



## The Tom Dwyer Automotive Services Newsletter for October, 2015

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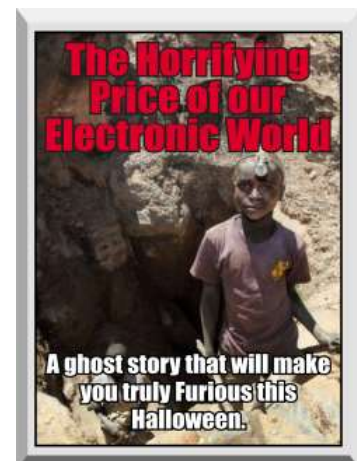
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#### News To Make You Furious

A Truly Terrifying Ghost Story



# Tom's Tidbits

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Connecting the dots



Greetings!

Several stories in the news recently may not seem related, but I think there's a deep link. One was Kevin McCarthy's boastful admission that the Benghazi hearings were inflated to discredit Hillary. Another was Bill O'Reilly's embarrassing proclamation that childhood hunger was a long-discredited myth. Another; the Texas Railroad Commission's finding that earthquakes were unrelated to fracking, despite the findings of scientists who studied the issue.

So what links the stories? They're all prime examples of bias trumping reality. Are the [Benghazi hearings legitimate investigations or a smear machine?](#) Valid questions have long since been answered and yet the character assassination continues. McCarthy's error was in admitting the reality of the witch-hunt. O'Reilly might propose whatever solution to hunger he wishes, but what value can there be in anything he says if he [pretends hunger doesn't exist in the first place](#)? If a Texas politician thinks earthquakes are just the price of doing business then so be it, but he should advocate that position instead of [pretending the observable, scientific method](#) doesn't exist. [Global warming](#)? Accepting climate change as real and deciding it's too expensive to do anything about it is a morally indefensible but logically coherent position, but pretending it doesn't exist is just negligent and dangerous.

In order to make rational decisions about anything first one must understand and accept current facts. Starting from biased perspectives doesn't make sense in any arena, and it's frustrating to see it so pervasive in areas as critical as public policy. We can pretend otherwise, but facts will continue to assert themselves in spite of our desires to ignore them. Ignoring reality will produce an outcome, but probably not one in line with a positive result.

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

# What NOW?!! Toons

Terrifying Halloween Trumarkin



**"WHAT NOW?!!!"**

© KEITH TUCKER  
WWW.WHATNOWTOONS.COM



# **What's up with YOUR car?**

Our IFR keeps you aware of what's REALLY important



A simple idea guides our approach to auto service... making clear, prioritized recommendations from a point of full knowledge leads to the best results. Before our Service Advisors make any recommendations about your vehicle they want to make sure what they offer makes sense. To get the full knowledge we need on our client's vehicles, we created our Inspection For Repair (or IFR, also known as our "Comprehensive Inspection" or "130-point inspection"). Since this is so critical to the level of care you'll receive from us, we think you should know exactly what's in our IFR, when and why we recommend it, and why it's so different from auto

maintenance approaches at other shops...

## **The big picture- Our inspection process**

Our goal is to deliver the *exact* services to meet your individual vehicle's mechanical needs and your ownership goals. Experience has shown us a rational, consistent inspection program is the best way to do that. Bad inspections are more than just useless- they can be expensive if they prompt you to spend money on a vehicle that's beyond repair, or even dangerous if you have false peace of mind about a critical system that's actually about to fail. We have developed our unique, proprietary inspection processes through over 30 years of use and refinement with the sole purpose of providing you the complete and accurate information you need to drive more safely and confidently, and get the most value from your vehicle maintenance dollars.

The IFR is critical to rational vehicle care, but it's designed to work in conjunction with other periodic inspections of various depths. We'll focus on the IFR in this article, but please click below for information on our...

- [40-Point Post-Service Checkout](#)
- [90-Point Basic Inspection](#)
- [Pre-Purchase Inspection](#)

## **An IFR is our deepest, most thorough evaluation**

The IFR is very similar to our used car pre-purchase inspection, and is a thorough, 130-point physical examination and evaluation of all the reasonably accessible systems of your vehicle. It also includes a vehicle road test, service history review, and Technical Service Bulletin and Recall search. The inspection portion alone requires well over an hour of professional time by an ASE-Certified Technician, and your non-commissioned Service Advisor will commit time as well in evaluating, prioritizing, and estimating the Technician's recommendations.

Plan a full day for the inspection; possibly more if you anticipate repairs or maintenance you might want done. If you drop off in the morning we can usually have the IFR completed with an evaluation and prioritized recommendations before the end of the day.

This is the form we use to conduct an IFR. We've heavily redacted it to protect a few trade secrets and you'll need to click to see a detailed image, but here are some of the high points to notice...

- That road test? We think it's a requirement in establishing your vehicle's condition, but it's not a standard part of "inspections" at every shop.
- Major vehicle systems are grouped together with all the detailed sub-components underneath.
- For the steering and suspension the Technician performs dry-park and physical inspection on the ground as well as a check when it's on the rack
- For the brake and friction components we don't think a "peek through the wheels with a flashlight" is enough. We remove the wheels and measure the brake rotors and friction materials, as well as removing and inspecting brake calipers (when pads below 3/32").
- The ignition component check includes actually pulling a spark plug to determine condition.
- Our coolant check includes a test of your coolant's pH to establish if it's acidic... changing coolants is a classic thing menu services include that may not be actually necessary by mileage alone.
- We scan vehicle data streams for possible trouble codes, either stored or pending.

This IFR is very similar to our used car pre-purchase inspection. When you're done, you'll have a complete mechanical picture of your vehicle so you can make informed choices to meet your goals based on your ACTUAL VEHICLE NEEDS. Please ask your Service Advisor to see the results of one of our completed IFRs next time you're by the office, we'll be glad to go over one with you point-by-point.

