



Tom's Tidbits

Hope for 2015? Don't hope. Get involved.

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News To Make You Furious

A whole year's rage on just one page



Tom's Tidbits

Hope for 2015? Don't hope. Get involved!



Greetings!

As I sat down to write this month's Tidbits, I learned that [Ted Cruz will become the new head of the Senate Subcommittee on Space, Science, and Competitiveness](#). Having him anywhere near the levers of power is dangerous enough, but as the head of a crucial Science committee? It's an outrage that will have repercussions for decades. And with that insult to us all, 2015 was off and running.

In summing up 2014 I had written "we can only hope 2015 is better", but Ted's elevation made me reconsider. It's not a pleasant thought, but much of the mess we find ourselves in today is our own fault. People like Cruz are in power partly because we *hoped* they wouldn't be. Hope has never been enough. Each of us needs to do more than just *hope*, we need to fight the lethargy and *act*.

Gandhi said "Be the change that you wish to see in the world", and there's evidence that advice was even more powerful than even he knew. According to [Rupert Sheldrake's morphic resonance theory](#), changes in individuals affect the entire genetic and societal makeup of humanity at a fundamental physical level. If the One affects the Many, how will you change the world? What matters to you? [Single payer healthcare](#)? [Environmental cleanup](#)? [Animal welfare](#)? Find issues you care about, local, national, or international, and resolve to do more than hope. Resolve to *work* toward making a change; any change large or small matters.

You don't even have to be a joiner to make a difference. [Educate yourself on issues that matter to you](#), and then [talk to your friends and family](#). Is your money still at [a for-profit bank instead of a credit union](#)? Why? Are you [tired of supporting the oil economy](#)? Then what [about free solar for your home](#)? If you're concerned about strong national, state, and local economies, then go out of your way to [spend your hard-earned dollars at a business that's as local as possible](#).

Yes, things in 2014 certainly could have been better, but there were bright patches of sunlight... the nonsensical prohibition of marijuana ended in two more states, the repressive laws against same-sex marriage are falling away, and the pointless embargo of Cuba is changing. These things didn't happen by accident. They happened because people like you decided to do more than wish for a beautiful world. They happened because people like you acted, and acted at every level. Don't just hope for a better 2015, don't just hope for a better world... get involved, and help make it happen!

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

Keith Tucker's full-year funny page



Does Pep Boys have one? No. Does Les Schwab? Nope. How about Jiffy Lube? Don't make us laugh!

As far as we know, we are the *only* auto repair shop in the country (the world?) with our own political cartoonist. Thanks to the creativity and artistry of Keith Tucker and his "What NOW?!! Toons", we have the privilege of treating you to a completely unique look at the news every month. If you're not familiar with Keith's work then this old-fashioned funny page will give you a taste of his left-leaning pen. If you want to get to know him and his work even better, then just check out his website at WhatNowToons.com. Enjoy!



(As we were writing this issue of Your Car Matters, terrorists massacred the staff at Charlie Ebdó. Keith had these wordless words in support of the cartoonists who died. Je suis Charlie.)



2014 in the Rearview Mirror

All our 2014 Feature articles gathered in one place



We know your inbox is bulging, and we sympathize. Everyone wants your email attention, but let's face it... most of it is just not worth the pixels it's printed on. We know that if we want you to keep reading our newsletter then it has to be worth your attention, so we try to make it as interesting as we possibly can. There's no way to know what to expect each month, so the best way to tell you what's ahead for 2015 is to tell you what went behind in 2014. With that in mind, please join us in looking back at all our Feature articles from last year. We know you won't like *everything*, but you're bound to like *something* and we hope you'll agree that it is all well worth your attention. Happy 2015!

January

[2013 in Review](#)- All our Features from 2013.

[Referral Reward Program](#)- Introduced our way of saying "thanks" for your support

[XRAY-FM](#) an introduction to Portland's newest Progressive radio station.



February

[Is Big Brother your co-pilot?](#)- Security and privacy concerns with the next generation of vehicle diagnostic systems.

