



FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #206 — AUG. 17, 2012

Welcome to always lively political discussion and whatever else comes up.
<http://www.FriendsOfTheMiddle.org> FriendsOfTheMiddle@hotmail.com

INDEX: Click here.

Creators to Suck Hind Teat in the U.S.

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Aug. 17, 2012)

Mmmm...we can't afford to support the arts in the U.S., even though Third World countries can. The arts take entirely too many dollars away from the overseas coffers of the billionaires.

"Buenos Aires Supports Aging Writers" by Sarah Amandolare, Salon

Aug. 16, 2012, (http://www.salon.com/2012/08/16/buenos_aires_bettors_mitt/)

(As Mitt Romney discusses plans to cut arts spending, Buenos Aires unveils a special pension -- for the literati.)



Christina's World (Andrew Wyeth)

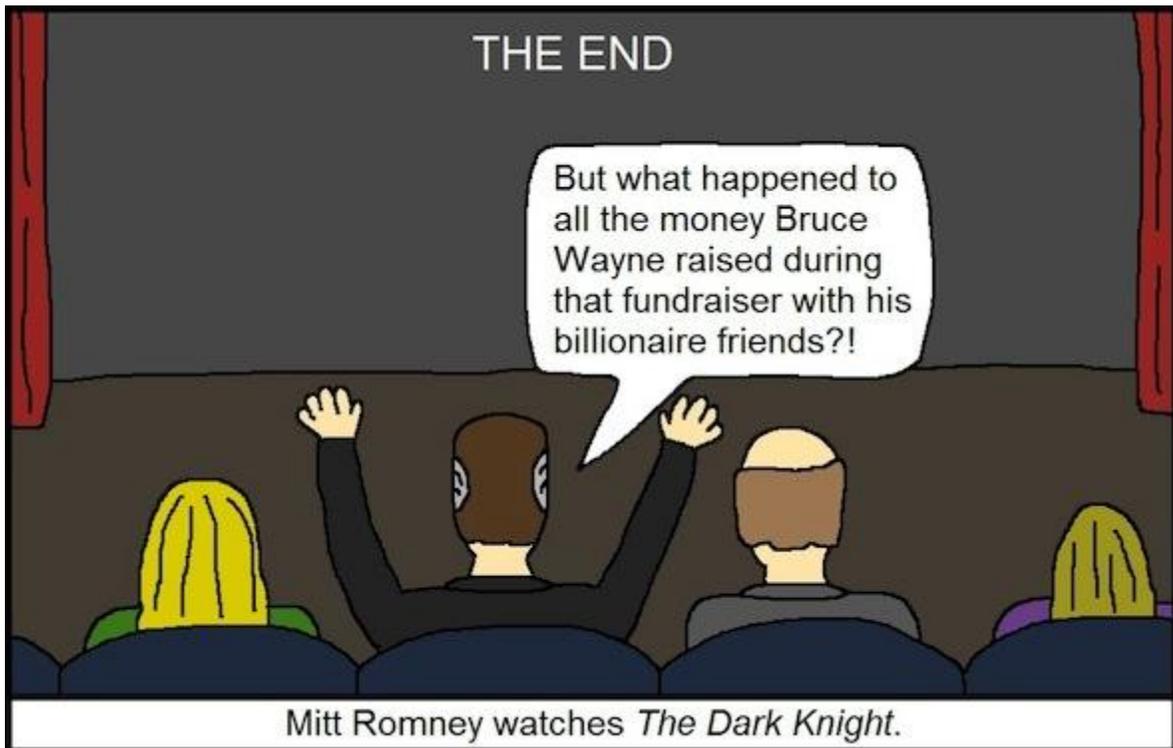
Arts and culture are on the fiscal chopping block in the U.S., but not in Buenos Aires. The New York Times reported that the literary city – *Granta* magazine recently included eight Argentines on its list of 22 best young Spanish-language novelists – has awarded pensions to at least 80 writers.

