



March 2015 Newsletter

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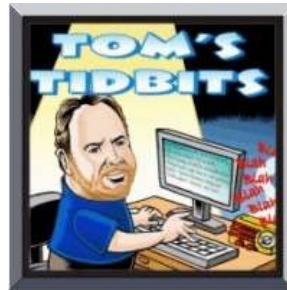
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Tom's Tidbits

47 Senators wrote a letter to regret

Greetings!



Republicans and Democrats disagree about everything, but at the center of any argument there's usually some central idea that transcends the spin. I try to keep my eye on *that* ball, the *core* issue, ignore the partisan hype, and then take a rational position. But sometimes one party (or the other) does something where 'partisan' is the only rational way to see it. Which brings us to the recent letter to Iran by the US Senate Republicans...

Just in case you haven't heard, Senator Tom Cotton led a group of 46 Republican-only Senators to write an unprecedented [open letter to the leaders of Iran](#) schooling them on the idea of our divided government, pointing out that treaties need Senatorial ratification to be more than a "mere executive agreement", and cautioning them that Congressmen will be here long after President Obama is gone. These probably weren't new ideas to the professional Iranian negotiating team and they certainly weren't to Javad Zarif, US-educated Iranian Foreign Minister, [who pointed out that](#) "...the authors not only do not understand international law, but are not fully cognizant of the nuances of their own Constitution when it comes to presidential powers in the conduct of foreign policy".

If the Republicans weren't generously trying to protect Iranian negotiating interests, then what purpose could this letter possibly serve? These talks (and the extensive sanctions) are intended to limit Iranian nuclear technology to commercial use and cut off their ability to create nuclear weapons. A deal seems imminent, but wild-eyed zealots on *both* sides think *any* deal is a bad idea. The only conceivable purpose of Cotton's letter is to scuttle such a rapprochement; regardless of the fact that it's negotiated by the people (and President) we sent to negotiate exactly that.

Iran's nuclear program has been under negotiation with the P5+1 (US, Russia, China, France, UK, and Germany) for over 2 years. Even if the Republicans assume Obama's a "[secret Muslim](#)" who is either "[naïve about Iran](#)" or even "[actively seeking ways to allow Iran to gain a nuclear weapon](#)", it's *still* not about him. The Iranian deal may indeed be bad on the facts (since we don't even know for sure what it says yet) but if Obama's being conned, then so are the leaders and negotiating teams from 5 other countries. And it still wouldn't justify this ham-handed, condescending, unauthorized interference from a bitter political party.

It's all too easy to keep my eye on the ball on this one, but what's the rational response? There have been calls for prosecution of these clowns for violations of the [Logan Act](#), [sedition](#), or even [treason](#), but in a world where Darth Cheney can openly brag about committing war crimes yet remain free, legal proceedings against half of the US Senate seem unlikely. Indeed, Cotton's letter might not rise to the level of lawbreaking, but it undeniably points out other violations... violation of the basic respect of Americans for their President, violation of the trust placed in Senators by their constituents, violation of the tradition that our internal disagreements "stop at the water's edge". These 47 irresponsible Republican Senators ([Bob Corker, Jeff Flake, Susan Collins, Lamar Alexander, Lisa Murkowski, Dan Coats, and Thad Cochran declined to sign the letter](#)) have shown, starkly and inarguably, that they hate the president more than they love the country. Maybe that's not a legal repercussion, but in the mind of rational people it's something that should continue to dog them. And who knows? Maybe Cotton was wrong... maybe he and his colleagues won't be in office for as long as they seem to think.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

What NOW?!! Toons

Our March check in with Keith Tucker



"WHAT NOW?!!"

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Want to dig deeper? Here's a great article on how the [47 Senators are reconsidering their choice of pen pals](#), or you might want to check [Tom's Tidbits for March](#), or even our [Humorousness column this month](#) from newbie columnist Steve Bergdorf.



Winning Dirty on TPP

Corporatists are pulling out a familiar, ugly playbook



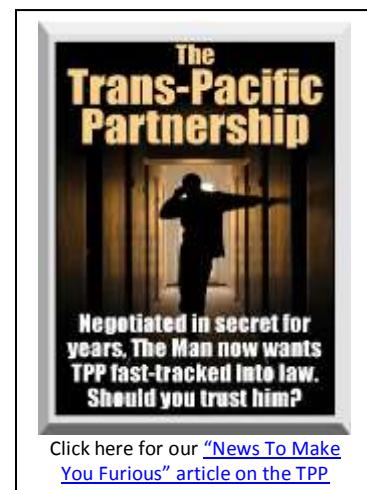
Richard Berman, lobbyist and political consultant, was [secretly recorded](#) during a speech to oil and gas industry executives in Colorado. He explained that the industry "...must be willing to exploit emotions like fear, greed and anger and turn them against the environmental groups". Then he summed up his philosophy in one cringeworthy sentence- "you can either win ugly or lose pretty".

People have complained for years about propaganda techniques that give the illusion of grassroots support for policies that only benefit corporate interests. But it seems these Orwellian strategies may be perfectly acceptable if they're pushing the "right" policy. In the looming fight over the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP),

Corporatists are once again rolling out the same strategies that they've used for decades. With apologies to Mr. Berman... win or lose, it won't be pretty.

The TPP would be the largest trade agreement in history, creating trade rules for 12 nations and over 500,000 people around the Pacific Rim. It would control 40% of global GDP and for the US alone, it would govern about 40% of our imports and exports. TPP has been in negotiation since 2010, but the public knows little about it because all negotiations have been conducted in secret. Even members of Congress can only see parts of it. They have to go to a special office, alone, to read the complicated legalese and can't make copies or even take notes. [The little we "know" comes from text leaked](#) to WikiLeaks, which discovered that only 5 of the 29 chapters deal with trade at all.

Whether or not the TPP is good policy, the ugliest part is the way it's being rammed down the throat of the public and Congress. Corporatists have created a secret deal that serves the interests of their masters, so they know better than to think it can garner support among the people at large. The solution? Resort to the Frank Luntz wordsmithing tactics we've seen pushing so many other NeoCon and corporatist agendas.



Click here for our ["News To Make You Furious" article on the TPP](#)

A PR firm called [270 Strategies](#), headed by two Obama campaign veterans, has just created a website in support of TPP called the ["Progressive Coalition for American Jobs"](#). The website touts "More jobs, protections for workers, and free and fair trade" as benefits of the TPP. That wasn't enough to convince Dave Johnson at Campaign for America's Future, so he called up the "Progressive Coalition" [to ask a few clarifying questions](#). He wanted to know: 1) Who is in the coalition? 2) Who is funding the campaign? and 3) Has anyone at 270 Strategies read the TPP agreement?

None of his repeated calls or messages resulted in a reply, but digging a little on his own he found a few answers. The Washington Post's Fact Checker had already given the Jobs claim ["4 Pinocchios"](#). No other members of the "coalition" were listed on the website or anywhere else. "Progressive" went down in flames when Dave found a [letter from actual Progressives](#) Raul Grijalva and Keith Ellison (leaders of the Congressional Progressive Caucus) expressing their doubts both about the substance of the deal and the emphasis on Fast Track authority. His last question is answered by the news each day... no one but the

negotiators and the roughly 500 CEOs who had input on the deal have read it. Interestingly, when we went to the site ourselves the “[Get the Facts](#)” link was a dead end when we clicked it.