[DoD catalogs hundreds of pages of ethical lapses](#)- The Defense Department outlines stories of things gone wrong to help employees do things right.

[Portland Teacher's fight](#)- Both sides of the February Teacher's Union battle.



March

[Response to Yelp Older car policy](#)- A bad Yelp review gave us another chance to explain why we have a “1998-and-newer” policy (for new clients).

[3rd year at Inner City Blues Fest](#)- We let you know about the Inner City Blues Fest in support of Single-Payer Health Care.

[XRAY opens](#)- We visit the studios and meet the people behind the new XRAY-FM.

[Robotic Service Advisors](#)- What happened when we experimented with Robotic Service Advisors instead of our friendly and helpful human ones.



April

[You love the Grid](#)- The Man is fighting against new generations of energy. Here's how.

[Dirty Truth about Fuel Injectors](#)- How these critical components work, and how to care for them.

[Report back from Blues Fest](#)- We had a great time, and we told you about it.



May

[Thom Hartmann event](#)- Progressive rock star Thom Hartmann was in town, and we were there

[Latest climate change report](#)- Unbiased information to understand climate change

[Referral Reward Spotlight](#)- Meet our first Quarterly Award winner, Artichoke Music



June

[Single Payer Healthcare study](#)- We told you how to help support Single Payer in Oregon

[Oregon and Washington road trips](#)- Great suggestions for summer getaways in our area

[Protecting your summer vacation](#)- How to make sure your vehicle is ready for any summer plans



July

[48 glimpses of things to come](#)- We brought you fascinating glimpses of the technology that will amaze us and bore our grandchildren

[Sellwood Concerts return](#)- Why you should be excited about the FREE Sellwood Concerts

[Synthetic oil](#)- Good for you, your planet, your vehicle, and your pocketbook



August

[Car of the future winners](#)- Kids visions of the future of transportation

[Sellwood Bridge Tour](#)- A behind-the-scenes photo essay as the bridge passes 50% completion

[Physician, heal thy friends](#)- Tom's response to a friend with car problems



September

[Right to be pacified](#)- Police militarization in the wake of Ferguson

[Yes on GMO Labeling](#)- We took a stand that you should know what's in your food. Voters disagreed, but by only a very small margin.

[Abusive court fines](#)- Justice bows to profit as communities use their court system as cash cows



October

[Get Ready for winter](#)- Essentials to get your vehicle prepped for the cold weather

[What is a brownfield](#)- Financial help to clean up toxic eyesores in your neighborhood

[On time and on budget over 98% of the time](#)- We blow our own horn a little (with good reason!)



November

[Veterans Day](#)- A reminder of our obligations to the people who protect us

[Legalized it \(What now?\)](#)- What's next now that pot is legal in Oregon?

[How we find out what's wrong with your car](#)- Understanding our repair process benefits you



December

[Stories we didn't have time to share with you](#)- Roundup of stories that we'd been sitting on

[Getting to the heart of the matter](#)- The underlying issues of Ferguson and beyond

[Who are the folks behind the counter](#)- Meet our ASE-certified, salaried Service Advisors



Resolve To Save Money

Our money-saving programs can help with one resolution



According to [Statistic Brain](#), 2014's top 5 New Years resolutions were:

1. Lose weight
2. Get organized
3. Spend less and save more
4. Enjoy life to the fullest
5. Stay fit and healthy

We can't help with most of these good intentions, but our [Money-saving Programs](#) can help you "spend less and save more". We thought our January issue was the ideal place to remind you that we offer coherent, rational ways to lower your auto maintenance costs, and who knows? Maybe with a little extra money in your pocket, those other four goals might seem a little more attainable.