If your vehicle has less than 60,000 miles and has been reasonably well-maintained, there may not be many recommendations at all. If it has over 100,000 miles, hasn't been well maintained, or already has problems, you can expect a longer list of recommendations but NOT ALL OF THEM WILL BE EQUALLY IMPORTANT. One of our greatest values is that we will *PRIORITIZE the needed work according to your vehicle ownership goals* so you can address the items in a logical order.

## What it's not

- **It's NOT a diagnosis.** In some cases it *might* function as one; for example if an IFR finds a vehicle needs new struts as the answer to a chassis noise, then no further diagnosis

is needed. However, if an IFR finds an emission related fault code it will not cover the time needed to diagnose the precise cause of the fault.

- **It's DOESN'T cover EVERY system.** It covers every system that we can logically examine, but some parts like timing belts or head gaskets can't be reliably judged visually or accessed without major work.
- **It's not a crystal ball.** We bring the experience of ASE-Master-Certified Technicians to bear on your vehicle, and we examine and evaluate everything we logically can to give you our best analysis on what's coming up for your vehicle, but we can't predict the future. Our IFR is *not* a guarantee that something won't fail on your vehicle.

## Why we do it

We recommend an IFR to most new clients to give our Service Advisors a complete mechanical evaluation of the vehicle, allow them to prioritize possible repair and maintenance needs, and develop a vehicle care plan based on the vehicle's actual condition and the client's ownership goals. We also recommend repeating it often enough to catch developing problems before they become serious. An IFR once every 12,000-18,000 miles with 90-point inspections in between should be enough for most vehicles.

There are other reasons you might want to know the complete, exact mechanical condition of your vehicle.

- You might want to know if it's "worth it" to make an expensive repair. For example, a \$5500 engine replacement might make sense on a 10-year-old car if that's *all* that is needed for safety and reliability, but it might not make sense if the vehicle also needs a \$3000 transmission repair and/or \$1500 in tires and brakes.
- You may be getting the vehicle ready to sell or pass it to a friend or family member and want to know about any potential problems.

## Why our method is superior to others

We think mileage-based Service Menus (30k, 60k, 90k services) are a flawed way to care for your vehicle. Mileage menus were created as a tool to sell canned lists of profitable services without the hard work of physical examination on the service provider's part. The shop can then sell more (and possibly more important) work after some minimal level of vehicle inspection. While menus are better than no system at all, they don't take into account what's been done between intervals, nor can they reliably predict things like brake or tire wear, fluid leaks, unusual wear, or other potential failures.

Worse even than menu service from a full-service shop are recommendations from a specialty shop... one that specializes in a particular area like tires, brakes, oil changes, or mufflers. If a service provider can't work on the complete vehicle or doesn't take the time for proper inspection and records management; how can they offer the precise services needed? It's easy to find things to sell from a mileage menu, road test, or quick look, but what gets missed? What might have been needed even more? Is what's being recommended a priority? Does it make sense to be done now or even at all? If Brakes and Tires (as an example) are the only services provided at a facility; how will a timing belt or emission repair enter into the balance of determining priorities? If a shop only sells shocks and struts, they won't be aware or concerned that your transmission is ready to fail. If a provider only services a portion of the vehicle they can't offer complete advice, but as a full-service shop we care for our client's whole vehicle instead of just selling the few things our shop specializes in.

While we certainly keep factory recommendations and warranty concerns paramount, we skip the menu sales and instead take the time for proper inspection to create a prioritized list of needs and services to review with our clients. Our Service advisors are not paid sales commission and our technicians are paid by the hour so there is no incentive to sell unnecessary work or to rush things. This keeps us from selling unnecessary work or having to make additional phone calls to authorize additional work after a menu service has been performed.

Understanding your ownership goals, maintaining complete records, and offering a fresh inspection when needed allows us to keep in touch with your vehicle's changing condition. Our process takes time, but provides us the ability to prioritize all your needed services far better than a mileage interval service menu or cursory inspection.

# Flying Death Robots

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What could possibly go wrong? This report tells us



What strikes terror into the hearts of people in Somalia, Yemen, and Afghanistan? The knowledge that unseen drones are ready to strike. What strikes terror into the hearts of bureaucrats running a robotic death program? The sound of a whistleblower.

A recent eight-part report by The Intercept centers on a classified 2013 Pentagon study of our drone program leaked by a whistleblower. It reveals, among many other things, that we are conducting a “shadow war” in Africa, 90 percent of those killed by drone strikes in one 5-month period were not the intended targets, and that the military labels unidentified

people killed in targeted strikes as “enemies killed in action”. If you’re tired of the friendly zombies and happy ghosts this Halloween, settle in for Flying Robots of Death and be truly terrified...



[Click here for the full report by The Intercept](#)

Thankfully, there's already been some response report...

## [Drone Papers Aftermath: ACLU Demands Secret Program Data](#)

*Nadia Prupis on Common Dreams, Oct 2015*

## [Snowden And Ellsberg Hail Leak Of Drone Documents From New Whistleblower](#)

*The Guardian, Oct 2015*

## [Most killed by US drones were not targeted: report](#)

*Al Jazeera, Oct 2015*



# Halloween Candy

All our Halloween treats in one basket



“They” say there’s been strange goings-on at the old Dwyer Place lately, that old gray building down by the crumbly bridge. Course, “they” say it’s a mighty strange place from the get-go... lots of cars going by all the time, makin’ scary noises and stuff. But the thing is, see, that once those cars roll through the big, dark doors in front of Dwyer’s, they never come out the same. Sure, the cars’ll look just fine, but you can bet they won’t be makin’ those scary noises no more. And the people who bring the cars? Well, you never, EVER hear ‘em complain. Why, folks ‘round these parts say it gets even stranger this time of the year, what with candy treats at the

shop, animals in costume, little monsters creeping around Sellwood, 2-sentence-stories you can tell at your own Halloween party, and more. So settle back and check in with Old Man Dwyer’s 2015 Halloween Survival Guide... you may have to stay the night! BWAHH HAAA HAAA HAA HA!

