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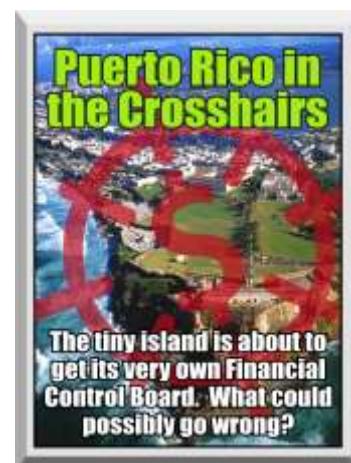
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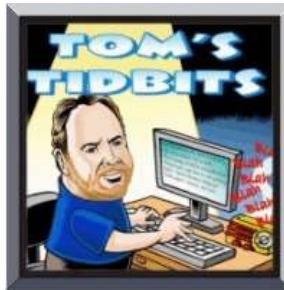
#### **News To Make You Furious**

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# Tom's Tidbits

## Space... The Fiscal Frontier



Greetings!

Most people don't pay attention to our military space program. If you're like me, you didn't even know we had one! I certainly *assumed* the military had a presence in space, but on the rare occasions I thought about it at all I imagined they piggybacked on NASA flights. Not even close... we've forked over A MINIMUM of \$37 BILLION dollars over the past 10 years for military launches alone! For WHAT? We as citizens aren't in the loop, so in most cases it's hard to know if the money is wasted or not. Not always, though. [The story that caught my eye](#) gives a glimpse into one area of the program, but the price tag isn't the headline. It's a story of bureaucracy, big government, corporate cronyism, small business squeeze, and how all this combines to endanger the access to space it was supposed to ensure to begin with...

Lockheed and Boeing's Space Age roots begin in the 1950's when they developed the boosters that are the [workhorses](#) of our current space program. In 2005 [they decided to combine](#) their launch services into the [United Launch Alliance](#) (ULA). The merger was criticized at the time by the [Federal Trade Commission](#) (FTC) and the [Department of Defense](#) (DoD) among others. The [FTC even intervened](#) to stop the merger but [eventually relented](#) and in 2006 ULA was born.

Fast forward to today. ULA has performed [106 launches with a 100% success rate](#), which is a very good thing. But [they also charge over \\$350 million per launch](#), plus an additional "readiness fee" of \$800 million *annually*. ULA's recent [uncontested contract](#) for \$11 billion is [currently under investigation](#) by the DoD. Their monopoly has eliminated the incentive to innovate, so even though they've promised for years to develop a domestically-manufactured replacement, ULA's rocket fleet is [now dependent on engines made only in Russia](#). That's right... our space program now depends on the good will of Vladimir Putin.

Now ULA is [facing challenges to their monopoly](#), but rather than make changes they're fighting back. Elon Musk's [SpaceX](#) says they can launch for as little as \$80 million per flight, and aren't dependent on Russian engines to do it. SpaceX [filed suit](#) to block the \$11 billion no-bid deal, which resulted in a [settlement](#) that would open more missions to competitive bid. Neither SpaceX nor the many other growing [private space companies](#) can yet do everything ULA can, but there shouldn't be a bloated monopoly standing in the way of their attempts.

In my fantasy world, I'd shrink the Pentagon and cut our "defense" budget in half over the next 10 or 20 years. I'd prefer going even lower, perhaps to 25% of current levels, but even that major change still wouldn't honor the Founder's goal of "no standing army". We either need to fight the congressional-military-industrial complex or accept endless war and waste as the new normal. But that's my fantasy world... in this world, the Pentagon is an economic black hole. We just accept the trillion dollar annual spending and the trillions of dollars that have gone missing in their care. For some disastrous mystery the Pentagon can't be audited, but companies like ULA, Halliburton, Blackwater, and a thousand others are sterling examples of why they should be. [Every dollar spent for planes, boats and bombs is a dollar that could have been invested in a better society.](#)

Take Care and Make a Great Day!