First Time Clients Coupon

Since we recommend our [Comprehensive Inspection](#) to all new clients to establish a baseline condition for their vehicle, it only makes sense to make it as easy as possible for them to start a maintenance relationship with us. (By the way, if you're referring a new client to us you may want to take advantage of our [Referral Rewards Program](#) that will benefit the non-profit group of your choice)



Carbon Neutral Program

Save money immediately by joining our innovative [Carbon Neutral Program](#) (CNP), a partnership with Bonneville Environmental Foundation that has already offset more than 1.4 million pounds of carbon from our atmosphere. Your membership offsets the carbon production of your vehicle for one year, and also saves you 10% on labor charges from day one. For many repairs, the labor discount outweighs the cost of membership, making our CNP FREE!



Labor Lock Program

Our [Labor Lock program](#) is a way to recognize our valuable long-term clients without requiring them to join anything at all. You keep the same hourly labor rate as when you started as a client, despite any labor rate increases we have in the future. All you have to do is come in at least twice a year. The longer you're with us, the more money you'll save!



Planned Maintenance Package

Aside from any specific service or failure issues your vehicle will have over its lifetime, there are certain maintenance needs every vehicle is likely to face in a normal year. We pulled these basics together into our [Planned Maintenance Package](#)

to make your planning and budgeting easier and to help keep you on track with the steady, coherent maintenance your vehicle needs. Because you're committing to your most critical maintenance items, you're getting the long-term value of a more reliable and longer-lasting vehicle and the inestimable value of complete peace of mind while you drive it. Each package is good for one year from your purchase date, and includes:

Planned Maintenance Package			
Save up to 60% by buying your basic yearly maintenance services in advance			
	Passenger, Light trucks	European, SUV, 4WD	Large vehicle, 10+ Diesel
(2) Minor Interval Services with synthetic oil	\$ 149.90	220.00	250.00
(1) 90-point inspection (Basic Inspection)	\$ 48.68	73.00	73.00
(1) 130-point inspection (Deep Inspection)	\$ 146.00	194.70	194.70
(2) Tire rotation and balances	\$ 79.90	99.98	99.98
25% off diagnostic charges (up to \$100 per year)			
Total normal charges	\$ 424.48	587.68	617.68
Cost to enroll	\$ 170.00	265.00	305.00
You Save	\$ 254.48	322.68	312.68
	60% savings	55% savings	50% savings

503.230.2300
TomDwyer.com
530 SE Tenth St.
Portland, Oregon

1998 and newer vehicles only, please

Two (2) Minor Interval Services using synthetic oil-

We're encouraging all our clients to make the switch from standard oil to synthetic oil to save both time and money! Using synthetic oil is better for you, better for your vehicle, and better for the environment. Since you can go twice as long between oil changes you will only need half as many, saving you the hassle of chasing oil changes every three months. Synthetic oil will also extend the life of your engine, increase your mileage, and reduce your vehicle's emissions.

One (1) 130-point Inspection-

This is the Comprehensive Inspection we encourage our clients to have each year. This inspection allows us to be able to accurately track, prioritize and recommend the needs of each vehicle. This is our most comprehensive inspection, and the core of a good vehicle maintenance program.

One (1) 90-point Inspection-

We need to see your vehicles at least two times per year to deliver great service results. This is our mid-term inspection, used in conjunction with our 125-point inspection to help us to stay on top of your vehicle's service needs. This on-going inspection regimen means you'll always have peace of mind whether you're driving across town or across country.

Two (2) Tire Rotations and Balances-

Basic tire care twice a year will greatly extend the life of your tire investment. Even if your tires are covered by a free rotation policy somewhere else you won't need to run around, and you'll be confident that the rotation and balance will be done right.

Surprise Your Younger Self

Hey, me... get a load of THIS!



Change is the only constant in our world. For tens of thousands of years change was slow... your world would only be slightly different than that of your parents or grandparents. For the past couple hundred years change has happened more quickly. Now, the world we take for granted is vastly different than that of our parents and our kids' world will be unrecognizable to us. But change is happening so fast that it's not just changing between generations, it's changing within lifetimes. Suppose your "self" of 10 years ago could see the world today? It may not seem like much would be different, but this list shows that changes is happening so fast, we don't even realize it anymore...

What aspects of daily life in the United States in 2012 would be unbelievable to a person in the year 2000?