## Monster March

One thing you absolutely MUST know to survive Halloween in Sellwood is the date of the Monster March. From the [Sellwood Bee...](#) “The annual Moreland Monster March in Westmoreland starts at 3 pm sharp at Llewellyn Elementary School, S.E. 14th and Tolman, proceeding east to Milwaukie Avenue, south to Bybee Boulevard, west to 14th, and then back to the school. It’s sponsored by the merchant members of the Sellwood Westmoreland Business Alliance and QFC Market, and is open to all. In costume? March in the parade, regardless of age or species! Not in costume? Gather on the sidewalks to watch the parade go by! Treats at the finish! It’s on, rain or shine, so if there are clouds, bring your umbrella.”



## Drew’s Kitchen... of FEAR!

Drew’s Experimental Test Kitchen is a shining temple of culinary technology, but most people don’t know about the dusty, secret door in the back, the one that leads to... Drew’s Dungeon. It’s where Drew cooks up his scariest concoctions, the ones that are only unveiled on Halloween. Click here for Drew’s [Halloween Meat Hand](#), [Spider Cookies](#), [Flayed Face Cheese Ball](#), [Ultimate Eyeballs](#), and Tentacle Pot Pie. Yum!



## Halloween Goes to the Dogs

In 2013 we had an article with about 70 pictures of adorable animals in Halloween costumes, and strangely, that article has had people looking at it almost every day for the past two years. Is your dog ready for the Halloween Fashion Runway? Click [here](#) to find out...



## Two-Sentence Terror

If you love ghost stories but can just never remember them, then we're here to help. Here's a whole library of spine-chillers that are just two sentences long; some even less...

I woke up to hear knocking on glass. At first, I thought it was the window until I heard it come from the mirror again.

The last thing I saw was my alarm clock flashing 12:07 before she pushed her long rotting nails through my chest, her other hand muffling my screams. I sat bolt upright, relieved it was only a dream, but as I saw my alarm clock read 12:06, I heard my closet door creak open.

Growing up with cats and dogs, I got used to the sounds of scratching at my door while I slept. Now that I live alone, it is much more unsettling.

In all of the time that I've lived alone in this house, I swear to God I've closed more doors than I've opened.

A girl heard her mom yell her name from downstairs, so she got up and started to head down. As she got to the stairs, her mom pulled her into her room and said "I heard that, too."

She asked why I was breathing so heavily. I wasn't.

My wife woke me up last night to tell me there was an intruder in our house. She was murdered by an intruder 2 years ago.

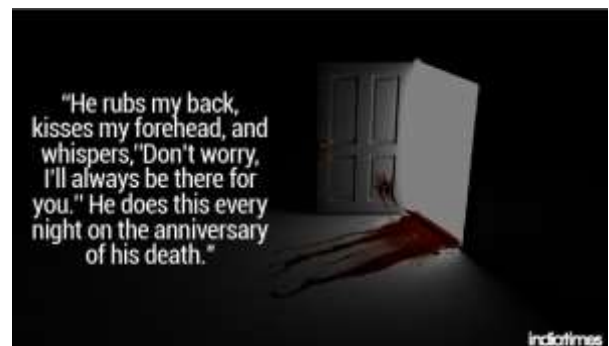
I awoke to the sound of the baby monitor crackling with a voice comforting my firstborn child. As I adjusted to a new position, my arm brushed against my wife, sleeping next to me.

I always thought my cat had a staring problem - she always seemed fixated on my face. Until one day,

when I realized that she was always looking just behind me.

There's nothing like the laughter of a baby. Unless it's 1 a.m. and you're home alone.

I was having a pleasant dream when what sounded like hammering woke me. After that, I could barely hear the muffled sound of dirt covering the coffin over my own screams.



"I can't sleep," she whispered, crawling into bed with me. I woke up cold, clutching the dress she was buried in.

After working a hard day I came home to see my girlfriend cradling our child. I didn't know which was more frightening, seeing my dead girlfriend and stillborn child, or knowing that someone broke into my apartment to place them there.

I begin tucking him into bed and he tells me, "Daddy, check for monsters under my bed." I look underneath

for his amusement and see him, another him, under the bed, staring back at me quivering and whispering, "Daddy, there's somebody on my bed."

You get home, tired after a long day's work and ready for a relaxing night alone. You reach for the light switch, but another hand is already there.



I can't move, breathe, speak or hear and it's so dark all the time. If I knew it would be this lonely, I would have been cremated instead.

She went upstairs to check on her sleeping toddler. The window was open and the bed was empty.

Don't be scared of the monsters, just look for them. Look to your left, to your right, under your bed, behind your dresser, in your closet but never look up, she hates being seen.

My daughter won't stop crying and screaming in the middle of the night. I visit her grave and ask her to stop, but it doesn't help.

After working a hard day, I came home to see my girlfriend cradling our child. I didn't know which was

more frightening, seeing my dead girlfriend and stillborn child, or knowing that someone broke into my apartment to place them there.

There was a picture in my phone of me sleeping. I live alone.

They celebrated the first successful cryogenic freezing. He had no way of letting them know he was still conscious.

She wondered why she was casting two shadows. After all, there was only a single lightbulb.