### Digging Deeper...

[How Elon Musk Exposed Billions In Questionable Pentagon Spending](#), Matthew Nusbaum on Politico, May 2016

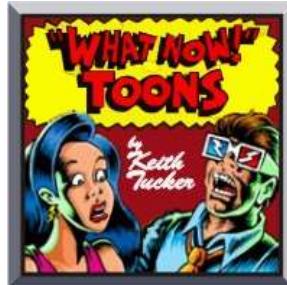
[ULA: Failure of Merger and Monopoly](#), Tim Kyger in SpaceNews, Oct, 2015

[SpaceX Breaks Boeing-Lockheed Monopoly On Military Space Launches](#), Irene Klotz on Reuters, Apr 2016

[Military Access to Space at Risk](#), Thompson and Baroudos, on Real Clear Defense, May 2016

# What NOW?!! Toons

Our monthly check in with Keith Tucker



# The Power Is In YOUR hands

Planning ahead means service on YOUR schedule



Tom Dwyer clients know about the feedback cards we leave in each vehicle after service. These cards are vital to us; they're how we know when we're doing well or when there's something that needs our attention. The majority of responses are positive (thank you!) but there is one negative comment that can pop up this time of year... "You're always so busy it was hard to get in". This is one of the most frustrating comments we get because it's so rarely the case! There's not much we can do about it, but YOU can, and we'll tell you exactly how...

We try our best to maintain the highest level professional staff, and at a level that works year-round. We need enough seasoned Technicians and Service Advisors to provide impeccable service

when it's busy, but not so many that we can't maintain them when it's slow. Careful matching of client needs and staff resources (with some flexibility built in for emergencies) makes our workflow go smoothly, and serves clients with advance appointments as well as those with surprise problems. But the auto repair industry is very seasonal, and in the very busiest times our workflow can stretch our capacity all too quickly.

Many shops handle this variability by paying Service Advisors on pure commission or Technicians on Flat Rate because after all, if people are paid solely for sales or production, any excess bodies standing around are free to the business! But things run differently in that environment, and not in a way that you as a client would appreciate. We're serious about not letting it happen here. Aside from the fact that we just don't like treating staff like they're fungible, our professionals are the best there are and can't easily be replaced. Instead we try to maintain a sustainable staffing level year-round. As result we may not be as able to keep up with the peaks, but we aren't cutting people lose in the valleys either.

Those peaks and valleys in work flow are very real constraints for us, but how can YOU avoid their impact? There's an easy way... scheduling well in advance for routine things like planned maintenance or your pre-vacation once-over will ensure timely service. We do try to keep some excess capacity for those inevitable surprise needs, but we can have unexpected no-shows or cancellations that turn "too much work to get done" into "not enough work to pay the bills". Scheduling is one of the most challenging aspects of our business and we do the best we can to strike the right balance, but there is always unpredictability that defies prediction or perfection. The farther ahead YOU can plan, the easier it is to for US to meet your needs. (And don't forget... our FREE Courtesy Shuttle or our access to rental cars can help change a scheduling conflict an easier experience).

We deeply appreciate the flexibility and patience of our clients during our busiest times! While we can't always promise next day appointments, we do promise this... we will produce the best possible outcome in the shortest possible time frame, and we won't corners on you (or anyone else) to do it!

# Red, Blue, and YOU

Take a look at the Facebook feeds you DON'T see



Facebook has been in the news for intentionally warping the results in its “trending” section. Intentional slanting of this kind is bad enough, but as Facebook become a major news source an unintentional but more insidious effect of their algorithms is becoming obvious as well. Tailoring news to individuals, feeding us the stories we’re “interested” in, means we’re not seeing the whole world. We create our own echo chambers where facts are cherry picked to reinforce our opinion. If a Lefty can’t understand the world view of a Righty, part of the reason might be because they’re both working from different sets of facts. Fortunately, there’s a cure...

The cure for bad information is good information. If we live in our own bubbles, then the answer is to break out of the bubble and see the rest of the world. Most people might not realize how insular their bubble can be, but the Wall Street Journal came up with a great way to show us all. Their site “[Blue Feed, Red Feed](#)” compares the news selections from Facebook on a variety of issues from Obama, Hillary, and Trump to guns, abortion, and transgender rights. Click on a topic and you’ll see the “Liberal” and “Conservative” Facebook feeds compared side-by-side. Take a look through the eyes of your wacky uncle or your hippie neighbor, and even if you don’t see the world *their* way, you won’t see it in the *same* way again!

## Digging Deeper...

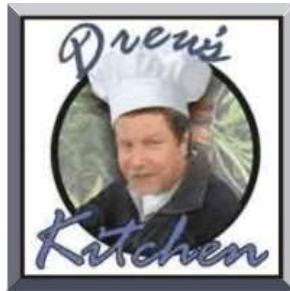
[Blue Feed, Red Feed](#)- See Liberal Facebook and Conservative Facebook Side-by-side, the Wall Street Journal, May 2016

[Facebook's Troubling One-Way Mirror](#), Jim Rutenberg in The New York Times, May 2016



# Drew's Kitchen

## Cucumber and Celery Salad with Tuna



The weather's getting nice. Recipes should be simple. Articles about recipes should be simpler still. Please enjoy this month's recipe from Drew's Kitchen. There... that's about as simple as it gets!