Oliver Emberton on Quora.com

- We would interact with our games consoles by waving our limbs like a drunken mime. The most popular platform for this would have a name that sounds like urine. This would become one of the great success stories of the decade.
- The US would elect a black president.
- People increasingly avoid the phone; the most common way to make a date is now via text message, which costs more per character then sending data into space.
- The most pressing social issue in 2012 will be fought mostly over chicken sandwiches:
- Sharing intimate aspects of your life - from drunken photos of you making out with a stranger, to broadcasting what music you're listening to *as you listen to it* - will become so routine as to be banal.
- Smartphones: half the US carries the *freakin' Internet in their pocket*. Back in 2000, [the now-old-fashioned flip phone] was the coolest in mobile tech.
- September 11th would embroil the US in two new wars longer than WW2.
- The idea of not having access to a fact, anywhere, would become almost laughable in the western world. Schools redesign themselves to accommodate this new reality.
- A website started by a Harvard undergraduate - Facebook - would become the world's most popular in about 5 years. It would be so ubiquitous that a film about its geeky founder would be a lauded commercial hit.
- Google would turn from a 40-employee startup to *a global verb*.
- The US would convince much of the world that re-invading Iraq is a moral imperative to protect civilization from weapons of mass destruction. They would be wrong.

- Following the daily and intimate lives of celebrities through posts of 140 characters would become a mainstream past time. Said 'tweets' would be the subject of debate on TV, scandal and lawsuits.
- The US would come *within hours* of defaulting on their 14 trillion dollar national debt. In 2000 the US was running a record surplus.
- Popular concepts like 'tagging', 'walls', 'unfriend', 'retweet', 'like', 'poke' and more would completely redefine our social interactions.
- People would carry all their music with them in tiny devices called 'iPods'. CDs would be *so passé*.
- People would stream all their music over the Internet. iPods would be *so passé*.
- Apple would recover from near bankruptcy to become the most valued company on Earth; ultimately over twice that of Microsoft.
- The most popular books of the decade are soft porn for ladies (50 Shades of Grey).
- No-one buys a holiday, insurance or hit singles in the real world anymore.
- We would land a robot on Mars using a flying crane; that robot would zap alien rocks with a laser. For science!
- The longest and debatably worst global recession in modern times would hit in 2008. Combining the 2012 and 2008 recessions, stock lost between 10-20 years of gains, and the US would have their credit rating *reduced*.
- In 1999, a 2.7 megapixel camera cost just under \$6,000, making it the first "affordable" digital camera. We now expect more from a cheap phone.
- People would buy virtual gifts and cards - *that cost real money*. This would not last, fortunately.
- An obscure website - YouTube - would grow to serve over 4 billion videos worldwide **every day**. The most popular would consist of cats and fingers being bitten by Charlie.
- Climate change remains controversial in the US, despite 9 of the 10 hottest global temperatures ever recorded, global floods, heatwaves, storms, receding polar ice and 4,000 US states of emergency in one month alone.
- The US would be without a replacement for the retired Space Shuttle, and would pay Russia to take them into space.
- A website built entirely from user contributions would grow into the largest and most comprehensive encyclopedia ever made and it would be free too.
- A distressingly high percentage of people WUD RITE LIK3 THIS, FML. This is increasingly tolerated and even advocated by schools.
- The financial future of the whole of Europe may well depend upon Greece, a country smaller than Uruguay.
- Quora - a website where people answer questions in far too much detail - would flourish and consume many needless lives. But not mine!
- People would complain nothing exciting happened in the last 10 years.

Drew's Kitchen

Drew's 2014 collection of capital cuisine



Drew's taking a break from his Kitchen this month as we bring you his full 2014 menu, but don't worry. He'll be back next month with more of the recipes you'll love to share with your family and friends. (Or better yet, enjoy by yourself!)