The grinning face stared at me from the darkness beyond my bedroom window. I live on the 14th floor.

I just saw my reflection blink.

They delivered the mannequins in bubble wrap. From the main room I begin to hear popping.

I kiss my wife and daughter goodnight before I go to sleep. When I wake up, I'm in a padded room and the nurses tell me it was just a dream.

The last man on Earth sat alone in a room. There was a knock at the door.

After working a hard day I came home to see my girlfriend cradling our child. I didn't know which was more frightening, seeing my dead girlfriend and stillborn child, or knowing that someone broke into my apartment to place them there.

My sister says that mommy killed her. Mommy says that I don't have a sister.



# Drew's Kitchen

## Speedy Shepherd's Pie with Halloween Bonus



BOO! It's Halloween, and you'll need something to stave off a sugar coma in your children and maybe even yourself. Pot pie is always a favorite, and this month Drew brings you a recipe that is much easier to make than your kid's homemade Transformer costume. If you're looking for a creative treat for your Halloween party, this recipe also comes with a Halloween bonus!

### Speedy Shepherd's Pie

*-Recipe in Cooking Light, October 2015*

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound 93% lean ground beef
- 1 cup matchstick-cut carrots, finely chopped
- 1 cup pre-chopped onion
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tbsp unsalted tomato paste
- 1 cup unsalted beef stock, divided
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3/8 tsp kosher salt
- 1 ½ cups frozen green peas
- 1 (24-oz) package prepared mashed potatoes
- 2 tbsp freeze-dried onion
- ½ tsp Hungarian sweet paprika

#### Preparation:

- Preheat oven to 500°
- Place beef in a large skillet over high heat; cook 5 minutes or until browned, stirring to crumble. Add carrot, onion, and garlic to pan; cook 2 min. Stir in tomato paste; cook 30 sec.
- Combine ¼ cup stock and cornstarch in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add cornstarch mixture, remaining ¾ cup stock, Worcestershire, pepper, and salt to pan. Stir in peas. Cook 2 minutes or until slightly thickened.
- Place beef mixture in a 2-quart glass or ceramic baking dish. Top evenly with mashed potatoes. Sprinkle freeze-dried onions and paprika over potatoes. Bake at 500° for 5 minutes.

**Serves 4 2-cup servings.**

#### Nutrition

419 calories; 13.8g fat (6.9g sat, 3.9g mono, .6g poly), 31g protein, 44g carb, 8g fiber, 81mg chol, 5mg iron, 681mg sodium, 85mg calcium.

### **Halloween Bonus:**

*A little creativity with dough and you have*

[Tentacle Pot Pie!](#)





# Shop Talk

## New Faces Behind the Desk



### **Trick or Treat at the Shop**

We go all out here at the shop for Halloween. Come on by to see the Halloween collection we've gathered over the years, and don't forget to say "Trick or Treat"... we give out the big Snickers bars that will make your kids jealous!



### **New Faces Behind the Desk**

If you've been by the shop recently, you've probably noticed some personnel changes behind the desk. Steve and Sarah have moved on to greener pastures after many years of spectacular service and Dean and Perry have sat down in their places. We hope you can stop by to meet them soon, and pssst... if you have any really good ideas on aggressive office hazing, you can send them to [tomdwyer@tomdwyer.com](mailto:tomdwyer@tomdwyer.com).



### **Comment of the Month**

"I like everything about your service including the magazines and recipes!" - Beverly S.

*Thanks, Beverly. While our main focus is auto repair and customer service, we think the details matter too. [Drew's Kitchen](#) is our longest-running column, so those recipes are favorites with many of our clients. Make sure you check out his Kitchen this month... there's a special Halloween Treat waiting for you!*



### **Referral Reward program**

People telling their friends, family, and co-workers about our service is our strongest source of the new clients we need to stay strong. In our Referral Reward program we make a donation in your name to the non-profit group of your choice when a new client comes in because of your referrals. Groups are eligible for quarterly and yearly awards too. So far, these donations have totalled

**\$9367 to 145 groups**

since the program started! Here are the groups that benefitted in October...

[TREE Fund](#) by Kim R.

[Workers World Party](#) by Lynn N.

[Juvenile Diabetes Research Fdn](#) by Steve L.

[Adventist Hospice](#) by Megan GB

[Blue Sky Gallery](#) by Eric M

[Downtown Church](#) by Peggy S

[Feed the Hungry Global](#) by Phil W.

[Working Families Party](#) by Gary W

[Oregon Food Bank](#) by Grace H.

[Jesuit High School](#) by David H.

[JOIN PDX](#) by Hans M.

[Oregon Humane Society](#) by Catheryn M.

[p:ear](#) by Joe P.



## **Your reviews and referrals matter**

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



## **Latest Automotive Recalls**

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

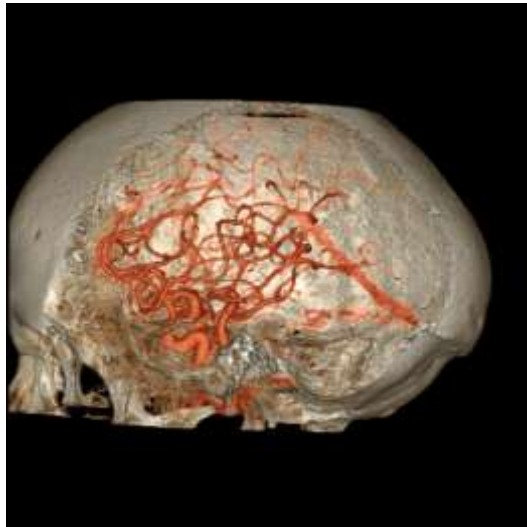
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# Health Notes

## Blood, skulls, bones, and brains



Western Medicine is built around technology. While your health may most often be about the decisions you make in your daily life, sometimes you may need to rely on that spectacularly successful tech. Have you ever looked at one of your X-rays? It may be hard to see a hairline fracture in your wrist in an X-ray, but it's a heck of a lot harder without one. X-rays were the absolute state-of-the-art for about 60 years until MRIs, CAT scans, and



ultrasounds came along to create a quantum leap in body imaging. Another quantum leap in body imaging is happening now, producing images so precise and clear that we saved them for Halloween. We've included several of the best shots here, but check the links below. If you are as impressed as we were by these images, you'll really appreciate the motion GIF animations showing a dive through a human skull to show the blood circulation in the brain! Brains, skulls, blood, bones... what more do you need for a happy Halloween?

