's OK now.

How many did you get? Before you forward this on to your friends, click below for explanations to 15 of them so you can look smugly superior.

[Explanations to 15 jokes only smart people can understand](#)

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!



An amazing technology that actually works. Try it!



Reading is one of the biggest technological achievements of humanity, but it hasn't changed much since we got the basic concept down about 6000 years ago. Until now. First, follow [this link to take a short test to establish your baseline reading speed](#). Most American adults read about 250-300 words per minute. Now, [click this link and you will INSTANTLY be able to read at up to 600wpm!](#) No training, no practice, no bull. You may not want to use it to linger over poetry, but doubling your reading speed has got to be useful for something!

41 camping hacks that are borderline genius



Spring, blessedly, means the return of camping season. The true die-hards never really took a break, but for the rest of us the end of the rainy season means a return to the outdoors we love. To make it even better, we're passing on this [list of great camping ideas](#). It has great ideas for sleeping comfort, camp cooking, first aid tips, campsite gadgetry, and even some ways to spice up the campfire. Whether you're an extreme lightweight backpacker or camping to you means pulling out the RV, we're sure you'll find at least a couple ideas that you'll use on your next trip.

What scientists actually know about climate change



A very loud, very small, very well-funded minority would have us believe there is a "controversy" about whether Climate Change is real, but is there? Scientists don't think so, and this month we bring you [a report from the American Association for the Advancement of Science](#) (AAAS), the world's largest non-governmental science organization and publisher of Science, one of the most respected peer-reviewed scientific journals. They boil down the state of science on the subject so you can actually see what's going on and make [informed](#) decisions. What a concept!

Dad turns videos of his toddler into insanely cool action movies



What are the perks of your job? Daniel Hashimoto works as an animator for Dreamworks, the special-effects wizards that worked on every movie you've loved since 1997. He uses all the effects software from work to turn the home movies of his 3-year-old son, James, into jaw-droppingly cool little clips that you'd actually want to see. Watch as James has lightsaber accidents in the toy aisle, plays "lava" in a living room filled with real lava, and disappears into deceptively shallow puddles. The vids are about 10 seconds each, and you'll be laughing all the way through them.

News To Make You Furious

Shaun McCutcheon's brave battle



"The first third of your campaign is money, money, money. The second third is money, money, and press. And the last third is votes, press, and money." -Rahm Emanuel

Everyone knew it was coming. In the sewage-strewn wake of Citizens United there could really be only one outcome to McCutcheon vs. FEC, one of the biggest cases heard by the Supreme Court this summer. There was only one way to decide the case IF the goal was an open, healthy democracy, and only one way to decide it IF the goal was to funnel even more power to the soulless corporations and sociopaths who pull the strings of our government. The Supremes decided just as everyone dreaded and expected, and the only people happy about it are the less-than-a-thousand who are waiting, like Wal-Mart shoppers on Black Friday, to rush through the now-open door and make their best deal on the shreds of our Republic. The rest of us? We huddle outside, cold in the rain, disenfranchised, defeated, and Furious.

Here's a brief history of the case... Shaun McCutcheon (that's him in the photo at a University of Alabama tailgate party) contributed to 17 candidates in 2011-2012, and wanted to support 11 more with contributions of \$1,776 each. (Nice touch, Shaun!) These contributions were under the per-candidate limit, but they were denied because they would have exceeded the per-cycle combined limit. That wasn't enough democracy for Shaun, and he sued. His reasoning was that Congress had found individual contributions to be 'non-corrupting', and he could see no reason why many small contributions would be corrupting either. This insipid argument was enough for The Republican National Committee to jump on Shaun's bandwagon, and the SCOTUS heard their arguments on October 8. The ironically named "Justices" decided to strike down the combined cap that had so crippled Shaun's political participation. The only redeeming factor in their decision was that they refused to follow the bug-eyed fanaticism of Clarence Thomas, who thought all contribution caps should be erased. Clarence will probably sleep soundly, though, knowing he'll get another bite at the apple soon.



This travesty has garnered outrage from all quarters, so if you'd like to dig deeper we've assembled some of the best facts and opinions we can find below. (By the way, when the McCutcheon case was heard in October, we wrote a little bit about it for that month's Furious. There are [some great links for more background from before the case was decided](#).) And if you're as Furious as everyone else, we've also included a couple links to groups who continue to fight what seems to be an increasingly hopeless battle...

First, get the real deal without spin-

[Full text of McCutcheon decision and dissent in PDF](#)

Now, drink deep from the brimming goblet of Fury that is McCutcheon...