Monthly stipends can near \$900 and are intended to boost “often meager retirement income.” To qualify, writers must be 60 or older, have lived in Buenos Aires for 15 years, and written five or more books of fiction, poetry, plays or literary essays for established publishers. What’s more, independent publishers in Buenos Aires are eligible for subsidies and the city offers “tax exemptions on book purchases.”

The program was reported as Mitt Romney revealed to *Fortune Magazine* his plans for reduced spending, taking sharp aim at prominent cultural institutions.

“So first there are programs I would eliminate,” Romney told *Fortune*, before naming subsidies for PBS, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. “I very much appreciate and like what they’re doing,” Romney said, “But I just think they have to stand on their own rather than receiving money borrowed from other countries, as our government does on their behalf.”

As the Huffington Post reported, the U.S. government gives \$444 million per year to PBS’s parent organization, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and \$146 million to the National Endowment of the Arts.



FotM NEWSLETTER #206 (Aug. 17, 2012)—HYPERTEXT INDEX

<u>DATE-ID</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>SUBJECT/TITLE</u>
20120817-00		SteveB	Creators to Suck Hind Teat in the U.S. by Steven W. Baker / SteveB ("Buenos Aires Supports Aging Writers")
20120816-01	09:06	Susette	Re: America Doesn't Like Mitt R0mney (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #205)
20120816-02	11:19	Art	Video: "One Term More"
20120816-03	11:29	SteveG	"Taxpayers Subsidize CEO Pay, Report Says"
20120816-04	13:05	SteveB	From the Right: "Why Liberals Behave the Way They Do"
20120816-19	23:58	SteveG	Quote: Dr. Marcia Angell on the Pharmaceutical Industry
20120816-15	18:11	SteveB	From the Right: "U.S. Chamber Calls Elizabeth Warren Greatest Threat to Free Enterprise"
20120816-05	14:05	SteveG	Fw: CREDO Action Petition: Tell Romney & Ryan to RSVP the Nuns!
20120816-09	16:50	SteveG	Fw: MoveOn Action: Get Out the Romney-Ryan Pink Slip Message Today!
20120816-14	19:38	SteveG	Fw: Working America Survey: What Do You Think About Paul Ryan?!
20120816-06	14:33	SteveBA	Fw: Joke: Talk with Daughter
20120816-07	14:38	Art	Re: The Real Miss America (reply to Marci, FotM Newsletter #205)
20120816-08	14:39	Art	Re: The Real Miss America (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #205)
20120816-10	16:55	Pam	Pam's Update
20120816-11	17:07	SteveB	Re: Pam's Update (reply to Pam, above)
20120816-12	17:34	Art	Re: Pam's Update (reply to Pam, above)
20120816-13	19:35	Pam	Re: Pam's Update (reply to Art & SteveB, above)
20120816-16	20:13	Ben	Photo: Lunch at Apple
20120816-17	20:22	SteveG	"The Big Lie of the Day: Republicans Balance Federal Budgets"
20120816-18	22:04	Ann	Fw: Graphics: Spelling Matters
20120816-20	23:59	SteveB	Photo: Daybreak over Indiana

20120816-01	09:06	Susette	Re: America Doesn't Like Mitt R0mney (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #205)
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Love it, Steve.

20120816-02	11:19	Art	Video: "One Term More"
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Best political ad yet! Turn up the speakers. Even if you don't agree, if you like *Les Miserables*, you'll love this for originality alone. Oh, and it's not for sale, so that will limit its use to one party maybe.

http://www.onetermmore.com/video_subtitles.html

20120816-03	11:29	SteveG	"Taxpayers Subsidize CEO Pay, Report Says"
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"Taxpayers Subsidize CEO Pay, Report Says" by Susanna Kim, ABC News

Aug. 16, 2012, (<http://news.yahoo.com/report-taxpayers-subsidize-ceo-pay-040124133--abc-news-deals.html>)

The Institute for Policy Studies, a self-described "progressive multi-issue think tank," analyzed the link between tax loopholes and excessive executive compensation and concluded that the loopholes created an "uneven playing field" between large companies and small businesses and led to lost tax revenue.