Lying only gets you so far, though, so there has to be some strategy to shove TPP through before people have a chance to think about what’s in it. Worried that the facts of the deal won’t win on their merits, President Obama has asked for Fast-Track authority to pass the deal. This would give Congress 60 days to vote yes or no, without amending or filibustering it. Don’t talk, don’t think... take it or leave it. And you damn well better take it.

Americans broadly think the best way to legislate is to create rational, logical policies through an honest, transparent, and inclusive process, then present the legislation to citizens for debate, amendment, and passage based on its merits. That ideal may be naïve, has been frequently breached, and certainly hasn’t always paid off, but it’s been the core of the American legislative ideal for decades. Obama and the Corporatists may end up winning the TPP battle, but even they don’t think it can win on its merits... and they’ve already given up any possibility of winning pretty on it.

Digging Deeper...

[Don't Let Congress Fast-Track TPP](#)

Petition at EFF.org

[Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement](#)

Fact page at Electronic Frontier Foundation

[With TPP at 'Make-or-Break Point,' Fast Track Foes Prepare for Battle](#)

Deirdre Fulton on Common Dreams, Mar 11, 2015

[The Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement- Your Guide To Copyright In The TPP](#)

Fact Page from Public Knowledge

[Leaked Texts & Negotiator Info](#)

From Public Knowledge

[Quiz: Will The Tpp Be Good For Me?](#)

Center for Popular Economics, Feb 13, 2014

[Trans-Pacific Partnership \(TPP\): Job Loss, Lower Wages and Higher Drug Prices](#)

Fact Page at Public Citizen

[Hard-Nosed Advice From Veteran Lobbyist: 'Win Ugly or Lose Pretty'](#)

Eric Lipton in the NY Times, Oct 30, 2014

[Big Green Radicals](#)

Smear site

[Democrats create an ALEC-killer](#)

Kenneth Vogel on Politico, Nov 9, 2014

[A Trade Campaign Built On Four Pinocchios](#)

Dave Johnson at Campaign for America's Future, Mar 11, 2015

[How to fight the Trans-Pacific Partnership: Anti-TPP petitions, protests, and campaigns](#)

Connor Sheets in International Business Times, Nov 18, 2013

[Obama Faces Backlash Over New Corporate Powers In Secret Trade Deal](#)

Zach Carter on Huffington Post, Jan 25, 2014

[Working Families Party Threatens Contest Against Ron Wyden Over Free Trade Deal](#)

Ali Watkins on Huffington Post, Mar 4, 2015

[The Obama administration's illusionary job gains from the Trans-Pacific Partnership](#)

Glenn Kessler in the Washington Post, Jan 30, 2015

[Progressive Coalition for American Jobs](#)

Coalitionless Coalition

[On the Wrong Side of Globalization](#)

Joseph Stiglitz in the NY Times, Mar 15, 2015

[Obama Trade Deal Secrecy Insulting, According To Key Democrat](#)

Zach Carter on Huffington Post, Jun 7, 2012

[Obama Campaign Alumni Form New Astroturf Group to Promote TPP](#)

Member on DailyKos, Mar 9, 2015

Junking Your Jalopy?

Guest advice on when to part with an older vehicle



Some auto repair shops look at older vehicles as cash cows. They know that the longer they keep the vehicle limping along, the longer the owner will pump money into their coffers. We're different. We don't accept new clients with older-than-1998 vehicles for many reasons, but maybe the biggest is that it's so rarely in the *client's* interest to spend money on vehicles near the end of their service life. Our clients appreciate our advice when it makes sense to spend hard-earned money on an older vehicle or when it makes sense to spend it on a replacement. There are other shops out there with this same philosophy, and we ran across an

article in [Motor Magazine](#) that explains the idea in detail. It's a long article and we may differ a little with some of their specifics, but it's got some great information if you're in this position and it's an interesting look at how other shops approach this issue...

When to pull the plug on an older vehicle

Sam Bell in Motor Magazine, February, 2015

With the possible exception of Aunt Tillie's fruitcake, everything falls apart over time. Clocks wind down, tires wear out, seals and skin lose their elasticity. The universal tendency towards increasing entropy (enshrined as the Second Law of Thermodynamics) in fact provides the basis for all maintenance work.

Automobiles are by no means immune from wear, as we well know. In popular parlance, they can embody the good, the bad and the ugly.

The Good.

The average age of the U.S. passenger vehicle fleet is at about 11.4 years. When you stop to think about what that really means, you soon realize that there must be an awful lot of 20+ year-old cars on the road to counterbalance all the newer ones. With 252.7 million light vehicles in service, about 125 million must date from 2003 or before. Given 2014 sales figures expected to total around 17.5 million vehicles, you'd have to figure that there are probably 10 million or more dating from 1991 alone. Since there were only 12.8 million 1991 models sold, the vast majority must still be on the road. If older cars are seen at somewhat higher rates, as might be expected, the new record size of the fleet and its high average age should keep us all busy for quite some time.

The Bad.

"Dig out your platform shoes and the revolving ceiling light, Boss," said my parts manager, "Your part's a disco."

"Hey, it's a '96 F-150," I replied. "It ought to be supported for a while more."

But, sadly, the fuel pressure regulator is no longer supplied by Ford. Fortunately, there are acceptable aftermarket alternatives available in this case, but OEM-level parts do become increasingly hard to find with time. In some cases, aftermarket substitutions are not sufficiently engineered to keep a Check Engine light off, for instance, although they may appear to fit perfectly well. In this particular case, the fuel pressure is regulated at 50 to 60 psi KOEO, not the more common 40 to 45 psi, which will always result in P0171 and P0174 lean codes. With an aging fleet, such issues become more and more frequent.

The Ugly.

Here in the Salt Belt of the upper Midwest, it's the ugly that shows up most. While replacing brake and fuel lines is messy, and at least modestly expensive, deterioration of subframes and unibody structures is often a game-ender (see the photo below). The sad truth is that salt + water + iron or steel + goop = rust. And not just a garden variety of rust: an endemic, metastasizing rust.



It can be tricky to see (and photograph) how extensively rotted a frame may be in a particular instance in the installed position. This corner of the subframe is designed not only to support the engine, lower control arm and steering rack, but also to absorb and redirect energy in the event of a crash. Don't send a customer back out on the road with a condition like this without a well-written waiver of liability. Better yet, don't send him back out like this at all.

The road salt used in my area has been treated with an acid gel to keep it pelletized! It's often spread on top of a layer of "molasses," actually a beet-juice byproduct which functions as a glue to hold the salt first on the road, and then, once dislodged by your tire, to the undercarriage of your car. Yep, you read that right: acid and glue, because salt alone isn't harmful enough.

The Four Horsemen

From an auto-centric point of view, the four horsemen of the apocalypse might as well be named **flood, fire, lightning and crash**. It's not that you can't possibly fix cars that have been hit by one of these causes; of course you can. Eventually, if money and time are no object. While a flood car, for example, might make a decent side project to keep you busy during lean times, it doesn't usually make sense from a car owner's standpoint.