[Drew's Make-Ahead Mashed Potatoes](#)

[Pasta with smoked salmon](#)

[Slow Cooker Beef Pot Roast and a Halloween Surprise!](#)

[Linguine Milano](#)

[Scott Peacock's Pulled Pork](#)

[Mushroom Chicken Sauté](#)

[Dijon Grilled Chicken Burritos](#)

[Chicken with Sour Cream and Paprika](#)

[Louisville Hot Browns](#)

[Grilled Cheese with Spinach](#)

[Fried pasta with eggs, pepper, and Parmesan](#)

[2013's full year of fine dining](#)

Shop Talk

2014's Shop Talk Review



2014 in Review for Shop Talk

What happened at the Shop in 2014? 2014 saw Shop Talk become the repository of any Special Offers we may be running, so the answer to the question "Do you have any specials right now?" will continue to be answered in this column. Other features of Shop Talk, like our monthly list of Auto Recalls, don't really need a recap. But there's usually something unique in the column each month, and many are worthy of a reminder...

In [January](#) we brought you a look back at 2013

In [February](#) we announced our new Referral Reward program and congratulated Employee-of-the-year Dave Gettmann

In [March](#) we announced the first group of monthly Referral Reward groups

In [April](#) we linked our article on Fuel Injectors to a special offer on Fuel Injector Service. Look for more links like this in 2015!

In [May](#) we announced the return of Free Carwash Season, congratulated Artichoke Music as our first Referral Reward quarterly winner, and gave you a heads up on the GM Ignition Recall.

[June](#) saw the return of our Postcard Contest, where we offered \$50 to the best vacation postcard by the end of the Summer. No one entered, so the cash went unclaimed. Keep an eye out for this year's contest... with so few entries, you'd have an excellent chance of winning!

In [July](#) we reminded everyone that our 1998-and-newer policy is for NEW clients, and we'll gladly care for the older vehicles of our existing clients. We even made a special offer to existing clients to bring in their older vehicles.

In [August](#), we told you about our temporary produce department as the overflow from Tom's home garden was offered free to anyone who wanted it. All organic, too.

In [September](#), Janus Youth Programs became our second quarterly winner from our Referral Reward program. We also told you about mice who'd taken up residence in a client's cabin air filter.

[October](#) and [November](#) were pretty quiet, but we did have a great Pre-Winterization special to share with you in October and a generous Automotive Amnesty program throughout November.

In December we selected Madison High School as our third Referral Reward quarterly winner, and reminded you about Tom Dwyer Gift Certificates... just in time for Christmas.

...and that brings us to 2015. Shop Talk may not carry our most interesting articles, but throughout 2015 you can look to it for the ones that will save your hard-earned dollars on auto repair. Special offers, auto recalls, and the occasional mechanical tip; that's what you can expect from Shop Talk in 2015!

Our Referral Reward program...

We started our Referral Reward Program as a way to say "thanks" for the loyal support of our clients. We used to send certificates for service, but that could lead to conflicts of interest in referrals... we don't want people referring their friends in hopes of getting an oil change coupon! This seemed to be a good way to express how grateful we are and help deserving people at the same time.

There's still a few months left in the first full year of the program, but as we look back at 2014 it's been a success so far- **81 groups have benefitted** as of 1/12/2015, with a total donation of almost \$4,900! When you include the \$250 to each of our quarterly



award winners, [Artichoke Music](#), [Janus Youth Programs](#), and [Madison High School](#)) our **clients have donated \$5,626 dollars to the groups they care about!** As we said there are a couple months left in the first full year, so we have two more months of individual donations, one more quarterly winner, and one yearly winner yet to go. There's still plenty of time for YOU to take part, and it's pretty simple... every time someone comes in and says they were referred by you, we'll write a check to the non-profit group of your choice (up to \$50) and your group will be automatically eligible for the quarterly and yearly awards as well. In the meantime, here are the groups who have benefitted in January...

