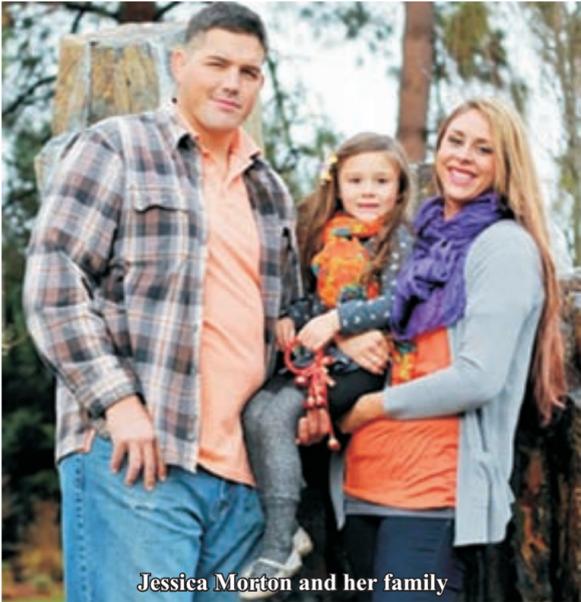




FALSE PROSECUTION SPOTLIGHT

The Jessica Morton Story:



Jessica Morton and her family

Kairos, Grants Pass Police and the Prosecutor's Office Destroyed My Career, Family and Life

Story on page 3

LAND THEFT SPOTLIGHT

“Dysfunctional” Surveying in Idaho Walker’s Surveyors, “Ethics” and the Board

By Edward Snook
Investigative Reporter

Grangeville, ID – Our first article about the Walkers, their property, and the nightmare they have endured can be read online by searching “Alleged Fraudulent Survey Creates Nightmare for Landowners.” As our first article points out, we believe the Walker's property line dispute, actually started back in 1977, when Surveyor Carl Edwards secretly set the SW Corner of their property over three hundred feet north of its original position, in a location we consider erroneous at best. One Idaho Surveyor has stated, “Edward’s Corner is so far out of place that it goes beyond incompetence. It almost has to be fraudulent.” Such misplacement of a survey monument will cause as much as a 35 acre shift in land ownership (that’s enough land for a small township). Carl Edward’s, instead of filing within 90 days of setting monuments in 1977, waited 19



Steve Wellington

years to file a “corner perpetuation” record; this indicates fraud was involved, as pointed out by several other surveyors.

In 1968, when Sydney (Butch) and Dorothy Walker purchased their property (hereinafter referred to as Section 24) just outside of Grangeville, ID from Mary Hurley, Hurley showed the Walkers the original property corners and



Chad Erickson

boundary lines of this land. A “mountain” of circumstantial evidence supports the legal description based on the original corners, including the sale(s) of rock from the Walkers gravel pit, located on Section 24, to the Grangeville Highway District (GHD).

In late 2009, the Walkers were forced to file a civil lawsuit against neighbors, Bessie Harmon, Etta

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Coma Causes Man’s Friend to be Wrongfully Convicted

By Joseph Snook
Investigative Reporter

Los Angeles County, CA – Brad Scott has filed a motion for Post Conviction Relief, asking the court to re-open his case based on new evidence. Brad was previously sentenced to seven years in prison for a conviction of BUI (boating under the influence) with a GBI (great bodily) enhancement, on December 8, 2011.



Brad Scott

On July 18, 2009, friends Brad Scott and Rel Vrooman were attending a weekend function at Whites Landing on Catalina Island, CA. The two friends of roughly twenty-five years were traveling back from Avalon towards Whites Landing

when their small, motor powered inflatable tender (dinghy) suddenly struck another boat, which was reportedly anchored in an area that was, “outside the typical moorage & anchorage area.” Both men sustained serious injuries, requiring medical evacuation by helicopter to Harbor UCLA Hospital. Both men had been drinking alcohol. It was after midnight, and the two unconscious, injured friends left initial responders puzzled about what actually happened as they began to receive medical attention. Brad was the first to regain consciousness. Still dazed from the accident, Brad awoke in the hospital to learn that Rel was in an induced coma, and

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Utah Caught in Possible Cover-Up? McKell’s Accuser “Helped Rape Child”

By Ron Lee
Investigative Journalist

Provo, UT – Do you know how the Justice System works, in many cases, in this day and age? There is an allegation or report made to the police and immediately the police form an opinion as to who is guilty. When police lock onto their suspect they don't let go until they hand them off to the prosecutor. Even then, the police act as the hand of the prosecutor and often massage their reports and collected evidence to support the prosecutor's chances to prove their suspect's guilt. Prosecutors, themselves, are as ravenous as a pack of starving, wild pit-bulls who, once their jaws lock, won't ever let go. Gone are the days when “the prosecutor's role transcends that



Prosecutor Sherry Ragan

of an adversary: he is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty ... whose interest ... in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done.” --U.S. v. Bagley, 473 U.S. 667, 675 n. 6 (1985). In this day and age, they ignore evidence of innocence, while heaping more charges onto a person. All of this is done to force the suspect to take a plea, and prosecutor to get their conviction. You see, it's a numbers game and it is all about winning a case. The more successful prosecutions they achieve, the better chance they have at winning reelection or to secure further financing through public taxation and federal grants. So you see, it's often not about justice anymore, folks, and that is clearly evident in the Utah case against Rob

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INFORMATION NEEDED

Do you know Karen Levanway or Stacy Underwood?



Karen Levanway (above), aka Terry Roberts, aka Karen Teresa of San Luis Obispo, CA and Stacy Underwood of Albuquerque, NM have reportedly been involved with Acacia Enterprises LLC, Wealth Masters Int., Great Hopes LTD, Baco Inc., Carbon Copy Pro and National Business Services. Bank accounts allegedly associated with these two are located with Bank of America in New Mexico and Arizona.

If you have any information on these two women please call the US-Observer at 541-474-7885 or send email to editor@usobserver.com. ★★★

FALSE IMPRISONMENT

Amazing Dave! Hinkson - Inventor of the Year

By Kelly Stone
Investigative Reporter

Grangeville, ID - There are few in this generation who can be considered true geniuses; ones with inventive minds that have the ability to think ‘outside-the-box’ and solve problems creatively and intuitively. Of recent fame, was Steve Jobs, whose Apple Empire began in a garage. Typically, we look to Albert Einstein, Nicolai Tesla and Thomas Edison as leading examples. In the laboratory, hundreds of experiments are often necessary, but the true genius has an abiding sure knowledge that the ‘Thing’ being invented



David Hinkson

when their small, motor powered inflatable tender (dinghy) suddenly struck another boat, which was reportedly anchored in an area that was, “outside the typical moorage & anchorage area.” Both men sustained serious injuries, requiring medical evacuation by helicopter to Harbor UCLA Hospital. Both men had been drinking alcohol. It was after midnight, and the two unconscious, injured friends left initial responders puzzled about what actually happened as they began to receive medical attention. Brad was the first to regain consciousness. Still dazed from the accident, Brad awoke in the hospital to learn that Rel was in an induced coma, and

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POLICE CORRUPTION

Florida Minister Appeals ‘Peacefully Resisting Arrest’ Conviction

By Joseph Snook
Investigative Reporter

Vero Beach, FL - On December 24, 2014, Minister Fred Luongo, who was previously convicted of ‘peacefully resisting arrest,’ (aka: Resisting officer without violence to his or her person) filed an appeal with Florida's Office of the State Attorney, Appellate Division. Minister Luongo's attorney, Jacob Noble, along with the State are now filing responses which are required before court dates are scheduled. As of May 19, 2015, the State has not filed further response.

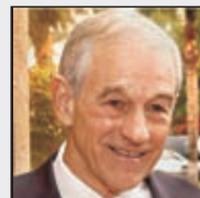


Fred Luongo

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The FBI faked an entire field of forensic science

Pseudoscience in the Witness Box, Innocents Put to Death

By Dahlia Lithwick

(Slate) - The Washington Post published a story so horrifying recently that it would stop your breath: "The Justice Department and FBI have formally acknowledged that nearly every examiner in an elite FBI forensic unit gave flawed testimony in almost all trials in which they offered evidence against criminal defendants over more than a two-decade period before 2000."

What went wrong? The Post continues: "Of 28 examiners with the FBI Laboratory's microscopic hair comparison unit, 26 overstated forensic matches in ways that favored prosecutors in more than 95 percent of the 268 trials reviewed so far." The shameful, horrifying errors were uncovered in a massive, three-year review by the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers and the Innocence Project. Following revelations published in recent years, the two groups are helping the government with the country's largest ever post-conviction review of questioned forensic evidence.

Chillingly, as the Post continues, "the cases include those of 32 defendants sentenced to death." Of these defendants, 14 have already been executed or died in prison.

The massive review raises questions about the veracity of not just expert hair testimony, but also the bite-mark and other forensic testimony offered as objective, scientific evidence to jurors who, not unreasonably, believed that scientists in white coats knew what they were talking about. As Peter Neufeld, co-founder of the Innocence Project, put it, "The FBI's three-decade use of microscopic hair analysis to incriminate defendants was a complete disaster."

This study was launched after the Post reported that flawed forensic hair matches might have led to possibly hundreds of wrongful convictions for rape, murder, and other violent crimes, dating back at least to the 1970s. In 90 percent of the cases reviewed so far, forensic examiners evidently made statements beyond the bounds of proper science. There were no scientifically accepted standards for forensic testing, yet FBI experts routinely and almost unvaryingly testified, according to the Post, "to the near-certainty of 'matches' of crime-scene hairs to defendants, backing their claims by citing incomplete or misleading statistics drawn from their case work."

NACDL executive director Norman Reimer said in an interview with Associations Now that the flaws in the system had been known for years now. "What we were finding was that the examiners ... wouldn't just simply say that there was a microscopic similarity [between the two hairs], but they would go beyond that and say it was a 100 percent match, essentially misleading the jury into concluding that the evidence had a certain value that it didn't actually have," Reimer said.

This problem doesn't stop with the FBI labs or federal prosecutions. The review focuses on the first few hundred cases, involving FBI examiners, but the same mistakes and faulty testimony were likely presented in any state prosecutions



that relied on the between 500 and 1,000 local or state examiners trained by the FBI. Some states will automatically conduct reviews. Others may not. Much of the evidence is now lost.

Systemic change, in other words, is being left to the discretion of the system itself.

Paradoxically, Justice Antonin Scalia has emerged as a vocal early skeptic about the risk of taint in the work of crime labs, even though he contended in 2006 that, "It should be noted at the outset that the dissent does not discuss a single case—not one—in which it is clear that a person was executed for a crime he did not commit. If such an event had occurred in recent years, we would not

have to hunt for it; the innocent's name would be shouted from the rooftops by the abolition lobby." It is clearer now than ever that crime labs and prosecutors' officers do make mistakes, shameful, devastating mistakes, and that they don't usually distinguish between capital and noncapital cases when they do so.

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, D-Vermont, and Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, D-Texas, the ranking Democrats on the Senate Judiciary and House Science committees, respectively, are looking for forensic-science reforms to hold examiners to meaningful standards. But this hardly helps the folks who are in cells for crimes they didn't commit, based on evidence that—according to scientific experts—is

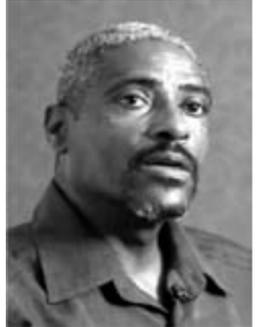
all but worthless.

This whole justice-disaster-on-wheels is not a problem that has gone unreported. As Conor Friedersdorf notes, state and national publications have been exposing the inadvertent errors and deliberate manipulations of forensic crime labs across the country for years now. We have covered these issues at Slate. But as long as crime labs answer to prosecutors, and indeed, according to Business Insider, in some cases they are compensated for each conviction, the incentives for reform are hopelessly upside-down. The problem, in short, isn't that we can't identify the problem.

There is no lack of good ideas for reform. (Journalist Radley Balko and Roger Koppl, a professor of finance at Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management and a fellow at Syracuse's Forensic and National Security Sciences Institute, offered up a laundry list of fixes in Slate—almost seven years ago.)* These solutions are not all that expensive or complicated. Among them: giving defendants their own forensic experts, untethering crime labs from the prosecutors and cops to which they now answer, verification and standards. But no matter how many times we may reiterate that the status quo is intolerable and that simple corrections would yield significantly better data, no real energy for reform exists.

University of Virginia law professor Brandon L. Garrett, who has been studying DNA exonerations and wrongful convictions for years now, had this to say in an email: "When I looked at forensics in DNA exoneree trials, I found more often than not that the testimony was unscientific and flawed. We know that whenever we look at old criminal cases we see flawed forensics wherever we look. And yet hardly any crime labs have bothered to conduct audits. Nor is the problem limited to bad hair cases—much the same type of eyeballed comparison is done on bite marks, ballistics, fibers, and even fingerprints."

Horror stories abound. George Perrot (profiled by Ed Pilkington of the Guardian) may have spent 30 years in prison based on erroneous forensic hair testimony. Mississippi bite-mark expert Michael West, about whom Balko has written extensively, was shown in a recent film jamming the suspect's dental mold into the body of a young victim. Santae Tribble served 28 years for a murder based on FBI testimony about a single strand of hair. He was exonerated in 2012. It was later revealed that one of the hairs presented at trial came from a dog.



Santae Tribble

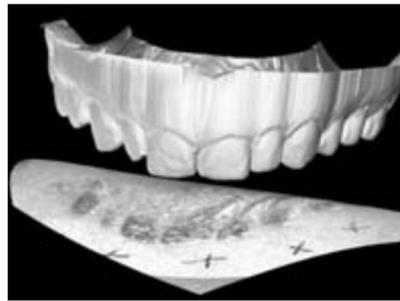
And the reign of pseudoscience in the witness box hardly stops at hair and bite marks. It sweeps in the testimony of forensic psychiatrists like James Grigson, nicknamed Dr. Death for his willingness to testify against capital defendants, and flawed arson analysis that may have contributed to the execution of Texas' Cameron Todd Willingham. Jurors grass-fed on CSI-Someplace and Law and Order believe uncritically in experts who throw around words like "cuticle" and "cortex," and why shouldn't they? These folks are supposed to be analysts who answer to the rules of science, not performance artists trotted out for the benefit of the prosecution.

Since prison-crowding and justice reform are widely touted as issues that unite the left and the right in this country, going back and retesting the evidence of those who may well have been wrongly imprisoned should be a national priority. So far it isn't, perhaps because the scope of the enterprise is so daunting. Or perhaps because nobody really cares all that much about people who've been sitting in jail for years and years. Says Garrett: "These victims may remain unrecognized and in prison—if they still live—and the same unscientific testimony continues to be delivered without limitation. ... But hey, these are just criminal cases right?"

★★★



NACDL executive director Norman Reimer



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The Jessica Morton Story

US~Observer Exclusive

Editor's Note: By all accounts when we first published the Jessica Morton story on-line, the Josephine County criminal justice levy was set to pass - our own poll showed its passing was assured by a strong margin.

Like wildfire, Jessica's innocence was spread far and wide and people were talking all across the country. Even the producer from the Dr. Phil show called to see about featuring Jessica's story.

Thankfully, the public saw that if the DA could waste time and money prosecuting an obviously innocent woman, the office didn't need to be funded. The levy failed.

By Jessica Morton

Grants Pass, OR. - For all of you who don't know me already, my name is Jessica Morton. I have lived in Grants Pass, Oregon, most of my life; went to Redwood Elementary, South Middle School and then Grants Pass High School.

While at Grants Pass High, I was a 3 sport athlete. I participated in volleyball, basketball, and softball. Beyond sports, I was part of Leadership, Spanish Club, worked with the multi-handicapped/special education classrooms, and was active in community service, helping with youth programs and wrapping presents for the unfortunate. During my Junior year, our softball team went to the State Playoffs and this opened many doors for me. I went on to play summer ball and was seen by Bob Coolen, head coach at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. On the spot, he offered me a full-ride scholarship.

In 2003, I moved to Hawaii to fulfill my dream of playing Division I College Softball at the University of Hawaii. I traveled all over the United States with my softball team, winning the WAC in 2004 and 2005, playing in Regionals and Super Regionals - almost making it to the Division I Collegiate World Series.

As soon as I went to Hawaii I knew what I wanted study; I have always had a passion for helping children and working with special needs kids. I graduated from the University of Hawaii in 2008 with my BA in Psychology and a minor in Sociology and Business.

After graduating, I immediately started working for Hawaii Behavioral Health and was considered a paraprofessional in my field of work. As such, I worked 1:1 with a boy who had autism and it was an incredibly rewarding experience, however, I soon had to make a tough decision when I found out that I was expecting my own little one. My fiancé and I decided that it was best we make the move back to Oregon.

In June of 2011, we moved back to good ol' Grants Pass. Immediately upon arriving we had a interview set up at Southern Oregon Adolescent Treatment Center (SOASTC), now known as Kairos. My fiancé and I were both hired and started June 16th, 2011. I worked there until July 23, 2014.



Jessica and her daughter

While working there I started as an on-call employee. In November 2011, I was encouraged by many staff and the Program Manager to apply for a supervisor position that was open. I ended up getting the position.

While being supervisor I became a Tier II Trainer and helped train staff members in Collaborative Problem Solving (CPC).

On May 6th, 2014, I was voted by co-workers for "Employee of the Month" for the 4th time since being hired.

On Friday, May 9th, 2014, I was asked by the Program Manager to attend a fundraiser for Kairos' "Celebration of Hope".

On Saturday, May 10th, 2014, the Admin-on-call contacted me and informed me that I was being put on administrative leave, which I would later find

out was because of an allegation made by one of our troubled residents.

THE FALSE ACCUSER

It is my opinion that The False Accuser, upon coming to Kairos, was an aggressive, angry boy. He was easily upset. His way of showing that he was tough was punching walls, doors, fences and other objects. He did this often when he was feeling insecure, and/or not getting attention.