The latest edition of the institute's annual Executive Excess compensation study found that in 2011, 26 CEOs received more in compensation than their companies paid in taxes, and that the four major tax loopholes contributing to excessive executive pay cost taxpayers about \$14.4 billion a year.

"The report is timely at a time when the tax debate is so intense in this country," Sarah Anderson, the institute's global economy project director and the report's co-author, told ABC News. "Some leaders are saying we need to reduce the corporate tax burden even more while major companies are taking advantage of loopholes to lower their tax bill."

The report critiqued the major tax loopholes, including the preferential treatment of "carried interest" income for hedge fund managers. "Carried interest" income can be taxed as capital gains - at 15 percent tops - instead of at 35 percent, the top income tax rate. The Congressional Budget Office's projected estimate for "carried interest" income - revenue from investment income or dividends - for 2012 to 2021 was \$21.4 billion.

Companies can deduct executive pay as a business expense, just as they do inventory and appreciation. Because of a tax rule enacted in the early 1990s that limited the amount of cash that could be deducted to \$1 million, corporations have increasingly paid executives in stock options. Corporations can exempt stock option compensation, and other performance-based pay, from taxation.

William McBride, chief economist with the Tax Foundation, a conservative-leaning nonpartisan think tank, said this makes sense, because stock options are speculative compensation.

"They're worth nothing unless they're in the money," McBride told ABC News. "It wouldn't be fair to tax someone for getting paid an option that doesn't have any real value until it has been exercised."

Steven Balsam, an accounting professor at the Fox School of Business at Temple University and who published a study earlier this week for the Economic Policy Institute, "Taxes and Executive Compensation," said from a business viewpoint, "it's an expense, just like any other person's salary."

Others defend performance-based compensation for high-performing executives who have overseen companies with increasing earnings and stock prices.

Balsam said it was unlikely that boards would limit executive pay even if their pay was not tax deductible.

Anderson, who co-wrote the report, said that company boards that might choose to forfeit the deduction and continue paying high compensation packages "are stacked with executives from other firms that have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo.

"However, we need to keep chipping away at the myth that massive payouts are necessary to attract talented managers," she said. "Having a meaningful deductibility cap would send the right message, and at least taxpayers wouldn't have to continue to subsidize excessive pay."

The report points to the largest beneficiaries of the tax loopholes, saying they benefit the most from the unlimited tax deductibility of executive pay because their compensation has the largest proportion of deductible, performance-based pay.

Oracle's Larry Ellison, the sixth richest person in the world with a net worth of \$36 billion, according to Forbes, tops the list, and is followed by Discovery Communications' David Zaslav; Viacom's Philippe Dauman; Motorola Mobility Holdings' Sanjay Jha; and CBS Corp.'s Leslie Moonves.

Neither Oracle, Discovery Communications, Viacom and Motorola Mobility Holdings returned calls requesting comment. A spokeswoman for CBS Corp. and a spokeswoman for Discovery declined to comment.

I don't really know how one person could have the truth so wrong. I guess this is just typical of the Republican "big lie" — they think that, to be effective, the lie has to be 100% the opposite of the truth. There is no going halfway for Ann Coulter, that's for sure. Every point can be easily refuted and shown to be in-line with the concept of the "big lie". For example: Democrats are condemned for being unscientific, after all their work to maintain scientific research in the federal budget, their work with climate and health scientists, etc., etc. (See Dr. Angell's quote, below, for a little different perspective.) Democrats. Unscientific! Critiqued by people who believe the Earth is only 6000-years-old so why worry about climate change! See? The exact opposite of the truth. (But I was happy to learn the author has so much concern for black people. LOL!)