## Cucumber and Celery Salad with Tuna

### Ingredients:

- (2) teaspoons poppy seeds
- (3) tablespoons rice vinegar
- (1) tablespoon granulated sugar
- (2) tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- (2) cucumbers, halved lengthwise and cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch half-moons (6 cups)
- (3) celery stalks, cut into  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces, inner leaves reserved
- (2) 5-oz can solid white tuna in water, drained and flaked
- Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Preparation:

- In a medium bowl, stir together poppy seeds, vinegar, sugar and oil. Add cucumbers, celery and tuna; season with salt and pepper. Toss well to coat. Sprinkle with celery leaves and serve immediately (or refrigerate, covered, up to 1 day)
- Delicious on its own or stuffed into pita.

**Serves 4**

# Shop Talk

## “Tom D.”s Comment Of The Month



### Comment of the Month

Thomas D. said “My auto shop has been nominated for ‘Best Auto Repair in Portland’ in Willamette Week’s 2016 ‘Best of Portland’ issue. I’d be very grateful if my spectacular clients would go to the link below and vote for Tom Dwyer Automotive as Best Auto Repair (in the ‘Local Business/Services’ category)”

OK, fine, this may not be a comment from an actual client, and we’re pretty sure we know who “Thomas D.” really is. He brings up a good point though... Tom Dwyer Automotive is once again nominated as the Best Auto Repair Shop in Portland, and we need YOUR vote to win. We finished in second place last year and while it’s an honor just to be nominated (much less to take second place) let’s face it... we want to win. Badly. So please, if you like what you’ve found at our shop TELL THE WORLD, or at least Portland’s little corner of it. Click below to go to Willamette Week’s 2016 Best of Portland, look for us in the “Local Business/Services” category, and VOTE TOM DWYER AUTOMOTIVE AS THE BEST AUTO REPAIR IN PORTLAND! Please vote early and vote often, and thank you for your support of our shop now and throughout the year!



### Current Discount Offers



We prioritize all our repair recommendations by safety, breakdown, and maintenance, but when Summer hits it seems like there can be another priority... AIR CONDITIONING! Don’t wait till that first 100 degree day to find that

your AC has conked out.... schedule now to make sure your system is in top shape, and save money while you do it...

**Get an A/C Function assessment at NO CHARGE!**

Then, if you need it,

**We'll waive up to one hour Diagnostic Time (with repair)**

OR

**We'll take 25% Off of system evacuation and recharge**

A broken A/C makes a good vacation story, but if you’d rather have a good vacation then act now to make sure you’ll beat the Summer heat!

*Offer expires June 30, 2016*



It's not bad yet, but the coming heat will soon turn our parking lot into a dust factory. We can't wash all the vehicles we service, so we created Carwash Coupon Season from May through September to make up for it.

### Get a coupon for a FREE WashMan car wash (with minimum purchase)

CarWash Coupon Season only goes through Sep 15, so act now to get the sparkly vehicle you'll love. Sorry, but we only give coupons for services exceeding \$125 and not for oil changes or other minor services. So why don't we just wash your car here? It's one of the most common questions we get, so click here and we'll let Tom himself tell you why...

*(offer expires Sep 30, 2016)*



### Referral Reward Program

Our Referral Reward Program is our way of saying "thanks" for your valuable-as-gold referrals of new clients to our shop. It's pretty simple... when a new client comes in based on your referral, we make a donation to the non-profit group of your choice. Donations vary from \$10 to \$50 depending on the new client's initial purchases. Since we started the program in 2014, our clients have made it possible for us to donate \$11,360 to 184 deserving groups. May was another great month because we

were able to make 9 individual donations totaling \$335 to these groups...

[Oregon Humane Society](#) by Max S. [Sierra Club](#) by Dick H.

[OPB](#) by Timora K. [Yakote Women Farmers Association](#) by David S.

[Make A Wish Foundation](#) by Rob P. [Jeremy Wilson Foundation](#) by Wendy P.

[Mercy Corps](#) by Gary B. [1000 Friends of Oregon](#) by Robert R.

[Feldenkrais Educational Foundation of North America](#) by Andrea W.