While getting to know him it became apparent that he was a very insecure boy with attachment issues. He always talked about his mother and how he wished she would be there for him. He really struggled with his mother issues and projected his feelings and emotions about his mom on both female staff and residents. He soon started acting out on his sexual urges after being in Oregon Youth Authority (OYA) for a few years. Soon he began pushing boundaries with female residents and parameters had to be put in place in his Behavioral Support Plan (BSP), which is documented.

He struggled, on a day-to-day basis, with boundaries set for both staff and residents. He

would stand too close, try to turn a side hug into a full hug, hug for too long, poke, touch hair, long awkward hand-shakes, try to hold hands, and would continuously be getting into your personal space. Everyday he was talked to about his boundaries. Plan B conversations (addressing/documenting his behaviors) were happening with many of the staff.

He often glorified his addiction to meth and his criminal history surrounding that time in his life. He talked about stealing from his family and friends, hurting family and friends, and not having any remorse for those actions. He told his stories several times a day with staff and peers. He, while at the facility, helped a peer sneak in meth and they were able to use meth together. He was not removed from Kairos for doing this. According to other staff and the clinical team, he is a pathological liar and sociopath, and lied on a daily basis about random things. Example: He went to the therapist and asked what would happen if he had a phone; therapist tells him that it would just need to be locked up offline. Therapist comes to me and says to keep an eye out because she thinks he has a phone. When I confronted him he claimed, "I just wanted to see what you guys would do." He lied about sexual encounters that he claimed to have had with other female residents. He lied about things he did on his day visits.



He engaged in several attention seeking behaviors trying to get attention from me. Example: Kairos was hosting a Prom for residents, I had arranged for someone to come in and do the girls nails. I was with the girls having girl time and he became very upset wanting to have a check-in. I informed him that there were other staff that could help him. He refused to check in with anyone else. He then decided to AWOP, (Away with-out permission) he hopped the fence knowing that as supervisor I would have to be the one to assess the situation. He also self-harmed, by cutting himself, punching walls, throwing objects, again knowing I would be the one assessing the situation. After his repeated inappropriate advances toward myself and other female staff and peers he became more aggressive, lying and complaining about me to staff. He asked peers about me and how I looked under my clothes.

Shortly after this, he made a false claim about me to staff, which they were required to share with law enforcement. I was subsequently fired from Kairos, with NO support from my employer to denounce the false claims against me. Soon after, I began being harassed by the Grants Pass Police Department. They obtained a warrant, issued by Judge Lindy Baker and forced me to strip naked, so they could photograph my unclothed body. There has been no, nor will there be any admission on my part, only adamant denial. There were no witnesses to the alleged sexual contact he claimed. There was no DNA. There was no evidence whatsoever other than an allegation from an alleged diagnosed schizophrenic/bipolar seventeen year old, who had reportedly abused meth since the age of 13, and the hearsay he offered.

Almost one year passed before I was arrested on April 30, 2015. I am now facing six criminal counts, 5 misdemeanors and 1 felony. I posted bail for \$2,000.00 that I had to borrow since I am not employed. The local media showed my mug shot on television, claiming The False Accuser was a "victim," basically branding me a sexual predator without any of the facts of my case, other than what the police and the district attorney delivered to them. Not one



person from the local media attempted to get my side of the story before branding me a criminal sexual predator for all of my friends, family, peers and others to see on live television, newspapers and radio.

Over the last year, I have not only suffered the loss of my job and career, my personal and family life has taken a huge toll from these wrongful allegations, causing my family and I a tremendous amount of stress and suffering.

Recently, Kairos has fired several other employees, two of whom have been charged with crimes, and these incidents have been highly publicized within our community. Interestingly enough, I was indicted just a couple weeks after those cases were so prominently displayed to the public, even though the investigation into my false charges began almost an entire year ago. This has left

me wondering if the 'warmed' public sentiment motivated the prosecutor to pursue my case, making it politically motivated in a time when police and prosecutors are trying to pass a levy and get more funding from taxpayers. Fortunately for me in my case, the majority of people are seeing these charges for what they really are, baseless allegations made by a desperate young man to get attention, and pursued by a new prosecutor who is looking to make a name for himself

by prosecuting Kairos employees. While I can not speak on the other Kairos employees' innocence or guilt, I can, without any doubt, declare my own innocence. In fact, I am shouting it for the world to hear!

I'm deeply saddened by the lack of investigative skills by the Grants Pass Police Department, and furthermore, I am extremely hurt by the explicit lack of professionalism displayed by Kairos, and their complete disregard and lack of support for their employees.

This next chapter in my life will assuredly be one of the costliest, financially. Attorneys, court fees, expert witnesses, and who knows what else, are all looming in the short term. Instead of being innocent until proven guilty, today you are guilty until you can pay to prove your innocence, and my innocence is going to cost my family and I much more than we have. So, I am humbly asking for your help. Please donate \$1, or any amount you wish, to help alleviate some of our costs. Anything given is greatly appreciated. With your help, I plan on being vindicated and declared, for all to know, the true victim of these false charges.

Thank you. ★★★



Please help their family! You can donate to the Jessica Morton Defense fund by mailing a check or money order made payable to Jessica Morton to:

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In The News

WHAT THE?! SPOTLIGHTS

Lawsuit: Rape 'endemic' by Rikers Island prison officers



(RT.com) - A lawsuit filed on behalf of two women who have been incarcerated on Rikers Island in New York City alleges they've been sexually abused routinely at the prison by upward of eight corrections officers.

The lawsuit, filed Tuesday by two unidentified plaintiffs, alleges rape is "endemic" within the walls of Rikers' Rose M. Singer Center, and worsened by the city's longstanding unwillingness to address the issue.

Despite allegedly reporting rapes to a mental health clinician, jail physician and city investigators, attorneys for the women say that little to nothing was done and that the supposed serial rapist named in the lawsuit is still employed at Rikers.

"This abuse is only possible because, in the face of repeated warnings, the City of New York has enabled a culture of complacency to perpetuate at Rikers Island and thereby consented to the abuse of women in its custody," the lawsuit says.

The filing alleges corrections officer Benny Santiago and seven other unnamed colleagues raped or otherwise abused the two women inside Rikers.

"These officers' conduct was open and notorious," the lawsuit says. "On at least one occasion, women in custody overheard a correction officer raping a woman in her cell. Another correction officer routinely raped women in the officers' station."

According to the New York Times, Jane Doe One says she was raped upwards of four times a week by Santiago and that, on occasion, he "implicitly threatened" her family in an effort to keep her quiet. Jane Doe One is still an inmate at the facility, the lawsuit says.

Another unidentified jailer referred to in the lawsuit allegedly

"masturbated while watching a woman sleep in her cell and ejaculated on the sheets of her bed." According to the lawsuit, he remains on the job.

Legal Aid Society's William Gibney, an attorney with the group representing the women, told NBC News that he has DNA evidence to back up some of the women's claims, and that in one instance an inmate was impregnated after being raped in custody.

"We are seeking an injunction requiring the city and the Department of Corrections to take all necessary steps to prevent women in their custody from being raped and sexually abused by correction officers," Gibney said.

The Department of Corrections said in a statement that it can't comment on pending litigation but insisted that "DOC has a zero tolerance policy with regard to sexual abuse and assault, and there is no place at DOC for the mistreatment of any inmate." Norman Seabrook, the president of the union that represents NYC-area prison officers, told The Huffington Post that the lawsuit "is an allegation we have to deal with" and said the union would "stand by Santiago to the furthest extent of the law."

This week's allegations come amid a wave of scandals in recent months that have brought negative attention to Rikers, including criticism from the Department of Justice late last year. Federal prosecutors sued New York City in December after a report determined that "force is used against adolescents at an alarming rate" inside the facility. This January, the New York State Commission of Correction called for an investigation into the death of a mentally ill inmate in custody in 2013.

Massive Spike In Deaths By Heroin Overdose

By James King

(Vocativ) - Heroin overdose deaths in the U.S. increased by 172 percent in a three-year period, and law enforcement officials fear that the trend is going to continue as the drug becomes increasingly more popular, particularly amongst those living in suburban areas.



Mexican cartels laying claim to the western part of the country and Asian or South American drug organizations supplying users in the east. That has changed as Mexican cartels continue to expand their networks across the country.

"DEA is targeting the cartels that produce and smuggle heroin into the U.S. and organized criminals that distribute this poison," recently appointed DEA Administrator Chuck Rosenberg said in a statement.

Another factor in the spike in deaths is a resurgence of the pharmaceutical drug fentanyl, a synthetic opiate that's up to 100 times more powerful than heroin and is often mixed by dealers with low-grade heroin to make it more powerful. There were about 700 reported deaths where fentanyl was the cause but officials believe that number is much higher because only a handful of medical examiners and coroners test for the drug, according to the DEA. ***

Exonerated After 10 Years in Prison Man Graduates From Law School

By Stephen A. Crockett Jr.

In 1996 a 17-year-old Jarrett Adams told his parents he was staying at a friend's house. Adams and two friends ended up at a campus party at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater.

"I had no business being up there," Adams told the Chicago Tribune. "It was [a] ... recipe for disaster."

The three friends ended up in the dorm of a woman they met at the party. She accused the three young men of rape.

Adams knew that he didn't commit any crime; his lawyer told him the evidence was thin. But even with barely any witness testimony and no evidence to support his guilt, he was convicted and sentenced to 28 years in prison.

"When they said, 'Guilty,' it was shocking," he told the Tribune. "It was a numbing experience."

His days behind bars were filled with basketball and chess, until one day his cell mate challenged him to fight his case.

"He was like, 'Sit down. I'm in here for the rest of my life for something I did do. You are here for some absolute bull crap with no evidence, and you're not going to fight to get out,'" Adams told CBS 2 Chicago. "And so it really woke me up."

With the help of the Wisconsin Innocence Project, Adams fought the case, and in 2006, after he'd spent 10

years behind bars for a crime he did not commit, an appeals court threw out his conviction.

Since then Adams has been working hard to make up for lost time, and last week he received his law degree from Loyola.

"I couldn't have imagined this day," Adams told the news station.

But Adams isn't stopping there. In August he will serve as a public-interest fellow to U.S. Circuit Judge Ann C. Williams of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit—the same court that reversed his wrongful conviction.

Because the position is not paid, Adams has set up a GoFundMe page in hopes of raising enough funds to pay for his expenses and health insurance during the fellowship.

Currently the biggest contribution has come from Loevy & Loevy, a public-interest law firm where

Adams worked as a law clerk. It donated \$10,000 toward Adams' \$60,000 goal.

One of Adams' law professors acknowledged not only his perseverance but also his ability to press on despite his hardships. "I can't say that if that had happened to me I'd have the same outlook on life that Jarrett does, so it must be something in the core of his being that I would love to be able to bottle," Michael Kaufman told the news station.



Jarrett Adams

Pew first: Gun rights top gun control in major public opinion shift

By Paul Bedard

(Washington Examiner) - Exactly two years after President Obama's bid for gun control following the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting died in Congress, a new poll has discovered a huge shift in public opinion to backing Second Amendment gun rights and away from controlling gun ownership.

The reason: Americans now believe having a gun is the best way to protect against crime, 63 percent to 30 percent.

Pew Research Center found that while support for gun control once reached 66 percent, it has dropped to 46 percent while support for gun rights has jumped 52 percent, the highest ever in the past 25 years.

"We are at a moment when most Americans believe crime rates are rising and when most believe gun ownership—not gun control—makes people safer," said the survey.

To say the shift in opinion is radical is not an understatement. It follows a short period where Americans were torn over gun ownership, but eventually sided with gun rights groups during the Obama years.

The findings also track with support for the National

Rifle Association which had its second biggest national convention earlier this month and whose membership has reached five million.

Pew suggested that the change is the result of Americans believing that crime is a big problem, despite statistics showing the opposite.

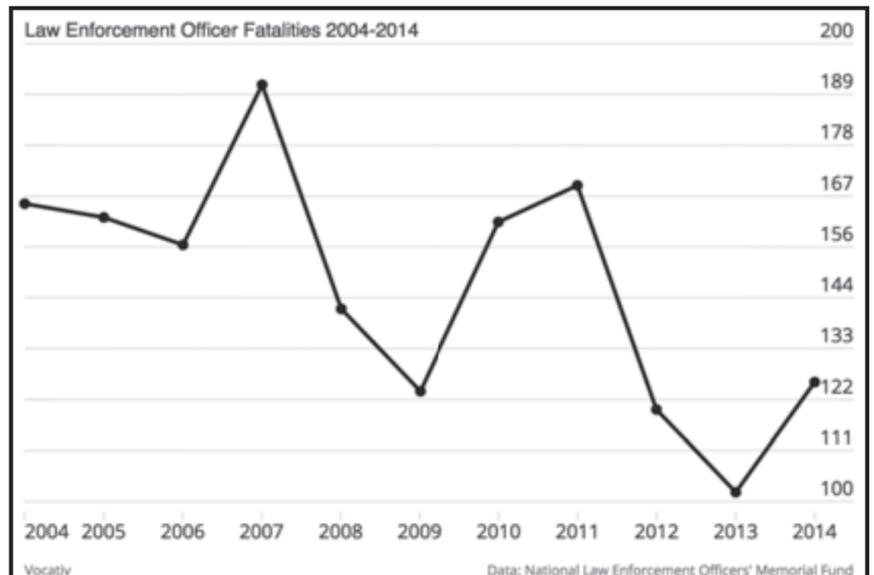


"In the 1990s, the rate of violent crimes plummeted by more than half nationwide. Public perceptions tracked right along, with the share saying there was more crime in the U.S. over the past year falling from 87 percent in 1993 to just 41 percent

by 2001," said Pew, adding: "In the new century, however, there's been a disconnect. A majority of Americans (63%) said in a Gallup survey last year that crime was on the rise, despite crime statistics holding near 20-year lows."

Pew said it is hard to explain the disconnect. "Why public views on crime have grown more dire is unclear, though many blame it on the nature of news coverage, reality TV and political rhetoric. Whatever the cause, this trend is not without consequence. Today, those who say that crime is rising are the most opposed to gun control: Just 45% want to see gun laws made more strict, compared with 53% of those who see crime rates as unchanged or dropping." ***

Being A Cop Isn't Getting More Dangerous, Says Data



By Abigail Tracy

(Vocativ) - A series of high profile police killings have put the spotlight on the safety of law enforcement officers in the field, but—statistically speaking—being a cop isn't getting any more dangerous.

So far this year, there have been 42 deaths of officers on duty throughout the United States. Twelve of the deaths were caused by firearms—three fewer than for the same time last year, according to data from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. More officers have been killed in traffic accidents this year in the United States. Already, 18 traffic-related law enforcement deaths have occurred this year, just one shy of the same period in 2014.

Since the nineties, overall law enforcement officer deaths have declined. In 2014, there were 126 law

enforcement officer deaths. While this was a slight uptick from the 102 deaths in 2013, it still represents a precipitous drop from the numbers seen in the early 2000s. Firearm-related officer deaths have been on a steep decline since peaking in 1973, when 156 officers were killed with some type of gun. The average of such deaths fell from a staggering 127 per year in the 1970s to 57 per year in the 2000s. In 2014, eight officers were killed during traffic stops or in pursuit of a suspect.

Last year, in total 62 of the total officer deaths were felonious killings and 50 involved firearms. In 68 percent of these deaths, officers were killed with a handgun, seven were killed with assault weapons and three were shot with a shotgun and a rifle. The type of gun used in the remaining three cases is unknown. Fifteen officers were killed in ambushes, making it the most common circumstance for firearm related deaths.

7,033-Person City Funds \$4.1 Million Police Station Through Civil Asset Forfeiture

According to a report by a watchdog group, the City of Richland, MS, population 7,033, currently features a \$4.1 million police station, a fleet of new Dodge Chargers, and a top-of-the-line law enforcement training complex paid for through civil asset forfeiture, a legal process through which police seize property from individuals suspected, but not convicted, of a crime.

By Barry Donegan

(Truth In Media) - Civil asset forfeiture is a legal maneuver used by police agencies to seize property from individuals accused, but not necessarily convicted, of a crime. The Cato Institute has referred to mechanisms that fund police agencies through civil asset forfeiture abuse as "policing for profit." Some civil liberties advocates feel that, when local police departments can raise funds by seizing cash from travelers on the highway on mere suspicion of criminal activity, there is a corrupting incentive for officers to, as an example, interpret a cash withdrawal that someone might make to buy a used car as evidence of drug dealing.

Mississippi Watchdog's Steve Wilson recently sounded the alarm on apparent civil asset forfeiture abuse taking place in Richland, MS. The 7,033-person city features a \$4.1 million police station, a new fleet of Dodge Chargers, and a police training complex so advanced that it is also used by 22 other local law enforcement agencies.

Said Wilson in his report, "Since 2006, Richland's four-officer interdiction team has racked up huge forfeiture numbers. In 2014,

the team seized \$506,400 in cash and property, helping boost the city's civil forfeiture account to more than \$2.3 million. For those keeping score at home, that's \$72 for every resident of Richland. The city also reported \$400,000 in revenue from fines and court costs... Those numbers are actually down from past years. In 2013, the department seized more than \$1.2 million in cash and property."

Richland Mayor Mark Scarborough started having officers seize assets through a drug interdiction program back in 2005. His officers mainly target travelers headed in and out of Jackson, MS on I-20. "It's great to be able to say that we built that [police station] and built it not only today, but built it for the future with funds that aren't taxpayer dollars. That frees us up huge with the rest of the city. Every other department benefits from the drug seizure deal," said Scarborough, defending his asset seizures.

Wilson's report notes that Richland seizes far more property per capita than neighboring police agencies. Wilson wrote, "The city

of Clinton, on Interstate 20 west of Jackson in neighboring Hinds County, declared only \$10,000 in seized assets on the balance sheet of the city's 2015 budget. In a 2014 audit of Brandon's finances, the Rankin County city listed \$567,510 in fines and forfeitures in 2013. In the city of Jackson's most recent budget, the city listed more than \$3.1 million in fines and forfeitures."

