



## FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #87 — MAR. 5, 2012

*Welcome to always lively political discussion and whatever else comes up.*  
<http://www.FriendsOfTheMiddle.org> [FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com](mailto:FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com)

**INDEX: Click here.**

### **Mitt Romney: 'Mr. President, What's the Rush?' LOL!**

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Mar. 5, 2012)

Two of the most famous Op-Eds of all time were written (supposedly) by Mitt Romney. The disastrous one, opposing government assistance to save the American automobile industry, appears in "FotM Newsletter #82". That one hurt Romney in Michigan, though not as much as one might have expected, which is probably a reflection of how small the auto industry has become, even in Michigan. But President Obama saved at least 1,000,000 decent jobs. This step was necessary, you'll remember, because our fine financial institutions were refusing to make auto loans, or simply found it impossible to do so. The government ended-up making money on the "bailout". It actually cost the taxpayers zilch by keeping those payroll taxes flowing. The final result was a whopping \$14+ billion profit for the government and an entire industry and all those jobs were saved. Yet Republicans say they hate it and Romney opposed it and says he still does. Even practical results don't matter to dogmatic Republicans. Ain't socialism terrible?

Now Romney's other famous Op-Ed has surfaced (2nd article, below). This is the inventor of Obamacare blasting Obamacare for all the wrong reasons, while cutting his own throat...again! What a track record this zero has!

Ya, I know, this stuff is obviously way too subtle for the base, but that base seems to be shrinking more and more. Poor GOP.

By the way, my dear Republican friends, if you want to blame someone for high U.S. gasoline prices, you might want to look a little further than President Obama. Your rich Republican friends in the oil industry sell tons of U.S. gasoline to countries like Bolivia (#2 import from the U.S.). Anything to reduce the supply of gasoline in the U.S. to keep prices artificially high in their biggest market, so record profits and bonuses can continue to grow. They say it's just the "American Way". I call it the "Screw the Americans Way".

"Mitt Romney Health Care Op-Ed Presents Deeper Problem" by Ryan Grim, Huffington Post

Mar. 3, 2012, ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-grim/mitt-romney-health-care-oped-problem\\_b\\_1319051.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ryan-grim/mitt-romney-health-care-oped-problem_b_1319051.html))

(WASHINGTON) The immediate reaction to Mitt Romney's 2009 USA Today op-ed on health care reform has zeroed in on his suggestion that President Barack Obama pursue an individual mandate. But that focus misses a broader problem the op-ed creates for the former Massachusetts governor.

Romney has consistently defended his health care reform effort in Massachusetts on 10th Amendment grounds, insisting that it was merely "a state solution to a state problem." The trouble with the president's plan, Romney has argued, is not that its policy particulars -- the individual mandate to buy health insurance, the coverage subsidies, the Medicaid expansion -- were based on the Massachusetts plan, but rather that it "was a power grab by the federal government to put in place a one-size-fits-all plan across the nation."

But Romney's op-ed, published during the heat of the health care debate and recently unearthed by BuzzFeed, is squarely on the side of health care reform being driven by the federal government. In fact, the national plan that Romney sketched out as acceptable to conservatives closely resembles the one that Obama ultimately signed into law.

Romney, after touting the success of the Massachusetts plan in the op-ed, noted that the main problem facing health care generally is soaring inflation and that only the federal government can rein it in. "Here is where the federal government can do something we could not: Take steps to stop or slow medical inflation," he wrote.

Simply believing that the federal government could take action to slow medical cost inflation is not evidence of hypocrisy, of course. Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), for instance, has put forth a plan that is nothing like Obama's and that he believes would ultimately lower health care costs. Romney has since embraced the basic contours of the Ryan plan. But Romney's Massachusetts law and Ryan's proposal are as divorced from each other as possible, and there's no indication that Romney was referring to a Ryan-type system in his 2009 op-ed.

After all, MIT economics professor Jonathan Gruber, a key policy architect behind both the federal and Massachusetts plans, famously compared them by saying "they're the same f\*cking bill."

Indeed, Romney said in 2009 that Republicans would back the federal reform effort -- under a few conditions.

"Republicans will join with the Democrats if the president abandons his government insurance plan, if he endeavors to craft a plan that does not burden the nation with greater debt, if he broadens his scope to reduce health costs for all Americans, and if he is willing to devote the rigorous effort, requisite time and bipartisan process that health care reform deserves," he wrote in the final paragraph of his op-ed.

[What a stupid joke! "Republicans join with the Democrats"? History shows the opposite in this case, despite the accommodation mentioned and more. --SteveB]

Nobody could accuse the president of not spending the "requisite time," with 14 months devoted to the process.

As for that "bipartisan process," the White House and Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) worked endlessly with the bipartisan Gang of Six, threatening to drag down the entire bill as they negotiated for months. Ultimately, the only Republican who voted for the bill was Sen. Olympia Snowe (Maine), and she did so only in the Finance Committee, opposing it on final passage.

As for the "government insurance plan," also known as the public option, Obama discarded that. The final bill did not increase the debt according to the Congressional Budget Office. And it will reduce "health care costs for all Americans" not just by providing subsidies but also by rewarding doctors and hospitals for healthy outcomes in general, rather than for a total number of procedures, just as Romney has repeatedly advocated.

**The problem for Romney is that the federal-state distinction was the only real way he had of differentiating what he did from what the president has done. His own op-ed suggesting a bipartisan federal health care approach undermines any attempt to make that distinction between now and November.**

["07/30/2009 – Mr. President, What's the Rush?" from Mitt Romney Central](#)

Mar. 2, 2012, (<http://mittromneycentral.com/op-eds/2009-op-eds/mr-president-whats-the-rush/>)

(Welcome visitors from BuzzFeed, Hot Air, Talking Points Memo, The Gateway Pundit, and yes... even The Blue Mass Group. While you are here may we suggest you also check out our extensive research on RomneyCare which can be found here: RomneyCare – The Truth about Massachusetts Health Care: [http://mittromneycentral.com/resources/romneycare/.](http://mittromneycentral.com/resources/romneycare/))

This opinion article by Mitt Romney appeared in *USA Today* on 07/30/2009. It is entitled "Mr. President, What's the Rush?"

Because of President Obama's frantic approach, health care has run off the rails. For the sake of 47 million uninsured Americans, we need to get it back on track.