There are strong reasons why most insurance companies will simply write off any vehicle hit by one of the first three of these horsemen as a total loss. First and foremost, there's the issue of repairability in a timely manner. While you can usually succeed eventually, the insurance company doesn't want to undertake the expense of a long-term rental. Nor do they wish to risk the possibility that the vehicle will have to be reworked at some future date to fix latent damage that may manifest itself later. For example, a small amount of saltwater intrusion into a wiring harness may cause no problem for a long time, but may eventually result in well-hidden corrosion in the harness, potentially causing or exacerbating future failures.

Secondly, there's the issue of customer satisfaction. People can and do change insurance companies, and are much more likely to do so when they feel that the

insurance company has failed to warn them adequately about the advisability of repair.

As to crash, the last of our four horsemen, the questions are somewhat more straightforward and familiar, although they vary considerably from state to state. Before undertaking repairs on crash-damaged vehicles, you have to ask whether it's a smart move or not. Don't forget to check your shop's insurance policy as well; many policies exclude coverage for any repair undertaken on a vehicle with a salvage title. You may also want to consider what impact, if any, your willingness to undertake repairs in such a circumstance might have on your reputation, whether for good or for ill.

There are shops that successfully repair cars that have been subjected to one or another of these calamities. Most of them have paid the price of a relatively steep learning curve, and very few of them offer such services on a direct consumer basis. Most either use such vehicles as long-term projects to be completed during any slow times, or they seek out salvageable cars for eventual resale. This is a viable business model, but is best suited to those who are comfortable with a certain degree of risk and unpredictability.

'Just Another 6 Months...'

We've all heard that before. Often again and again from the same customer about the same car! The fact is that, with very few exceptions (graduation from college, relocation to another city, entering military service, maybe marriage or kids) nothing is likely to be noticeably different in six months. The reality is that most folks are not likely to experience large changes of financial circumstances absent one of the significant life events listed above, or possibly a career change event. So, how should you respond? Let's look at a few scenarios.

Allen's dad gave him his old Audi AllRoad with 175,000 miles on the clock. He had it flatbedded to the shop when he found the fenders rubbing the tires. Somehow, he didn't connect that with the air-suspension warning light; after all, it had been on for a few months now. Besides a leak in the right front air spring, and likely as not because of that leak, the suspension pump itself has now given up the ghost.

He also has a MIL on with both P0420 and P0430 codes, the oil is overdue, and likely not the right lube anyway. Not that you could tell, because, after all, that would mean there was at least enough of it left to touch the bottom of the dipstick. He just needs it to last another six months until he graduates from

college, but the registration expires in two months and he cannot renew his tags with the MIL on.

The vehicle is structurally sound, though it has a few minor cosmetic blemishes and one of the fenders is a little crunched from a run-in with a snow bank. The Kelley Blue Book trade-in value for this car is between \$2000 and \$3200 (on a generous day).

If it needs both converters, factory units are about \$1300 each, plus definitive diagnosis, installation and tax. Labor for the R&R alone books out at 6.3 hours. If the cats died because of the oil consumption issue, there will be motor work required to make the fix stick. You'll spend close to a full day overhauling the suspension, including updating the pump per the TSB and doing an alignment.

No matter how you slice it, Allen needs to spend a lot of money to put this car back on the road and keep it there. But there are several ways to look at it. The car is currently worth about \$2000 (X), comparable to the salvage value used in TLF calculations by insurance companies. It needs about \$1900 (Y) of immediate repairs to fix the suspension and change the oil. If those repairs are made, the car will likely be usable for two months (Z) before the next substantial repairs are needed. (Be realistic, not optimistic!) If repaired, the car might be worth about \$2500 (M)—similar to insurers' ACV. A better used car will cost at least \$5000 (N).

Questions: Is M > X? Is M > X 1 Y? (Looks a lot like the TLF formula, doesn't it?) Are the monthly payments on (N 2 X) less than Y / Z? (Y / Z is the amount per month of the currently needed repairs apportioned over the time until the next major repair; (N 2 X) is the net cost of a better used car after trade-in.)

Are the monthly payments on N 2 (X 1 Y) less than Y / Z? This essentially adds the repair costs and the trade-in together as a down payment on the better used car, then compares that to the situation of repairing the current car and apportioning those costs only until the next major repair.

Let's see how those numbers play out:

Yes, M is greater than X (\$2500 > \$2000); that is, fixing the suspension does increase the value of the car. Many repairs will not increase the value at all, but may still make sense anyway.

M is not greater than X 1 Y (\$2500 < \$3900); that is, fixing the suspension costs more than the immediate monetary value it adds. This is often the case, but could be offset by factors such as extended useful life.

N 2 X (\$5000 2 \$2000) 5 \$3000. This is the figure for the net cost of a better car after trade-in.

When we calculate the monthly payments on the immediately needed \$1900 in repairs, we have to ask over how long a period of time? We decided earlier that it wouldn't make sense to extend this beyond the time horizon until the next reasonably foreseeable major repair. Here, we run right up against the two-month window on the MIL repairs. Y / Z 5 \$1900 / 2 5 \$950 a month, plus interest. Ouch.

If we add the current value (X) and the immediate repair cost (Y) together, we get \$3900. If we subtract that from the cost of a new-to-him used car, Allen comes out only \$1100 shy: N 2 (X 1 Y) 5 \$5000 2 \$3900 5 \$1100.

If Allen's new used car will go six months without needing major repairs, and we again apportion it all to that time period, he'll be financing the N 2 X amount (\$3000) over six months, for \$500 a month plus interest.

You may want to recalculate that one after allocating a residual trade-in value R to his new used car at the six-month mark (Zr). If we made that figure a reasonable \$3500, we could recalculate his monthly costs as [(N 2 X) 2 R] / Zr 5 [(\$5000 2 \$2000) 2 \$3500] / 6 5 minus \$500 / 6 months, or a paper gain of about \$80 a month. Note, however, that here we're talking about net cost rather than monthly payments. The actual cash position still has Allen trading the Audi up front, then paying out \$500 a month for six months, then selling his "new" used car for \$3500 and walking away. Compared with selling the Audi for \$2000 today and walking away, the six months use of his "new" car has cost him the Audi and the \$3000 in loan payments, but leaves him walking away with \$3500. This works out to a net cost of \$1500, representing the Audi's original trade value minus the \$500 "gain" on the new-to-him used car. Over six months, his eventual net cost per month comes to \$250. This may be his best play.

Finally, what would we be looking at if Allen decided to fix his Audi all at once instead of piecemeal? Of course, some of the pieces remain the same: X is still \$2000, but Y increases to about \$5200. As compensation for spending that extra money, the time frame (Z) increases to 18 months, and the repaired residual value (M) probably hits \$3000.

Even though paying \$5200 to bring the car's value up to \$3000 looks pretty foolish on the face of it (M is greater than X, but still nowhere near greater than X 1 Y), the extra months may turn things around. Let's see.

\$5200 spread over 18 months is about \$290/month out-of-pocket—again, plus interest. (Because the residual value will probably be about the same as the present in 18 months' time, we could calculate the cost of repair at about \$180/month.)