Here's a few statistics for context

AlterNet- [If 97% Percent of Americans Sold Everything They Owned and Spent It on Congressional Elections, They Still Couldn't Max Out](#)

The Supreme Court's ruling in *FEC vs. McCutcheon* eliminated one of the few remaining limits on campaign donations, granting frightening new powers to the richest Americans, while providing no clear benefit to the rest of the population. *McCutcheon* eliminated the overall limit that individuals can give to candidates and parties in an election cycle. While the Court justified its ruling on the grounds of free speech, a pillar of democracy, a quick examination of the practical effects of *McCutcheon* shows that the ruling is anything but democratic.

Demos- [Billion-Dollar Democracy: The Unprecedented Role Of Money In The 2012 Elections](#)

The first presidential election since *Citizens United* lived up to its hype, with unprecedented outside spending from new sources making headlines. Demos and U.S. PIRG Education Fund analysis of reports from campaigns, parties, and outside spenders to the Federal Election Commission found that our big money system distorts democracy and creates clear winners and losers.

Now, some thoughts on the decision from various sources...

Huffington Post- [The Supreme Court Has Struck Down Overall Campaign Contribution Limits](#)

The decision relies heavily on the assertion in the 2010 *Citizens United* ruling that influence and access are not a corruption concern. "With the ruling, we continue to chip away at the long entrenched status quo from the grassroots -- a status quo that has kept challengers, better ideas, and new entrants to the political arena mostly locked out," *McCutcheon* said in a statement. "Ensuring that citizens are able to contribute to multiple candidates or causes who share their views only provides further support to a system in

which 'We the People' hold the ultimate reins of power."...

Mother Jones- [The Supreme Court Just Guttled Another Campaign Finance Law. Here's What Happened.](#)

Hypothetically, a single donor can now contribute as much as \$3.5 million, to be divvied up between candidates, PACs, and political parties. No single entity could receive any more than the legal limits, and when you add up all the contributions a donor could potentially make without the aggregate limits, you get \$3.5 million. (The overall aggregate limit was raised to \$123,200 for the 2014 cycle.)...

The Nation- [The Supreme Court's Ideology: More Money, Less Voting](#)

In the past four years, under the leadership of Chief Justice John Roberts, the Supreme Court has made it far easier to buy an election and far harder to vote in one. First came the Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. FEC*, which brought us the Super PAC era. Then came the Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted the centerpiece of the Voting Rights Act. Now we have *McCutcheon v. FEC*, where the Court, in yet another controversial 5-4 opinion written by Roberts, struck down the limits on how much an individual can contribute to candidates, parties and political action committees...

Common Dreams: [In 'Blow to Democracy,' SCOTUS Strikes Down Campaign Contribution Limits](#)

"This is truly a decision establishing plutocrat rights," said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen, slamming the ruling as a "devastating blow at the very foundation of our democracy." "Today's decision in *McCutcheon v. FEC* is *Citizens United* round two, further opening the floodgates for the nation's wealthiest few to drown out the voices of the rest of us," said Miles Rapoport, president of Common Cause. "With these two rulings, corporations and billionaires like the Koch brothers will be able to use their money to buy more influence in more places, gaining a tighter grip on our government," said Wenonah Hauter, executive director of Food & Water Watch...

Stephen Colbert- [Campaign Funding](#)



Sunlight Foundation- [Sunlight's Response to SCOTUS Ruling on McCutcheon v FEC](#)

Once again, the Supreme Court has given more power to special interests and a tiny percentage of the very rich. Its Citizens United ruling four years ago opened up the floodgates for unlimited spending in our elections, and now it might as well have tied a big bow around Congress and deliver it to the 1%. By striking down the long-standing cap on total contributions individuals may give to federal candidates and political parties, the Supreme Court has permitted the unseemly spectacle of a single donor being able to contribute more than \$3.5 million to one party during an election cycle (or double that, if he/she wants to hedge her bets)...

Common Cause- [Again, U.S. Supreme Court Decides Against Democracy](#)

The Roberts Court today continued its drive to give Americans a government of, by and for big money. "Today's decision in McCutcheon v. FEC is Citizens United round two, further opening the floodgates for the nation's wealthiest few to drown out the voices of the rest of us," said Miles Rapoport, president of Common Cause. "The Court has reversed nearly 40 years of its own precedents, laid out a welcome mat for corruption, and turned its back on the lessons learned from the Watergate scandal," said Rapoport. "This decision once again demonstrates the Court majority's ignorance of the real world of American politics, the one in which big money buys big returns."...