Health care cannot be handled the same way as the stimulus and cap-and-trade bills. With those, the president stuck to the old style of lawmaking: He threw in every special favor imaginable, ground it up and crammed it through a partisan Democratic Congress. Health care is simply too important to the economy, to employment and to America's families to be larded up and rushed through on an artificial deadline. There's a better way. And the lessons we learned in Massachusetts could help Washington find it.

No other state has made as much progress in covering their uninsured as Massachusetts. The bill that made it happen wasn't a rush job. Shortly after becoming governor, I worked in a bipartisan fashion with Democrats to insure all our citizens. It took almost two years to find a solution. When we did, it passed the 200-member legislature with only two dissenting votes. It had the support of the business community, the hospital sector and insurers. For health care reform to succeed in Washington, the president must finally do what he promised during the campaign: Work with Republicans as well as Democrats.

Massachusetts also proved that you don't need government insurance. Our citizens purchase private, free-market medical insurance. There is no "public option." With more than 1,300 health insurance companies, a federal government insurance company isn't necessary. It would inevitably lead to massive taxpayer subsidies, to lobbyist-inspired coverage mandates and to the liberals' dream: a European-style single-payer system. To find common ground with skeptical Republicans and conservative Democrats, the president will have to jettison left-wing ideology for practicality and dump the public option.

Our experience also demonstrates that getting every citizen insured doesn't have to break the bank. First, we established incentives for those who were uninsured to buy insurance. Using tax penalties, as we did, or tax credits, as others have proposed, encourages "free riders" to take responsibility for themselves rather than pass their medical costs on to others. This doesn't cost the government a single dollar. Second, we helped pay for our new program by ending an old one — something government should do more often. The federal government sends an estimated \$42 billion to hospitals that care for the poor: Use those funds instead to help the poor buy private insurance, as we did.

When our bill passed three years ago, the legislature projected that our program would cost \$725 million in 2009. At \$723 million, next year's forecast is pretty much on target. When you calculate all the savings, including that from the free hospital care we eliminated, the net cost to the state is approximately \$350 million. The watchdog Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation concluded that our program's cost is "relatively modest" and "well within initial projections."

And if subsidies and coverages are reined in, as I've suggested, the Massachusetts program could actually break even. One thing is certain: The president must insist on a program that doesn't add to our spending burden. We simply cannot afford another trillion-dollar mistake.

The Massachusetts reform aimed at getting virtually all our citizens insured. In that, it worked: 98% of our citizens are insured, 440,000 previously uninsured are covered and almost half of those purchased insurance on their own, with no subsidy. But overall, health care inflation has continued its relentless rise. Here is where the federal government can do something we could not: Take steps to stop or slow medical inflation.

At the core of our health cost problem is an incentive problem. Patients don't care what treatments cost once they pass the deductible. And providers are paid more when they do more; they are paid for quantity, not quality. We

will tame runaway costs only when we change incentives. We might do what some countries have done: Require patients to pay a portion of their bill, except for certain conditions. And providers could be paid an annual fixed fee for the primary care of an individual and a separate fixed fee for the treatment of a specific condition. These approaches have far more promise than the usual bromides of electronic medical records, transparency and pay-for-performance, helpful though they will be.

I spent most of my career in the private sector. When well-managed businesses considered a major change of some kind, they engaged in extensive analysis, brought in outside experts, exhaustively evaluated every alternative, built consensus among those who would be affected and then moved ahead. Health care is many times bigger than all the companies in the Dow Jones combined. And the president is rushing changes that dwarf what any business I know has faced.

Republicans are not the party of "no" when it comes to health care reform. This Republican is proud to be the first governor to insure all his state's citizens. Other Republicans such as Rep. Paul Ryan and Sens. Bob Bennett and John McCain, among others, have proposed their own plans. Republicans will join with the Democrats if the president abandons his government insurance plan, if he endeavors to craft a plan that does not burden the nation with greater debt, if he broadens his scope to reduce health costs for all Americans, and if he is willing to devote the rigorous effort, requisite time and bipartisan process that health care reform deserves.

(Mitt Romney was governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007.)

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<a href="#">20120304-09</a>	19:41	SteveG	"Protesters Occupying Monsanto Corp. Arrested"
<a href="#">20120304-02</a>	23:58	SteveB	Our Cookie Business in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Day 1
<a href="#">20120304-11</a>	23:59	SteveB	Photo: Lake Wales, Florida

<a href="#">20120302-01</a>	09:27	MarthaH	Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to SteveB)
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from SteveB:

I don't remember any of this stuff myself! Too young! Maybe some of you guys do? If the Republicans win in November, I'm looking forward to the return of my personal favorite, candy cigarettes! Why not? It would be a boon to tobacco sales. Money is all that counts, right?

Listen here, KID...all of this was GOOD, and I wouldn't trade a thing on the list for an iPod! :-)...TGIF!



I agree! Almost perfect!



20120302-07 12:59 Pam Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to all, above)

I remember all these things as if it were yesterday. Does anyone remember clove Life Savers. I loved those, and I don't think they make them anymore. And Valomilk and Bun candy bars? Except they were round. We shouldn't worry; the kids of today will be nostalgic about bey blades.

[I loved my Fort Apache!!! Those pesky Redskins! –SteveB]



20120304-03 13:04 SteveB Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to Pam, above)

I loved the clove chewing gum! Why do some flavors, like horehound and sarsaparilla (and clove?) get old-fashioned and others don't?

How could Valomilk and Bun die? I guess the Clark Bar and Necco Wafers are still being made, but I haven't noticed them for years.

News: Valomilk lives! — <http://www.valomilk.com/>.

Interesting site — <http://www.oldtimecandy.com/discontinued.htm>.





[20120302-04](#)

12:17

Beth

Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to SteveB, above)

I remember all that stuff. I also remember polio, mumps, measles, and scarlet fever. I remember when there was no reliable birth control. The ability to determine when and how many children we want to have has given women many more choices about how to live our lives. I remember segregation and inequality of women as well. I have fond memories as all older people do, but the fifties and early sixties were very repressive times. And that repression caused the upheaval in the late sixties and early seventies.

[You're right, Beth. Memory is such a strange instrument. It's funny, all the things you mention are things the Republicans seem to want to bring back, after all the battles we fought and won to get where we are (not far enough). I wonder if they'll bring back polio too? -SteveB]



[20120302-05](#)

12:30

Ben

Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to SteveB, above)

Dunno if you noticed that that particular 1955 cent is the version you could use to pay for a semester of college these days: yah, sure, I'd reach into a muddy gutter for that one, today!