Once again we have to figure in the effect of Allen's self-proclaimed six-month time frame. If he could finance the repairs at that \$290/month level (plus interest), and he really does sell the car after six months, he'll be out-of-pocket "only" about \$1740 (plus interest) on the monthly payments, and he should be able to get close to \$3000 from the new buyer. So, since \$5200 + \$3000 is \$2200, he'll be in the hole only about \$460 once he sells the Audi off.

The recap: To fix everything on the Audi and sell it in six months will cost him \$2200 plus whatever interest, origination fees, etc., are associated with the transaction. That's an overall net cost of repair of about \$370/month. The math doesn't recommend this course of action, no matter how we slice it.

What if we change it up a bit? Let's look at a nearly identical scenario.

Craig has the same car as Allen, with the same problems, but he just passed the emissions test a month ago, so his tags won't need to be renewed for another 23 months. The suspension fix (Y) is still about \$1900, but the time frame until the next reasonably foreseeable necessary major repair (Z) is now 23 months—assuming, of course, that the engine's thirst for oil doesn't bring things to a halt prematurely.

If, as before, we allocate the repair dollars across the entire time (Y / Z), we're looking at a very different figure: \$1900 over 23 months is less than \$85 a month—again, plus interest. And what happens if Craig sells the car after six months? He'll have paid back about \$500 on the loan. If he gets \$2500 from the sale, he'll still owe only about \$1400 on the loan, leaving him with \$1100 in his pocket.

Let's go back to Allen for a moment. The difference between our analyses of Craig's situation and Allen's clearly hinges on the converter question. This should prompt us to ask whether Allen should spend money now to pin down the diagnosis. For example, it could turn out that his DTCs stem from faulty oxygen sensors, or even from exhaust leaks that aren't particularly obvious at idle in the shop (see the top right photo on page 16 for an example). Sometimes, in order to help our customers arrive at the correct decision, they'll have to spend some money with us. I hope that you would already have gotten an

authorization before doing the diagnostics on the air suspension system in this example. Yours, like many shops, may have read the powertrain DTCs at no additional charge, but you should go no further without getting paid to pinpoint their causes (see "Santa Gets You Paid," on page 18).

Jane just bought her truck a month ago, and intends to use it for her urban farm. It's a 15-year-old F-150. The fenders are Swiss cheese, and when you lift it on a twin-post hoist, you see the right front wheel droop oddly. Closer inspection reveals that the frame has rusted through completely in that area. You can try doing the same analysis as before, but the reality is that you should stop here; rust severe enough to cause complete frame separation cannot be safely repaired. Even though you might be able to box in a new section of frame, you cannot count on finding another section strong enough to which to anchor it. And even if you did find a spot from which to work, ask yourself these questions:

- How will the repaired section compare to the original frame in the event of an accident?
- Will it be able to absorb an equivalent amount of energy?
- Will it be able to redirect impact forces using the same vectors as the original?
- How good is your insurance? Will it protect you adequately in the event of a lawsuit by Jane and her passengers (or their estates) in the event that your repair does not hold up in a serious accident?

It's better, by far, to draw the line. The lesson for Jane to learn is that she should have her next truck inspected before she buys it, not the other way around.

Claire's car is a '99 Accord V6 with the MIL on and current codes P0141 (O2 sensor heater circuit malfunction) and P0401 (insufficient EGR flow). There's a TSB for an update on the EGR system. As far as anyone knows, the update has never been done. The rear brake calipers are bound up and need to be replaced, along with the rear pads and rotors. Her car has 260,000 miles on the odometer. The timing belt has been changed at the scheduled 105,000 mileage intervals, most recently at 210,000 about four years ago. The car is from Georgia and is rust-free. The radiator has a slow leak from the lower tank seam.

In good condition, the Audi is worth about \$1500 as a trade, or about \$2300 on the open market. Making the needed repairs won't materially affect the car's value.

Flat-rate for the EGR update is 1.5 hours. The required parts kit retails out for about \$150. The rear O2 sensor lists for about the same, if that turns out to be the source of the P0141 DTC. Labor for the R&R is another .5 hour or so, on top of any additional diagnostics. The rear brake job adds another \$650 or so, the radiator another \$500, plus tax on everything. Call it \$1800 as a round number, and that doesn't factor in new hoses, clamps or thermostat, all of which would be strongly recommended at this age and mileage.

If this car were in an accident and cost a similar amount to fix, would an insurance company pay to fix it, or would it pull the plug? What should Claire do? Before we can analyze her situation as we did Allen's and Craig's, we need to define a time frame for the likelihood of future major repairs. We can look to past experience, failure frequency data or reports (iATN, Identifix, various user groups, etc.) and our best judgment when trying to predict the future. However, there will be times when our best forecasts will, like our local meteorologist's, leave us waking up to two fluffy inches of partly cloudy.

So, what does the weatherman do? He assigns a probability to each element of his forecast. For instance, using Allen's situation as an example once again, we might assign a probability (say 75%) to his Audi's likelihood of needing both catalytic converters. In Claire's case, we know she'll be due for another timing belt and water pump combo in about 55,000 miles, probably about three and a half years from now. There's also a fairly good chance, say 25%, that some other major repair, such as a transmission failure, for example, may crop up during that interval. Once we assign a probability to that potential future failure, we can use it to decrease the projected time until the next repair by a similar amount. So in this example, we would project the next likely repair at about two and a half years, roughly 75% of our earlier time frame.

Spending \$1800 won't increase the value of Claire's car, but it does extend its useful life. Could Claire buy another 30 months of use for less than \$1800? That works out to about \$60 a month. Here's a case where the best question may be, Could she get a better used car by trading hers in and adding the \$1800 on top? My guess is that she couldn't, but it's a decision she ought to make consciously and with full knowledge of all the known facts and of the reasonably foreseeable risks.

Up the Technology

Just to add one more factor to the mix, somewhere along the way we need to take automotive evolution into account. In general, at least within similar market segments (luxury, economy, etc.), newer cars tend to be safer, more economical and more reliable. The underlying enabling technologies range from ever more advanced air bags to vehicle stability control and active safety systems. For example, if an old vehicle is not equipped with ABS, an upgrade to a newer model with that feature may offer more long-term value to your customer.

On the flip side, an older Mercedes S-Class, for example, may contain more advanced systems than a somewhat newer used Ford Focus. Either way, it's up to you to help your customers make the best decision by pointing out any significant change in technology levels between two alternative choices.

Differences in projected operating costs should also be factored in. A newer vehicle with large-diameter, low-profile tires and a V6 engine might well be considerably more expensive to operate (and insure) than an older one with less stylish wheels and an inline 4-cylinder engine.

One more thing: As I said earlier, it's up to you to prepare your customer for the possibility that his or her vehicle may not be on the one-day-turnaround list. You're going to make your money on this visit today from your inspection and consultation. This is also the time to presell your services on a future prepurchase inspection. Don't be shy about charging for it, but do make sure it's a complete and thorough job. You don't want your customer saying six months from now that you led him astray and made him buy a used lemon when he should have fixed his old jalopy.