### 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.

# Health Notes

## Does breathing affect your diet?



### **A Deeper Look Into Vitamin O**

By Marc David on the Institute for the Psychology of Eating, 2014

People often talk about burning calories but few realize that a calorie is simply a measure of heat released when something is burned. Food scientists determine the caloric value of a food by placing it in a special apparatus that essentially torches it to a crisp and measures the heat given off. It shouldn't surprise you, then, that just about everything has a measurable caloric value. A fortune cookie contains about 30 calories. A page of a typical book you read has at least 60 calories. The chair you're sitting in has upwards of 200,000 calories. And all of these calories need oxygen if you want them to burn. So if you're interested in maximizing metabolism, breathing is one of the most effective tools because the greater your capacity to take in oxygen, the higher your metabolic "burning power" will be.

Breathe in more oxygen and you burn food more fully.

It's really that simple. The digestive system is hungry for oxygen. Certain parts of the stomach lining consume more oxygen than any other tissue in the body. The intestinal villi, our site of primary nutrient absorption, are charged with the job of extracting large quantities of oxygen from the blood during the breakdown of a meal. When the blood lacks oxygen for the villi to pick up, absorption decreases.

If you like this article, then you may also be interested in another article by Marc David, "[Deep Breathing & Relaxed Eating Improves Digestion](#)" in the Well Being Journal, Mar/Apr 2016

The more we eat, the more the body naturally wants us to breathe. After a meal, the parasympathetic nervous system generates synchronous changes in breathing, blood circulation, and oxygen uptake. In other words, the brain automatically increases air intake to accommodate the need for more oxygen. Breathing more if you eat a lot is the same as exercising more if you eat a lot. If you interfere with the body's natural switch to deeper breathing because of anxiety or overstimulation, you limit your ability to burn calories. The simple rule here is this: If you eat more, breathe more.

To further examine the relationship between oxygen and calorie burning, have you ever had the experience of going on a low-calorie diet and not losing any weight, or dieting and losing weight with the first week but leveling off despite continuing your low-calorie fare? Many people are perplexed by this mysterious phenomenon, but the reason is quite simple. Your metabolism changed. The body learned to tolerate the meager portions of food you served it by lowering oxygen uptake—decreased oxygen means decreased metabolism. In many cases, weight loss diets actually teach the body to need less oxygen. So by going on a low-calorie diet you may think you're doing what's right for shedding pounds, but you're actually working against yourself.

Another way to think of this phenomenon is to consider that the act of eating creates a “demand” on metabolism. Just as lifting weights puts a demand on your muscles to grow bigger and stronger, eating puts a demand on your metabolism to grow more powerful and efficient. Food is literally like a weight that your body lifts. So it’s not just the nutrients in the food that determines the nutritional and metabolic value of a meal; the value is also determined by the process your body goes through to break the food down.

Indeed, the simple act of eating, by itself, raises metabolism. If we looked at one of the most common measures of metabolism—body temperature—we’d see that each time we eat, body temperature automatically rises. That’s the reality behind the old folk-medicine adage to “starve a fever”—if you already have a high body temperature, don’t eat because that will raise it even more.

It should come as no surprise that if chronic under-eating can lower the amount of oxygen we use, and hence lower metabolism, then eating more food for such individuals could increase metabolism. Indeed, many people I’ve worked with who honestly had weight to lose and were on a long-term, low-calorie diet without success lost their weight once they ate more food. Do you know someone who’s had this unusual experience? Eating more food literally created a demand for metabolic force and hence for oxygen uptake. The resulting increase in calorie-burning capacity far “outweighed” the extra food on their plate.

Certainly, many of us gain weight simply because we eat too much food. But when we shift to the opposite extreme—eating too little food—we will likely slow down our calorie-burning capacity. On any given day approximately 80 million Americans are on a diet. If low-calorie diets—meaning 1,400 calories a day or less—were truly effective in the long-term, then we’d see a lot more success and a lot less dieters. The point is not to overeat and expect to lose weight. The point is that neither extreme—too much food or too little—will take you where you want to go.

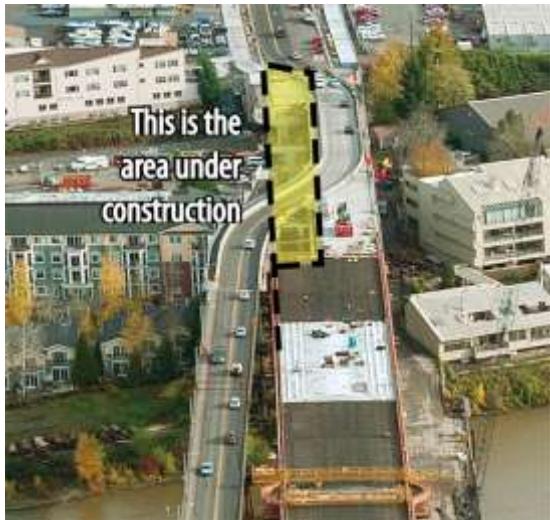
So if you truly want to achieve your optimum weight and metabolism, you can’t get there by denying yourself and going against biology. Losing weight means gaining life. Eat while relaxed and breathe while full of generosity and you access nature’s plan for greater health and inner satisfaction with food.