(Take a close look. Maybe it was photoshopped, but it appears to be the "double-die" version.)



[20120304-04](#)

13:34

Paula

Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to SteveB, above)

Thanks! I love the nostalgia stuff! We wore the ugly gym uniforms, and chewed clove gum, and I remember gas at 29.9 cents...(instead it is now \$3.79) John had and loved his 57 Chevy. I won a hoola hoop contest— 1 hour and 45 minutes, but they made us stop because there were still 49 kids! We have a pack of candy cigs on the desk now (our drive thru beverage store sells them). anyway life is different, but at least we still have some memory to fall back on...



[20120302-03](#)

09:53

GaryF

Re: Photos: How's This for 1950's & 1960's Nostalgia (reply to SteveB, above)

I enjoyed your Nostalgia email, so I thought you might enjoy this and maybe pass it on.

[Source of original email unknown. –SteveB]

TO ALL THE KIDS WHO SURVIVED the 1930's 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's !!

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they were pregnant. They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes.

Then, after that trauma, we were put to sleep on our tummies in baby cribs covered with bright colored lead-based paints.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking.

As infants & children, we would ride in cars with no car seats, booster seats, seat belts, or air bags.

NO ONE actually died from this.

We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank Kool-Aid made with sugar, but we weren't overweight because WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.

No one was able to reach us all day.

And we were O.K.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We did not have Playstations, Nintendo's, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 150 channels on cable, no video movies or DVD's, no surround- sound or CD's, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet or chat rooms.

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.

We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

We were given BB guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks and tennis balls and, although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just walked in and talked to them!

Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that!!

The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!

These generations have produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever! The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.

We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL!

If YOU are one of them . . . CONGRATULATIONS!

You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and the government regulated so much of our lives for our own good. And while you are at it, forward it to your kids so they will know how brave (and lucky) their parents were. Kind of makes you want to run through the house with scissors, doesn't it?!

[Hey, Pam, sounds like Atty finds ways to be a normal kid just like we did (above), despite the changing times, huh? :- ) -SteveB]

About your attachment: my Mom smoked while she was pregnant and I only weighed 5-1/2 lbs. I'd be smarter and tougher if she hadn't done that. She didn't know.

And was there such a thing as child abuse then? If they killed you, maybe?

[20120302-06](#) 12:45 SteveG Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe.

As the moderates go home, and I really don't blame them, are we not left with more polarization? Don't we need moderates to hang in there and for more moderates to be elected? It seems that from the middle we can grow together, not from the ends.



[20120302-08](#) 14:10 Phil Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to SteveG, above)

Absolutely right. Unfortunately, I think it is a reflection of the dissatisfaction of the population as a whole. The "divide" is enlarging and as a consequence I think people are choosing (or blaming ) the extremist left or right creating an even larger polarization. We need more centrists that appeal to both sides.

[20120302-09](#) 14:19 Pam Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to Phil & SteveG, above)

Yeeesssssss!

[20120302-10](#) 14:44 Bill Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to Phil & SteveG, above)

Democracy seems to have its defects in times when polarities are so sharp. Still, there has to be a way around or through the myriad litmus issues that divide the populace, and centrists who are strong leaders are needed.

[20120302-11](#) 14:49 SteveG Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to all, above)

True, but as time marches on the number of centrists decrease in both houses of congress. We have blue states, we have red states, and there are extremely few states that are red/white/and blue. Who on the horizon is a centrist running for election, election to any position of significance state or federal?

[20120302-12](#) 15:13 Bill Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to SteveG, above) / Bloviators

They're in short supply, and the political process never seems to award much charisma or following to those who don't bloviate about some injustice, cause, or crusade.

[20120302-14](#) 16:46 SteveG Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Bloviators (reply to Bill, above)

To be honest, I had to look bloviate up – good word – good word to describe Newt, Santorum, and the folks on Fox.

[20120302-16](#) 17:54 Dennis Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Bloviators (reply to SteveG, above)

Definitely add Keith Olbermann to the list of supreme bloviators. That guy can't even get along with people who agree with him politically.

[20120304-06](#) 14:48 SteveB Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Bloviators (reply to Dennis, above)

You're right, Dennis, yet the guy can have moments of pure genius. As is so often the case, though, genius is tempered by one kind of craziness or another. He's one pi\*sed-off dude! Like Pam says, Jon Stewart is amazing—and I might add, because he is sane!

I'm just glad nobody ever does any damned bloviating around here! :-)

[20120304-07](#) 15:18 Art Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Bloviators (reply to all, above)

It all sounds slightly perverted to me.

[20120304-08](#) 17:06 SteveB Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Bloviators (reply to Art, above)

No, Art, that's not Rush, it's Santorum! Look it up!

[20120302-17](#) 17:56 Pam Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. (reply to Dennis, above) / Rush Limbaugh

Yeah, Olbermann and Bill Maher both get on my nerves. I do agree with them, but I wish they wouldn't sound so condescending. I like Jon Stewart much better.

Also, I signed the anti-Rush petition. I love it that petitions are so easy to sign nowadays. I hope they do some good.

<a href="#">20120302-19</a>	23:21	SteveG	Re: Good-Bye, Sen. Olympia Snowe. / Rush Limbaugh (reply to Pam, above)
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Just read that three companies have pulled their ads and Bonehead through a spokesperson said Rush's comments were inappropriate.

<a href="#">20120302-13</a>	15:45	Dennis	Fw: DemocracyInAction Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke, Boycott Rush Limbaugh!
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generated by DemocracyInAction website:

I just signed a pledge asking the right-wing leadership in Congress to stop the outrageous attacks on contraceptive availability and the concurrent assault on women's rights and dignity.

Join me in standing with Sandra Fluke, who was attacked last night by Rush Limbaugh because she dared to testify in Congress about birth control access. Limbaugh called Fluke a "slut" and a "prostitute." This is unacceptable.

When Limbaugh attacked Sandra, he also demeaned the 99% of women who use contraceptives in their lifetimes – regardless of religion. We will not be silenced nor shamed.

Stand with Sandra and demand coverage of contraceptives without co-pays or deductibles for most women under the Affordable Care Act's preventive care package. This coverage would apply to women who work at universities, hospitals, or social service agencies – regardless of any institutional religious affiliation.