Bill Moyers- [A Blistering Dissent in 'McCutcheon': Conservatives Substituted Opinion for Fact](#)

What has this to do with corruption? It has everything to do with corruption. Corruption

breaks the constitution-ally necessary "chain of communication" between the people and their representatives. It derails the essential speech-to-government-action tie. Where enough money calls the tune, the general public will not be heard. Insofar as corruption cuts the link between political thought and political action, a free marketplace of political ideas loses its point. That is one reason why the Court has stressed the constitutional importance of Congress' concern that a few large donations not drown out the voices of the many....

Think Progress- [How The Supreme Court Just Legalized Money Laundering By Rich Campaign Donors](#)

Chief Justice John Roberts begins his opinion in McCutcheon v. FEC with a flourish: "There is no right more basic in our democracy than the right to participate in electing our political leaders." He then spends the next forty pages explaining why that participation includes the right of rich people to attempt to buy elections. Thanks to the decision Roberts and his four fellow conservative justices handed down today (Though Thomas did not join Roberts' opinion, he wrote a more radical opinion calling for all limits on campaign donations to be eviscerated), wealthy donors now have a broad new power to launder money to political candidates — they just have to be a bit creative about how they do it...

Jon Stewart- [Donors Unchained](#)



Bernie Sanders- [SCOTUS McCutcheon Decision Is A Koch Brothers 'Gravy Train!' \(Video\)](#)

Senator Bernie Sanders offered up a chilling assessment of the Supreme Court's

McCutcheon ruling that, in effect, allows the wealthy to funnel unlimited money into an army of political lackeys. Sanders called it what it is: nothing more than a "gravy train" of Koch brothers money for Republicans. According to Sanders, the McCutcheon debacle undermines the very foundation of our democracy and allows millionaires and billionaires to "contribute even more money to the candidates of their choice and push a reactionary, right-wing agenda."...

Believe it or not, there are a couple opposing opinions...

Newt Gingrich- [Remove All Donation Limits To 'Equalize The Middle Class And The Rich'](#)

Speaking on ABC's "This Week," Gingrich cited the 1976 decision Buckley v. Valeo, which first equated with money with speech and said that to limit certain contributions was tantamount to limiting freedom of expression. Gingrich said that "you've gone from that original decision to Citizens United, which said, in effect, that corporations could give and created super PACs. Now you've said they're unlimited." Gingrich added, "The next step is the one Justice Clarence Thomas cited -- candidates should be allowed to take unlimited amounts of money from anybody. And you would, overnight, equalize the middle class and the rich."

Heritage Foundation- [The First Amendment Triumphs at the Supreme Court](#)

In a terrific decision this morning that will no doubt cause The New York Times to go into the same type of hysterics it exhibited after the Citizens United decision, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled against the Federal Election Commission. Today's decision in FEC v. McCutcheon restores Americans' First Amendment rights to

Who's fighting back, and how can you get involved...

Bill Moyers- [What You Can Do to Make Your Voice Heard on 'McCutcheon' Right Now](#)

Shortly after the decision in McCutcheon v FEC came down on Wednesday morning,

campaign finance reform groups around the country activated their rapid response network to hold rallies in front of the Supreme Court building in Washington, DC, and 38 states. Groups like Public Citizen, Common Cause, MoveOn.org, Move to Amend and many, many others are "standing up against the pervasive, corrupting influence of an electoral system that auctions offices to the highest bidder and suppresses the vote of millions of Americans." Over the course of the day on Wednesday, there were more than 140 protests...

Cenk Uygur- [How We Can Fight Back Against the Supreme Court](#)

Let me start by quoting two great men and a crook that died the other day. Thomas Jefferson said "The issue today is the same as it has been throughout all history, whether man shall be allowed to govern himself or be ruled by a small elite." When asked if his payments to politicians had worked, Charles Keating replied, "I want to say in the most forceful way I can: I certainly hope so."...

[Democracy 21](#)

Democracy 21, and its education arm, Democracy 21 Education Fund, work to eliminate the undue influence of big money in American politics, prevent government corruption, empower citizens in the political process and ensure the integrity and fairness of government decisions and elections. The organization promotes campaign finance reform and other related political reforms to accomplish these goals.

[Represent US](#) A Movement for the People

Represent.Us is the non-partisan movement behind the American Anti-Corruption Act: a law that would overhaul campaign finance, impose strict lobbying and conflict of interest laws, and end secret political money. We are mobilizing millions of Americans to put an end to the culture of legalized corruption that has come to define modern politics. We believe that a government of, by, and for the people isn't an idealistic fantasy — It's non-negotiable. Visit anticorruptionact.org to read the full provisions of the Act and learn more.