Decisions regarding major repairs require careful analysis. Proper planning and presentation on your part can assure that your interests and your customer's interests are aligned. Careful and thorough assessments, both of current conditions and of upcoming maintenance and repair needs, require competent inspection, experience and diagnosis, for which you should charge accordingly. A candid and complete report of your findings provides a starting point for financial analysis.

Your care and guidance through the decision-making process form a strong foundation for long-term win/win customer relationships. Step-by-step and side-by-side cost comparisons can help your customer evaluate potential alternative plans to reach a rational decision.

I Never Knew...

Uncommon stories behind common phrases



Orwellian trade agreements, senatorial interference with foreign policy, and how to deal with an aging vehicle... sometimes it seems like our newsletter can get a little heavy. Don't worry, though, because we here at *Your Car Matters* don't want to leave you depressed! We recently ran across an old-fashioned email with the origins of 16 words and phrases you probably use every day without knowing where they came from. From a "shot of whiskey" to "hot off the press", all these phrases have stories behind them, and sometimes they're the last stories you'd expect...

A SHOT OF WHISKEY

In the old west a .45 cartridge for a six-gun cost 12 cents, and so did a glass of whiskey. If a cowhand was low on cash he would often give the bartender a cartridge in exchange for a drink. This became known as a "shot" of whiskey.

THE WHOLE NINE YARDS

American fighter planes in WW2 had machine guns that were fed by a belt of cartridges. The average plane held belts that were 27 feet (9 yards) long. If the pilot used up all his ammo he was said to have given it the whole nine yards.

BUYING THE FARM

This is synonymous with dying. During WW1 soldiers were given life insurance policies worth \$5,000. This was about the price of an average farm so if you died you "bought the farm" for your survivors.

IRON CLAD CONTRACT

This came about from the ironclad ships of the Civil War. It meant something so strong it could not be broken.

PASSING THE BUCK or THE BUCK STOPS HERE

Most men in the early west carried a jack knife made by the Buck knife company. When playing poker it was common to place one of these Buck knives in front of the dealer so that everyone knew who he was. When it was time for a new dealer the deck of cards and the knife were given to the new dealer. If this person didn't want to deal he would "pass the buck" to the next player. If that player accepted then "the buck stopped there".

RIFF RAFF

The Mississippi River was the main way of traveling from north to south. Riverboats carried passengers and freight but they were expensive so most people used rafts. Everything had the right of way over rafts which were considered cheap. The steering oar on the rafts was called a "riff" and this transposed into riff-raff, meaning low class.

COBWEB

The Old English word for "spider" was "cob".

SHIP STATE ROOMS

Traveling by steamboat was considered the height of comfort. Passenger cabins on the boats were not numbered. Instead they were named after states. To this day cabins on ships are called staterooms.

SLEEP TIGHT

Early beds were made with a wooden frame. Ropes were tied across the frame in a criss-cross pattern. A straw mattress was then put on top of the ropes. Over time the ropes stretched, causing the bed to sag. The owner would then tighten the ropes to get a better night's sleep.

SHOWBOAT

These were floating theaters built on a barge that was pushed by a steamboat. These played small towns along the Mississippi River. Unlike the boat shown in the movie "Showboat" these did not have an engine. They were gaudy and attention grabbing which is why we say someone who is being the life of the party is "showboating".

OVER A BARREL

In the days before CPR a drowning victim would be placed face down over a barrel and the barrel would be rolled back and forth in an effort to empty the lungs of water. It was rarely effective. If you are over a barrel you are in deep trouble.

BARGE IN

Heavy freight was moved along the Mississippi in large barges pushed by steamboats. These were hard to control and would sometimes swing into piers or other boats. People would say they "barged in".

HOGWASH

Steamboats carried both people and animals. Since pigs smelled so bad they would be washed before being put on board. The mud and other filth that was washed off was considered useless "hog wash".

CURFEW

The word "curfew" comes from the French phrase "couvre-feu", which means "cover the fire". It was used to describe the time of blowing out all lamps and candles. It was later adopted into Middle English as "curfew", which later became the modern "curfew". In the early American colonies homes had no real fireplaces so a fire was built in the center of the room. In order to make sure a fire did not get out of control during the night it was required that, by an agreed upon time, all fires would be covered with a clay pot called-a "curfew".

BARRELS OF OIL

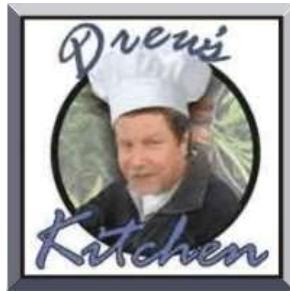
When the first oil wells were drilled they had made no provision for storing the liquid so they used water barrels. That is why, to this day, we speak of barrels of oil rather than gallons.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

As the paper goes through the rotary printing press friction causes it to heat up. Therefore, if you grab the paper right off the press it's hot. The expression means to get immediate information.

Drew's Kitchen

Crunchy Baked Parmesan Cod



If you're like most Americans, you don't eat nearly enough fish. Drew is out to change that this month! Crunchy cornflake cereal creates a perfect crust for delicate and moist cod fillets. Your family will love this quick and easy baked fish dish.

Crunchy Baked Parmesan Cod

Serves 4

Nutrition Information (per serving)- Calories-175; fat 3g (sat 1g); Protein 30g; Carb 7g; Fiber 0g; Chol 83mg; Sodium 360mg.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup crushed cornflakes
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp dried dill
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 pound cod fillets
- Lemon wedges

Preparation:

- Preheat oven to 450°F. Coat a baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray.
- In a large resealable plastic bag combine crushed cornflakes, Parmesan, dill, salt, and pepper.
- In a shallow dish whisk together milk and egg. Dip cod in egg mixture, turning to coat, then place in bag. Seal; turn to coat, pressing so that the crunchy coating adheres to the cod.
- Place cod on baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Serve with lemon wedges.

Shop Talk

50 Car Facts To Blow Your Mind



Looking for our special discount offers?

Our special offer this month is just for the regular readers of Your Car Matters... [You can have any discount offered in any of our 2014 newsletters!](#) If you missed our announcement on this last month, here's a reminder... although we used to publish any special offers or discounts in this Shop Talk column, that was a little hard to find. Starting last month, we created a page on our website with all our current offers in one spot so you'll always know where to find them. We'll update the page whenever the offers change. [Bookmark this page now](#), and you'll always be a click away from savings!

[Click here for all our current discount offers!](#)

50 Car Facts to Blow Your Mind

The world-wide love affair with cars is well into its second century, and that's a lot of time to accumulate facts, figures, and oddities that you probably never knew. We ran across an amazing graphic that points out some of the best. It's pretty large, so we've broken it down into some smaller, more digestible chunks for you. The "History" section is at right, but click the icons below to learn about Money, Car Brands, International Facts, or Technology.