Civil liberties law firm the Institute for Justice gave Mississippi a "D+" ranking for its civil asset forfeiture rules, noting that police only need a preponderance of evidence that property is related to a crime in order to seize it, that the burden of proof is on property owners to prove in civil court that the property was not used in a crime in order to get it back, and that police in the state are not required to report data on the items that they seize from individuals. The Institute for Justice calls the 80% rate at which Mississippi police agencies can keep the proceeds of their seizures a "corrupting incentive."



Mayor Mark Scarborough

Is Juror Skepticism of Police Testimony on the Rise?

(FIJA) - In the wake of numerous, high-profile cases involving questionable police conduct, are jurors becoming more skeptical of testimony from law enforcement? Beth Hundsdorfer reports in the Belleville News-Democrat that just may be the case in St. Clair County, Illinois. St. Clair County is part of the Greater St. Louis metropolitan area, along with Ferguson, Missouri, which has been in the public spotlight most recently due to a Department of Justice report of its investigation of the Ferguson Police Department.

Police conduct issues may be swaying jurors in St. Clair County. The conduct of police officers has been coming up in criminal trials for a long time, but after high-profile cases such as the shooting of a black youth by a white officer in Ferguson, Mo., or last week's in South Carolina where an officer shot a man in the back, there can be a tendency by the public to question officers' testimony, said Southern Illinois University Carbondale law professor Bill Schroeder.

"That's the climate that's out there right now," Schroeder said.

Cosby was accused of the shooting death of Antwan Thomas outside an East St. Louis lounge. A St. Clair County jury acquitted Cosby in a trial after East St. Louis Detective Orlando Ward, the lead investigator in the case,

was charged with federal drug-trafficking.

"I have been a lawyer for eight years, and the difference now is that jurors no longer give police officers the benefit of the doubt," Cueto said. "I think jurors focus on the case they are deciding."

Public defender and longtime defense lawyer John O'Gara agreed. He thought it may have begun with the O.J. Simpson murder case. During the televised trial, jurors sent out questions to Judge Lance Ito, asking and challenging evidence and witnesses. Those jurors were empowered and engaged, O'Gara said, leaving potential jurors around the country to expect the same.

"Jurors we are getting now are millennials. They tend to question things more, not take things at face value, not take the word of a police officer over anyone else," O'Gara said.

Jurors should always keep in mind that the value they place on any testimony before them is entirely up to them. We know for a fact that many crime labs have perverse incentives to convict and that police misconduct is a common occurrence. Despite the appearance of authority, jurors are not obligated to give police officers' or any other government officials' testimony any special consideration or weight simply because it came from someone with a badge, a uniform, or a government title. ***



Picture by Wesley Allbrook



By Gosia Wozniacka

Portland, OR - Oregon is about to embark on a first-in-the-nation program that aims to charge car owners not for the fuel they use, but for the miles they drive.

The program is meant to help the state raise more revenue to pay for road and bridge projects at a time when money generated from gasoline taxes are declining across the country, in part, because of greater fuel efficiency and the increasing popularity of fuel-efficient, hybrid and electric cars.

Starting July 1, up to 5,000 volunteers in Oregon can sign up to drive with devices that collect data on how much they have driven and where. The volunteers will agree to pay 1.5 cents for each mile traveled on public roads within Oregon, instead of the tax now added when filling up at the pump.

Some electric and hybrid car owners, however, say the new tax would be unfair to them and would discourage purchasing of green vehicles.

"This program targets hybrid and electric vehicles, so it's discriminatory," said Patrick Connor, a Beaverton resident who has been driving an electric car since 2007.

State officials say it is only fair for owners of green vehicles to be charged for maintaining roads, just as owners of gasoline-powered vehicles do.

"We know in the future, our ability to pay for maintenance

Oregon to test pay-per-mile tax

and repair... will be severely impacted if we continue to rely on the gas tax," said Shelley Snow with the Oregon Department of Transportation.

Other states are also looking at pay-per-mile as an alternative to dwindling fuel tax revenues.

Last year, California created a committee to study alternatives to the gas tax and design a pilot program; Washington state set money aside to further develop a similar program; and an Indiana bill directs the state to study alternatives and a test project.

While growing in popularity, electric vehicles and hybrids are still in the minority on American roads, even in a state as green-minded as Oregon. Of 3.3 million passenger cars registered in Oregon at the end of 2014, about 68,000 were hybrid, 3,500 electric and 620 plug-in hybrid. A decade ago, only 8,000 hybrids were registered.

However, fuel-economy for gas-powered vehicles has been increasing as technology is developed that addresses public concerns about greenhouse gas emissions and dependence on foreign oil.

Oregon is the only state to actually test-drive the pay-per-mile idea.

The gas tax provides just under half of the money in Oregon's highway fund, and the majority of the money in the federal Highway Trust Fund, of which Oregon receives a portion.

Oregon's share of the fuel tax over the past two decades has been mostly flat and in some years declined, state data show. In 2009, the Legislature raised the tax from 24 cents to 30 cents per gallon, but that's not enough to avert shortfalls, state officials said, because construction costs increase with inflation.

Oregon previously held two rounds of small-scale tests involving GPS devices to track mileage.

The current program, called OreGo, will be the largest yet and will be open to all car types. Of these, no more than 1,500 participating vehicles can get less than 17 miles per gallon, and no more than 1,500 must get at least 17 miles per gallon

and less than 22 miles per gallon.

Volunteers will still be paying the fuel tax if they stop for gas. But at the end of the month, depending on the type of car they drive, they will receive either a credit or a bill for the difference in gas taxes paid at the pump.

Private vendors will provide drivers with small digital devices to track miles; other services will also be offered. Volunteers can opt out of the program at any time, and they'll get a refund for miles driven on private property and out of state.

After the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon raised concerns about privacy and government surveillance, the state built protections into the program, said ACLU's interim executive director Jann Carson.

Drivers will be able to install an odometer device without GPS tracking.

For those who use the GPS, the state and private vendors will destroy records of location and daily metered use after 30 days. The program also limits how the data can be aggregated and shared. Law enforcement, for example, won't be able to access the information unless a judge says it's needed.

"This is the government collecting massive amounts of data and we want to ensure the government doesn't keep and use that data for other purposes," Carson said.

The OreGo program is projected to cost \$8.4 million to implement and is aimed to gauge public acceptance of the idea of charging motorists per mile of road they travel. It will be up to the Legislature to decide whether to adopt a mandatory road usage charge.

One of the biggest concerns will be whether a program like OreGo could actually discourage people from buying electric or hybrid vehicles.

Drive Oregon, an advocacy group for the electric-vehicle industry, supports the program because every driver should pay for road repairs, executive director Jeff Allen said. Still, he said, "The last thing we need to do right now is to make buying electric cars more expensive or inconvenient." ***

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1 : an advocate of the doctrine of free will
2 a : a person who upholds the principles of individual liberty especially of thought and action

—Merriam-Webster

YOUR PERSONAL LIBERTY

Articles of Interest that first appeared on Personal Liberty Digest™ at Personalliberty.com

When the elites wage war on US, this is how they will do it

By Brandon Smith

In September 2009, more than 4,000 police and National Guard troops locked down Pittsburgh for the Group of 20 summit. Only one route was open for travel.

The consequences and patterns of war, whether by one nation against another or by a government against the citizenry, rarely change. However, the methods of war have evolved vastly in modern times. Wars by elites against populations are often so subtle that many people might not even recognize that they are under attack until it is too late. Whenever I examine the conceptions of “potential war” between individuals and oligarchy, invariably some hard-headed person cries out: “What do you mean ‘when?’ We are at war right now!” In this case, I am not talking about the subtle brand of war. I am not talking about the information war, the propaganda war, the economic war, the psychological war or the biological war. I am talking about outright warfare, and anyone who thinks we have already reached that point has no clue what real war looks like.

The recent exposure of the nationwide Jade Helm 15 exercise has made many people suspicious, and with good reason. Federal crisis exercises have a strange historical tendency to suddenly coincide with very real crisis events. We may know very little about Jade Helm beyond government admissions, claims and misdirections. But at the very least, we know what “JADE” is an acronym for: Joint Assistance for Deployment and Execution, a program designed to create action



and deployment plans using computer models meant to speed up reaction times for military planners during a “crisis scenario.” It is linked with another program called ACOA (Adaptive Course of Action), the basis of which is essentially the use of past mission successes and computer models to plan future missions. Both are products of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

As far as I know, no one has presented any hard evidence as to what “HELM” really stands for, but the JADE portion of the exercise explicitly focuses on rapid force deployment planning in crisis situations, according to the government white paper linked above. This fact alone brings into question statements by the Department of Defense that Jade Helm is nothing more than a training program to prepare military units for “foreign deployment.” This is clearly a lie if Jade Helm revolves around crisis events (which denotes domestic threats), rather than foreign operations.

Of course, if you also consider the reality that special operations forces always train like they fight and train in environments similar to where they will fight, the entire notion of Jade Helm as a preparation for foreign theaters sounds absurd. If special operations forces are going to fight in Iraq, Iran or Syria, they go to training grounds in places like Kuwait. If they are training in places like Fort Lauderdale, Florida (including “infiltration training”), then there is no way around the fact that they are practicing to fight somewhere exactly like Fort Lauderdale with a similar culture and population.



So if Jade is a crisis-planning system for the military and the military is training for domestic operations, what is the crisis it is training to react to? It’s hard to say. I believe it will come down to an economic disaster, but our economic and social structures are so weak that almost any major event could trigger collapse. Terror attacks, cyberattacks, a stiff wind, you name it. The point is the government expects a crisis to occur. And with the advent of this crisis, the ultimate war on the American people will begin.

Why wait for a crisis situation? With the cover of a crisis event, opposition to power is more easily targeted. For my starting point on the elite war strategy, I would like to use the following presentation on guerrilla warfare by Max Boot, Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow and military adviser, at the elitist World Affairs Council.

I would point out that Boot claims his work is merely a historical character study of interesting figures from the realm of insurgency and counterinsurgency and is not “polemical.” I’m afraid that I will have call horse hockey on that. Boot is direct adviser to the Department of Defense. His work and this presentation were obviously a study of guerrilla tactics from the perspective of counterinsurgency and an attempt to explore strategic methods for controlling and eradicating guerrillas and “terrorists.”

Any defense the American people might muster against elitist dismantling of constitutional liberties would inevitably turn to insurgency. So using CFR member Boot’s views on counterinsurgency as a guideline, here is how the elites will most likely wage war on those within the American population who have the will to fight back.



crucified and the rebellion would have immediately floundered because the Romans had no concern for public opinion. This is where we get into the real mind of the elitist.

For now, the establishment chooses to sway public opinion with carefully crafted disinformation. But what is the best way to deal with public opinion when fighting a modern revolution? Remove public opinion as a factor entirely so that the power elite are free to act as viciously as they wish. Engineered crisis, and economic crisis in particular, creates a wash of other potential threats, including high crime, looting, riots, starvation, international conflict, etc. In such an environment, public opinion counts for very little, if people even pay attention at all to anything beyond their own desperation. Once this is achieved, the oligarchy has free reign to take morally questionable actions without fear of future blowback.

CONTROL THE PUBLIC

Another main tenet Boot describes as essential in defeating insurgency is the control of the general population in order to prevent a revolution from recruiting new members and to prevent them from using the crowd as cover. He makes it clear that control of the public does not mean winning the “hearts and minds”

Two-year investigation determines ATF should be dissolved

By Sam Rolley

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives should be dissolved and have its mission, agents and investigators merged into the FBI, the Center for American Progress concluded in a new report following a two-year investigation of the agency.

“Every day, thousands of dedicated agents and civilians working at ATF fight to keep guns out of the hands of criminals — many risk their lives,” said Arkadi Gerney, CAP senior vice president. “But too often, the leadership, management, and resources lag behind the dedication of the agents.”

After interviewing more dozens of current and former ATF agents and other members of law enforcement, CAP concluded that the ATF suffers from serious management, funding and coordination problems.

The center notes:
Over the past 20 years, the agency has developed a culture of limited oversight and lack of accountability that has resulted in a structure of largely autonomous local field divisions that have too little connection to the executive leadership at the agency’s headquarters or to each other. This decentralized structure at times has left room for innovation by the agency’s many talented special agents and, in many offices, has resulted in strong investigative work. But too often, successful strategies in one field division are not transferred to other divisions — and worse, this autonomy has led to a culture of complacency in some field divisions, which has resulted in significant misjudgments and mistakes.

The negative effects of lackluster oversight within the ATF made national headlines in 2013 when The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel published a series of reports on the agency’s use of “rogue tactics” throughout the nation.

And in 2010, the ATF’s notorious Fast and Furious program shot to the center of public debate after news broke that Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry was killed with a firearm the agency had allowed to “walk” into the hands of Mexican cartel members.

Besides problems within the ATF, CAP argues that the agency should be dissolved simply because it is failing in its mission to keep guns out of the hands of criminals in the country.

Via CAP:
While there have been remarkable reductions in violent crime across the country — driven in part by federal law enforcement’s partnerships with local police — illegal gun



access continues to contribute to murder rates in the United States that far outpace those in comparable countries. The problem of gun crime in the United States and the daily toll of gun deaths on our communities warrant something new — a large-scale rethinking of how the federal government should address gun violence and illegal firearms trafficking and what ATF’s role should be in that effort.

According to CAP, merging the ATF with the FBI would help decrease gun crimes while significantly reducing government waste.

From the report:
First, combining the assets of these two agencies would reduce overlap and waste and would provide some cost savings at a time when all government agencies are struggling to maintain budgets. And merging the expertise of these two agencies would result in more effective and successful enforcement of federal firearms and explosives laws and a better approach to combat violent crime.

Merging the ATF with the FBI would be a lengthy process which CAP estimates could take as many as seven years. But according to the center, the end result would be an annual cost savings of \$58.7 million.

This isn’t the first time the idea of dissolving or radically restructuring the ATF has been floated. In March, in apparent response to the ATF’s attempt to regulate popular types of rifle ammunition off the civilian market, Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-Wis.) introduced legislation to disband the agency.

Sensenbrenner has long called for the ATF’s abolition, citing the agency’s well-publicized scandals as proof that the agency does more harm to the nation than good.

“[The ATF’s] ‘Framework’ is an affront to the Second Amendment and yet another reason why Congress should pass the ATF Elimination Act,” the lawmaker said of his legislation.

Sensenbrenner’s ATF Elimination Act would have handed the ATF’s firearms, explosives and arson responsibilities to the FBI and alcohol and tobacco law enforcement to the Drug Enforcement Agency. ★★★

CONTROL PUBLIC OPINION

Boot stresses the absolute necessity for the control of public opinion in defeating an insurgency. Most of his analysis is actually quite accurate in my view in terms of successes versus failures of guerrilla movements. However, his obsession with public opinion is, in part, ill-conceived. Boot uses the American Revolution as a prime example of public opinion working against the ruling powers, claiming that it was British public opinion that forced parliament and King George III to pull back from further operations in the colonies.

Now, it is important to note that elitists have a recurring tendency to marginalize the success of the American Revolution in particular as being a “fluke” in the historical record. Boot, of course, completely overlooks the fact that the war had progressed far longer than anyone had predicted and that the British leadership suffered under the weight of considerable debts. He also overlooks the fact that pro-independence colonials were far outnumbered by Tories loyal to the crown up to the very end of the war. The revolution was never in a majority position, and public opinion was not on the revolutionaries’ side.

The very idea of the American Revolution is a bit of a bruise on the collective ego of the elites, and their bias leads them to make inaccurate studies of the event. The reality is that most revolutions, even successful ones, remain in a minority for most, if not all, of their life spans.

Boot suggests that had the Founding Fathers faced the Roman Empire rather than the British Empire, they would have been

in a diplomatic sense, but dominating through tactical and psychological means.

He first presents the example of the French counterinsurgency in Algeria, stating that the French strategy of widespread torture, while “morally reprehensible,” was indeed successful in seeking out and destroying the insurgent leadership. Where the French went wrong, however, was their inability to keep the torture campaign quiet. Boot once again uses the public opinion argument as the reason for the eventual loss of Algeria by the French.

What Boot seems to be suggesting is that systematic torture is viable, at least as a hypothetical strategy, as long as it remains undetected by the overall public. He also reiterates this indirectly in his final list of articles for insurgency and counterinsurgency when he states that “few counterinsurgencies (governments) have succeeded by inflicting mass terror, at least in foreign lands,” suggesting that mass terror may be an option against a domestic rebellion.

Boot then goes on to describe a more effective scenario, the British success against insurgents in Malaya. He attributes the British win against the rebellion to three factors:

The British separated large portions of the population, entire villages, into concentration camps, surrounded by fences and armed guards. This kept the insurgents from recruiting from the more downtrodden or dissatisfied classes. And it isolated them into areas where they could be more easily engaged.

The British used special operations forces to target specific rebel groups and leadership rather than attempting to maneuver through vast areas.

Continued on page 7

PERSONAL LIBERTY CONTINUED

Articles of Interest that first appeared on Personal Liberty Digest™ at Personalliberty.com

America is a food stamp nation

By Bob Livingston

The gospel according to Wall Street, the White House and propaganda media is that the U.S. economy is recovering just fine.

Last week, happy-faced talking heads told us that unemployment was down to 5.4 percent — the lowest rate since May 2008 — even while the number of Americans not in the labor force climbed to a record 93,194,000. The Labor Force Participation Rate (the percent of people 16 years old and older eligible to work) stands at 62.8 percent. Still, government men dutifully claim all is well, that the stock market is bullish. Now the Fed is talking about raising interest rates.

Yet as of January 2015, the number of Americans receiving food stamps, officially known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP, had topped 46 million for 41 straight months, according to data released by the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Every month now for more than three years, going back to September 2011, 14.5 percent of the American population received food stamps.

In the Great Depression, long bread lines of hungry people waiting hours to get a meager bite to eat were visible reminders to everyone of the country's economic pain. This went on while, thanks to FDR's Agriculture Adjustment Act; farmers were paid to slaughter livestock, burn crops and leave their land fallow in order to prop up farm prices.

Today's digital bread lines are invisible and easy to ignore. Food stamps are today's soup kitchens. Most Americans are totally unaware of their magnitude. But they are real.