# Sellwood Bridge Update

Another major milestone



The Sellwood Bridge was closed May 20 and 21 for installation of concrete girders to fill in the gap left by the temporary "shoo fly" bridge. We sent a photographer from our Sellwood Bridge Bureau to cover the installation, and here's what he found...



This is one of the major parts remaining on the east side of the bridge. This gap was left to access the Old Bridge during construction of the New Bridge. Time to patch it up!



Here's a view of the gap from the east side, several days before the girders were to go in.



A construction worker observes the installation of the girders. When we took these pictures the first group of girders were already in. Each one takes about an hour to put in place.



A view from beneath the bridge on the Springwater Corridor as one of the girders is positioned.



Concrete girder being lowered into place.



Finished concrete grid structure after bridge opening.

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, 503-209-4111) or visit [www.sellwoodbridge.org](http://www.sellwoodbridge.org).

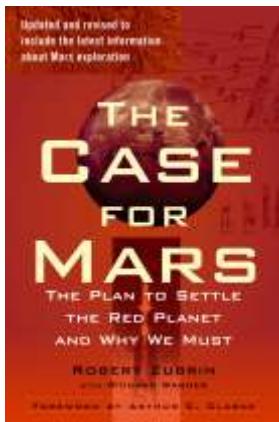
# Book Spotlight

## “The Case For Mars” by Robert Zubrin



We cover a lot of ground with our Book Spotlight, but it's usually political ground.

It's nice to occasionally break out into something a little different. Since Tom's Tidbits this month is about the entrenched bureaucracy of United Launch Alliance being challenged by the nimble and private SpaceX, we decided to bring you a very detailed look at another David-vs-Goliath-in-Space story. To do it, we'll defrost one of our very own Book Spotlight reviewers for his take on one of his all-time favorite books...



### [“The Case For Mars” by Robert Zubrin](#)

Review by Charles Letherwood. *Click the book cover to go to the Powells.com site*

In 1989, President George H.W. Bush wanted to revitalize a moribund space program for a new generation. In a soaring speech he called on humanity to return to space and reach for Mars. Politicians and engineers huddled together and came up with a number to do it... \$500 billion. This was a staggering amount even for Congress, and support was non-existent. President Clinton officially removed human space exploration from the national agenda in his 1996 National Space Policy. Except for low-earth-orbit and robotic missions our space program was dead.

Dead, that is, until engineer Bob Zubrin decided to re-examine the Bush plan. Digging in, he found the plan revolved around a gigantic “Battlestar Galactica” ship built in a new orbital drydock and requiring exotic new technologies to function. Every aerospace company involved in the Bush estimate had deemed their services “critical” to a Mars mission, and the resulting pork and set-asides for every company and congressional district had inflated the price tag to the impossible. Even worse, the benefits of a Battlestar-Galactica-style mission would be limited to a surface stay of a few weeks with little time to do real science... a “flag and footprints” mission only.

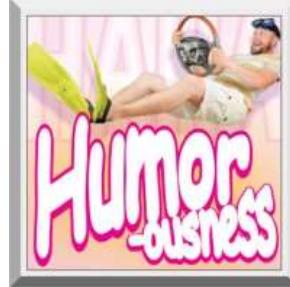
So Zubrin changed one assumption that changed everything else... what if the astronauts *didn't take any fuel for a return trip*, but instead *made the return fuel on Mars itself*? He put pencil to paper and found that the entire mission could be flown on 2 flights of existing Saturn V boosters. Making rocket fuel on Mars, seemingly new and exotic, was actually one of the simplest parts of the plan and could be done with gaslight-era technology. The new mission profile offered benefits never contemplated in space flight, but most importantly it gave the astronauts *almost a year* on the surface with the resources to *explore hundreds of miles from their landing site!* Total cost? Only \$50 billion; a tenth of the Bush number. And it could be even less if done by private companies rather than NASA.

Zubrin's plan wasn't the pie-in-the-sky dribblings of a crank. He presented his plan to NASA and, perhaps surprisingly, they not only saw the wisdom but acted on it. Zubrin's “Mars Direct” mission architecture became NASA's paradigm for eventual exploration of Mars. It's the plan that provided the setting for the movie “The Martian”. In “The Case For Mars” Bob Zubrin details this mission for a non-specialized audience. He's a clear and engaging writer, and makes what could be a dry technical analysis an inspirational and engaging read. From crew selection to Mars landing to splashdown on Earth, he explains precisely how we can reach for the Red Planet. More importantly, he explains the opportunities that await all of humanity on Mars... if we have the courage to go.