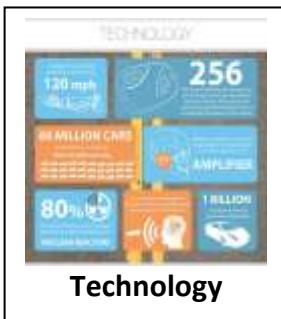
Money



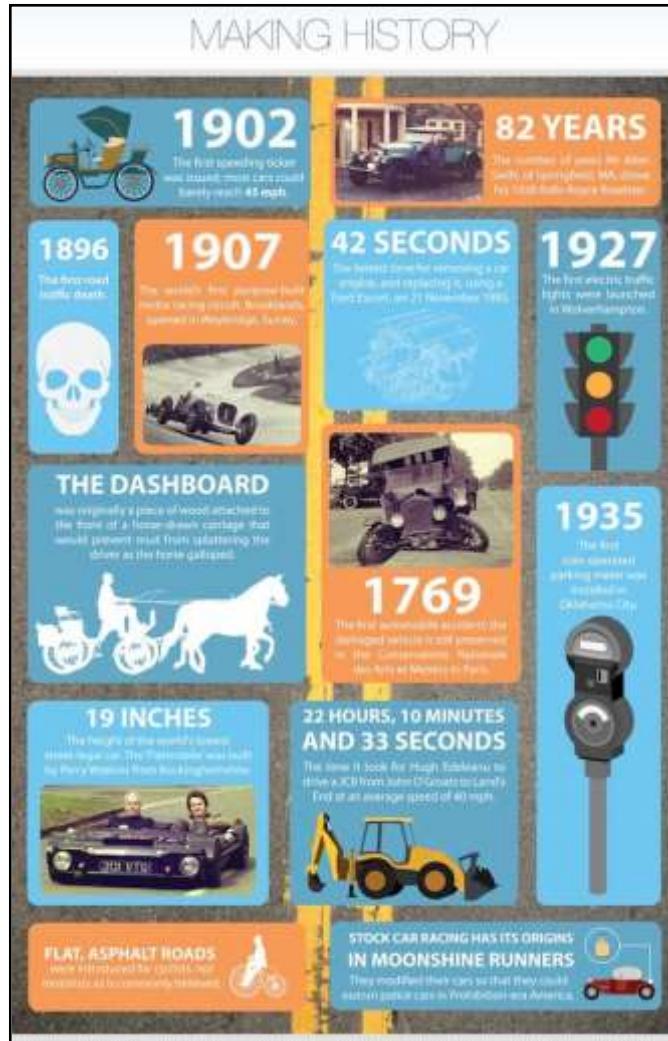
Car Brands



International



Technology



Real Life stories from our comment cards...

We leave [comment cards in every vehicle](#) after service so we can keep track of what we're doing right and what you think we should do to make our services better. We thought we'd start sharing some of the comments we receive each month and tell you what actions we're taking in response. This month, client Tom R. said...

"It would be nice if you didn't have to keep the vehicle all day for minor, routine service"

Tom, we certainly understand how inconvenient it is to be without your vehicle, even for a little while. We do everything possible to keep that time to an absolute minimum without sacrificing quality, but we have real-world restrictions on how fast we can be. We see anywhere from 25 to 50 cars a day depending on the time of year, and it requires careful planning to handle that work flow. We match vehicles to the proper techs based on their experience with your vehicle's particular problem, but we also prefer to have the same technician work on the same client vehicle whenever possible so that the person who understands your vehicle and its history best is the one who's consistently doing the work. However, this also means that the tech we assign to your vehicle may still be working on other vehicles before he can get to yours. We pride ourselves that our techs care for the whole vehicle, not just the problem that brought you in, so once your vehicle is on the lift we also allow time to keep an eye on other vehicle systems as well. Even for "minor, routine service" there could be issues (for example, with parts availability) that can and do extend the time of a "quick" service. Finally, our post-service checkout takes time and there may be several vehicles ahead of yours to be checked that day.

Scheduling well in advance can help us plan for your vehicle and return it to you in the minimum time, but we will still likely plan most of a day to care for it properly. If you just can't leave it that long, we do have a limited number of "will-wait" appointments each day- just ask your Service Advisor when you call to schedule. Finally, our FREE Courtesy Shuttle or the available rental cars from Enterprise can help get you through your day without wheels. We'll do everything we can to get you back on the road as soon as possible, but we can't sacrifice the quality you expect to do it. And we hope that's one of the reasons you keep coming back to us!

Our Referral Reward Program

We've had such a great response to our Referral Reward Program (in which we make a donation to the non-profit group of your choice when someone comes in from your referral) that we've decided to continue it for a second year. We gave you all the details from the first year of the program in [last month's "Referral Reward Wrap Up"](#), and we have a few more groups to tell you about this month...

[Bark](#)- Defending and restoring Mt. Hood

[Fences for Fido](#)- Unchaining dogs, one dog at a time

[KBOO](#)- Community radio for Portland and beyond

Your reviews and referrals matter

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



Latest Automotive Recalls

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



Health Notes

Your mind's power to heal... or kill



If you're in a car wreck, you need a hospital. If you have cancer, you need medicine. If you have a heart valve problem, you need surgery. We've come to rely on Western, allopathic medicine for one major reason... it works. Despite insurance hurdles, pharmaceutical chicanery, or medical malpractice, few of us would trade today's miraculous medical technology for anything of the past.

But high-tech medicine isn't the only source of doctors out there... our minds also have power to heal. The Placebo Effect, the ability of the body to heal itself when it thinks it is getting real treatment, has long been known. Scientists continue to study this link between our minds and bodies, and how each influences the other. This month we bring you several articles exploring this subtle yet powerful ability that lies hidden in our own bodies, and what scientists are doing to bring it into the world of the everyday. But beware! Like any technology, the placebo effect has a good side... and a dark side.

The Good side of the force...

[The Placebo Effect](#)

Steven Novella in Science-Based Medicine, Jan 16, 2008

[The Placebo Effect Is Real. Now Doctors Just Have To Work Out How To Use It](#)

Ben Schiller on Co.Exist, Aug 26, 2013

[Is the Placebo Powerless? — An Analysis of Clinical Trials Comparing Placebo with No Treatment](#)

Hróbjartsson and Gotzsche, New England Journal of Medicine, May 24, 2001

[How the Placebo Effect Works \(with video\)](#)

Shanna Freeman on How Stuff Works

[The Power of Nothing- Could studying the placebo effect change the way we think about medicine?](#)

Michael Specter in The New Yorker, Dec 12, 2011

[The Placebo Phenomenon- An ingenious researcher finds the real ingredients of “fake” medicine](#)

Cara Feinberg in Harvard Magazine, Jan-Feb 2013

But beware of the Dark side...

[The Dark Side of the Placebo Effect: When Intense Belief Kills](#)

Alexis Madrigal in The Atlantic, Sep 14, 2011

[The Contagious Thought That Could Kill You](#)

David Robson on BBC.com, Feb 11, 2015

Sellwood Bridge Update

The next set of arches is here



There's really only one thing to talk about on the Bridge this month... the next set of arches has arrived! Stacked on a barge and parked on the southwest side of the bridge, these arches are the smaller ones that go on the east bank, right next to our shop. Here are a few pictures from the next stage of evolution of our wobbly (but increasingly stable) neighbor...