[Aris Bishop Memorial Scholarship Fund](#)
[Native American Youth Association](#)
[Oregon Food Bank](#) (12th donation)
[Oregon Humane Society](#) (10th donation)
[Peninsula Children's Learning Center](#)

[Pongo Fund Pet Food Bank](#)
[Lewis Elementary PTA](#)
[Wounded Warrior Project](#)
[Planned Parenthood](#) (4th donation)

The Sellwood Bridge Construction

The overwhelming reality at the Shop throughout 2014 was the Sellwood Bridge construction project. It's vitally important, but it's been a crushing weight on our business. So far we've made it through without laying anyone off, but things are getting tighter and the bridge is well over a year from completion. If you have a friend, family member, or co-worker who hasn't tried our service yet, PLEASE encourage them to come in. You can take advantage of the [Referral Reward Program](#), and our generous [First-Time Client offer](#) will make your friend's first visit more affordable. If you like what you have found at Tom Dwyer



Automotive, please share it with someone you know. From all of us here at the shop, thank you for your support over the years and thanks in advance for the new clients we know you'll send.

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; they're the lifeblood of our 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. Clicking the button at right will take you to the full list at the NHTSA website.



Health Notes

Another Healthy year in review



You count on us to keep your vehicle operational, but how far will it go if you aren't operational? We'll say it out loud... nothing is as important as your health, not even auto repair! That's why we bring you Health Notes each month, to keep you operating at your best. From the universally useful to the unique facts you didn't know, it's a look at health through the eyes of someone you can trust more than your doctor... your mechanic!

[**Tips to beat holiday stress
and gluttony**](#)

[**Our Ebola coverage...
relax, it's short**](#)

[**Tips for a Healthy
Halloween**](#)

[**GMO Debate... SOLVED!**](#)

[**Nothing keeps you healthy**](#)

[**The straight dope on some
scary additives**](#)

[**Summer Avocado Festival**](#)

[**Small picture to big
picture... in PICTURES!**](#)

[**Your kids' diapers are full
of s#!+**](#)

[**7 "unhealthy" foods that
aren't**](#)

[**7 drug dangers we learned
about too late**](#)

[**Living healthy for 2013**](#)

Sellwood Bridge Update

Yes, it's open! And here's the Update from 2014

If there were just one thought we could convey to sum up 2014 in the life of the Sellwood Bridge, it would be this...



THE BRIDGE IS OPEN!

It will stay OPEN throughout construction except for BRIEF, ANNOUNCED closures
(and you can count on us to keep you posted on those).

After almost 3 years of construction, we still occasionally have clients who ask when the Bridge will be open again, but it's open NOW. Construction is projected to be complete in 2016, but it's OPEN IN THE MEANTIME. There are delays from the flaggers, but these are brief and intermittent. If you plan to visit the shop, please believe us that the construction is only minimally inconvenient.

But here's a little more detail from a November 25, 2014 [Portland Tribune article](#) as 2015 begins...

- Although the Bridge was scheduled to open in the Fall of 2015, the date has been pushed off until early 2016.
- Schedule delays were caused by unexpectedly hard rock, a redesign of the retaining walls on the west side cliffs, and delays from the steel fabricators.
- The total budget of the Bridge project was \$307.5 million, and that is still the budget. There is a contingency fund that is being drawn down, but for now it's holding.

(NOTE: On the day we were writing this article, [an Oregonian article](#) came out that overturns the budget info in the Tribune article. We'll bring you more information on that in next month's Update.)

As we enter 2015, the new bridge will really begin to take shape. All the old supports are gone and the new supports are in, so the arches are coming in. Here's a picture from Powers Marine Park of the first arches going into place...



But for our Year-In-Review issue, nothing beats this series of aerial photographs showing the entire construction process for the past 12 months...



As a reminder, 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

Our 2014 Library and some guest recommendations



One of the most unique features of our shop is our Book and Bumper Sticker Library. On two walls of our lobby you'll find a range of fascinating books, videos, and bumper stickers on a range of subject but concentrating on politics, history, and sociology. The bumper stickers are free (one per visit, please) but the books and videos are available for checkout. Just ask your Service Advisor and return it on your next visit.