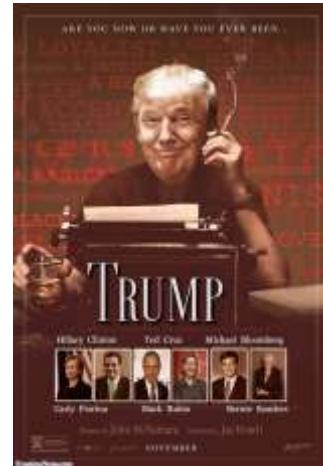
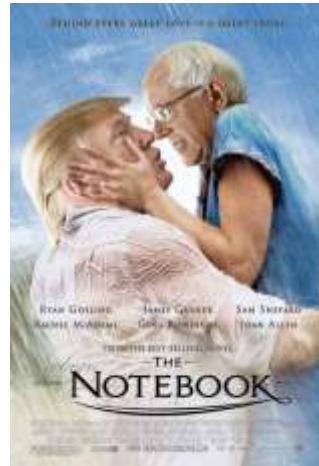
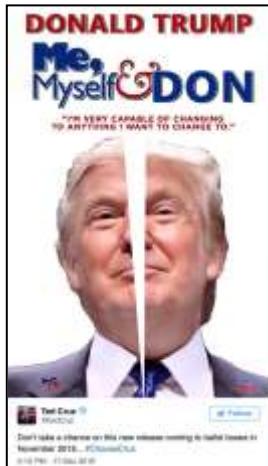
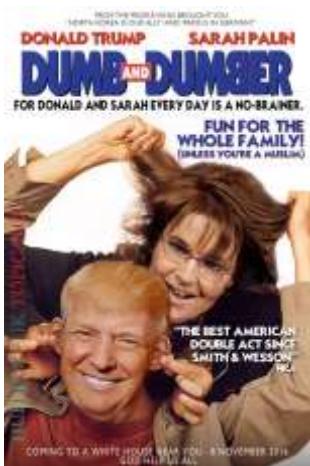
I was just four years old when human beings first landed on the Moon; too young to fully realize what I was seeing. Now I know I was just one of billions inspired by that awesome achievement, and just one of billions who believe our future in space isn't over. The last human stood on the Moon 1972. It's long past time to go back into space, but not back to the Moon... it's time for Mars. This excellent book will tell you how we get there.

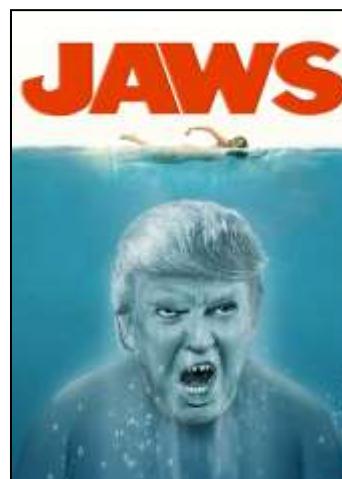
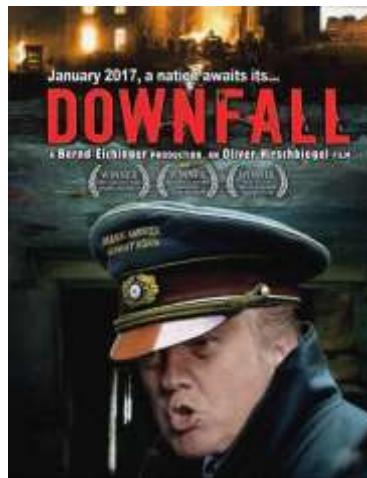
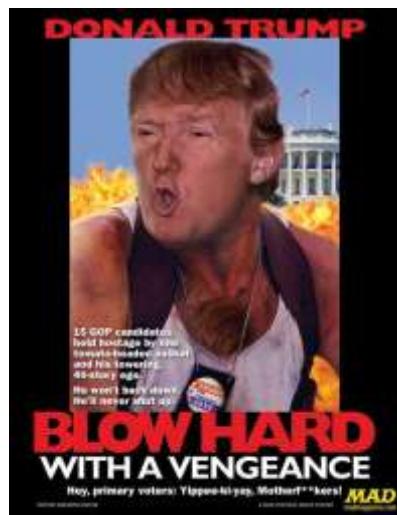
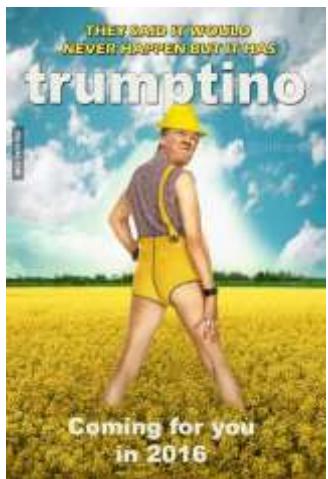
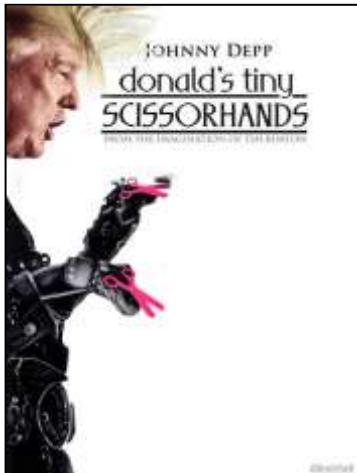
# Humorousness