View of the east side construction from Powers Marine Park



The west side arches are barely visible above the new interchange



View of the east side construction from Powers Marine Park



View of the east side construction from Riverpark Condos

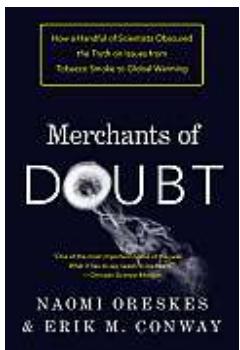
As always, Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project, www.sellwoodbridge.org. Construction and closure alerts, archived information, and other resources are all available 24/7 for your convenience. If you're looking for something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

Book Spotlight

"Merchants of Doubt" By Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway



We owe this month's Book Spotlight to the bright spotlights of Hollywood, in the form of an NPR interview with the director of the film "Merchants Of Doubt". "Merchants" was based on a 2011 book of the same that gave the inside story of the shills who are paid to sow doubt on doubtless issues. Important as it is, "Merchants" has never made it into our Spotlight so we're correcting that oversight now with the book, the movie, the website, and links to two articles from our "News To Make You Furious" column on these same (for lack of a better term) "people".



["Merchants of Doubt"- Book](#)

By Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway

(From [Powell's.com](#)) The U.S. scientific community has long led the world in research on such areas as public health, environmental science, and issues affecting quality of life. Our scientists have produced landmark studies on the dangers of DDT, tobacco smoke, acid rain, and global warming. But at the same time, a small yet potent subset of this community leads the world in vehement denial of these dangers. Merchants of Doubt tells the story of how a loose-knit group of high-level scientists and scientific advisers, with deep connections in politics and industry, ran effective campaigns to mislead the public and deny well-established scientific knowledge over four decades.

Remarkably, the same individuals surface repeatedly—some of the same figures who have claimed that the science of global warming is "not settled" denied the truth of studies linking smoking to lung cancer, coal smoke to acid rain, and CFCs to the ozone hole. "Doubt is our product," wrote one tobacco executive. These "experts" supplied it.

["Merchants of Doubt"- Movie](#)

(2014) | PG-13 | 96 min | Documentary | 12 December

Director: Robert Kenner Writers: Robert Kenner, Kim Roberts

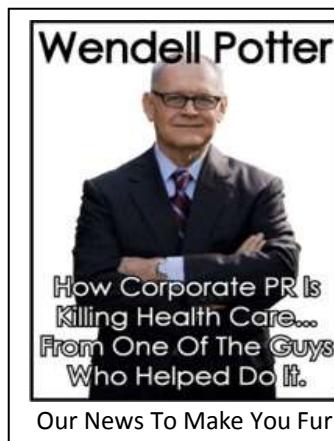
Ratings: 7.0/10 from 172 users Metascore: 69/100



Looks at pundits-for-hire who present themselves as scientific authorities as they speak about topics like toxic chemicals, pharmaceuticals and climate change.



"Merchants of Doubt" website



Our News To Make You Furious "DoubleHeader of Disgust"



Humorousness

Response to the 47 Senator's Letter



There's been a staffing addition at the Humorousness newsdesk this month. You may know our Service Advisor [Steve Bergdorf](#) for his witty, some might even say "humorous" quips when you drop your car off with us for service. We're pleased and proud to announce that Steve will begin sharing his unique sense of humor with you every month as our Senior Humorousness Correspondent. For his first offering, Steve has gone someplace you wouldn't normally expect to find humor... the Council of Guardians of The Islamic Republic of Iran. Way to go, Steve!

Council of Guardians
The Islamic Republic of Iran
Tehran, Iran

March 11, 2015

Dear senators:

Thank you for your letter of March 9 explaining your system of government. We were unfamiliar with the complexity of your laws. For three years we have been negotiating a nuclear energy agreement with your president. We now realize our mistake. As your letter makes clear, the authority to establish such agreements on behalf of your country rests with your Congress.

We are in your debt for this clarification. Moreover, your letter has prompted us to undertake a broader study of the American political system. What we have learned has opened our eyes. For 35 years, we have treated you as an adversary. Our intelligence agencies told us that your culture and your political system were radically different from ours. We now understand that we were misled. Your country is much like ours. Indeed, your Republican Congress is much like our revolutionary Islamic councils. We are brothers.

Your letter explains that our discussions with your president have been in vain because "anything not approved by Congress is a mere executive agreement," which can easily be cast aside by a future president or Congress. Under your Constitution, as you point out, "the president may serve only two 4-year terms, whereas senators may serve an unlimited number of 6-year terms." Therefore, the ultimate authority to make and interpret your country's policies resides with you, not with your president. As you note, "President Obama will leave office in January 2017, while most of us will remain in office well beyond then—perhaps decades."

Your Republican Congress is much like our revolutionary Islamic councils.

We were delighted to read this sentence. What you have described—a circle of overseers who work in perpetuity to restrain the president—is very familiar to us. Our president, like yours, is limited to two consecutive four-year terms. His powers are also severely circumscribed. He has a national security council, but he and his council do not establish our nation's policies.

In our system, true power lies with the chamber that oversees the president. For you, this chamber is the Senate, controlled by your Republican caucus. For us, it is the Council of Guardians. Members of our council, like members of your Senate, serve six-year terms. The council may veto any legislation, which, in its judgment, violates our republic's guiding body of law. For us, that body of law is Sharia.

Our intelligence agencies told us that in your country, the guiding document is your Constitution. Recently, however, we watched videos from your “Conservative Political Action Conference.” Several of your senators spoke there about the abomination of homosexual marriage and the importance of protecting religion. Our assessment is that your senators interpret your Constitution in accordance with the Christian Bible, just as our council applies our Constitution in the light of the Holy Quran. We particularly enjoyed the speech of your senator from Texas, Ted Cruz, who called on your government to fight for Christians abroad. This is in agreement with our own policy of coming to the aid of faithful Muslims everywhere.

We are in great admiration of Sen. Cruz. In our republic, he would be an Ayatollah Uzma. We appreciate his signature on your letter and his steadfastness in correcting your president. Many of us were dismayed to learn that Sen. Cruz was criticized in your country for withholding the government’s operating funds in order to block the implementation of a health care law. Some Americans even called the senator a hostage taker.

We also very much admire the principal author of your letter, Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas. Sen. Cotton, like many of our young militiamen, served in combat in Iraq and believes that he is an instrument of God. Some may consider him too young to assert dominion over your country’s foreign policy, at 37 years of age and with only two years of political experience. But we in Iran appreciate his vigor. He reminds us of the young men who seized your embassy here in 1979, two years after he was born. Those brave young revolutionaries did not wait for guidance from their elders.

In Iran, all educational institutions are governed by our Cultural Revolution Council, which safeguards the faith of the people. We have been unable to locate such a council in your federal government. However, we recently learned that the state board of education in Sen. Cruz’s state, Texas, controls through its purchasing power the content of textbooks throughout your country. The board has used this power to limit the teaching of evolution and promote the celebration of your country as a Christian nation. Our cultural council protects Islam in the same way.

Our system, like yours, has its critics. Some portray our Council of Guardians as unelected ideologues who override the will of the people. The charge is absurd, as your own experience demonstrates. In your country’s three most recent elections, which together produced your Senate’s entire current membership, the other party’s nominees won 5 million more votes than yours did. Nevertheless, you control the chamber. The true will of the people, as you know, is to follow those of us who understand what is best.