### [You Won't Believe How Accurate GE's New CT Scanner Is](#)

Andrew Tarantola on Gizmodo, Dec 2013

### [See marvelously detailed images of the body taken by new CT scanner](#)

Anthony Domanico on CNET, Jan 2015

### [Revolution CT Image Gallery](#) GE Healthcare website

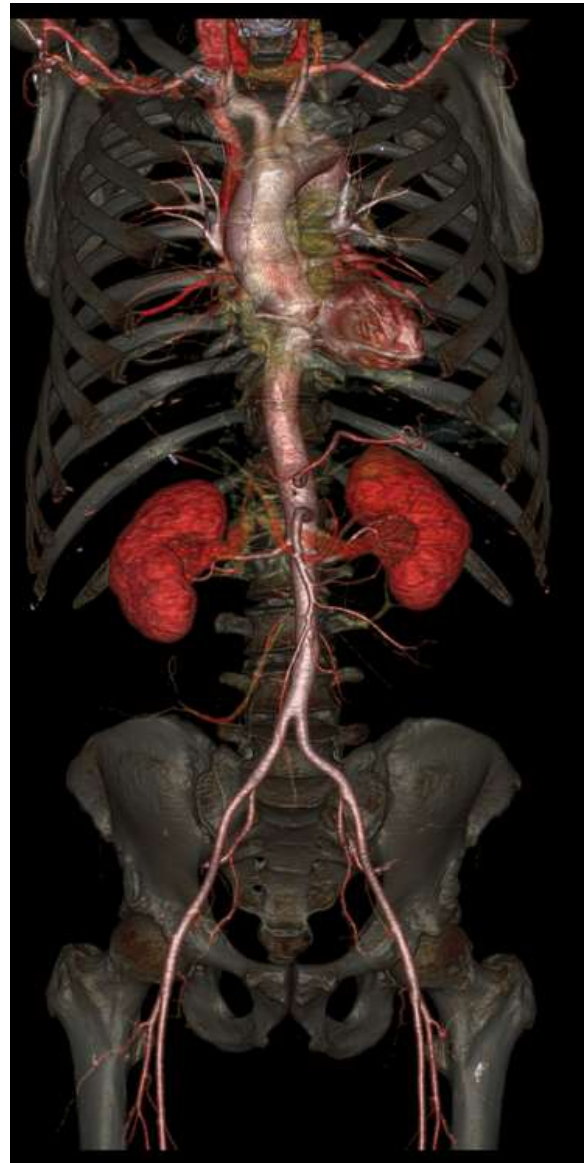
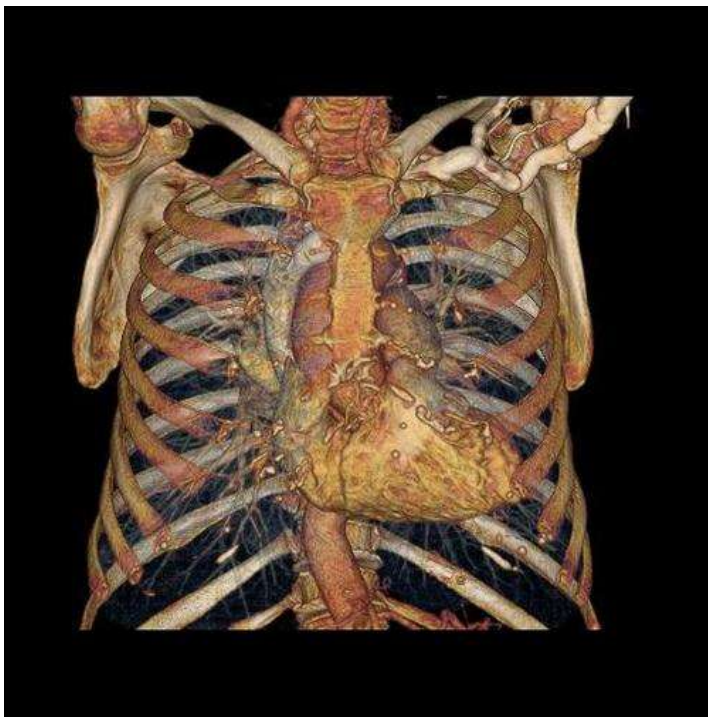
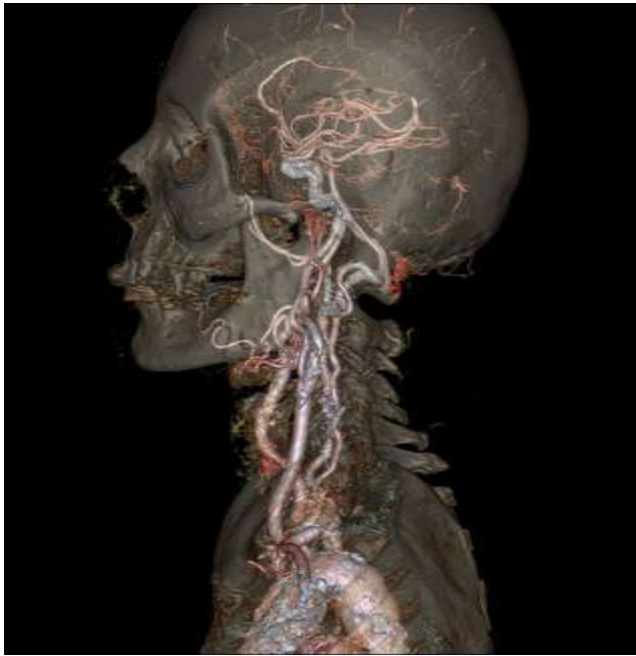
### [New CT Scan Images From GE Show Unprecedented Level Of Detail](#)