Sandra Fluke was initially barred from testifying for birth control access at a so-called "religious liberty" hearing and later testified at a Democratic hearing. We believe that Speaker Boehner and the Congressional Republican leadership must hold real hearings and that they must allow women to testify concerning accessibility to contraceptives for birth control and other medical needs such as ovarian cysts or endometriosis. The Republican Congressional leadership must also condemn Limbaugh's outrageous comments, as the Democrats have already done.

The Catholic bishops, the right-wing leadership in Congress, and especially Rush Limbaugh have no right to control women's access to birth control. We are counting down to see how long it will take to stop the outrageous attacks on contraceptive availability and the concurrent assault on women's rights and dignity.

Please stand with me and sign the pledge. It's time to stand with Sandra and demand access to birth control.

Sign the petition @ [http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1400/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=9723](http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1400/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=9723)

#### From Democracy in Action: Boycott Rush Limbaugh's Sponsors

This is our current list of Rush Limbaugh advertisers as of 03/02/12. We have tried to keep our list updated as sponsors come and go but cannot guarantee the complete accuracy of this list. Part of the problem of keeping a list like this is that some of his radio sponsors or web sponsors may not even be aware their ads appeared on his program/website because these ads are sold in blocks to various programs, stations, and websites.

Due to the recent deluge of complaints Sleep Train pulled their advertising with Rush. If you wish to thank them, please use the link below to find their contact information.

#### 1. Sleep Train Mattress Store

<http://www.sleeptrain.com/>

2. Quicken Loans - confirmed sponsor

<http://www.quickenloans.com/>  
1050 Woodward Avenue  
Detroit, MI 48226  
Client Relations - (800) 863-4332  
and: (800) 251-9080  
also: you can chat online

3. Century 21 Real Estate LLC - confirmed sponsor

<http://www.century21.com/>  
International Headquarters  
1 Campus Drive  
Parsippany, NJ 07054  
Web contact form

4. ProFlowers

<http://www.proflowers.com/>  
Email  
Web contact form  
Sales or Service: 1-800-580-2913  
Phone: 800.580.2913

5. eharmony

<http://www.eharmony.com/>  
300 N. Lake Ave., Suite 1111  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
[media@eharmony.com](mailto:media@eharmony.com)  
Web contact form  
Email  
626.795.4814  
FAX 626.585.4040

6. CARBONITE, Inc.

617-587-1100  
177 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115  
[carbonite@mailnj.custhelp.com](mailto:carbonite@mailnj.custhelp.com)  
Direct Dial Office: 617-587-1100 EXT:1115

7. Sleep Number Bed

<http://www.sleepnumber.com>  
Select Comfort Corporation - confirmed and long-time advertiser  
6105 Trenton Lane N  
Minneapolis, MN 55442  
Phone: 763-551-7000  
Fax: 763-551-7826  
800-438-2233  
[investorrelations@selectcomfort.com](mailto:investorrelations@selectcomfort.com)

8. Oreck Upright Vacuum Cleaners

<http://www.oreck.com/>

Oreck Corporation  
100 Plantation Road  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70123  
Online contact form  
800-289-5888

9. Mid-West Life Insurance Company of Tennessee

<http://www.midwestlife.com/>

9151 Grapevine Hwy.  
North Richland Hills, TX 76180  
Phone (800) 733-1110  
(web banner ads on <http://www.rushlimbaugh.com>)

10. AutoZone Inc.

<http://www.autozone.com/autozone/>

901-495-7185; Fax: 901-495-8374  
P.O. Box 2198, Memphis, TN 38101  
[investor.relations@autozone.com](mailto:investor.relations@autozone.com)

11. LegalZoom.com - confirmed and long-time advertiser

<http://www.legalzoom.com/>

800-773-0888; Fax: 323-962-8300  
Site has a Web Form

12. Citrix Online (GoToMyPC)

[http://www.citrixonline.com/collaboration/online\\_collaboration](http://www.citrixonline.com/collaboration/online_collaboration)

[http://www.gotomypc.com/remote\\_access/remote\\_access](http://www.gotomypc.com/remote_access/remote_access)

6500 Hollister Avenue, Goleta, CA 93117  
Phone: 805-690-6400; Fax: 805-690-6471  
[info@citrixonline.com](mailto:info@citrixonline.com)

13. American Forces Network

<http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>

Contact Us: @MyAFN.net

14. Mission Pharmacal Company

<http://www.missionpharmacal.com/>

10999 IH-10 West Suite 1000  
P.O. Box 786099  
San Antonio, TX 78278-6099  
Telephone: (800) 531-3333  
Bennett Kennedy - Citracal Product Manager

15. Life Quotes, Inc.

<http://www.lifequotes.com.au/>

32045 Castle Court  
Evergreen, CO 80439  
1-800-670-5433



[info@lifequotes.com.au](mailto:info@lifequotes.com.au)

<a href="#">20120302-15</a>	16:50	SteveG	Re: DemocracyInAction Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke, Boycott Rush Limbaugh! (reply to Dennis, above)
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Petition signed, sent, and forwarded to others.

<a href="#">20120302-18</a>	19:05	Art	Re: DemocracyInAction Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke, Boycott Rush Limbaugh! (reply to Dennis, above)
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We really need to call these companies.

<a href="#">20120303-01</a>	10:30	Pam	Re: DemocracyInAction Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke, Boycott Rush Limbaugh! (reply to Art, above)
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Art, you're becoming an activist!

<a href="#">20120303-02</a>	12:07	SteveG	Re: DemocracyInAction Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke, Boycott Rush Limbaugh! (reply to Pam, above)
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Art has always been an activist, just a different focus at this point.

<a href="#">20120303-05</a>	15:02	SteveG	Fw: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh
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from Daily Kos:

Since yesterday, at least five of Rush Limbaugh's advertisers have dropped their support for his program due to the outrage people have expressed over his disgusting comments on Sandra Fluke.

We can convince more advertisers to follow suit if we keep piling on the pressure. Please, sign the petition telling Rush Limbaugh's advertisers to pull their support for his program.