All our 2014 Book Spotlight picks are included below. We certainly hope you enjoy the selections we made in 2014 and that you'll join us for more in 2015. But, as a special treat to start the year off right, we're offering you a look at some of the reading lists of our close personal friends. Between our choices and our guests, we feel sure you'll find something to spice up your own bookshelf this year!

Our 2014 Book Spotlight Picks



Our 2014 Book Spotlight Guest Picks



Humorousness

Our annual audit of amusing antics



2014 was widely considered a banner year for badness, but not here at Humorousness. Month after month we searched out the fun in everything including police, politics, even the rise of ISIS. If you're looking for a smile, no matter what the subject, this is the column for you!

[Things you wish you woulda
said](#)

[The Lighter Side of ISIS.
Believe it or not.](#)

[29 People About To Have
Very, Very Bad Days](#)

[These police jokes are so
funny, it's a crime](#)

[Crazy Funny Politics](#)

[The lighter side of global
annihilation](#)

[Kids say the darndest things](#)

[Mom Spotting](#)

[Jokes for smart people... are
YOU ready?](#)

[Meet our new Robotic
Service Advisors... or else](#)

[Meet Bill Hicks](#)

[Our in-depth Olympic
coverage](#)

[2013's yippees](#)

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 quite 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!



Inequality Quiz- Can you beat the Dwyer guinea pig?



Jesus Christ said "the poor will be with you always", and he was right. No matter how our society (or any society) tries to structure itself, there will always be a gap between the poorest and the richest. But how big can that gap get before it causes real structural problems? How big is it now? [This 15-question quiz](#) will give you some idea of how the vast our gap is, and how it's continuing to grow. All stats in it are sourced so you can check them out. We uncrated the Dwyer Guinea Pig to take the quiz, and he got 12 out of 15. Can you do better?

Happy Kirby Delauter Day to us all!



Kirby Delauter is a county councilman in Maryland who didn't like a local paper's story about how parking spaces were reserved at the capitol. What would you do? [Kirby threatened the reporter with a lawsuit for using his name without getting his permission](#). The paper backed her up, writing a great editorial that used the Kirbster's name over twenty times, and even worked his name into an anagram in the first letter of each paragraph. We didn't know about Kirby before and we won't care about him tomorrow, but this little kerfluffle made for an entertaining read.

Weird science. Very, very weird science.