So in an economy that is supposedly percolating along nicely, the government still spends \$6 billion a month to keep U.S. citizens from starving? It doesn't make sense that in a prosperous country, participation in the food stamp program has ballooned 1,517 percent since 1969. When something doesn't make sense, usually government is involved.

Even though jobless claims and the unemployment rate reported by the government are down, the Labor Department's figures are based only on people receiving unemployment benefits. When those benefits run out, a person is no longer counted as unemployed by Uncle Scam, even though he or she still doesn't have a job. Jim Clifton, chairman and CEO of Gallup, has called the official unemployment reports "a Big Lie."

A truer picture of actual unemployment counts not only the short-term unemployed, but also the short-term and long-term "discouraged" workers — those who have given up looking for work. That unemployment rate is 23 percent, according to Shadowstats.com. That number rivals the heights of the Great Depression.

Children and the elderly once were the main beneficiaries of the food stamp program, but now working-age adults make up the majority. High school graduates are the largest group at 37

percent. But since 1980, workers with some college training have been the fastest-growing component of the recipient base, now with 28 percent of them having some college, compared to only 8 percent 35 years ago.

In fact, the majority of American families on public assistance — including food stamps, Medicaid, Temporary Aid to Needy Families and the earned income tax credit — have at least one full-time worker. More than half (56 percent) are working families. And 60 percent of food stamp recipients who are of working age and not disabled were employed while receiving the benefits, according to the Census Bureau.

A recent study by the University of California, Berkeley, Center for Labor Research and Education reports that persistent low wages costs the taxpayers \$153 million in public assistance every year to make up the slack. Some think tankers blame it on robots and overseas sweatshops, as automation and outsourcing to other countries with cheaper labor removes available jobs for the people at home.

But the real culprit is government tax policy and faux "free trade" deals that give multinational corporations breaks and incentives to take their manufacturing jobs to other countries, while burdensome regulation, high taxes and Obamacare destroy jobs that would be created by U.S. small businesses.

There is collusion between the globalists in government and the large multinational corporations to destroy the middle class and turn America into a Third World backwater of government dependents. This policy is endorsed by the leaders of both political parties.

Everything done in the District of Criminals is to the benefit of the large corporations and to grow government. Just look at the pending Trans-Pacific Partnership deal — at least what you can see of it, as it's shrouded in secrecy — which Rep. Sandy Levin (D-Mich.) claims would let foreign firms challenge U.S. laws, potentially overruling those laws and costing U.S. taxpayers billions of dollars in fines. And which Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) claims will undermine U.S. sovereignty. And which Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) claims contains a "living agreement," which is language allowing the treaty to be changed by the president after Congress approves it.

When you have such diametrically opposed politicians agreeing that a treaty is bad because it gives such breaks to large corporations and benefits to government, the deal has to be suspect.

Washington prints large sums of money to hand to

corporations in the form of corporate welfare. And it jiggers the tax code and passes so-called "free trade" laws to make it more profitable for them to outsource American manufacturing jobs. All the while, it imports millions of aliens — legally and illegally — to flood the market with workers content with slave wages. Obamacare is causing small businesses to close or to cut employees and hours in order to avoid complying with its mandates.

These policies drive up unemployment and drive down wages. Meanwhile, government food stamp recruiters have quotas of 150 signups per month. The program has an advertising budget of \$41 million per year; and advertising extends across the border into Mexico, explaining how illegals can sign up for the system. And eligibility requirements are constantly being eased in order to grow the rolls of dependents.

And ever since the New Deal, the government has manipulated prices and production of farm products. This has created artificially inflated food prices and cost consumers trillions of dollars by forcing them to pay higher-than-market prices for food and surrender ever increasing sums of their wealth to taxes and inflation.

And then there is the rapid rise of acceptance by the American people of government dominance in our lives. The people no longer shrink from a handout from Uncle Scam,

and the stigma once attached to doing so is fading. In fact, we have reached a time in America where most people consider handouts from government as something that they deserve as a right rather than a privilege because of their financial hardship or unemployment.

This attitude will be very bad when the food stamp system fails, as it surely will when the worthless paper money system collapses.

There are now several generations of people who have only known government handouts for their income. They depend upon government for their food, housing, transportation, entertainment and healthcare. This is part of the national collectivism designed and perpetrated by politicians on both sides of the aisle ... the "creeping fascism" move from a benevolent to full totalitarianism. Only it's not just creeping anymore, it's up to at least a fast walk and getting quicker by the day.

The elected class and the bureaucratic enablers hold themselves up as paragons of virtue whose chief aim is to serve the public interest. History has shown that when governments act to "protect the people," as often as not, death, destruction and dependency result. ★★★



Continued from page 6 • When elites wage war on US ...

The British made promises that appealed to the general public, including the promise of independence. This made the public more pliable and more willing to cooperate.

Now, I have no expectation whatsoever that the elites would offer the American public "independence" for their cooperation in battling a patriot insurgency, but I do think they would offer something perhaps more enticing: safety.

I believe the British/Malayan example given by Boot would be the main methodology for the elites and the federal government in the event that a rebellion arises in the U.S. against shifts away from constitutional republic or martial law instituted in the wake of a national emergency.

ISOLATE POPULATION CENTERS

There is a reason why certain American cities are being buried in technologically sophisticated biometric surveillance networks, and I think the Malayan example holds the key. Certain cities (not all) could be turned into massive isolated camps, or "green zones." They would be tightly controlled, and travel would be highly restricted. Food, shelter and safety would likely be offered, after a period of disaster has already been experienced. A couple months of famine and lack of medication to the medically dependent would no doubt kill millions of people. Unprepared survivors would flock to these areas in the hopes of receiving aid. Government forces would confiscate vital

supplies in rural areas whenever possible in order to force even more people to concentrate into controlled regions.

I have seen the isolation strategy in action in part, during the Group of 20 summit in Pittsburgh. More than 4,000 police and National Guard troops locked down the city center, leaving only one route for travel. The first day, there were almost no protesters; most activists were so frightened by the shock-and-awe show of force that they would not leave their homes. I imagine this is the closest example I have personally experienced to a martial law cityscape.

DECAPITATE LEADERSHIP

The liberty movement has always been a leaderless movement, which makes the "night of long knives" approach slightly less certain. I do not see any immediate advantage to the elites in kidnapping or killing prominent members of the movement, though that does not mean they will not try it anyway. Most well-known liberty proponents are teachers, not generals or political firebrands. Teachers leave their teachings behind, and no one needs generals or politicians. The movement would not necessarily be lost without us.

That said, there is a fear factor involved in such an event. The black-bagging of popular liberty voices could terrorize others into submission or inaction. This is why I constantly argue the need for individual leadership; every person must be able and willing to take individual action without

direction in defense of his own freedoms, if the need arises. Groups should remain locally led, and national centralization of leadership should be avoided at all costs.

According to the very promoters of Jade Helm exercises, training will center on quick-reaction teams striking an area with helicopter support, then exfiltrating within 30 minutes or less. Almost every combat veteran I have spoken with concerning this style of training has said that it is used for "snatch and grab" — the capture or killing of high value targets, then exfiltration before the enemy can mount a response.

FOURTH-GENERATION WARFARE

The final method for war against the American people is one Boot does not discuss: the use of fourth-generation warfare. Some call this psychological warfare, but it is far more than that. Fourth-generation warfare is a strategy by which one section of a population you wish to control is turned against another section of the population you wish to control. It is warfare without the immediate use of armies. Rather, the elites turn the enemy population against itself and allow internal war to do most of their work for them. We can see this strategy developing already in the U.S. in the manipulation of race issues and the militarization of police.

The use of provocateurs during unrest in places like Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore suggests that a race war is part of the greater

plan. I believe law enforcement officials have also been given a false sense of invincibility. With military toys and federal funding, but poor tactical philosophies and substandard training, LEOs are being set up as cannon fodder when the SHTF. Their inevitable failure will be used as a rationalization for more domestic military involvement; but in the meantime, Americans will be enticed to fight and kill each other while the elites sit back and watch the show.

KNOW THY ENEMY

I have outlined the above tactics not because I necessarily think they will succeed, but because it is important that we know exactly what we are dealing with. Such methods can be countered with community preparedness, the avoidance of central leadership, the application of random actions rather than predictable actions, etc. Most of all, liberty champions will have to provide a certain level of safety and security for the people around them if they want to disrupt establishment efforts to lure or force the population into controlled regions. Crisis is the best weapon the elites have at their disposal, and exercises like Jade Helm show that they may use it in the near term. The defense that defeats crisis is preparation — preparation not just for yourself, but for others around you. War is coming, and while we can't know the exact timing, we can assume the worst and do our best to be ready for it as quickly as possible. ★★★

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COMMENTARY Your Right to Speak Out



By Judge Andrew Napolitano

(FOX News) - What if we didn't have a Constitution? What if the government were elected by custom and tradition, but not by law?

What if election procedures and official titles and government responsibilities merely followed those that preceded them, and not because any of this was compelled by law, but because that's what folks came to expect?

What if those elected to office, and those appointed to it, as well, took oaths to uphold the Constitution? What if those who took the oaths promised fidelity to the Constitution? What if the Constitution declares itself to be the supreme law of the land? What if the supreme law of the land means what it says?

What if all in government, from presidents to park rangers, from generals to janitors, from judges to jail guards, take substantially the same oath? What if very few who have taken their oaths take them seriously? What if very few who have taken their oaths have actually read the Constitution? What if very few who have taken their oaths understand the values the Constitution upholds?

What if even fewer understand the historical, moral and legal bases for those values? What if

What If We Didn't Have a Constitution?

most who took those oaths did so expecting someone else in government to tell them what the Constitution means and how to deal with it?

What if the whole purpose of the Constitution is to limit the government, not to unleash it?

What if the plain language of the Constitution puts clear limits on what the government in America may lawfully do?

What if those in government began cutting constitutional corners about 100 years ago and overlooked prohibitions and limitations in the Constitution because they enjoyed exercising power over others and because they thought they knew what was best for everyone?

What if those prohibitions and limitations -- some of which were in the corners that were cut -- were written into the Constitution intentionally to keep the government off the backs of the people?

What if personal liberty is the birthright of all persons? What if government is essentially the negation of that liberty?

What if the Constitution represents the value judgment of Americans that our rights are higher in value than the government's powers to interfere with them? What if those who wrote the Constitution believed that personal liberty is the default position and government power the exception? What if the Constitution means that our rights should be maximum and government minimum?

What if our rights are natural components of our humanity? What if that humanity is a gift from God? What if we were created in His

image and likeness? What if the greatest likeness we have with Him and the greatest gift from Him is free will? What if we are perfectly free as He is perfectly free?

What if He created us with such free will that we are free to reject Him? What if we are so free that we are free to reject the government? What logic could underlie an argument that we are free to reject the Creator who made us but not free to reject the government we created?

What if the Constitution recognizes that liberty is personal and cannot be sacrificed by a majority vote of representatives, but only by individual consent?

What if the greatest right protected by the Constitution is the right to be left alone, the right to be oneself, the right to answer only to one's own free will? What if the Framers who wrote the Constitution so valued the right to privacy that they wrote very specific criteria into the Constitution to govern the government's ability to interfere with it? What if the government violated those criteria millions of times a day in the name of safety?

What if the violation of the right to privacy is a gateway to all other government violations of personal liberty? What if every government witch hunt never stops until it finds or creates a witch? What if every government inquisition never stops until it finds or creates a heretic?

What if government does create modern-day witches and heretics and then arrests them and seeks credit for keeping us safe from them? What if they never posed any threat? What if we fall for this?

What if those who love power defeat those who love liberty in a government election? What if there is no one left to enforce the Constitution against those in power?

What if all this is happening right under our noses? What do we do about it?

Andrew P. Napolitano, a former judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey, is the senior judicial analyst at Fox News Channel.



John Adams

What if a government that rejects its own Constitution were to be rejected by the people? What if the people have had enough of politicians and government leaders who promise safety and demand the surrender of liberty? What if liberty once surrendered is never returned? What if the liberty-for-safety trade is a facade that impairs both liberty and safety?

What if that trade makes government's job easier, but does not keep us safer? What if the Constitution was written to keep the government's job from becoming too easy? What if it is easier to listen to everyone's phone calls than only to those as to whom the government has probable cause to listen?



The Devastating Effect of Mandatory Sentencing

(FAMM.org) - On Feb. 6, 2010, active duty air force serviceman Michael Giles was invited to a Tallahassee nightclub by a few of his friends. Giles, a young father, was stationed in Tampa at the time, after spending the previous six years on tours of duty in places such as Iraq and Kuwait.

Michael accepted the invitation to hang out, thinking it would be a good time. Unfortunately, the night took a violent turn.

Two area fraternity chapters began arguing and fighting inside of the club, and the chaos soon turned into a brawl involving dozens of people that spilled into the club's parking lot. Michael thought that, during the commotion, his friends may have all gathered at the rental car one of his buddies had used to drive everyone to the party that night. When he made it to the vehicle, but didn't find his friends there, Michael retrieved his legally owned handgun from the glove box, and resumed his search for his friends. "I removed the handgun because the car was unlocked and [people] were walking between the cars," Michael says. Despite the fact that he was not involved in the fight, while Michael was looking for his friends, he was attacked from behind and punched to the ground.

Fearing for his life, he fired two shots from his firearm in an attempt to defend himself. His attacker was struck in the leg, but not seriously injured.

The gunshots broke up the fight, and Michael says he went across the street from the club to get away from the people that harmed him. He was arrested shortly after the incident and charged in Florida state court. There was little dispute over the facts of the case—the prosecutor and defense attorneys agreed that Michael had been attacked. Even the testimony of Michael's attacker supported that fact. However, prosecutors argued that he did not need to fire a gun to defend himself, and charged him with attempted murder.

"If I wouldn't have had my firearm that night, I believe I would have been killed or [would be] permanently handicapped right



Michael Giles

now," Michael says. "I was never one for trouble, which is the reason why I never had a criminal record before this offense."

Ultimately, Michael was acquitted of the attempted murder charges, but a jury convicted him of aggravated battery—because a gun was involved, the offense carries a mandatory minimum sentence under Florida's 10-20-Life law. Michael was sentenced to the 25-year minimum required by the law, despite his judge's strong objections. During trial, and again at sentencing, Michael's judge expressed concern over the sentence: "Frankly, I think the 25-year mandatory is overly harsh on the facts of this case, but that's what the law requires I do....I have no legal authority to impose less than that."

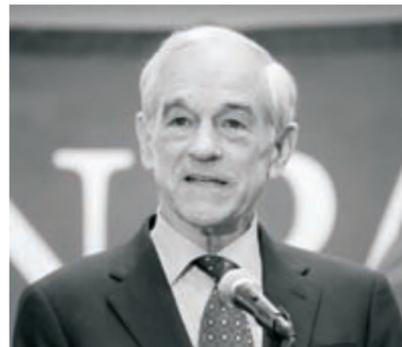
The judge wasn't the only one who thought the mandatory sentence was excessive. Since his sentencing, Michael has received support from advocates and legislators in his state who believe that he should be free. Michael's mother, Phyllis Giles, says that the concern of others and prayer are the two things bringing comfort to her tight-knit military family (both of Michael's parents are veterans, and both of his brothers have served as well).

"It's hard, especially when you've raised your children to do right thing, and they have done the right thing, and they're caught up in a situation that shouldn't have been," she says. "He asks me, 'Ma, how did this happen?' and I don't have an answer for him."

Giles, who bravely served his country, will be nearly 50 years old when he is released from prison if he doesn't receive some form of relief.

"I am a father of three beautiful children, and a military veteran who believes in fighting for this country to keep them safe," Michael says. "[Despite] all of my accomplishments outside of these walls, where I was a standup citizen, in here I just feel like a failure for not being out there with my kids even though I did nothing wrong. It's hard thinking about all the things you've tried to do right, and still end up on the bad side of things."

Straight Talk: The real war on the middle class



By Dr. Ron Paul

One of the great ironies of American politics is that most politicians who talk about helping the middle class support policies that, by expanding the welfare-warfare state, are harmful to middle-class Americans. Eliminating the welfare-warfare state would benefit middle-class Americans by freeing them from exorbitant federal taxes, including the Federal Reserve's inflation tax.

Politicians serious about helping middle-class Americans should allow individuals to opt out of Social Security and Medicare by not having to pay payroll taxes if they agree to never accept federal retirement or health care benefits. Individuals are quite capable of meeting their own unique retirement and health care needs if the government stops forcing them into one-size-fits-all plans.

Middle-class families with college-age children would benefit if government got out of the student loan business. Government involvement in higher education is the main reason tuition is skyrocketing and so many Americans are graduating with huge student

loan debts. College graduates entering the job market would certainly benefit if Congress stopped imposing destructive regulations and taxes on the economy.

Politicians who support an interventionist foreign policy are obviously not concerned with the harm inflicted on the middle-class populations of countries targeted for regime change. These politicians also disregard the harm US foreign policy inflicts on Americans. Middle- and working-class Americans, and their families, who join the military certainly suffer when they are maimed or killed fighting in unjust and unconstitutional wars. Our interventionist foreign policy also contributes to the high tax burden imposed on middle-class Americans.

Middle-class Americans also suffer from intrusions on their liberty and privacy, such as not being able to board an airplane unless they submit to invasive and humiliating searches. Even children and the physically disabled are not safe from the Transposition Security Administration. These assaults are justified by the threat of terrorism, a direct result of our interventionist foreign policy that fosters hatred and resentment of Americans.

Some "military Keynesians" claim that middle-class workers benefit from jobs in the military-industrial complex. Military Keynesians seem to think that the resources spent on militarism would disappear if the Pentagon's budget were cut. The truth is, if we reduced spending on militarism, those currently employed by the military-industrial complex would be able to find new jobs producing goods desired by consumers. Even those currently employed as lobbyists for the military-industrial complex may be able to find useful work. ***

"Congress has not unlimited powers to provide for the general welfare but only those specifically enumerated.
... A wise and frugal government... shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned."
--Thomas Jefferson

COMMENTARY

Wyden should be recalled for his stance on TPP



By Shelley Pineo-Jensen
For The Register-Guard

Sen. Ron Wyden should be recalled because of his decision to join congressional Republicans and ensure fast tracking of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

The TPP serves the interests of multinational corporations, including Monsanto, in a war for control of the world's resources. When the transnational corporations win, humanity loses. Wyden has proven that he is a tool of the corporations; he does not represent the people of Oregon and should be removed from office.