Keep fighting, Joan McCarter, Daily Kos

[http://campaigns.dailykos.com/p/dia/action/public/?action\\_KEY=81](http://campaigns.dailykos.com/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=81)

<a href="#">20120303-06</a>	16:10	Pam	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to SteveG, above)
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Thanks, SteveG. I have signed all the petitions that have come my way against Loudmouth Limbaugh. I think there's something seriously wrong with that man. He's just not normal. Either he is the most cynical shyster to come down the pike in a long time, or he is demented. Assuming he means what he says, he has, at the very least, anger issues. Anyone who goes around that angry all the time has a problem. I think the people who hire and support him are guilty of taking advantage of a sick man for their own profit--rather like aristocrats in the 18th c. going to mental asylums for entertainment. Some talking heads are just stupid, but he is screwed up.

<a href="#">20120303-07</a>	16:39	Dennis	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to Pam, above)
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He's a very rich cynical shyster who has proven that being outrageously right-wing attracts a huge audience of willingly ignorant Americans and is highly profitable. Whether he is also demented depends upon how you look at it. The demented in his audience who identify with him and his demonizations of the "left" love to cheer him on as he reinforces their biases and ignorance. The last thing his audience wants to hear is logic and facts. As for his sponsors, they have to weigh how useful he continues to be now that he has stirred up what he calls "femi-nazis" and I assume us "femi-nazi sympathizers" too. Alienating too many women customers may lead to his downfall. But maybe not. In any case, there are many more opportunists who would gladly fill his place on the airwaves while smiling all the way to the bank.

<a href="#">20120303-08</a>	18:14	SteveG	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to all, above)
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Glen Beck, in my opinion, falls into the same category. Both will say anything to get the spotlight and people talking about them and their programs, and they both laugh all the way to the bank. Being outrageous sells. On the other side is Keith and it used to be Imus. Imus got fired though, oh yeah Keith almost got fired too.

<a href="#">20120303-09</a>	18:56	Art	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to all, above)
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This is pretty neat. I've actually gotten back a few things. Rather just bash 'em though.

Done!!

Notice how they are all pasty white fat tubs of guts? Gingrich too. Suspect they are all lacking some things.

<a href="#">20120303-12</a>	20:15	Pam	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to Art, above)
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He and his like are disgusting human beings.

<a href="#">20120303-14</a>	20:48	SteveB	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to Pam, above)
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Gee, Pam, he's just a comedian! LOL!

Wouldn't it be great if we could get rid of the rat, or at least lesson his impact, through his sponsors? It seems to be working so far.

I think "disgusting human being" puts it way too mildly and may even have the species wrong.

I think you were on to something when you were talking about Limbaugh and Beck and others being seriously crazy. Not that I know them, except through their public personas (not that fake, in my estimation), but I would bet that if almost anyone, even many Republicans, sat around with one of these guys for the evening at a cocktail party, they'd probably be convinced something was unhinged.

<a href="#">20120303-15</a>	21:11	SteveB	Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to all, above) & "Rush Limbaugh Apologizes to Sandra Fluke for Calling Her a 'Slut'"
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Oh, this makes it all OK...but it is something!

"Rush Limbaugh Apologizes to Sandra Fluke for Calling Her a 'Slut'" by Benjamin Hart and Jack Mirkinson, Huffington Post

Mar. 3, 2012, ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/03/rush-limbaugh-apologizes-to-sandra-fluke\\_n\\_1318718.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/03/03/rush-limbaugh-apologizes-to-sandra-fluke_n_1318718.html))

After a media and political firestorm, Rush Limbaugh issued an apology on Saturday for calling student Sandra Fluke a "slut" on his radio show this week.

Fluke, a law student at Georgetown University who was advocating for health insurance plans to cover the cost of contraception, became the target of a series of attacks by Limbaugh. Besides calling her a "slut," he also called her a "prostitute," said that he wanted her to make sex tapes and post them online, and speculated that she only had a problem paying for contraception because she was having "so much sex."

Limbaugh's comments caused advertisers to flee from his show, and even prompted President Obama to weigh in. The statements also became an issue in the Republican presidential race.

Limbaugh — who has a long history of making incendiary remarks, and is not known to take them back — issued the rare apology on Saturday afternoon, saying he was "sincerely" sorry about his "insulting" characterization of Fluke. But he maintained that the birth control debate was about "personal sexual recreational activities," not any broader health questions, and compared contraception to sneakers.

Even as he walked back his comment, though, there were signs that Limbaugh is not out of the woods yet. Another advertiser, Carbonite, posted a message on Facebook saying that it was ending its sponsorship of his show.

"No one with daughters the age of Sandra Fluke, and I have two, could possibly abide the insult and abuse heaped upon this courageous and well-intentioned young lady," CEO David Friend wrote. "Mr. Limbaugh, with his highly personal attacks on Miss Fluke, overstepped any reasonable bounds of decency. Even though Mr. Limbaugh has now issued an apology, we have nonetheless decided to withdraw our advertising from his show."

Below, read Limbaugh's apology in full:

For over 20 years, I have illustrated the absurd with absurdity, three hours a day, five days a week. In this instance, I chose the wrong words in my analogy of the situation. I did not mean a personal attack on Ms. Fluke.

I think it is absolutely absurd that during these very serious political times, we are discussing personal sexual recreational activities before members of Congress. I personally do not agree that American citizens should pay for these social activities. What happened to personal responsibility and accountability? Where do we draw the line? If this is accepted as the norm, what will follow? Will we be debating if taxpayers should pay for new sneakers for all students that are interested in running to keep fit? In my monologue, I posited that it is not our business whatsoever to know what is going on in anyone's bedroom nor do I think it is a topic that should reach a Presidential level.

My choice of words was not the best, and in the attempt to be humorous, I created a national stir. I sincerely apologize to Ms. Fluke for the insulting word choices.

[20120303-16](#)

21:14 Art

Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to SteveB, above)

Hey!! Carbonite is one of the companies I've been talking to. Maybe this "activist" stuff does work.

[20120304-10](#) 21:19 SteveG Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to Art, above)

Social media was a primary force behind Obama getting elected and a driving force in Egypt and Libya.

[20120304-01](#) 06:25 SteveB Re: Daily Kos Petition: Stand with Sandra Fluke Against Rush Limbaugh (reply to Art & SteveG, above)

And look at what Andrew Breitbart did in such a short time. The web makes small voices bigger and silent voices heard.

Obviously the second greatest invention for man on earth.

Now if we can just all use that power to accomplish the opposite and make Limbaugh silent! Ah, peace and fresh airwaves!!!