Chris Weller in Medical Daily, Jan 2015

### [GE Revolution CT Scanner](#) GE Healthcare website

### [New CT Scan Can See Bones And Organs In Stunning Detail](#)

Tomas Kelinek on GE Reports, Jan 2015





# Sellwood Bridge Update

## Big Westside changes on the way



The Sellwood Bridge is creeping closer to opening... latest projections have traffic moving on the NEW bridge in Jan-Feb of 2016. After the new bridge opens there's still some finishing touches to be done (like the removal of the old bridge) but the project should be completely, ultimately, fully finished by November 2016. Unless it isn't. As always, we'll keep you posted.

In the meantime, there's a big traffic change coming in a couple weeks. From the Sellwood Bridge website...

"The contractor is preparing for a major traffic change in early November, when the northbound lane of Hwy. 43 will shift onto the new interchange ramps and the southbound through lane will be routed under the new bridge (see [diagram and article on project website](#)). Shifting the traffic will create space for the contractor to build the second through lane under the bridge. In the new stage, southbound traffic will use the right lane (not the left lane used now) to access the bridge. Watch for road signs and email updates about this traffic change tentatively planned for Nov. 7-8.

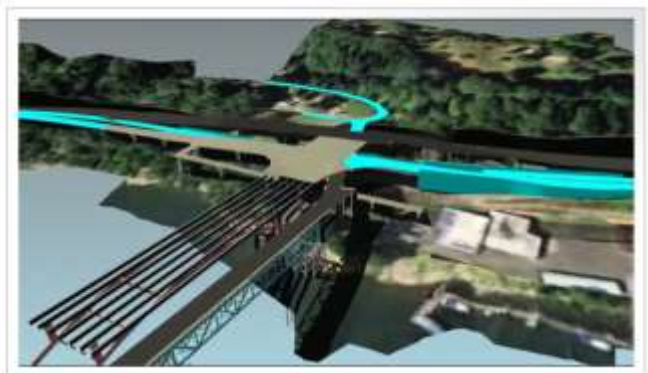
### TRAFFIC ALERTS

- The outside northbound lane of Hwy 43 lane will be closed near the driveway to Macadam Bay and Freeman Motors from 9 am to 4 pm on weekdays from Oct. 19-28 during work to relocate a water line.
- Concrete truck deliveries will add to morning congestion on Hwy. 43 on Tuesday, Oct. 20 and Friday, Oct. 23.
- Later this month several parking spaces on the south side of SE Spokane St. between SE Oaks Park Way and the driveway to Riverpark condominiums will need to be closed temporarily during installation of a storm drain li

Throughout the construction we've been mystified by the coming west side interchange, but the County had some wonderful images and videos that made it clear. Mostly. Anyway, the pic at top shows you a still view of the traffic pattern, and the pic at bottom is a full animation of the traffic patterns throughout the project. Well worth a watch!



As always, Multnomah County maintains the definitive website on everything related to the Sellwood Bridge Replacement project, [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://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](mailto:mike.j.pullen@multco.us), 503-209-4111) or visit [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://www.sellwoodbridge.org).



# Book Spotlight

## “Democracy NOW” Featured Authors



We've loved KBOO Community Radio for many years, and many of our clients work with the station as either employees or volunteers. Although we were underwriters long ago we've been remiss in not continuing the relationship, a situation we're very pleased to say has changed! We've returned as supporters of KBOO's [Tuesday Talk Radio](#) (8am) as well as one of the flagship shows of KBOO and the whole Progressive Media world... "[Democracy NOW!](#)" with Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez, 7am and 4pm Monday through Friday. We don't have much to share with you here from the Talk Radio shows but we found something from Democracy NOW that's perfect for Book Spotlight, [this list of some of the many, many authors who have been interviewed on Democracy NOW](#). We've included just a few of the titles below, but the list goes through several hundred important books. If you're settling in for Fall reading, your list is already complete!

### [Democracy NOW \(very partial\) list of featured authors](#)



### [Banned Books Week](#)

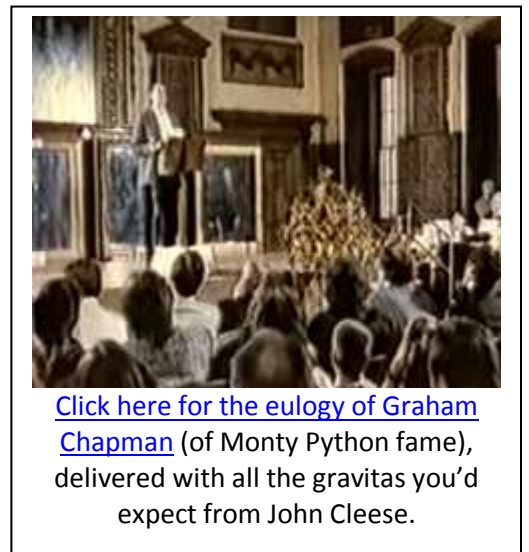
Although we missed mentioning 2015's Banned Books Week (Sep 27 to Oct 3), it's never too late for a little subversiveness. To post-celebrate, here is a link to the [most challenged books of 2014](#) (and a lot of other related info) as printed in Smithsonian magazine



# Humorousness

## Humor from beyond the grave

What's funnier than strolling through a graveyard? Well, nothing we could think of, which probably says we need a new staff here at Humorousness. For Halloween it works though, so take a stroll with us through this Graveyard of Guffaws. Feel free to whistle past it if you'd like!