Wyden is not ignorant of opposition to the TPP, and the fast-tracking thereof. People from all across the state have flooded Wyden's voice-mail with thousands of messages.

He's received thousands of emails urging him to oppose fast track authority for the deal. And unions, environmental groups and community organizations have delivered petitions bearing tens of thousands of signatures to his office and met with his office staff on numerous occasions.

The senator could also read postings on his Facebook page if he wants to know which way

the wind is blowing.

Local residents, Oregonians, Americans, human beings, and the biosphere all have everything to lose under the rules that will control us if the TPP becomes the law of the land. This deal is being negotiated in secret — well, it's a secret from our side of the bargaining table, but not a secret from the multinational corporations on the other side. Fortunately for human beings, WikiLeaks has published much of the document. Public Citizen's analysis reports that the TPP would:

Give foreign investors expansive new substantive and procedural rights and privileges not available to domestic firms under domestic law.

Empower foreign firms to directly "sue" signatory governments in extra-judicial investor-state dispute settlement tribunals over domestic policies that apply equally to domestic and foreign firms when foreign firms claim that these policies violate their new substantive investor rights. Before an investor-state dispute settlement tribunal, foreign firms could demand taxpayer compensation for domestic financial, health, environmental, land use and other policies and government actions they claim undermine foreign investor privileges under the TPP, such as the "right" to a regulatory framework that conforms to their "expectations."

Empower these investor-state dispute settlement tribunals to order payment of unlimited government funds to foreign investors over TPP claims. Such compensation orders would be based on the "expected future profits" a tribunal surmises that an investor would have earned in the absence of the public policy it is attacking as violating the substantive investor rights

granted by the TPP.

We already have transnational corporate control of the railroad tracks in our country.



Oregon Senator Ron Wyden (D)

Local control of what materials travel through our town on the railroad tracks is a decision controlled by the World Trade Organization.

You cannot make a local law to stop the transport of dirty polluting coal through your town. The WTO "Compliance Panel" recently ruled that U.S. country-of-origin meat labeling is not permitted.

The WTO ordered our government to deny U.S. consumers basic information about

where food comes from.

One transnational corporation has spent millions of dollars to block labeling of foods containing genetically modified organisms: Monsanto. Monsanto is one of the key proponents of the TPP. Monsanto is represented by the lobbying group Akin Gump. And Akin Gump was the largest donor to Senator Wyden from 2009 to 2014. It is no surprise that Wyden is a cheerleader for the TPP; he hears his master's voice: Monsanto.

It is not complicated to recall a U.S. Senator in Oregon. According to the Oregon secretary of state's website, a chief petitioner files a document with the local elections filing officer. After receiving written approval, signatures are gathered. The number of signatures required to qualify for a recall vote is 15 percent of the total votes cast for governor in the last election.

In this case that number is 220,458. If sufficient signatures are verified, a recall election would be held. More than a quarter of a million people in Oregon are represented by unions. We can do this, and we should.

Shelley Pineo-Jensen of Eugene has worked as a union leader and social justice activist.

US-Observer Editor's Note: The US-Observer fully supports the attempted Recall of Senator Ron Wyden. While Recalling a US Senator will be tough, all of the bad exposure throughout the Recall is imperative. Some say you can't Recall a US Senator; the US-Observer says try to.

The US-Observer has been exposing Wyden's anti-constitutional actions, legislation and efforts for nearly two decades. From his anti-Second Amendment efforts to his bought and paid for support of legislation, we have exposed this corrupt Senator. ★★★



By John Whitehead
Tenth Amendment Center

We elevate the events of the American Revolution to near-mythical status all too often and forget that the real revolutionaries were people just like you and me. Caught up in the drama of Red Coats marching, muskets exploding and flags waving in the night, we lose sight of the enduring significance of the Revolution and what makes it relevant to our world today.

Those revolutionaries, by and large, were neither agitators nor hotheads. They were not looking for trouble or trying to start a fight. Like many today, they were simply trying to make it from one day to another, a task that was increasingly difficult as Britain's rule became more and more oppressive.

The American Revolution did not so much start with a bang as with a whimper—a literal cry for relief from people groaning under the weight of Britain's demands. The seeds of discontent had been sown early on. By the time the Stamp Act went into effect on November 1, 1765, the rumbling had become a roar.

The Stamp Act, passed by the British

Everyday People and the American Revolution

Parliament with no representation from the colonies (thus raising the battle cry of "no taxation without representation"), required that revenue stamps be affixed to all printed materials. It was an onerous tax that affected every colonist who engaged in any type of business. Outraged at the imposition, the colonists responded with a flood of pamphlets, speeches and resolutions. They staged a boycott of British goods and organized public protests, mass meetings, parades, bonfires and other demonstrations.

Mercy Otis Warren was an active propagandist against the British and a prime example of the critical, and often overlooked, role that women played in the Revolution. Historian Nina Baym writes, "With the exception of Abigail Adams, no woman in New England was more embroiled in revolutionary political talk than Mercy Otis Warren." Warren penned several plays as a form of protest, including *The Group* in 1775. As Baym writes: "The Group is a brilliant defense of the revolutionary cause, a political play without a patriot in it. In letting the

in 1766, it boldly moved to pass the Townshend Acts a year later. The Townshend Acts addressed several issues. First, any laws passed by the New York legislature were suspended until the colony complied with the Quartering Act, which required that beds and supplies be provided for the king's soldiers. And duties (or taxes) were imposed on American imports of glass, lead, paint, paper and tea.

Americans responded in outrage through printed materials and boycotts. In *Letters of a Pennsylvania Farmer*, which appeared in newspapers and pamphlets, attorney John Dickinson argued that Parliament had no right to levy taxes for revenue. He also cautioned that the cause of liberty be advanced with moderation. But as historians George Brown Tindall and David Emory Shi write, "Such conciliatory language led John Adams to dismiss Dickinson as a 'piddling genius.'" Samuel Adams responded by organizing protests in Boston.

And in 1768, Samuel Adams and James Otis circulated a letter throughout the colonies that reiterated their concerns about the illegality of British taxation and asked for support from the other colonists. When an official in London ordered that the letter be withdrawn, they refused. By 1773, Samuel Adams had convinced the Boston town meeting to form a "Committee of Correspondence," a group of protesting American colonists. The Committee issued a statement of rights and grievances and invited other towns to do the same.

Thereafter, Committees of Correspondence sprang up across Massachusetts. And in 1773, the Virginia Assembly proposed the formation of Committees of Correspondence on an inter-colonial basis. A network of committees spread across the colonies, mobilizing public opinion and preventing colonial resentments from boiling over. As a result, the Committees of Correspondence played a critical role in the unification of the colonies. Author Nat Hentoff writes:

In 1805, Mercy Otis Warren—in her History of the Rise and Progress and Termination of the American Revolutions, emphasized: "Perhaps no single step contributed so much to cement the union of the colonies, and the final acquisition of independence, as the establishment of the Committees of Correspondence . . . that produced unanimity and energy throughout the continent." These patriots spread the news throughout the

colonies about such British subversions of fundamental liberties as the general search warrant that gave British customs officers free reign to invade homes and offices in pursuit of contraband.

COLONISTS BEGIN TO ORGANIZE

- Committees of Correspondence
- Set up in Massachusetts 1772
- Boycott of British goods
 - 1773 Boston Tea Party
 - Colonists dressed as Indians went aboard ships carrying British Tea and dumped the tea into Boston Harbor
- First Continental Congress 1774
 - First form of organized delegates that discussed abandoning Britain
 - Met in Philadelphia
 - 12 of the 13 colonies were represented
 - Made up of 55 members
 - Georgia did not attend

We would do well to remember that, in the end, it was the courage and resolve of common, everyday people that carried the day. Courage was a key ingredient in the makeup of the revolutionaries. The following vignette offers a glimpse of one man's strong stand in the face of the British army.

Two months before the battles of Lexington and Concord, the British sent Colonel Leslie with 240 men to seize arms and ammunition which the rebels had stored in Salem. As the troops approached town, residents halted their progress by lifting the Northfield drawbridge. Several inhabitants climbed onto the raised leaf of the bridge and engaged in a shouting match with Colonel Leslie on the other side. William Gavett, an eyewitness, reported the incident:

In the course of the debate between Colonel Leslie and the inhabitants, the colonel remarked that he was upon the King's Highway and would not be prevented passing over the bridge.

Old Mr. James Barr, an Englishman and a man of much nerve, then replied to him: "It is not the King's Highway; it is a road built by the owners of the lots on the other side, and no king, country or town has anything to do with it."

Colonel Leslie was taken aback, but he pressed the issue; James Barr held firm, knowing he was in the right. In the end, Leslie promised to march only fifty rods "without troubling or disturbing anything" if the residents of Salem would lower the bridge. The bridge came down, Leslie kept his word, and the opening battle of the American Revolution was postponed. Old James Barr had taken on the British empire with a few simple words.

Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of The Rutherford Institute.

★★★



opposition drop their masks of decency, Warren exposes them as creatures of expediency and selfishness, men who are domestic as well as political tyrants."

Although Parliament repealed the Stamp Tax

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Continued from page 1 • "Dysfunctional" Surveying in Idaho ...



Dorothy and Butch Walker

Harmon, Ellan Hoiland, Dean Hoiland, Elvin Harmon (Harmon/Hoilands) to protect their property boundaries.

The Walkers hired a Boise, Idaho Attorney to represent them. The Walkers then enlisted local surveyor Chad Erickson to assist them in reaffirming their property lines based on the original corners.

In December of 2011, the Walkers fired Chad Erickson because he started deviating from standard surveying practice, which will be described later. In January of 2014, the Walkers, "unable to communicate with their Attorney," and believing they were "not receiving adequate counsel," fired him as well. They subsequently contacted the US-Observer to investigate their case.

On May 3, 2014, the Walkers hired Attorney Wesley W. Hoyt of Clearwater, Idaho. During a hearing held on December 16, 2014, District Judge John Stegner dismissed Walker's original lawsuit and flawed Summary Judgement Motion (filed by the opposition Attorney) and dismissed the Walker's claims without prejudice, meaning he was allowing them to file a new lawsuit, with Hoyt's representation. Judge Stegner ruled at this hearing on a Motion filed by the Grangeville Highway District's Attorney Gary Jones, that when the Walkers file their new lawsuit, they need to include all adjoining landowners who would be affected by a court ruling in this case. Walker's Boise Attorney had failed to do this in his original Summary Judgement Motion along with numerous other failures. Judge Stegner's ruling allowed the Walkers to seek justice after they completed additional survey work to identify the original property corners and boundary lines.

BACKGROUND AND SURVEYOR ETHICS

In 2009, Walkers neighbors, Harmon/Hoilands began building a home on what the Walkers believed was their property. The Walker's Attorney subsequently sent Harmon/Hoilands a letter informing them that they were building on Walker property and to stop. Harmon/Hoilands

ignored the demand letter and continued building not only the home, but a road across what had always been Walker property.

Since the Idaho Board of Surveyors (BOS) heavily promotes the position that they are all about "ethics", let's reveal what has transpired in the Walker case with the BOS and two of the surveyors hired by the Walkers.

SURVEYOR CHAD ERICKSON

Surveyor Erickson was hired by the Walkers in 2010 and when he referred to Carl Edward's (surveyor) Corner during a recent conversation with me, he stated, "When I looked at the aerial photo I could tell that Edward's Corner was nothing." And, this "took me a year and a half." He continued, "you've probably heard

Ketchum (surveyor) and others say that my Monument was in err because I used Edward's Stone, that's true, that's true." At one point Erickson claimed his own Monument was "Bogus."

Keep in mind as you read this section on Erickson, that he represented himself as a licensed professional to the Walkers! Further, surveyor ethics require a surveyor not take any action that is detrimental to their client, such as assisting the other side in a controversy. It is also a breach of ethics to attack a client who has hired you as an expert. You may not agree with that client, but under the rules of expert witnesses, once hired, the surveyor cannot start working for the other side.

Fast-forwarding to March of 2015, we discovered that Chad Erickson was published in "the American Surveyor Magazine." Their article was titled, "One Room Schools, Aerial Photos, & Hokey Pokey Surveys." In the article, Erickson does his best to make Dorothy Walker look dishonest and refers to two of the Walkers surveyors (hired after Erickson was fired by the Walkers) as "paladins," because they identified the Walker's south property line, south of the line he previously thought should be established. Erickson stated in the article, "They and their opinions are now 80' further south and 270 feet west and still going, apparent next stop, Pismo Beach, California." Hyperbole aside, such name calling is strictly unethical.

Why would Erickson write this deceiving article over two years after the Walkers fired him, especially when he is bound by ethics not to attack a former client. Was he still mad over being fired? Or, given that in an interview he admitted to me that he was recently seen at the courthouse in Grangeville with

Surveyor Hunter Edwards who was working for the other side (Harmon/Hoilands surveyor and son of Carl Edwards), did he write the article to hurt the Walkers and attempt to insure that the Walkers would lose their case or that the Harmon/Hoilmans would win theirs? If so, this is a strict violation of ethics.

Let's deal with some of Erickson's most damning statements. After his article was published, Erickson went to the Recorder's Office at the courthouse in Grangeville and recorded the article (placed it into the public record). In the copy he recorded, he named Dorothy Walker and her, "surveyors," (Pete Ketchum and Steve Wellington). He did not mention them by name in his published article.

When I first confronted Erickson about his article, I hit him straight-on with a hard- to-answer question. His first response was, "I'm a little rattled right here, give me just a minute." When I asked him why he didn't name Dorothy Walker or the Walker's other two surveyors in his published article, but he did in the recorded one, he paused for a fair amount of time and then responded, "Oh dear, it is there." Erickson was letting on like he was looking up what he had filed on his computer, while we were on the phone. I pressed Erickson at this point, asking who got him to file the article into the record. He finally told me, "The Board [Idaho State Board of Surveyors] hired a surveyor.

I sent him the magazine article and he said, 'this helps a lot' and, ah, he said, 'you need to record that.'" I then asked Erickson for the name of the surveyor who told him that he needed to record it and he stated, "it seemed like J.R. Russell." After another pause, he concluded, "John Russell out of McCall." I subsequently called Surveyor John Russell and informed him that Chad Erickson had told me that he (John Russell) asked Erickson to record the article – that recording it would help a lot. John Russell replied, "that is a Lie!"

I will leave it up to my readership to separate the lies and to decide why Surveyor Chad Erickson would take over two years to complete a survey, on his own, that the Walkers can't use, then, write a damning article about his client in a national magazine when nobody was paying him to do it. Was it revenge? Last,

but certainly not least, Erickson charged the Walkers a whopping, "\$37,856.00" for this. That's almost \$40,000! Would the Idaho Board of Surveyors consider this charge ethical, and, do they condone licensed surveyors writing defamatory articles about their own clients? Frankly, it is not ethical for the BOS to render a decision as long as there is unresolved litigation that a judge is supposed to resolve. Since this case is far from resolved, we see action by the BOS as an attempt at obstruction of justice.

During my conversation with Erickson he did enlighten me about surveying in the State of Idaho. Erickson stated, "Why can't one surveyor survey the same as the next surveyor? It's because their profession is totally dysfunctional, and the state Boards are the worst." I was under the impression from what I



John Russell

Continued on page 11



Fighting Mad Drunk

Editor's Note: Red is one of the most ethical individuals to have ever worn a badge. Besides, he has some real good stories.

By Red Smith

I was working swing shift out of the Gold Hill Sub-Station and was in the Wimer area when I heard the Rogue River Police duty officer dispatched to a pizza parlor to deal with a white male adult who was being disorderly and possibly intoxicated.

Thinking the officer may need a cover unit, I responded. Upon my arrival, I saw the officer by his car to my left near the entrance of the pizza parlor and the police chief standing right in front of the obviously intoxicated male, who was standing on the sidewalk right in front of the pizza parlor entrance. I was behind the police chief but further away than his officer.

The drunk was loudly and profanely refusing to allow the police to look in his truck for a gun with which he was accused of threatening people inside the pizza parlor. He told the police chief to take off his badge and gun and he would whip his ass, over and over again. After about twenty minutes, the chief told his officer to keep watch on the guy while he contacted the pizza parlor manager inside.

The drunk, with tunnel vision like most drunks, saw me and approached. He started telling me all the same things he'd been telling the chief and I stood there and didn't say a word. After awhile he started running out of gas and asked me if I had anything to say. I told him I was trying to be polite and respectful and let him have his say.

When he didn't say anything I asked him if he was man enough and could be respectful like me and listen to what I had to say. He said, "yes I can." I told him he might be tough

enough to whip the chief, but the chief was the fleet boxing champion in the Navy prior to becoming the chief. And, that if he whipped the chief he would then have to whip his officer and if he was able to do that he'd have to whip me. I told him, 'Giving you the benefit of doubt and say you whip all three of us. Then they will issue warrants and they will send six. Again for the sake of argument you whip those six. The next time they will send 12, then 24, then 48, then 56. Sooner or later in all this whipping you plan on doing you're going to hurt someone and then they will send people with guns and you will end up in one of two places, in prison or in the ground. Now I'm not trying to threaten you. I'm trying to provide you with helpful information so you can make an educated decision in your own best interest so think about it.'

When the chief returned, the drunk walked up to him and told him, "Here's the keys to my truck. Look all you want. If you want to arrest me, go ahead whatever you want, I'll do." The chief took the keys looked in the truck to find a rusted piece of a rifle unable to function, sent the guy to a motel for the night and asked me if I had threatened the drunk. I told him no, just provided some helpful information and with that he made what I considered to be a good decision.