## Trump... The Motion Picture



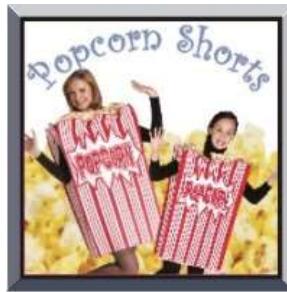
Everyone, just stop piling on... let's find something nice to say about Donald Trump. Hmmmm. Well, it seems like he's bringing out the creative side of millions of Americans as they look for ways to express their loathing that no one else has tried. Guess that's good! At least it can be funny, as these Trump Movie Posters clearly show...





# 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!

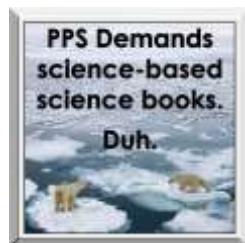


## [The Future is here... Run.](#)



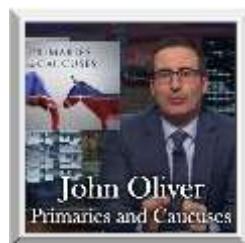
Even people who once lived without Smartphones barely remember what it was like. They've changed the way we interact with our environment so deeply that we don't see the effect any more than a fish sees water. Virtual reality (VR) is almost here and is about to do exactly the same thing. One flavor of VR is "enhanced reality" (ER), where graphics are displayed on glasses and superimposed over the world around you. It's a novelty now, but what will happen when ER is integrated into our world as thoroughly as smartphones? ["Hyper-Reality, a beautiful, clever, and deeply insightful video from Keiichi Matsuda](#), takes you into the world of ER. Tour the future now... you'll be living there soon.

## [Portland Schools demand science-based science books](#)



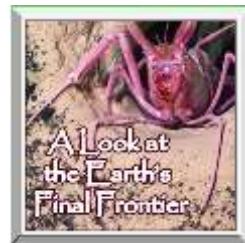
In a "win" for the reality-based community, Portland Public Schools unanimously resolved that [the district would abandon textbooks or materials that cast doubt on whether climate change is occurring](#) and that human activity is responsible. "Climate education is not a niche or a specialization, it is the minimum requirement for my generation to be successful in our changing world." said Lincoln High student Gaby Lemieux. Of course, you probably aren't surprised that there's a backlash. Read additional articles [here](#), [here](#), or [here](#), or better yet, check out the comments on the [PPS Facebook page \(May 22 post\)](#).

## [John Oliver- Primaries and Caucuses](#)



Last month we brought you a [video from Andrew Klavan](#) in which he attempted to explain the intricacies of the election process. He might have left some gray areas, so in our continuing effort to spread civics literacy we'll let [John Oliver take a crack at it this month](#). John takes on a painfully complex subject with his inimitable wit and flair, questioning how well (or poorly) the system serves the cause of democracy. As usual, you'll laugh your way through the whole segment, but also as usual, you'll come away with knowledge you didn't realize you were getting. Enjoy!