(Except, as Dennis says, there are plenty to take his place, but Limbaugh is the biggest and pastiest. He's #1. Mr. *Mierda*.)

Good work with Carbonite, Art. Sounds like you're ready for the next March on Washington!

[20120303-03](#) 13:49 SteveG "Would Mitt Like to Fire Bain Employee Rush Limbaugh?"

Does Rush Limbaugh Work for Mitt Romney?

"Would Mitt Like to Fire Bain Employee Rush Limbaugh?" by Henry Decker, *National Memo*

Mar. 2, 2012, (<http://www.nationalmemo.com/article/would-mitt-fire-bain-employee-rush-limbaugh>)

In the wake of Rush Limbaugh's torrent of ignorant misogyny, just about everyone has jumped to condemn the conservative radio host's comments. Several of Limbaugh's corporate sponsors have dropped him, and politicians from both sides of the aisle -- such as Nancy Pelosi and John Boehner -- have denounced him. Even anti-contraception culture warrior Rick Santorum has labeled Limbaugh "absurd."

One notable exception? Republican presidential frontrunner Mitt Romney, who has been silent on the issue. Here's a fun possible reason why the "King of Bain" won't speak up:

The "Rush Limbaugh Show" is aired by Premiere Networks, a massively profitable syndication network, which is owned by Clear Channel Communications.

Clear Channel Communications is owned by Bain Capital.

So perhaps Romney's persistent silence is owed to the fact that Limbaugh's offensive comments make him quite a bit of money. After all, the majority of investment income in Romney's "blind trust" is derived from private equity funds managed by Bain Capital. Clear Channel is one of Bain's largest investments. Rush Limbaugh is one of Clear Channel's largest investments. Clearly, Romney has a real conflict of interest here.

The Limbaugh/Romney connection may or may not explain why Romney has refused to step forward and repudiate Limbaugh's comments. What it definitely does prove is this useful rule of thumb for covering the 2012 campaign: whenever something crazy happens in the electoral theater, it's a good policy to check if Mitt Romney owns one of the actors.

20120303-10 19:57 Art Video: "Jacob Hacker & Paul Pierson on Engineered Inequality"

This pretty good for those who have not seen. A bit longish but hits at the heart of the matter. I will say from my perspective I feel absolutely nothing for these super rich dirtbags and could easily see them all fall with no regrets at all. Burn 'em out!

Video: "Jacob Hacker & Paul Pierson on Engineered Inequality", by Bill Moyers, Moyers & Co.

Mar. 1, 2012, (<http://billmoyers.com/segment/jacob-hacker-paul-pierson-on-engineered-inequality/>)

20120303-11 20:10 SteveG Fw: Change.org Petition: Help Henry Young

from Change.org:

In October of 2011, my father Henry Young -- a 62-year-old husband and father of three who was employed with Philips Medical System in Andover, MA -- had a heart attack while in the gym at work. His heart stopped ten times, leaving his brain deprived of oxygen. After being comatose for several weeks, he miraculously awoke one day and began making great strides towards recovery. Currently undergoing rehab at Whittier Rehabilitation Hospital, he has made enough progress to convince his medical team, family, and friends that with continued rehab he will regain functional motor and cognitive skills.

Despite the critical progress my Dad has made in recent weeks, his insurance provider Blue Cross Blue Shield will cease coverage of my father's rehab this coming Monday, March 5, 2012. If this happens, my family will be put in the position of choosing to either continue treatment and face financial ruin or give up on our beloved father & husband's recovery process.

Health insurance is supposed to be there when you need it most. It's wrong for Blue Cross Blue Shield to drop coverage when my father's future depends on it. Please take a stand and help us change Blue Cross Blue Shield's mind. Not only is this morally and ethically wrong, this is a travesty of justice! Don't think this couldn't happen to you; be the change you want to see!

[http://www.change.org/petitions/blue-cross-blue-shield-henry-young-needs-rehab-to-live?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=action\\_alert](http://www.change.org/petitions/blue-cross-blue-shield-henry-young-needs-rehab-to-live?utm_medium=email&utm_source=action_alert)

20120303-13 20:45 SteveB From the Archive: "The Bible Has Some Shocking 'Family Values'"

I have a great Republican-type idea! Let's go back in time 2000 years and start over with a decent society (no gays, no contraception, no masturbation) this time, based on the Holy bible.

Except that I have a few problems if the Holy Bible is going to be jammed down our throats as the Law of the Land. (What if the nearly impossible happened and Rick "Satan" Santorum were elected President?) I don't really want to sell my daughters into slavery. Oh...you say I don't have to sell them into slavery, it's just that I can if I want to? I just have the option! Oh, OK. Much better. I have so much confidence that the sweet Evangelicals would never interpret the Holy Bible literally! LOL!

Gee...duh...maybe there's a reason why the Founding Fathers passed-on a separation of church and state to their grandchildren. Maybe it's something worth preserving, even worth fighting for!

From the FotM Archive:

"The Bible Has Some Shocking 'Family Values'" by Michael Coogan, CNN

Oct. 26, 2010, ([http://articles.cnn.com/2010-10-26/opinion/coogan.bible.family.values\\_1\\_biblical-writers-family-values-slavery?\\_s=PM:OPINION](http://articles.cnn.com/2010-10-26/opinion/coogan.bible.family.values_1_biblical-writers-family-values-slavery?_s=PM:OPINION))

(Editor's note: Michael Coogan is a lecturer on Hebrew Bible-Old Testament at Harvard Divinity School, professor of religious studies at Stonehill College, and director of publications for the Harvard Semitic Museum. Editor of *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, his most recent book is *God and Sex: What the Bible Really Says* (Twelve).)

When talking about so-called family values, pastors, popes, and politicians routinely quote the Bible as if it were an unassailable divine authority -- after all, they assume, God wrote the Bible, and therefore it is absolutely and literally true.

But that is a misconception. As the Bible itself makes clear, its authors were human beings, many of whom are named: David, Isaiah, Luke, and Paul. These human writers wrote over the course of more than a thousand years, and their writings reflect their own views and the values they shared with their contemporaries. So it's not surprising that inconsistencies are frequent in the Bible, both trivial and profound.

Although Jews and Christians, individually and collectively, have for the last 2,000 years accepted the Bible as authoritative in principle, in practice many of its values have been rejected. On issues such as slavery, no one today would maintain that slavery is acceptable, even though, according to the Bible, it was a divinely sanctioned institution. In the debates about slavery in the 19th century those opposed to its abolition cited the Bible in support of their position, but despite such biblical warrant, their views were renounced.