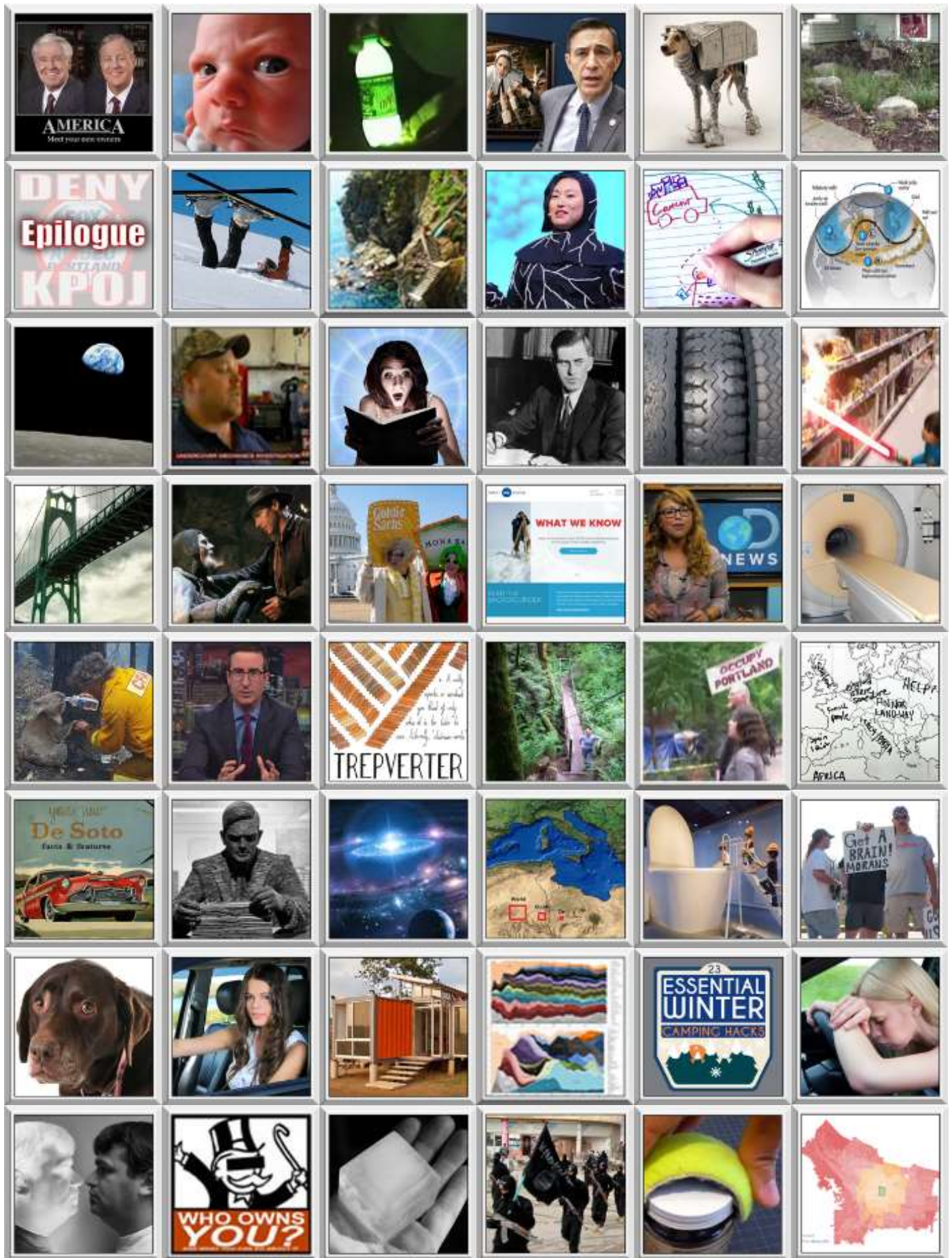
It's getting harder and harder to keep up with reality. In [last month's News To Make You Furious](#), we talked about the House Science and Technology Committee and their dangerous antipathy to the science they're supposed to oversee. [This week, we learned that Ted Cruz, who doesn't believe in manned space flight and denies the reality of climate change, will be the next chair of the committee](#). Welcome to the future!

Accountability returns for a cameo



Political, military, social, economic... it seems that in every facet of our world, no matter what sins are committed, no one is ever held accountable (at the top, at least). Here are two stories that offer a glimmer of hope that basic accountability isn't dead. In Nigeria, [Royal Dutch Shell agreed to pay \\$83 million](#) for destroying much of the Nigerian Delta with oil spills. In New Mexico, the [cops who shot a homeless man \(in a video that went viral\) will face murder charges](#). The only way we will EVER stop these abuses in our world is to hold the people responsible accountable for their actions, and these two stories are a good start.

And without further ado, here's all our Popcorn from 2014...



News To Make You Furious

A whole year's rage on just one page



The twenty-year anniversary of the Exxon Valdez disaster went largely unnoticed by everyone except Greg Palast. His report, "[Stick Your Damn Hand In It](#)" also went largely unnoticed, but we read it and it was so enraging that we ran it in our newsletter with the headline "News To Make You Furious". Later, we realized that corporate McMedia's well-known habit of ignoring news that shouldn't be ignored was infuriating in itself, so we decided to write about one topic each month that just frosted our cake. Why? Because we think people have an obligation to deal with the biggest, ugliest problems that face our world. Some problems are too big to do anything about, others are so revolting they drive us away, but we all have an obligation to try. It can be too easy to ignore them, but when we face up to our problems we expand our knowledge of the real world, and knowledge is power. Power to make real change. Click any of the images below to see what ground our gears in 2014's News To Make You Furious...