Thank you once again for this enlightening exchange. Prompted by your letter, our council has decided to end the talks with your secretary of state and dismiss nuclear inspectors from our country. We look forward to working with you in the future on other matters of common interest, such as prayer, capital punishment, and troops in Iraq.

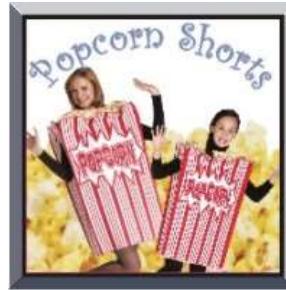
Sincerely,

Council of Guardians
The Islamic Republic of Iran

(as translated by Will Saletan on Slate, Mar 11, 2015)

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!

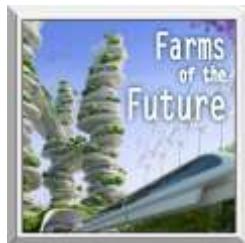


[Kirk, Spock, and the stolen Buick](#)



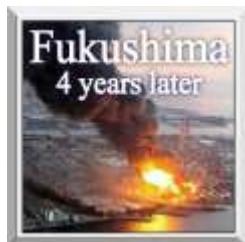
On February 27, Leonard Nimoy beamed up to the big starship in the sky. Tributes abounded, but one little-noticed anecdote caught our eye... the time Kirk stole Spock's car. "During the time the original Star Trek was on the air, Leonard Nimoy did well enough to own a first-gen Buick Riviera, one of the most stylish cars around at the time. These first Rivieras were tailored and dramatic looking, and, unusually for a GM product, had a completely unique body not shared across the GM line. This was a very cool car in 1966, and as you can see by the pictures, he was quite proud of it..."

[Farms of the Future](#)



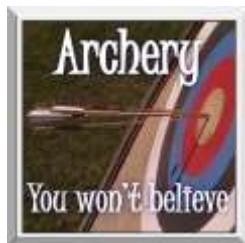
Our world is moving towards sustainability, but one of the things we'll have to deal with on the way is the inherent unsustainability of cities. Fortunately, architects and farmers are already on it. "Flourishing green skyscrapers are sprouting up, both literally and conceptually, around the world. With the world's population on target to grow by some 2.5 billion people by 2050, according to the United Nations, 80 percent of those people will reside in cities, which will challenge agriculturalists and designers alike to accommodate the increasing need for vertical epicenters."

[Fourth Anniversary of the Fukushima disaster](#)



The March 2011 accident at Fukushima Daiichi followed a 45-foot-high tsunami that washed over the plant in the wake of a historically powerful earthquake off Japan's east coast. Loss of electric power to the facility and all but one of 12 emergency diesel generators led to overheating nuclear fuel in three of the six reactors, meltdown of uranium fuel and ultimately the release of radioactivity into the environment. Fukushima was all over the news during the early, video-worthy parts, but it's fallen away since then. 4 years later, it's worth another look.

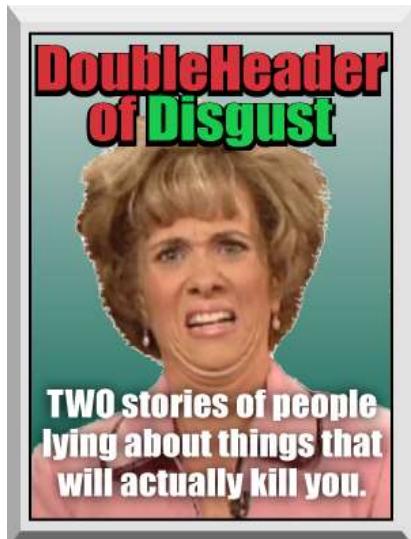
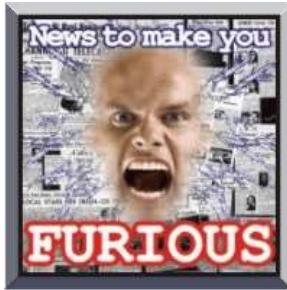
[Archer splits arrow in air... for starters](#)



There's a [viral video out there from a Danish archer named Lars Andersen](#), and it's just amazing! He splits one arrow with another arrow. He shoots an incoming arrow OUT OF THE AIR. Get this... he jumps up, grabs an incoming arrow out of the air, then fires it at a target BEFORE HE HITS THE GROUND! [Critics](#) have pointed out some flaws in the historical basis for his techniques, and they've nit-picked some of the shots, but no one has tried to say it's faked. You may not usually spend a lot of time watching archery videos, but treat yourself to this one. You've been missing out!

News To Make You Furious

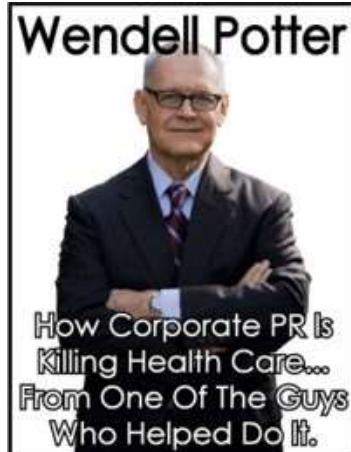
DoubleHeader of Disgust



Our Book Spotlight this month focused on "Merchants of Doubt", the shameless shills who honed their lies years ago creating doubt about smoking and continue lying today about global warming. Well, that seemed like a familiar story here to us at the Newsdesk-To-Make-You-Furious, so we sent an intern deep into the dank Archives of Anger to see if we had any past articles along those same lines. We found two to share with you, and they're some real vein-poppers...

[Wendell Potter And How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care](#)

Have you ever heard the phrase "Government takeover of health care"? It comes to you from a gentleman named Wendell Potter, a retired PR executive for the health insurance industry. He, and people like him, spend their careers figuring out ways to drop people's insurance when they get sick, mislead them about what their insurance covers, and lie to them about the state of health insurance and the implications of reform. Wendell retired from the industry "...because (he) could no longer serve in good conscience as a spokesman for an industry whose routine practices amount to a death sentence for thousands of Americans every year", and now he's telling the behind-the-scenes story the insurance industry doesn't want you to know. If you haven't heard about Wendell Potter already, then settle in. You won't soon forget him.



[The Climate Change Denial Machine](#)

Science does not promise truth, and it never has. Science gives the best possible explanation of reality, though that explanation is always subject to revision. On climate change, there is a scientific consensus that it is real, human-caused, and increasing. The consensus does not prove it is true. The consensus arose because the evidence supports it. Basic open-mindedness is necessary for the function of science, but reasonable skepticism doesn't imply doubt about the thrust of a theory. But then there's FOX News, Exxon, the Koch Brothers, and more who'll be glad to tell you about the sliver of scientists who criticize climate change. Is this a case of lonely scientific voices being silenced by a bloated scientific orthodoxy?

No, they're lying. We wanted to be a little open-minded, but it's just that simple... they're not wrong, they're lying. They're lying about one of the most critical issues possible, something that will affect humanity for centuries. They're lying about

issues that will leave people dead, starving, ill, homeless, and warring. They're paying billions of dollars to put these lies out day after week after year. And they're lying ONLY because they make money off the lies. Ready to get your blood boiling? Then settle in for this month's News to Make You Furious...