**According to biblical law, a father could sell his daughter as a slave**, and the last of the Ten Commandments lists as off-limits a neighbor's possessions -- his house, wife, slaves, and livestock. But the majority of modern Jews and Christians no longer accept the biblical view of women as men's property and hence subordinate to them, as they have also abandoned the biblical practice of polygamy.

In current debates about family values, most of which have to do with sex, opponents of abortion and advocates of a woman's right to choose both cite the Bible in support of their conflicting views, even though the Bible in fact says nothing specifically about the issue. And with regard to same-sex marriage, although the few biblical writers who mention same-sex relationships, especially between men, were unequivocally opposed to them, many contemporary believers would argue that, as with slavery and the status of women, it is time to recognize that the values of the biblical writers are no longer necessarily our own.

Opponents of same-sex marriage cite Leviticus, which says that when a man sleeps with a man as with a woman it is an abomination. They're right: It does say that. But it later calls for the death penalty for such activity, which only the most rabid opponents would insist on. The Bible also calls eating pork and a woman wearing a man's clothes abominations, yet many would no longer enforce such prohibitions.

Individual biblical texts should not be appealed to selectively: Such cherry-picking is all too easy because of the nature of the Bible as a multi-authored book. Rather, as with another formative text, the Constitution, one needs first to understand it historically -- what did its words mean when they were written -- and then attempt to determine what its underlying values are, not just what it says in a specific passage. Only in this sense can the Bible be considered to have timeless relevance that transcends the historical particularities of its authors.

What are those underlying values? I would argue that they are rooted in love of neighbor, which Jewish and Christian commentators over the ages have identified as the essential and enduring message of the Bible.

Here are three of them. The great Rabbi Hillel, who when asked what the basic principle of the Torah was, replied: "What is hateful to you do not do to your neighbor: That is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary." His words are echoed both by his near-contemporary, another rabbi, Jesus of Nazareth, who put it this way: "Whatever you wish people to do to you, so you should do to them: for this is the Law and the Prophets," and by an early leader in the movement that Jesus started, the rabbinically trained Paul, who pronounced that "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

So, I suggest, the essence of the Bible -- its ultimate authority -- is not in its individual pronouncements, but in its underlying message: equal, even loving, treatment of all persons, regardless of their age, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

<a href="#">20120303-17</a>	21:16	SteveG	Re: "The Bible Has Some Shocking 'Family Values'"
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Reading one of Bart D. Ehrman's books – *God's Problem* or one of his 19 other books – doesn't help Santorum's philosophy and substantiates the need for separation of church and state.

<a href="#">20120303-04</a>	14:22	Charis	Earth Hour, Sat., Mar. 31, 2012, 8:30 pm (timezone?)
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<http://www.earthhour.org/>

<a href="#">20120304-09</a>	19:41	SteveG	"Protesters Occupying Monsanto Corp. Arrested"
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Good read – share with others.

"Protesters Occupying Monsanto Corp. Arrested" by Anthony Gucciardi, NationofChange

Mar. 4, 2012, (<http://www.nationofchange.org/protesters-occupying-monsanto-corp-arrested-1330870187>)

("Police threatened protesters with arrest if they did not move away from the doors, and 12 were ultimately arrested. According to the report, 10 were arrested for 'blocking the entrance' and 2 were arrested for crossing a police line.")

Taking a stand against the agricultural takeover of the United States and worldwide, a group of Occupy DC members began to protest outside the offices of Monsanto. Taking part in an attempt to help raise awareness over the atrocities committed by mega corporations like Monsanto, Occupy members as far away as Portland helped to organize the national protest. In the call to action statement provided by Occupy Portland, the movement stated that the protest was to highlight the fact that "corporations buy off legislators and craft legislation that serves the interests of corporations and not people." According to Occupy DC, about 12 members were arrested.

Protesters were told by D.C. police officers to remove themselves from the Monsanto office, where they formed a line around the building. One police officer, William Farr, said that around 50 protesters gathered around the building. Police threatened protesters with arrest if they did not move away from the doors, and 12 were ultimately arrested. According to the report, 10 were arrested for 'blocking the entrance' and 2 were arrested for crossing a police line. One of the individuals arrested was an American University student doing a report on police brutality.

During their protest at Monsanto corporation, protesters chanted things like "Monsanto and ALEC, corporations are making us sick." Protesters were even quoted as saying that Monsanto "is doing more to make a sustainable world impossible than almost any corporation on the planet."

Monsanto was declared worst company of 2011 for their numerous acts against nature and public health. In addition to running slave rings and controlling U.S. diplomats behind the scenes to push their agenda, Monsanto is also ensuring that you have no idea whether or not you are eating their genetically modified foods. Squashing labeling initiatives all over the nation through admitted influence, Monsanto wants to make sure you're in the dark about their latest GMO creations.

<a href="#">20120304-02</a>	23:58	SteveB	Our Cookie Business in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Day 1
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Yesterday, my wife, Marci, and I took the big plunge and began starting-up another Third World business. We're going to bake and sell gourmet cookies! (With the help of our "people", of course!)

I guess all you dear readers are familiar with the "Picture of the Day" which comes at the end of every "FotM Newsletter" (see below). Today I am starting here, just before the Picture of the Day, a new daily or frequent continuing article about the trials, tribulations, adventures, and rewards of small-business capitalism, Bolivian/American-style. Our little company is not any big deal, really (yet!), but we think it's going to be really fun to build and run, so I thought it might also be fun to write about our little \$10,000 adventure. The name of the company and cookies is still secret, pending getting the registered trademark started, but I'll let you know as soon as I can. It will be familiar English to you all, but sounds exotic and sophisticated to Bolivian ears—unforgettable!—exactly our requirement in a name.

Many of you already know that I've been working on getting an American restaurant off the ground, here, for more than a year. I have done all the research and written a complete 100+ page business plan, as a matter of fact. We have searched and searched, but have yet to find a suitable location at the right time. This project is still a "go", but will be put on the back burner for a while. Still looking. Meanwhile, we plan on doing restaurant experiments in the dine-in part of the cookie bakery/store. We'll evolve the restaurant as we go, like I do everything. Just about any restaurant is more complicated than our cookie bakery/shop, and I want it to be the best in the city too.