[Click here for the eulogy of Graham Chapman](#) (of Monty Python fame), delivered with all the gravitas you'd expect from John Cleese.

# 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!



## **The most evil App you'll ever encounter**



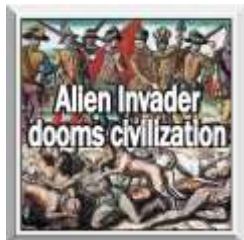
When we say "cool stuff that's too small for a big article", this is exactly what we mean. This story will terrify you in just one sentence... "[Peeples is a new app will be like Yelp for individuals, allowing people you know to rate YOU.](#)" AAAAHHHHH! Believe it or not, the Intertubes have stood firm against this horror, and the backlash has forced founder Julia Cordray to "[rethink the app](#)". Check out Julia's cringeworthy [defense](#) here and her equally cringeworthy [YouTube monologue](#) here, but don't miss satire apps [Sheeple](#) or [Meet Peeples](#) that popped so quickly. And remember, it's all just a dream, it's all just a dream...

## **Poisonous Troll UNMASKED!**



Wayne Simmons has been FOX News' go-to guy for terrorism and intelligence commentary for many years, based on his claims that he helped run clandestine operations for the CIA for nearly three decades. "Nobody knew who I was," Simmons said at one event. "Nobody was allowed to know who I was." As it happens, the CIA was one of the people not allowed to know him because on October 15 federal authorities arrested Simmons and charged him with making false statements, major fraud against the United States and wire fraud. [He apparently made the whole thing up.](#) FOX news did not have any comment on their website by our press time.

## **Alien Invader dooms civilization**



Another Columbus Day has come and gone, but despite what you hear from FOX News and your grade school history books, the real Columbus wasn't a plastic superhero striding bravely across the waters to open up a new world for Europeans. Whatever his contribution to charting the New World, it wasn't pretty from the point of view of the people he met when he got here. From rape and murder to slavery and pedophilia, [this article](#) from our Oct 2014 "News To Make You Furious" will introduce you to the man who, far from deserving his own holiday, fits in just perfectly with the horror show of Halloween...

## **Time Travel Terror**



13.8 billion years is a lot to take it all at once, but designer Matan Satuber of Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design has taken a big step to make it easier. He created an interactive timeline that covers not just recent history, not just written history, not just Earth's history, but [ALL history back to the Big Bang](#). Each dot on the timeline represents a discrete historical event with deeper links, and it's constantly updatable as new history is added.





# News To Make You Furious

## A Truly Terrifying Ghost Story



We were searching for the perfect News to Make You Furious this Halloween when client Marla R. sent us one wrapped in a bow. It's even a ghost story in a way, because after all, what's a ghost? It's a damned spirit that's usually invisible, but that strikes terror into the heart of anyone who comes face to face with one. The ghosts in this story certainly haunt houses, but then they also haunt offices and stores, farms and factories, cities and villages, even purses and pockets. No one wants to see these ghosts so corporations, politicians, and media conspire to ensure we never even think about them, much less see them. But they're still lurking, desperate to be seen, waiting to disrupt our digitally anesthetized lives. They're the ghosts of children who live and die in mines, the ghosts of adults who jump to their deaths from factory barracks, the ghosts of landscapes murdered by pollution,

the ghosts of opportunities lost to greed. And the thing that will make you Furious is that these ghosts don't haunt OTHER people, they haunt us ALL. Because we're ALL responsible, and these are the ghosts we ALL have to face. BOO!

## [12 Horrifying Photos of the Tech Industry Apple Never Wants You to See](#)

C. Robert Gibson on US Uncut, Sep, 2015

As the American public continues to depend more on digital technology to run society, the US tech industry is booming. New gadgets are flooding the market each year, and the top tech companies — Apple, Microsoft, Google, IBM, HP, and Cisco, among others — are raking [in record profits](#). But our addiction to the latest technology is simultaneously killing our atmosphere, our water, indigenous populations, and in the long run, our economy. These 12 photos illustrate how the US tech boom is affecting the rest of the world.

### **Tech companies depend on child labor for their raw materials.**

In the war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), child labor has intensified in the last decade due to increased demand for minerals like cobalt, copper, and coltan (short for columbite-tantalite). Currently, [16.9 percent](#) of the children between ages 5 and 14 work in the Congolese mining industry. And despite Congolese mining laws prohibiting the nation's armed forces from running the mines, the United Nations estimates that the Congolese army controls [approximately 50 percent](#) of the DRC's 200 mines. The UN's International Labor Organization called mining [one of the worst forms of child labor](#) due to the numerous health risks inherent in the industry.



## At least 40,000 children are forced to mine the minerals in our smartphones and laptops.

To get around Congo's mining laws, the Congolese army operates under "artisanal mining" guidelines, allowing them to conscript workers to labor in extremely hazardous conditions. According to a 2010 study by BMS World Mission, of the 100,000 mine workers in the DRC, [40 percent](#) are children under age 18. Children are often conscripted by the army to work in the mines, and are paid just [\\$1 to \\$5 a day](#). Of the children who work in the mines, [66 percent](#) are unable to finish school, and [77 percent](#) of those children eat just one meal a day.