ABOUT ME: My name is William Holden Smith, but most people know me as Red Smith. I think communication is the most important tool any person can have and especially a police officer. I'm retired from the Sheriff's Office after being a reserve for years and then twenty-eight years full-time. In retirement, I drove armored truck, worked for three different Municipal Police Departments and a Constable's Office. Now I'm trying the retirement thing again. Fair warning though, I like to stay busy. ★★★

Continued from page 1 • Amazing Dave! ...

will work. Edison's light bulb, for instance, required him to try and fail about 20,000 times to find material that would work for the filament. He tried using everything available—even human hair—until he got it right.

Now imagine that Einstein, Edison or Tesla had been jailed when they were developing their creations; imagine they were placed in a prison cell the size of a small closet and only allowed to have a pencil and a few sheets of paper. Although trapped, these geniuses, who by their very nature, are compelled to invent would press on despite their surroundings, inventing the Things that are in their mind. They report that they have been driven by a vision and history records that human society seems to place a curse on those with this amazing talent.

So it is with David R. Hinkson, former Idaho County resident, the inventor of WaterOz dietary supplements. He invented products providing mineral replacement therapy for those who want better health, when their body, organs and systems have been deprived of essential minerals. We all know that many of our soils are depleted so that the plant grown in mineral deficient soil does not have the food value it should.

But David Hinkson was given a vision of how to take pure raw minerals and turn them into consumable liquids in a process he calls, "ionization." The ionized mineral is then poured into a controlled, purified water so that a mere teaspoon is enough to affect the aging process caused by lack of essential minerals.

Unfortunately for David, he was caught in a trap set by a blackmailing criminal, an Idaho County resident, named "Elven Joe Swisher." This villain falsely bore witness against David, as he promised he would, if David refused to sign over one-half of his business (extortion). This cowardly, sniveling ex-con himself convicted of perjury, forgery, theft of government property and stolen valor is considered by many – including members of his own family – a sociopath, who was guilty of lying to the jurors in David Hinkson's trial. But, what's worse is the trial judge and prosecutor both vouched for Swisher's credibility to the jury, basing Hinkson's conviction on a complete falsehood.

The majority of judicial grey-beards on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals failed to recognize that a person, such as David Hinkson—sent to prison solely on the testimony

of a convicted perjurer, Swisher, should receive a new trial. Certainly, justice demands Hinkson be given a fair trial. But then there are the Politics of this situation.

Yes, the politics in Idaho County, contributed to David's unfair conviction, leaving him confined to a prison cell where he can only develop his inventions on paper. By the way, the latest Thing he is working on is a transformer that every homeowner can afford, which uses magnetic power to deliver enough electricity to run a household and put the excess into the grid—so that the power company sends the homeowner a check every month. The tragedy of our prison system in American is that once a person is convicted, he/she is forgotten and his family often experiences shame.

But maybe not so much for David R. Hinkson. Newspaper publisher, Edward Snook of the U.S. Observer, was astonished that David, of all those innocent persons victimized by a corrupt system, was the most highly recognized nationwide. According to Snook, "the American public is aware of David and that he was falsely convicted of crimes he did not commit, and in fact, these were make-believe crimes that never occurred".

After twelve years in prison, having been railroaded by a lying Appellate Court Judge Richard C. Tallman who served by designation as the trial court judge in the Hinkson case, had a private "ex parte" meeting with Swisher immediately prior to his testimony and embraced Swisher's lies as if he was a credible witness, David's creativity has survived and, despite the gross unfairness, has been inventing many Things that will benefit Mankind, despite those who have tried to destroy and silence him. David envisions a better world for humanity, instead of playing the victim role. He creates amazing Things that will benefit society (without a laboratory, or tools or assistance); he visualizes and implements where possible, and that's why we call him "Amazing Dave" who should receive an award as Inventor of the Year.

Editor's Note: We have taken on Hinkson's absolutely false conviction and we look forward to seeing this innocent Veteran released from prison. It is simply a matter of how much effort it will take.

I urge anyone with information on Elven Joe Swisher or the Hinkson case to contact Edward Snook at 541-474-7885 or send an email to editor@usobserver.com. ★★★



Elven Joe Swisher

Continued from page 10 • "Dysfunctional" Surveying in Idaho ...

have read about surveying that the Board's rules prohibit one surveyor from bad-mouthing another. And what about bad-mouthing the Board?

SURVEYOR STEVE WELLINGTON

In a recent conversation I had wherein Carl Edward's SW Corner of Section 24 was referred to as possibly being fraudulent, Walker's second Surveyor Steve Wellington stated to me, "I always figured it was either fraud or gross negligence, but I had no proof of either one." Wellington continued, "Now he's got his son (Hunter Edwards) trying to perpetuate..." All I have to say about this statement by Wellington is that he could only have concluded this by looking at evidence (surveys, etc.) and surveying Section 24 (which he has done). It is clear that Wellington is merely attempting to limit his possible liability by stating, "but I had no proof of either one."

Cutting to the chase, Steve Wellington took much less time to "complete his work" for the Walkers. Wellington reportedly took only one year to file his "Record of Survey." And get this; he saved the Walkers some money – the Walkers only had to pay Wellington a whopping, "\$30,059.36" for his "work."

Unlike Chad Erickson's "\$37,856.00" survey, the Walkers were going to use Steve Wellington's "\$30,059.36" survey in court, however, two years after filing his Record of Survey and approximately one month before the Walkers deadline for filing their amended complaint, Wellington did a '180.' He allegedly told Dorothy Walker and her attorney in April of 2015, that he was under "duress" (pressure) by the Walker's Boise Attorney, when he filed his original Record of Survey, and, that he would have to file a corrected one. Surveyor John Russell told me that when he met with Steve Wellington in Meridian, ID., Wellington told him he, "was under a little duress" by Dorothy Walker when he filed his Record of Survey. Why would Wellington give such differing statements? What integrity Mr. Wellington!

Wellington stated he is now required to file a corrected Record of Survey, but why wouldn't he have done this long ago if that was true? If he was under duress when he filed over two years ago, wouldn't that mean, he knew at that time, he was filing a false survey? Having already had Chad Erickson admit to me that he was communicating with Hunter Edwards about the Walker's survey, I can't help but wonder if Wellington has been talking to Hunter and possibly others who are opposing the Walkers. You see, all the Walkers want is their property according to the original corners. In fact, surveyors call it the "law of original corners." But, those who are encroaching on the Walker property are pushing hard to nibble away big chunks



Hunter Edwards



Chad Erickson

of land for themselves.

I learned in late April from one of our sources that Walker's current attorney was communicating with Attorney David R. Risley, who represents the Harmon/Hoilands, about a possible mediation regarding this case and guess what – Attorney Risley wrote, "We would like to have a firm deposition date for Mr.

Wellington scheduled for a week or so after the Mediation." Why in the world would Risley bring up a deposition of Wellington in late April of 2015, when Wellington filed his Record of Survey over two years ago? It appears to me that Risley must have known Wellington was going to change his Record of Survey and he could only know this if Wellington had been speaking to either him or others associated with the Walkers opposition. Could the Walkers have paid their Surveyor Steve Wellington "\$30,059.36" to assist the very people they have filed lawsuits against? Talk about unethical!

Again, I would ask the Idaho Board of Professional Land Surveyors; are all of these statements and actions ethical?

The Walkers are about to file their amended complaint to preserve the land that they paid for and was originally deeded to them. The suit will include the Ray Zumwalt Estate, and Mike Frei. The Freis were the original landowners who hired surveyor Carl Edwards back in 1977, when Edwards established a "new corner" for the Walker's section of land, which in turn, changed and affected additional properties. The US-Observer is continuing to not only compile

facts in our effort to prove that Edward's corner is "fraudulent", but to uncover the motive and intent behind his "fraud."

I commend Dorothy Walker and her family for acting on their principles. Dorothy has been forced over the past five years to conduct an intense and very thorough study of surveying laws, principles, the history of surveys in the area where her property corners and boundaries are located, and the actual practice of surveying. Dorothy and her family know what property they purchased and they are willing to fight for it. In light of the other twenty surveys or more - which are all different - that have been conducted regarding Section 24 in Grangeville, Idaho, I will choose to rely on the Walker's proven information as to original corners and the fact that the person they purchased from clearly described the boundaries of section 24 to them.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE IDAHO BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS

The Board of Surveyors should not even be involved in this case while it is being adjudicated. However, since they chose to

jump in, I must address Board issues in this article and I must now include the Board and the Board members in my investigation.



Idaho Board of Surveyors
Executive Director, Keith Simila

When I questioned Surveyor John Russell, he informed me that the Board had hired him and that this case was different than most. Russell stated that he wrote his report for the Board's Executive Director Keith Simila and that he was asked to write his opinion as opposed to his factual finding. Russell said that historically, the Board wants facts. I would publicly ask Simila; why is this case different, and who have you been "Dealing" with? Opinions suggest that decisions are politically motivated.

I'm sure the Board is aware that reporter Cynthia Sewell of the Idaho Statesman wrote an article in March of 2015 that stated: "Idaho is one of eight states without an agency or independent commission to oversee state ethics laws. It is one of three states with no financial disclosure requirements for state, judicial, county and city elected officials and it has no 'revolving door' policy. These shortcomings are part of the reason the state has received a D- in a national survey rating government corruption risk."

My final recommendations to Simila and his Board would be: start demanding that your surveyors practice actual ethics. Have the deceitful and dishonest surveyors involved prosecuted. And, do not attempt to influence ongoing litigation by board action and stop playing your "behind closed doors" favoritism regarding the Walkers and their case. If you don't, I assure you that further exposure will follow.

Edward Snook's Note: I urge anyone with information on this case or any of the people involved to call me at 541-474-7885 or send an email to ed@usobserver.com.

★★★

Continued from page 1 • Florida Minister Appeals ...

The Minister claims that he did not resist, ever. Furthermore, he claims to have been wrongfully arrested after his former neighbor, Jeff Gomez, claimed that he, "flipped him off," which resulted in the Minister's arrest for violation of an injunction order that the Minister claims was, "wrongfully granted in the first place." Minister Luongo stated he has, "suffered extreme abuse from his former neighbor Jeff Gomez (the accuser), the Indian River County Sheriff's Department, and the local courts over the past several years."

Minister Luongo's criminal history shows nothing on record, until his former neighbor, Jeff Gomez purchased property next to his now closed non-profit food bank. It was shortly after they became neighbors that conflict arose. A detailed account of the problems can be read in the on-line version of this article at www.usobserver.com. Conducting further background's on Minister Luongo, it was apparent that he has spent many years of his life feeding the homeless and preaching. Several sources proved that he has dedicated much of his life to helping others. This begged the question; Is he the type of person to commit such a crime; would a Minister, "flip off his neighbor?" And, was his arrest lawful or un-lawful?

I found it difficult to fully understand how someone could be arrested and charged with peacefully resisting arrest, until I started talking to people associated with the Minister's case. His accuser, Jeff Gomez has a reported long standing relationship with the local police, even being referred to as a, "friend" by Indian River County Sheriff Lieutenant Kent Campbell, who arrested Minister Luongo for peacefully resisting. Causing more concern, I learned that

Lieutenant Campbell's wife is employed by Jeff Gomez, the accuser, which paints a picture of bias and intent. Interestingly, the Indian River County Sheriff's Department spokesperson, Sergeant Eric Flowers informed me during a phone conversation that all of their vehicles have video capability, and, several of their deputies have camera's on their person, yet Lieutenant Kent Campbell, who arrested Minister Luongo, and is in charge of the entire department while in uniform, did not record Minister Luongo, 'peacefully resisting arrest.' Why?

After my previous article on this case, I was contacted by Jeff Gomez, and, Deputy Teddy Floyd, who were both named in my previous article. They both claimed to have not lied, nor violated the Minister in any way whatsoever. They agreed to contact me with proof that what I had published was not true, and I told them, in return I would remove the content and retract my previous article if they could support their claims with evidence. That was over three months ago. Both Jeff Gomez and Deputy Teddy Floyd never contacted me again.

Many of Minister Luongo's troubles with Gomez originated over property disputes. Gomez owns and operates Coast to Coast Landscaping, which is located directly next to the Minister's now closed food bank. Witnesses reported that Gomez, either



Lieutenant Kent Campbell

himself, or through his employees, damaged the Minister's cargo truck which was used to transport food for homeless people. Additionally, the Minister's plants were allegedly sprayed by Gomez's employees with poison several times, always dying, causing the Minister to re-plant. The Minister was constantly touching dead plants, not knowing he was coming into direct contact with toxic poison. Minister Luongo's medical reports confirm the seriousness of the health problems that he

endured as a result. The Minister built several fences between his and Mr. Gomez's property which were allegedly damaged by Gomez and/or his employees. The Minister claims that each time police got involved, he was almost always arrested (arrested five times). Not knowing why, he began suffering from severe stress. Mr. Gomez was able to get multiple injunctions (restraining orders) against the Minister, causing the Minister's business, health, personal, and family life to suffer immensely. In all, Minister Luongo has been, "ordered" by the courts to undergo two mental evaluations. He passed both. He claims to be suffering from a case of self-described, "abuse."

Many people in the Minister's community have come forward, supporting him. He's received many awards for his hard work. Multiple organizations and publications have recognized him for helping the homeless.

Subsequent to my first article, I contacted Indian River County Code-Enforcement. It was Indian River Code-Enforcement (employee's name omitted as requested) that dealt with several complaints between the two neighbors. I was told by Code-Enforcement

that my previous article was, "spot-on."

While looking further into Gomez' past, I discovered a lawsuit, in which he was named as defendant. The suit, a claim of "Fair Labor Standards Act," violation, led me to believe that Minister Luongo was not the only person whom Gomez had legal problems with. It appears Gomez was sued by a Mr. Scott R. Slechta, and possibly three other people in Broward County, Florida on October 10, 2013. According to pacer, an online court document site, a "judgment - jury verdict" was entered on November 18, 2014 between Slechta and Gomez.

Why would Gomez be sued by other(s) for reportedly failing to compensate their labor?

One witness, Steve Folds, submitted a sworn and notarized affidavit, revealing choice words that Gomez had towards Minister Luongo, wherein Jeff Gomez told him, "...that mother F@#ing Jesus freak. I'm ready to go to jail, I'm going to blow his (Minister) fricking head off! He is gonna need God when I'm finished with him!"

Does that sound like it could come from a 'nice guy' like the one Gomez claims to be?

Fliers disparaging Minister Luongo were recently plastered all over vehicles at a recent event in Vero Beach claiming he is a "schizophrenic" and a, "violent con-artist." There are only a select few that Minister Luongo believes are responsible for this act. He publicly asks for their forgiveness for what they have done to him, his business and family, but believes they should be held accountable saying, "I pray that justice is served."

I commend him for his patience and understanding of others, especially considering all that he has endured.

Will Minister Luongo's conviction be overturned so that he can move on with life? Please visit www.usobserver.com for updates.

Anyone who has any information, or anyone involved in this case is urged to contact the US-Observer at 541-474-7885. We thank those who have already contacted us. ★★★

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10 Celebrities You Didn't Know Were Libertarian

(The Libertarian Republic) - While millennials still make up the largest percentage of those that call themselves libertarian, much of the idea has matriculated into books, film and social media. We thought we would compile a list of celebrities who might be Libertarian or – at the very least – leaning Libertarianish. As Victor Hugo once said, "Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come."



1. Sandra Bullock

Not typically outspoken on politics, Bullock prefers to keep her political and religious beliefs private. However, she has given the public mixed signals when she self-identified as a conservative on her Facebook page and then another time stated

that she has "as many Democratic ideas as she does Republican".

(Sounds libertarianish to me)

Many people presumed Bullock to be liberal when she signed on to the "Restore The Gulf" project. But, once she learned that the America's Wetland Foundation was a front group run by Shell Oil Corp to redirect negative attention away from the oil industry, she cut ties immediately.

Besides the fact that she can speak German fluently, which was evidenced during her 2012 Germany award acceptance speech, she raised our libertarian antennae during a Marie Claire magazine interview in 2002. When asked what twelve things she would take if she were stranded on a desert island, she said,

"The Fountainhead by Ayn Rand. The main character, Howard Roark, being safe and strong enough to be the outsider, to be the lone voice, is such a great metaphor for what, in one way, the [movie] business promotes and looks for, and in another way, doesn't allow. When somebody breaks out and completely shatters the mold, it's inspiring. It's scary to set off by yourself like that."

Danke, Sandra. Danke. [tips fedora]

2. Joe Rogan

A Jersey-born individual who was raised Catholic is going to be skeptic (it takes one to know one). Although they say it is impossible to pin Rogan down to one ideology, all arrows appear to be pointing due North liberty!

Let's check off some boxes, shall we? He distrusts the government; endorsed Ron Paul in 2012; he is a critical thinker who doesn't want to be pigeonholed (but we are going to try anyway); he doesn't take things at face value; he questions paradigms; he doesn't mind telling you what he thinks – all good indications that someone might be a Libertarian.

Finally, his quotation on Ron Paul would basically summarize the overall sentiment of libertarians (generally speaking) where he said,

I think it's interesting that [Ron Paul], who says all this sh*t about making the government smaller, which everybody agrees on, stuff about lowering taxes, and just a lot of common sense small government stuff, and you'd think there would be a groundswell of conservative people behind him... Our government's f*cking out of control. We're governed too much.

Jersey Strong!



3. Clint Eastwood

Country music artist Jessie James Decker sang it true in her hit "Clint Eastwood" when she sings "They don't make them like that anymore".

The legendary actor and director was quoted saying, I like the libertarian view, which is to leave everyone alone. From a libertarian point of view, you would say, 'Yeah? So what?' You have to believe in total equality. People should be able to be what they want to be and do what they want — as long as they're not harming people.



4. Rob Lowe

In addition to being on Parks and Recreation, home of the beloved



Libertarian hero, Ron Swanson, Lowe seems to have been bitten by the Libertarian bug over the years. In

an Elle 2004 magazine interview, he was asked what woman would he like to meet living or dead. The former West Wing star answered enthusiastically, "I'm almost done with Atlas Shrugged and it's completely blowing my mind, so Ayn Rand."

In another interview he added, "Atlas Shrugged by Ayn Rand is a stupendous achievement and I just adore it."