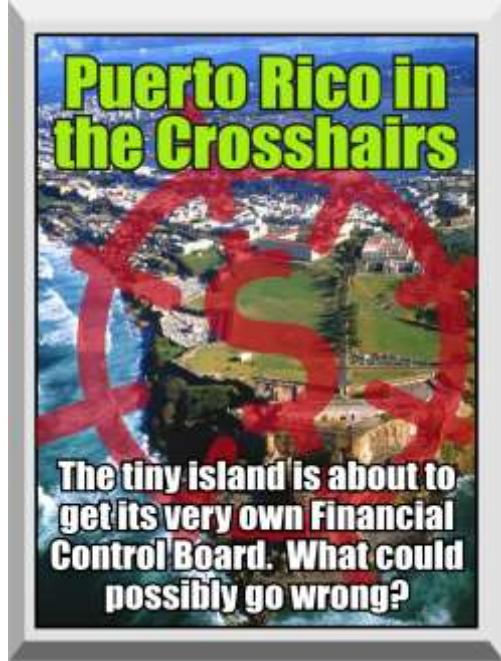
## [A Look at the Earth's Final Frontier](#)



It's said that we know more about the surface of the Moon than about the bottom of the sea, but a mission going on right now is working to change that. A researcher team from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has begun a 3-month investigation of the Marianas Trench, the deepest part of the ocean. The first of three deep-sea probes went down in April with the last to go in July, and already they are bringing back amazing discoveries including new species of corals, sea cucumbers, anemones, sponges, squid, jellyfish, and more. [Click here for some amazing pictures and video](#) but keep an eye out... there's much more to come.

# News To Make You Furious

## Puerto Rico in the Crosshairs



Puerto Rico isn't a state, and it's not a country. It's been a territory of the United States since 1898, meaning although Puerto Ricans pay tax and are subject to American law, they don't get to vote and their decisions are subject to the whim of our Congress. That whim has rarely swung in their favor. Currently, US Federal agencies control virtually every aspect of the island's economy and government, and multinational conglomerates and the military control what's left. They haven't been doing a very good job.

Puerto Rico has been in the news recently because they're about to default on \$70 billion of debt. Despite the fact they control only a minuscule amount of their destiny, the debt part is apparently all their fault. Fortunately Congress, who *actually* created the problem, has a

solution. The idea of a Financial Manager worked so well in Flint, Michigan, they're imposing a Financial Control Authority (FCA) to restructure Puerto Rico's debt and make sure the creditors get paid. What could possibly go wrong? Well, it depends. If you're a creditor you're more likely to get at least part of your money back although you still probably won't see it all. On the other hand, if you're a Puerto Rican, you're very very likely to get shafted once again by a distant government and plundered by private companies. Is this enough to make you Furious? If you're Puerto Rican, definitely. If not, read some of the details of a story being sanitized and spoon-fed to you by a complicit media and you'll be well on your way...

If you read nothing else on this story, please read "[No More Colonialism Disguised As Financial Assistance: The US Must Relinquish Puerto Rico](#)" by Nelson Denis in Truthout (May 2016). It gives you all the backstory of Puerto Rico since the US liberated it from Spain in 1898. He covers the specifics of the FCA, the history and effects of over 100 years of colonialism, who's going to benefit from the FCA, and who will pay the price. Extensively hyperlinked and passionately written, this one article will be enough to make you see the FCA deal in a whole new light.

If you want to dig deeper from there, we have many more sources for you to explore. If you get Furious after reading them, don't say we didn't warn you... we PROMISED!

**BREAKING NEWS-** As we were writing this, Congress did the absolutely expected...

"[House Committee Approves Puerto Rico Bill with Bipartisan Support](#)", Nick Timiraos in the Wall Street Journal, May 2016

It's not proof that the FCA is a bad thing, but if Grover "Tax Pledge" Norquist is shilling on it you can be reasonably suspicious...

[PROMESA Is the Way Forward for Puerto Rico](#), Grover Norquist and Tom Schatz in National Review, May 2016

The Corporate Sludgepump has one side (and only one side) of the story, but the Puerto Ricans have their own side. [“War Against All Puerto Ricans”](#) is where you'll find it. Here are some of their posts that jumped out at us...

- [Luis Fortuño...the chairman of Puerto Rico's Financial Control Board?](#)
- [The Gentrification of Puerto Rico](#)
- [Puerto Rico must send a Financial Control Board to Washington, to manage the US economy](#)
- [Fifty Organizations in Puerto Rico form a coalition against the US Financial Control Board](#)

[“A Fiscal Control Board For Puerto Rico”](#), Brannon and Albright in e21,

[“Congress Agrees On Plan To Help Puerto Rico Restructure \\$70 Billion Debt”](#), Greg Allen on NPR, May 2016

[“Puerto Rico Faces Prospect of Financial Control Board”](#), Klimasinska and Miller in Bloomberg Politics, Feb 2016

[“How the United States Economically and Politically Strangled Puerto Rico”](#) by Mark Karlin in Truthout, May 2015