In the meantime, Marci started baking cookies. She gave them to members of her family, people at work, the security guards in our building, and even some to me. Do you remember Meg Ryan's fake orgasm in the restaurant in *Sleepless in Seattle* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G9hstRfZVCY>)? ("Hey, I'll have whatever she's having!") That was pretty much the genuine, not fake, reaction Marci received from most folks lucky enough to try her delicious cookies. Come to think of it, one of them might have been faking, but I doubt it. Go, Meg! You women! :-)  
Love ya!

So what could an enterprising entrepreneur do except build a business around such a product (amazingly little-known here)? We really have no direct competition at this time.

Yesterday was the big day when we committed to renting our little bakery/store that we found last week during a taxi ride, very near where we live. We love the location on a great corner with plenty of foot and vehicle traffic, though that is not where our sales emphasis lies, as I will explain. Our landlords are a very nice family with a tiny grocery of their own and about a dozen pet parakeets, etc., one of whom loved standing on my shoulder, as we negotiated, licking the sweat off my neck. (Don't say yuk, I liked it!) The rent is surprisingly little (most financial details will be omitted from these posts). The place is newly constructed—cut-out of part of the family's patio, behind. The breaker box isn't even installed yet. We have to put in air-conditioning, a ventilation fan, a big oven, mixer, refrigerator, hot water heater, stainless-steel counter, a big sink, and a little remodeling, but not much, really.

We have an upscale product—a premium quality, gourmet cookie (4 varieties, actually) that we intend to sell at an above average price. We are committed to working hard and with love to making a very high quality product. Our emphasis, therefore, will be on a quality image. Everything must look clean and elegant (comparatively). This will definitely apply to our bakery/store, which could have been built in a cheap garage-type building on the outskirts of town, but that wouldn't be as helpful to our image. This quality image will also apply to our main sales effort, which will be focused outside the bakery/store.

The second part of our idea, after great cookies, is our sales force. Street vendors! Street vendors are very popular here, but they are a little like relics from the past, for the most part. No crisp and clean and gourmet and up to American standards. Most street vendors ride or push dilapidated vendor's carts. You've all see the ones that are used to sell hotdogs, etc., in many American cities, especially on the coasts. Wheelbarrows are very popular for fruit, juice, and many other products. You can be way out of town here, maybe sitting at a little restaurant in the middle of nowhere, and a guy will ride up on a bicycle with about 100 brooms sticking out in every direction and try to sell you one. I can buy reprints of old, early century maps, of all things, on many street corners. We found the full-length mirror in our bedroom being sold by a street vendor near the central plaza. Products here are brought directly to the people. Milk is still delivered to people's houses. Doctors make house calls. If you need a snack or a cold drink or ice cream almost anywhere in the city, someone will be there to meet your needs. Maybe this is the



future of America—poverty capitalism. When there are no jobs, people become street and market vendors. What else can they do but turn to capitalism? Especially after capitalism has failed them so miserably...

We will harness and modernize this force. We'll start with just one or two salesmen (consider this word an abbreviation of "saleswomen"), but our plan is to have about 10 as soon as possible. We want to start with about 100 cookies a day and quickly work our way up to 1000 per day. That's our target volume. Each of our salesmen will be on foot, though they will also take very cheap public transportation to many sales locations—soccer games, parades, office buildings, universities, the big bimodal bus/train terminal, the airport, the huge lines at government offices, the busy plazas. Our personnel—in and out of the store—will wear chef-type uniforms (photo to come, of course), with our name embroidered tastefully, and a matching hat. Outside salesmen will carry about 100 plastic-wrapped, artfully-labeled cookies in vendor trays strapped around their necks like hotdog vendors in the bleachers at U.S. sporting events. They will be very mobile and very distinctive and noticeable. (I'm going to try for people only above 7 feet tall. :-) They will be happy because they will be the best-paid vendors in town, thanks to an upscale product. In the store, we'll sell individual cookies, boxes of a dozen, coffee, fruit juice, and some other drinks. We have room for just a few tables, but can expand to a widened sidewalk covered by an awning pretty easily if the future warrants. Once people discover the little bites of Heaven that we sell for very little more than ordinary treats which no one else makes, I think we'll have something interesting and, hopefully, very profitable. If others copy, we'll still stand out, and everyone will know we're the original and genuine best. We'll do whatever it takes to be the best! That's the plan in a nutshell.

We know so many people here who are great workers and want to work for us—actually, mostly with us, because our outside sales force will all be independent businesspeople, who will buy cookies from us, paying upon delivery, and will also invest a refundable deposit for their uniforms, etc. They each will need to invest about \$100 with the potential to make four or five times that every month—good money for here. More than many pharmacists with five years of college make, for instance. I'm pretty sure we'll be swamped with good applicants.

Tomorrow we'll probably sign our lease, which will start as soon as the place is completely ready for us to start moving in, possibly as soon as Wednesday, but it has to get cleaned-up, a little roof leak fixed, and a little electrical work done. Our first order of business is to get legally organized as a business. Fortunately, Marci is a lawyer and we have friends who are accountants, lawyers, and businesspeople. We will be the equivalent of a U.S. LLC (Limited Liability Corporation) as equal partners. Then we have to get our government tax ID number—called a "NIT" (I'll write about how this works at a later date). We need a couple of licenses, get our trademark application started, get our construction guy, don Joaquin, on the scene, and we'll be ready to go equipment shopping. I'll do my best to keep you posted.

If any of you have a great cookie recipe, and I bet you do, I'd love to try it. Maybe we could name it after you? Wow! You'd be famous in the entire country!

Consider this a "Before" picture. It's a cute place on a great corner near the heart of the city,  
And it will be even cuter when we get done with it (in about a month, we hope.)



You can see the hexagonal paving tiles used on many streets in Santa Cruz (pop. 2,000,000).  
The corner (*la esquina*) of Streets (*des Calles*) Tarija and (y) Manuel Ignacio Salvatierra,  
About 10 blocks (*diez quadras*) from the Central *Plaza 24 de Septiembre*.



Our neighborhood (*vecindad*) (late on a sleepy Saturday afternoon. Note our great trees!



<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/usa/florida/travelblogs>

Bok Tower Gardens at Sunset with the Bells Playing



—Friends of the Middle,  
Steven W. Baker (SteveB), Editor/Moderator

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