Is it me or did this just make him hotter?



5. Angelina Jolie

Although it may appear that she may be taking after her Republican father, Jon Voigt, when she has expressed her disapproval of President Obama, don't assume that she'll be railing against the Democrats on Fox News any time soon.

A source close to her stated that "She's into education and rehabilitation and thinks Obama is all about welfare and handouts. She thinks Obama is really a socialist in disguise," adds the source.

Jolie holds strong libertarian-leaning and wanting to star in the first Atlas Shrugged movie that was released in 2011, however scheduling did not work out.

"I just think [Ayn Rand] has a very interesting philosophy... You reevaluate your own life and what's important to you." Jolie said.

Her point of view on Ayn Rand's philosophy leads us to think she may be a left-leaning libertarian, but we'll take what we can get from this Hollywood beauty.

6. Drew Carey

This sitcom star and comedian is a strong Libertarian that actually spent some time in the Marine Reserves. He even hosted a series for Reason.TV called 'The Drew Carey Project' with each episode dealing with a different subject, but always focusing on an overzealous government. Appearing on Penn & Teller's podcast, Carey sums up the libertarian sentiment during elections:

If you're a libertarian, every election you're sad. Every election, if you're a libertarian, you're going to feel like you were playing Monopoly and you got up to go to the bathroom for five minutes. And when you came back, everybody made a trade and f*cked you out of the game.



7. Vince Vaughn

I think it is safe to assume that Libertarians everywhere tipped their fedoras when Vaughn stepped outside of the Hollywood bubble and publicly backed Ron Paul and introduced him at LPAC 2011 when other celebrities were backing the current President.

"The last book I read was the book I've been rereading most of my life—The Fountainhead."

In a Playboy Magazine interview, Vaughn was passionate about the role of government and the danger behind its laws like the Patriot Act. He doesn't even try to hide his political views, saying "I would use the term libertarian to describe my politics. I like the principles of the Constitution and the republic, which is a form of government built around the law." Passionately, he explains:

You have to understand that America today is not capitalistic. The problem is corporatism. The government has too much authority, and it's dangerous. It stifles productivity and freedom and prosperity and peace. I find most people nowadays are more complacent or accepting that the government can successfully do everything for us. It can't. It can't!



8. Kennedy – or – Lisa Kennedy Montgomery

As a 22-year-old VJ for MTV Kennedy was described as "transgressive and unpredictable" and considered herself an ardent Republican. Twenty years later, she is a mother, an honors graduate in philosophy and politics from UCLA, a contributor to Reason TV and Reason magazine, the



author of two books, the host of Fox Business Network's The Independents and now her own show, simply called Kennedy. Oh.. and she's libertarian.

I just don't want some regulatory, bureaucratic body giving my child a one-size-fits-all education, or keeping my husband from producing a good product in the state of California. [Montgomery is married to Signal Snowboards CEO Dave Lee.] Like, those are the two most important things to me, and I see how government and regulations can

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Continued from page 12 • 10 Celebrities You Didn't Know Were Libertarian

get in the way. I think when the government gets out of the way, people can achieve phenomenal things.



9. Woody Harrelson
In a USA Today interview Harrelson revealed

his distaste for rules of the road and, actually, refers to himself as an Anarchist.

I don't believe in government. In other words, I think we can all look after ourselves. You want some mechanism that controls the traffic, absolutely. But generally, what the government accomplishes, 99% of that is (expletive), he says. 'I look at government as businessmen working for bigger businessmen. There's obvious things — don't steal, the Ten Commandments. There's what we call victimless crimes. In my opinion, if you don't actually have a victim who's a human being, someone who's been hurt or their property has been hurt, there's no crime.'

10. Kurt Russell
In the British magazine Talking Pictures, Russell said, "I am by nature libertarian... don't



tread on me, just leave me alone, that's all." When he introduced former House Speaker Newt Gingrich at a speech in Los Angeles, Russell went out of his way to note, "I'm not a Republican; I'm a libertarian."

At the 20th anniversary celebration of the Cato Institute in Washington, DC, Russell said, "I'm a libertarian. I think a lot of people are libertarians and are afraid to admit it — or don't know." (The Washington Post, May 2, 1997.)

And on Fox TV's The O'Reilly Factor (February 6, 2004), Russell said his politics are "limited constitutional government. I believe in that. Freedom, freedom, freedom. Being a libertarian, I do believe that limited government is good."

I wonder if he's Libertarian, or just libertarian?

★★★

Continued from page 1 • Coma Causes Man's Friend to be Wrongfully Convicted

had sustained severe brain trauma among several other injuries. Brad was diagnosed with a concussion, whiplash, and released later that day.

Concerned for Rel, Brad began seeking helpful information. Brad knew that Rel was the boat operator at the time of the accident, and feared if Rel awoke, he may say something without proper legal guidance. At the advice of a friend who was retired law enforcement, Brad and others were urged to tell Rel's family, "When Rel wakes up, if he doesn't know who was driving, don't say anything to anyone." After the statement was made to Rel's family, concerns over who was operating the boat began to surface. Not knowing Brad very well, some family members grew skeptical of Brad's intent. Causing more concern was the fact that Brad owned the boat involved in the accident. At the advice of a family friend, Rel's family retained the prominent Southern California Law Firm, Aitken, Aitken and Cohn.

After being placed in a medically induced Coma for 10-days, and one and a half months in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) after the accident, Rel regained consciousness. Although he was alive, his memory loss, and near complete loss of vision left a question mark as to how speedy, if at all, his recovery would be.

For the next eight months, neither Brad nor Rel were charged with any crime. Several experts agree the evidence did not show Brad was the operator, and without Brad stating that Rel was the driver, charges remained unfiled. According to witness statements, pressure was reportedly mounting against the Sheriff's Dept. and District Attorney's office from Aitken and Aitken and their Private Investigator to file charges. Pressure, coupled with faulty evidence, led to Brad's arrest and charges on March 6, 2010.

At the advice of Brad's former corporate attorney, Larry Rubaum, Brad hired attorney Howard E Lowe. Brad remained confident that the evidence would clearly show his innocence.

The first person to see Brad and Rel in the dingy after the accident was Marissa Brown, owner of the sailboat "Black Dahlia." Marissa and her husband David Brown were on their boat as the inflatable dinghy hit it, around 1:15 a.m. After speaking with investigators associated with Aitken and Aitken,

Marissa reportedly couldn't quite remember where Brad or Rel were post accident, with certainty. Although, on the morning after the accident, and during the preliminary hearings, she reportedly knew exactly where each man was located, since she stated she had jumped into her skiff (small boat) and piloted over to the dingy to hold Rel's head & arm out of the water as she towed the dingy back to her sailboat. Her husband, David Brown, offered conflicting information, almost a year and a half later that was never given to authorities on the morning after the accident. His recollection of where the men were lying after the accident conflicted with his wife's initial statement taken shortly after the accident. Now, the "altered" recollection of events made it more plausible that Brad was actually the driver.

The injuries sustained during the accident were representative of Rel being behind the helm (steering column) of the boat, and Brad, being a passenger next to him on the bench seat, to the left of the helm. Rel had broken four of his ribs, and his collar bone which was indicative of someone being behind the steering console and sustaining that type of injury on impact. The evidence that Brad's defense obtained, including accident reconstruction reports from the defense's expert as well as the insurance company's independent expert appeared to be sufficient enough to prompt prosecuting



The dinghy, Rel was driving the night of the accident

attorney David Dixon to dismiss Brad's charges.

Shockingly, former Sheriff turned Prosecutor, David Dixon did not dismiss.

According to documents obtained, crucial testimony for the Defense, from the bio-mechanical engineers accident reconstructionist was not permitted at trial. One witness stated, "Judge Cassani sustained the prosecutions objections, disallowing very important evidence for Brad, intended to be presented to jurors." First, retired deputy sheriff, Oliver

Grani, was not allowed to tell the court that he had instructed Brad and others to tell Rel, "that it would be best if Rel doesn't remember who was driving, not to say anything at all." Second, a mutual friend who was with Brad and Rel during the weekend of the accident would have testified that he was with Brad and Rel, while Rel was operating the dingy, earlier that day. He would have also stated that Rel, when operating the boat, "often stands up" to see over the bow as speeds increase and lift the front-end of the boat. Again, Judge Joan Comparet-Cassani didn't allow the jurors to hear this evidence. This would normally alarm me, however, I found while investigating this particular judge that she had been admonished on three separate occasions by the California State Commission on Judicial Performance, prior to Brad Scott's trial. On one occasion she ordered that a Shock Belt be placed on a defendant, and then she ordered that the defendant be shocked for being disruptive.

According to witnesses, other crucial evidence for the defense was not allowed during trial. Possibly the most concerning testimony came from Rel Vrooman himself, when he stated during trial that, "he could not remember who was driving the boat." Rel was in an induced coma for 10 days, and ICU for a month and a half, after sustaining memory loss. At trial, Rel Vrooman was clueless about who was driving the boat. Rel was even chastised during court proceedings by Judge Cassani, implying that he could remember who was driving, but wasn't being truthful.

In a blink of an eye, Brad was convicted and sent to prison. After reading all trial transcripts, etc., it was absolutely a foregone conclusion that Judge Cassani and DA David Dixon, were going to see to it that Mr. Scott would be found guilty!

After his conviction, a friend of Brad's found the US-Observer and convinced us to look into his "false conviction."

During our investigation, we determined that the evidence was completely contrary to Brad's guilt. After going through transcripts, police reports, in-depth accident reconstruction reports and other evidence, we finally traveled to Huntington Beach, CA., to meet with Rel Vrooman. He was still suffering from his injuries sustained during the tragic accident however, after speaking with Rel over a period of approximately one year, Rel began to regain his vision out of his left eye, which was a huge medical breakthrough. Next, he started regaining memory.

In an affidavit obtained by the US-Observer, Rel stated that as time elapsed, "I began to regain my memory and would experience

glimpses of the accident." Time continued to help Rel regain his memory and as of July 19, 2014, Rel confirmed in a sworn affidavit that, "I now clearly remember driving the boat when the accident



Rel Vrooman

occurred." During my many conversations with Mr. Vrooman I could visibly see him struggling to remember. His memory, just as his vision was, without any question, slowly recovering.

Rel is concerned that he was taken advantage of while he was incapacitated. He stated that he dealt with attorney Michael Penn of the Aitken and Aitken firm, strictly by himself, even though he had a conservator appointed at that time. Witnesses believe that Vrooman's law firm had a "close" or "influential" relationship with the local courts and prosecutor, which heavily influenced Brad's prosecution and subsequent conviction.

It is our hope that Rel Vrooman finds an attorney to help him file a lawsuit against the attorneys who allegedly took advantage of him while he was incapacitated. Despite the initial confusion, Rel's family has been instrumental in helping Rel. Although Rel received \$500,000.00 in an insurance settlement, his attorney's reportedly walked away with more than \$300,000.00 of that amount, all while Rel was "medically oblivious" to what was happening.

Today, Rel wakes up in a small trailer park with the sobering memory of his friend being falsely convicted. Rel also deals with ongoing medical issues and the thoughts of how "he was taken advantage of by his attorneys." Rel is pursuing his dream of becoming a Spanish-speaking preacher in his community. His faith in God is something he graciously shares with others.

Brad Scott has been ordered to not have any contact or speak with Rel as part of his five-year probation agreement, issued at his resentencing in May of 2014. In all, Brad was incarcerated for almost one-and-a-half years, and an additional fifteen-months of being in a lock-down program. Today, Brad remains a convicted, "serious violent felon."

The Long Beach Superior Trial Court is expected to hear and rule on the newly discovered evidence this summer. ★★★

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Mckell.

Rob McKell, husband to Nu-Skin co-founder Nedra (Roney) McKell stands accused of multiple counts of sexual abuse, and 2 violations of a restraining order. His accuser is none other than his adult adopted daughter, Summer McKell, and the case is being heavily pursued by Utah County Deputy Attorney Sherry Ragan.

Ragan has been pushing McKell's felony conviction for nearly a year, and her office headed by Jeffrey Buhman longer than that. Deputy Attorney Sam Pead is heading the charge against Mckell on his violation of protective order charges. The McKell case has already come at an incredible cost to the taxpayers of Utah County. Just what that final cost will be, if McKell ever sees a trial, is anyone's guess – hundreds of thousands, perhaps more. As for Ragan, personally, she apparently rakes in a gross income of \$143,198.00 per year, according to utahsrigh.com. That's a pretty comfortable living for someone who chooses to continue the prosecution of an individual based on testimony alone. Especially when that testimony comes from of a young woman whose story constantly and continually changes; who has admitted, on the record, that she doesn't always tell the truth; and whom had to be reminded of when things allegedly happened while she was on the stand during the preliminary hearing. She is also apparently relying on the supporting testimony of several others who have personal conflicts with Mr. McKell and want to see him removed from the family, for no other reason than their own personal gain. It leads one to speculate about what the real motivation is for the Utah County Attorney's Office dogged pursuit of Rob McKell. Heck, maybe there's someone pushing this behind the scenes and there's a connection somewhere...

If you do a simple Google search for Sherry Ragan, many options appear; one being a link to her LinkedIn profile where it explains that she is a Utah County Attorney and that she is also part of the Utah County Sheriff's Communication Auxillary Team. Interestingly, to the right on her profile it has a list of people also viewed. The bottom on the list of 4 people is Lisa Killpack, Human Resource Director at Nu Skin Enterprises... Interesting. While it could just be a coincidence, data populated on sites like LinkedIn are generated from association. People look for you and they then find 'so-and-so' and that information is tracked and bingo, you have your list of 'people also viewed.' Or, maybe its just random similarity occurrences.

Regardless of why, there is something keeping Ragan



Rob McKell

interested in prosecuting a case that has no physical evidence of a crime committed (evidence that had the police collected it at the time, may well have exonerated Rob McKell immediately), and no eye witnesses to wrong-doing with the sole exception of the accuser, Summer - a young woman, who by all accounts has serious issues. And, the issues just got a lot worse...

THE PLOT THICKENS

In a stunning turn of events, Summer has been implicated herself by a young girl who claims the sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of Summer's adopted brother River was aided by Summer herself, who allegedly violently held her down. These crimes are said to predate Summer's allegations against McKell. Also, Summer's claims against McKell apparently mirror the allegations against herself, thus making it appear as if Summer used her involvement as a boiler plate for her insinuations against McKell. It also further calls into question her integrity as the only "eye-witness" against Rob McKell.

According to McKell, the revelation came during a recent interview between the young girl and McKell's private investigator, who immediately reported the abuse to the authorities. While the sex abuse this girl had suffered had already been known and adjudicated, with River being convicted, Summer's alleged involvement of "holding her down" and injuring her was a seemingly new development. That is until the investigator was informed, upon his reporting, that the girl's counselor had reported it to Utah's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) approximately a year earlier.

But, this is where it gets interesting, the investigator was purportedly told in a follow-up call to his initial reporting that no investigation was warranted as it had been looked into before and the case was "locked" - a term we are informed is most often used when someone within DCFS has some personal involvement in the case. However, there is no such involvement.

Even more concerning, DCFS now reportedly claims that the girl's counselor never reported it to DCFS, and that the employee who talked with the investigator was absolutely mistaken, and they claim they will be addressing this with the employee.

What is the old saying? If it looks like a rat, acts like a rat...

We're now informed that DCFS is looking into the allegations against Summer, although a recent protective order seeking to keep her away from the victim was denied by the court, which

claimed there was no immediate danger to the victim.

BACK TO RAGAN AND HISTORY OF PUBLICATION

In July of 2014, Ragan filed a "Memorandum in Support of Motion to Change Venue" in the case of the State vs. Rob McKell. In her Memorandum, Ragan seemed oddly overconcerned with the US-Observer's publication and distribution throughout Utah County of an article that told the story behind the allegations that lead to sexual abuse charges being filed against McKell. At one point, Ragan even stated that there was an on-going investigation into the US-Observer article - although there was never a call made to the US-Observer. However, nowhere in her memorandum did she mention the dozens of local media articles, that plainly depict Rob McKell as a rapist and seemingly guilty, as being potentially harmful to an individual who is supposed to be innocent until proven guilty - beyond a mere mention there had been other publicity in the case.

The fact that Ragan openly commits Utah to her comment, "the State believes that information in the [US-Observer] article is false," suggests she and the State are not interested in justice whatsoever and she is willing to drag the State down with her in the prosecution of this 'he-said, she-said' case. Furthermore, the US-Observer would like to challenge Sherry Ragan to point out to our readership what she thinks is false in the article, "\$10-million and this goes away'- Accuser's 'Brother' Orchestrates False Sex Allegations?"

While a good portion of what was uncovered for that article will not be allowed inside a courtroom - due to overprotective rape shield laws - the court of public opinion has every right to hear the whole truth, and that is what the US-Observer always strives to bring our readers. As such, the US-Observer followed up with the article, "Utah: 'Let's Deal' - NuSkin Co-founder's Case Dismissed, Husband's Trial Upcoming" wherein we pointed out the overwhelming amount of evidence that suggests this "victim" is less than truthful, while also reporting how the State dropped all charges against McKell's wife, Nedra, in a plea in abeyance.

Once again we are calling on Utah County Attorney Jeffrey Buhman - Ragan's boss, and an elected official - to do what is right for the sake of justice and drop this case, as it is apparent the credibility of the accuser is continuing to erode and the cost to the taxpayer is continuing to increase.

If it's not about justice and is all about winning your case, Mr. Buhman, you can take it to the bank that the US-Observer will be there to report it, and you and your out-of-control assistant attorney can face the court of public opinion.

Editor's Note: We have been informed that Rob McKell's defense is seeking a change of venue as there are concerns he can not get a fair trial in Utah County. There has been much publicity promoting Mr. McKell's presumed guilt, as local media relays what is reported to them by the prosecutor's office, police department or sheriff's office. Our justice system would operate so differently if the media actually investigated what they reported on and didn't serve as the publicity arm for the railroading of innocent victim's of false prosecution. ★★★

The Anti-Surveillance State - Methods of Self Cloaking

By Janet Burns

(AlterNet) - Last spring, designer Adam Harvey hosted a session on hair and makeup techniques for attendees of the 2015 FutureEverything Festival in Manchester, England. Rather than sharing innovative ways to bring out the audience's eyes, Harvey's CV Dazzle Anon introduced a series of styling methods designed with almost the exact opposite aim of traditional beauty tricks: to turn your face into an anti-face—one that cameras, particularly those of the surveillance variety, will not only fail to love, but fail to recognize.