## The groups behind the 1994 Rwandan Genocide operate the mines that supply the US tech industry.

The DRC holds roughly [80 percent](#) of the world's coltan. Along with the Congolese national army, militias from Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi control most of the coltan mining in the DRC. One group is the [Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda](#), which was behind the [slaughter of 800,000 Rwandans](#) in 1994. Even though Rwanda itself contains no coltan, Rwanda's coltan exports went from 50 tons in 1995 to [250 tons in 1998](#). The United Nations reported in 2001 that the American companies purchasing the exploited minerals serve as "[the engine of the conflict in the DRC](#)."

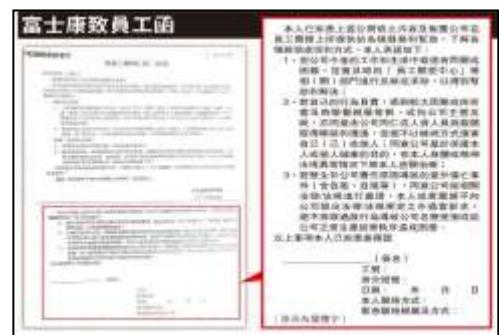


## Apple's largest manufacturer installed nets to prevent workers from committing suicide — but workers are still killing themselves.

Contract manufacturer Foxconn is China's largest private sector employer and the [chief manufacturer](#) of Apple's iPhones and iPads. It also makes electronics for [Dell](#), [Motorola](#), [Nintendo](#), [Nokia](#), and [Sony](#). Working conditions are apparently so bad at Foxconn that the tech manufacturer [installed suicide nets](#) at its plants after a rash of suicides in 2010 at Foxconn's Shenzhen plant that resulted in [14 worker deaths](#). Foxconn also put barriers on windows of the factory dormitories where its 300,000 to 400,000 workers live, to prevent workers jumping to their deaths.



However, Foxconn workers continue to attempt suicide every year — Between 2010 and 2013, 7 more workers [committed suicide](#). And another Foxconn worker jumped to his death as recently as [August](#). In 2011, workers at Foxconn's Chengdu plant were forced to sign a contract that [forbids them from committing suicide](#).



In response to the suicides, Foxconn has [held rallies](#) and announced a pay increase of \$293 a month (roughly an additional \$9.70 per day) in an attempt to boost workers morale. But the company still hasn't removed suicide nets from its buildings. And judging by this photo of a Foxconn rally, worker morale hasn't improved much.



## Foxconn workers make \$17 a day. Foxconn's CEO is worth at least \$5.9 billion.

The pay and working conditions at Foxconn are so unbearable that 5 percent of its workforce — [approximately 24,000 people](#) — quits every month. According to the [New York Times](#), the average Foxconn worker makes \$17 a day, working [70 hour weeks](#). Meanwhile, Foxconn CEO Terry Gou has a net worth of [\\$5.9 billion](#). That means the average Foxconn employee would have to work 347 million days, or 951,000 years, to have as much money as its top executive. And if that isn't bad enough, Foxconn workers are fined just for talking at work, and security guards patrol the assembly lines to listen for workers breaking the no-talking rule.



"Hundreds of people work in the workshops but they are not allowed to talk to each other," Chinese government investigator Zhu Guangbing told The Telegraph. "If you talk, you get a black mark in your record and you get shouted at by your manager. You can also be fined."

## Tech industry mining produces miles-wide lakes of toxic waste.

Roughly [95 percent](#) of the "rare earth minerals" used in smartphones and laptops gets produced in Northern China. But Mongolia holds 70 percent of the world's reserves of those minerals. The waste from those mining operations gush out of pipes in Baotou — a region of Mongolia bordering Northern China — where some toxic lakes span [more than 5 miles in diameter](#). Here's a GIF image of multiple pipes ejecting sludge from a tech mining site into an artificial lake.



## America's biggest tech companies are some of the nation's biggest corporate tax avoiders.

Collectively, the 5 biggest tech companies — Apple, Microsoft, Google, Oracle, and Cisco — have over [\\$430 billion](#) in overseas cash. Apple alone has [\\$158 billion stashed overseas](#). If brought back to the US and taxed at a 35 percent rate, that \$430 billion would provide \$150.5 billion in revenue. That could create 600,000 public sector jobs for 5 years at \$50,000 a year per job. And as the below chart illustrates, the tech industry's median tax





rates are some of the lowest out of all industries. New York University professor Aswath Damodaran studied the data of over 7,000 publicly-traded companies, and discovered that while the retail automotive sector pays a median effective income tax rate of 32.7 percent, the computer software/services sector and the internet sector pay just a 10.1 percent and 5.9 percent rate, respectively.

#### A Large Tax Gap

Cleaning up the corporate tax code, as President Obama has proposed, would level the tax rates paid by different industries.



Data compiled from documents of more than 7,000 publicly traded companies.

Source: Prof. Aswath Damodaran, New York University

## Tech workers are gentrifying San Francisco so much, their bus drivers have to sleep in cars

While the tech industry is booming, a huge influx of well-to-do employees of Google, Twitter, and Facebook are moving into San Francisco and Oakland en masse. Silicon Valley tech companies even shuttle workers from their downtown apartments to their workplaces using [private bus services](#). According to the [San Francisco Chronicle](#), an average one-bedroom apartment now costs \$2,186 in San Jose, \$2,469 in Oakland, and \$3,361 in San Francisco. Needless to say, these bus drivers can't afford to rent an apartment in the cities they serve, and sleep in their cars instead.



Technology is an industry likely to continue growing and expanding over the next several decades. Unless customers start demanding better treatment of workers, the environment, and the communities they inhabit, the tech industry's unsavory business practices are likely to continue.