Harvey is one of a growing number of privacy-focused designers and developers "exploring new opportunities that are the result of [heightened] surveillance," and working to establish lines of defense against it. He's spent the past several years experimenting with strategies for putting control over people's privacy back in their own hands, in their pockets and on their faces.

Harvey's goal of "creating a style that [is] functional and aesthetic" has driven several projects and collaborations, including a method for "spoofing" DNA, and via the Privacy Gift Shop, his drone-thwarting Stealth Wear line (clothing he claims "shields against thermal imaging...[which is] used widely by military drones to target people," seen below) and the OFF Pocket phone sleeve, able to keep out unwanted wireless signals.

His CV Dazzle designs for hair and makeup obscure the eyes, bridge of the nose and shape of the head, as well as creating skin tone contrasts and asymmetries. Facial-recognition algorithms function by identifying the layout of facial features and supplying missing info based on assumed facial symmetry. The project demonstrates that a styled "anti-face" can both conceal a person's identity from facial recognition software (be it the FBI's or Facebook's) and cause the software to doubt the presence of a human face, period.

Harvey's work is focused on accessibility in addition to privacy. "Most of the projects I've worked on are analog solutions to digital challenges," he said. His hair and makeup style tips – a veritable how-to guide for how to create "privacy reclaiming" looks at home –

are "deliberately low-cost." His current project – software to "automatically generate camouflage...that can be applied to faces" – will allow a user to "create [their] own look and guide the design towards [their] personal style preferences."

Other low-tech protections against widespread surveillance have been gaining ground, too. Though initially designed as a tongue-in-cheek solution to prying eyes and cameras, Becky Stern's Laptop Compbody Sock offers a portable, peek-free zone to laptop users, while the CHBL Jammer Coat and sold-out Phonekerchief use metal-infused fabrics to make personal gadgets unreachable, blocking texts, calls and radio waves. For people willing to sport a bit more hardware in the name of privacy, the Sentient City Survival Kit offers underwear that notifies wearers about real-life phishing and tracking attempts, and its LED umbrella lets users "flirt with object tracking algorithms used in advanced surveillance systems" and even "train these systems to recognize nonhuman shapes."

Large companies are also getting in on the pushback against increasing surveillance. Earlier this year, antivirus software leaders



AVG revealed a pair of invisibility glasses developed by its Innovation Labs division. The casual looking specs use embedded infrared lights "to create noise around the nose and eyes" and retro-reflective frame coating to interfere with camera flashes, "allowing [the wearer] to avoid facial recognition." In early 2013, Japan's National Institute of Informatics revealed a bulky pair of goggles it had developed for the same purpose.

A spokesperson for Innovation Labs claims its glasses represent "an important step in the prevention against mass surveillance...whether through the cell phone



camera of a passerby, a CCTV camera in a bar, or a drone flying over your head in the street." Innovation Labs says that, with a person's picture, facial recognition software "coupled with data from social networking sites can provide instant access to the private information of complete strangers. This can pose a serious threat to our privacy." Though AVG's glasses are not scheduled for commercial release, Innovation Labs said that individuals can take a number of steps to prevent their images from being "harvested":

"First and foremost, make sure you're not allowing private corporations to create biometrics profiles about you. When using social networks like Facebook, be aware that they are using facial recognition to give you tag suggestions. Facebook's DeepFace was already tested and trained on the largest facial dataset to-date (an identity labeled dataset of more than 4 million facial images belonging to thousands of identities)."

Holmes Wilson of nonprofit Fight for the Future, which works to defend online privacy and freedoms on various fronts, is more concerned with other types of privacy invasion than real-life image harvesting. "It's pretty unlikely in most of the world that you'll get followed around using a network of street cameras with face recognition," he said. "It's probably pretty likely, though, that you'll get filmed by police at a protest. But [there's] not much you can do about that other than wearing a mask."

Wilson advises people concerned about privacy breaches through surveillance to first focus on the ways in which their gadgets are supplying info to third parties. "The place where it's easiest to fight back against surveillance is in protecting the security of your messages," he said, adding that message

security "can be a problem for activists, too." He said apps like Textsecure, Signal, and Redphone can make it "a lot harder for people to spy on you." Wilson added:

"Phones are the biggest thing. Lots of people think of smartphones as the big privacy problem, but old-fashioned phones are just as bad, and worse in some ways. All cellphones report on your location to the network as you move around. That's just how they work, and they need to send that information or the system won't know where to send your call. There's no way to turn that off, other than by turning off the phone and, for good measure, taking the battery out."

In collaboration with the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Fight for the Future recommends a variety of options for encrypting messages, password-protecting accounts and securing a user's various communication and browsing activities via Reset the Net. Wilson encouraged those with specific privacy concerns to check out tutorials, resources and break-downs of privacy issues from Surveillance Self-Defense.

Last year, Facebook announced that its DeepFace facial recognition technology can detect a person's identity from photos with 97.25 percent accuracy, only a hair below the 97.5 percent success rate for humans taking the same test. Currently, a congressional front is preparing to extend surveillance powers granted to legal bodies by Section 215 of the Patriot Act—the NSA's legal foothold of choice with regard to mass collection of US phone records since 2006, and set to expire on June 1—with the light-on-reform USA Freedom Act.

It seems likely that a growing number of both tech-wary and tech-savvy people will continue weighing how best to ensure their personal privacy, whether by putting stark makeup on or by turning their phones off.

★★★

Cancer Cure? Scientists discover 'unknown' immunity boosting protein molecule

(RT.com) - A "game changer" protein that promotes the body's immunity to cancer has been discovered by scientists, offering fresh hope the often deadly disease will be conquered in years to come.

Researchers at Imperial College London discovered a "completely unknown" molecule, proven to improve the body's immune system to fight off chronic illnesses.

The protein has been branded "unknown" because it doesn't resemble any other protein, nor does it have a known function.

Researchers say the discovery could "open the door" to new therapies, and might potentially defeat cancer and other deadly viruses.

When a person develops cancer, the body fights the deadly virus with T cells, although it often loses the battle.

However, a protein called lymphocyte expansion molecule (LEM) allows the body to produce enough T cells to potentially overcome cancer and other viruses.

The protein was discovered while mice with genetic mutations were being screened. The test revealed that mice with a specific mutation made 10 times the number of T cells. It linked to the protein, which also exists in humans.

The experiments in mice and human cells have proved the protein promotes the proliferation of cytotoxic T cells.

Scientists hope to begin trialing a new genetic therapy on humans in three years, the Daily Telegraph reports.

Professor Ashton-Rickardt, from the Section of Immunobiology in the

Department of Medicine at Imperial, who led the study, is certain this discovery could be a "game-changer."

He says the new protein has the potential to treat "a number of different cancers and viruses."

Rickardt says the discovery is "exciting" as they have unveiled a "completely new way" to use the immune system to defeat cancer.

Dr Mike Turner, head of infection and immunobiology at The Wellcome Trust, says the discovery is "fascinating."

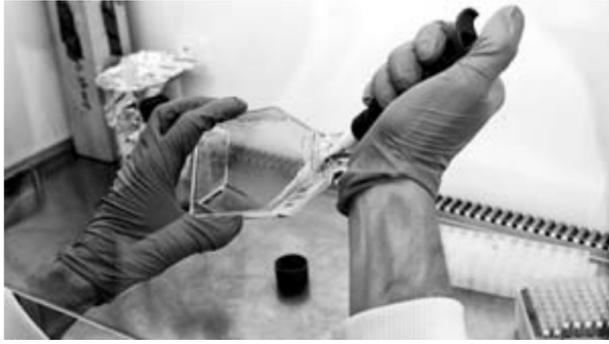
However, Turner argues that before the protein is tested on humans, a "further investigation in animal models is needed."

"There is potential for a new type of treatment that capitalizes on the immune system's innate ability to detect and kill abnormal cells," he added.

Dr Alan Worsley, senior science information officer at Cancer Research UK, says the test on mice is "exciting", although it only looked at one type of cancer.

"Cancer often finds a way to suppress the immune system, but drugs that overcome this and allow immune cells to target cancer show great promise," he added.

To develop "more effective treatments" Worsley says more research should be done



into the biology of the immune system, as it could increase the number of cancer-killing immune cells.

Worsley says the researchers should now "figure out how to develop drugs that target this molecule" and investigate whether doing so would be effective and safe in cancer patients.

The discovery follows the unveiling of a new treatment being tested at the University of Kansas that could defeat cancer.

Dr Liang Xu and his team of researchers spent three years testing a chemical cocktail, which inhibits a naturally occurring protein called HuR.

The inhibitor was tested on lab cultures in mice and has been successful against the deadliest types of cancers.

Dr Xu said the inhibitor is a "very promising" treatment which could "potentially lead to a new therapy for cancer." ★★★

Social liberalism matches social conservatism among Americans – survey



(RT.com) - As many Americans identify as liberal on social ideology as they do conservative for the first time since Gallup began polling for the question in 1999. Since then, social conservatives have lost an 18-point advantage.

Thirty-one percent of Americans said they were socially liberal on issues such as same-sex marriage or marijuana legalization, according to Gallup, matching those who said they were socially conservative. In 1999, Gallup found 39 percent of Americans reported as socially conservative, compared to 21 percent of social liberals.

The broad trend since has been a near-steady increase in the share of poll respondents identifying with the liberal position. Only during President Barack Obama's first two years in the White House did the socially liberal position stall in its rise.

Gallup reported that it has measured social viewpoints among Americans at least once each year since 1999. That year, then-President Bill Clinton was acquitted by the US Senate of impeachment charges of perjury and obstruction of justice brought by the US House of Representatives over an affair between Clinton and White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

The poll also found a new high among Democrats and Democrat-leaning people who claim liberal social views (53 percent) as opposed to "moderate" (31 percent) or "conservative" (14 percent) positions.

Meanwhile, the share of Republicans and Republican-leaning people who claim conservative social views is at its all-time low, at 53 percent, compared to moderate (34 percent) and liberal (11 percent).

Gallup said views on social issues have tracked along with the organization's measurement of overall ideology since 1992, as polls since have found increasing liberal identification among Americans.

"As with the social ideology measure, the longer-term shifts are mainly a result of increasing numbers of Democrats describing their views as liberal rather than moderate," Gallup wrote. "That may reflect Democrats feeling more comfortable in describing themselves as liberal than they were in the past, as much as a more leftward shift in Democrats' attitudes on political, economic and social issues."

The poll also found that Americans still call themselves conservative on economic issues to the tune of 39 percent to 19 percent who claim to be economically liberal.

Despite that difference, the gap between economic conservatism and liberalism is at its lowest point since 1999, according to Gallup.

The number of Americans reporting to be economically conservative is at its lowest point to date, as well. In 1999, the gap was 44 percent to 16 percent. The highest difference came in 2010, with conservatives outnumbering liberals 51 percent to 15 percent.

Gallup attributed the changes in part to "population changes, with younger, more liberal Americans entering adulthood while older, more conservative adults pass on."

The poll was conducted by telephone from May 6-10, with a margin of error of 4 percentage points. ★★★

Americans Vastly Overestimate Size of LGBT Population

By Ben Brody

(Bloomberg) - Same-sex marriage is one of the fastest-moving social issues in U.S. history, having become legal in state after state as Americans cheer it in ever-growing numbers. But one thing is slightly off-kilter: Americans seem to have absolutely no idea just how many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people are out there.

In fact, they think that 23 percent of Americans, or almost one in four, are LGBT, a Gallup survey released Thursday revealed. That's way off: The polling organization most recently found that less than 4 percent self-identify that way.

A third of people surveyed believed that LGBT made up more than 25 percent of the population. Just 9 percent of those in the survey correctly stated that they thought the group made up less than 5 percent of the population.

It's unclear why people think the LGBT population is six times larger than it actually is.

"Part of the explanation for the inaccurate estimates of the gay and lesbian population rests with Americans' general unfamiliarity with numbers and demography," Gallup ventured, noting that people also overestimate the size of the African-American and Hispanic populations in the U.S., although usually only by a factor of two. "The overestimation [of the size of the LGBT population] may also reflect prominent media portrayals of gay characters on television and in movies, even as far back as 2002, and perhaps the high visibility of activists who have pushed gay causes, particularly legalizing same-sex marriage."

Several gay, lesbian, bisexual, and even transgender characters have become prominent in recent years on TV shows such as "Modern Family," "Scandal," "Degrassi," and "Glee," as well as in movies including "Brokeback Mountain" and the Academy Award-winning biopic "The Imitation Game."

Those who oppose same-sex marriage give slightly lower—but still way-too-high—estimates of the LGBT population than those who support it do, but the difference between the two groups' estimates was within the margin of error of 4 percent.

In a separate Gallup poll released Tuesday, the organization found a "record-high" 60 percent of Americans favoring the legalization of same-sex marriage. ★★★

Police cash confiscations still on the rise



By Mark Fahey & Nicholas Wells

(CNBC) - The case of an aspiring Michigan businessman has reignited the debate over limits to the federal government's ability to seize property of those it suspects of being involved in criminal activity.

Joseph Rivers of Dearborn was on his way to California to start a career as a music video producer when he was stopped by DEA agents in New Mexico, who seized \$16,000 in cash Rivers had in a bank envelope, the Albuquerque Journal reported.

Rivers' story is one of many from U.S. citizens who say the government unfairly seized their assets under the Justice Department's Asset Forfeiture Program. The program empowers a number of federal agencies working with the DOJ to seize property and assets that are used in or derived from a criminal enterprise.

When assets are seized in connection with a prosecution, it's known as a criminal asset forfeiture. In civil asset forfeitures, a "preponderance of the evidence" is needed by law enforcement to seize goods, according to the FBI.

Assets seized can be anything from airplanes to headphones and clothing. But the vast majority is cash. In 2014, government agencies seized \$4.6 billion in more than 10,000 forfeitures, 91 percent of the year's total.

Critics say civil asset forfeiture is at best overused and targets innocent people and at worst is a cash cow for local law enforcement agencies. In 2014, the federal government distributed the equivalent of \$4.8 million to municipalities around the country.

Sean Waite, agent in charge for the DEA in Albuquerque, told the Journal he could not comment because the Rivers case is ongoing. Rivers is back in Michigan, awaiting a resolution to his case, the Journal said. ★★★

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Are You Facing False Criminal Charges? Have You Been a Victim of False Prosecution?



Welcome to the largest racket in history: The American Justice System

If you are facing false charges and a prosecution then you are aware of how the 'justice' industry (racket) in America works. You (the innocent person) have been falsely charged with a crime. Most of the time you receive a myriad of stacked charges intended for the sole purpose of extracting a "plea bargain" from you.

You then rush to an attorney, pay him a huge retainer to cover the usual \$175.00 per hour (if not higher), which he/she charges, to supposedly defend your innocence. The attorney usually files some motions, writes some worthless letters and makes many unproductive (unless they pertain to you accepting a plea bargain) phone calls until you are broke. Generally you haven't even started your trial and 99% of the time the attorney hasn't completed any investigation.

All of a sudden your attorney is telling you that you can't win your case and you should accept the benevolent plea bargain that the almighty district attorney has offered you. "Do you want to take the chance on spending 30-40 years in prison when you can plea bargain for 18 months," your attorney tells you. What happened to: "I think we can win this case, it's a good case." Remember? Isn't that pretty close to what your attorney told you as he/she was relieving you of your money?

You then accept a plea bargain and go to jail or you have a jury trial, you're found guilty (because your attorney hasn't produced enough evidence-if any and because the judge directs the jury to find you guilty) and then you go to jail. When you finally wake up you realize that on top of now being a criminal, you are flat broke and incarcerated. You find that the very person (your attorney) you

frantically rushed to retain, became your worst enemy.

There is only one way to remedy a false prosecution: Obtain conclusive evidence, investigate the accusers, the prosecutors, the detectives and then watch the judge very carefully. In other words, complete an in-depth investigation before you are prosecuted and then take the facts into the public arena.

The US~Observer newspaper will not waste your time or your money. This is not a game, it's your life and your freedom. We do not make deals. If you are innocent, then nobody has the right to steal what belongs to you, most of all, your liberty. Nobody! That includes your attorney - as well as your supposed public servants.

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Do not contact us if you are in any way guilty and for justice sake, don't wait until they slam the door behind you before contacting us if you are innocent.

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**"One false prosecution is one too many
and any act of immunity is simply a government
condoned crime." - Edward Snook, US~Observer**

The US~Observer's services have

VINDICATED



over 4,200 cases to-date. Here are a few:

Ryan Sanchez

Victim: Custody

Status: Full Custody

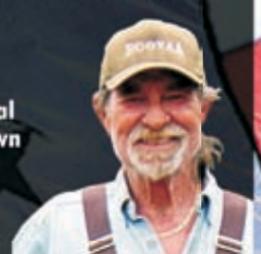
"You were a big change for the good in this case."



James Roberts Charges: Three Misdemeanor's

Status: Acquitted

"(The US~Observer was) pivotal in my defense. I was going down if I hadn't contacted Edward Snook."



Reno Francis

Conviction: Murder

Status: Released

"I'm proud of what you (the US~Observer) are doing. You have all of my respect. Ed (investigative reporter) has all of my respect. I love him very much."



Sarah Walker Victim: DHS Abuse

Status: Dismissed

"Thank you. Thank you so much. We can finally move on with life."



Michael Young

Charges: Felony Sex Abuse

Status: Dismissed

"Without the US~Observer's help, the outcome would not have been what it is today. Jen and I are more appreciative than you could imagine."



Armando Garcia Charges: Felony Rape

Status: Acquitted

"Not many people would've been on the side of someone who was being accused of such charges. I really appreciate what the US~Observer did for me."



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