In case you don't have time to wade through the entire article, here's an interesting example of hypocrisy for you (emphasis, mine). This is Ann Coulter's view of some alleged future liberal utopia:

The rest of us are forced to live in a lawless universe of no new pharmaceuticals, foreign doctors, gay marriage, girl soldiers, a health care system run by the post office, and bankrupt Social Security and Medicare systems, because **liberals can't enjoy their wealth unless other people are living in squalor.**

"Why Liberals Behave the Way They Do" by Ann Coulter, *Human Events*

Aug. 15, 2012, (<http://www.humanevents.com/2012/08/15/why-liberals-behave-the-way-they-do/>)

My smash best seller *Demonic: How the Liberal Mob Is Endangering America* has just come out in paperback — and not a moment too soon! Democrats always become especially mob-like during presidential election campaigns.

The "root cause" of the Democrats' wild allegations against Republicans, their fear of change, their slogans and insane metaphors, are all explained by mass psychology, diagnosed more than a century ago by the French psychologist Gustave Le Bon, on whose work much of my own book is based.

Le Bon's 1896 book, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, was carefully read by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in order to learn how to incite mobs. Our liberals could have been Le Bon's study subjects.

[Interesting that the author would return to the 19th Century for her "scientific" study of Democrats. —SteveB]

With the country drowning in debt and Medicare and Social Security on high-speed bullet trains to bankruptcy, the entire Democratic Party refuses to acknowledge mathematical facts. Instead, they incite the Democratic mob to hate Republicans by accusing them of wanting to kill old people.

According to a 2009 report — before Obama added another \$5 trillion to the national debt — Obama's own treasury secretary, Tim Geithner, stated that in less than 10 years, spending on major entitlement programs, plus interest payments on the national debt, would consume 92 cents of every dollar in federal revenue.

That means no money for an army, a navy, rockets, national parks, food inspectors, air traffic controllers, highways, and so on. Basically, the entire federal budget will be required just to pay for Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security — and the cost of borrowing money to pay for these programs.

When Social Security was enacted in 1935, the average lifespan was 61.7 years. Today, it's almost 79 and rising. But liberals believe the age at which people can begin collecting Social Security must never, ever be changed, even to save Social Security itself.

Mobs, according to Le Bon, have a "fetish-like respect" for tradition, except moral traditions because crowds are too impulsive to be moral. That's why liberals say our Constitution is a "living, breathing" document that sprouts rights to gay marriage and abortion, but the age at which Social Security and Medicare benefits kick in is written in stone.

Le Bon says that it is lucky "for the progress of civilization that the power of crowds only began to exist when the great discoveries of science and industry had already been effected." If "democracies possessed the power they

wield today at the time of the invention of mechanical looms or of the introduction of steam-power and of railways, the realization of these inventions would have been impossible.”

Liberals exhibit this exact groupthink fear of science not only toward light bulbs and nuclear power, but also toward medical inventions. Thus, when a majority of the country objected to Obamacare on the grounds that — among many other reasons — a government takeover of health care would destroy medical innovation, liberals stared in blank incomprehension.

They believe every drug, every diagnosis, every therapy, every cure that will ever be invented, has already been invented. Their job is to spread all the existing cures, while demonizing and stymieing pharmaceutical companies that make money by inventing new drugs.

Democrats haven't the slightest concern about who will formulate new remedies because they are enraged at profit making and suspicious of scientific advancement.

Apart from cures that will never be invented, liberal elites will be mostly untouched by the rotten medical care to which they are consigning the rest of us. Note how Democrats' friends, such as government unions, immediately received waivers from Obamacare. Rich or connected liberals, such as George Soros, Warren Buffett, Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama, will always have access to the best doctors, just as Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez do.

It is similar to the way that Democrats, who refuse to pass school choice, always seem to bypass the disastrous public schools for their own children, who end up at Sidwell Friends or St. Albans.

Democrats don't worry about how bankrupting Social Security and destroying the job market hurts black people, bitter divorcees and young people, because they can always demagogue these one-party Democratic voters simply by repeating that Republicans are racist, hate women and aren't cool like Obama.

The truth is irrelevant; only slogans and fear mongering delight mobs.

The rest of us are forced to live in a lawless universe of no new pharmaceuticals, foreign doctors, gay marriage, girl soldiers, a health care system run by the post office, and bankrupt Social Security and Medicare systems, because liberals can't enjoy their wealth unless other people are living in squalor.

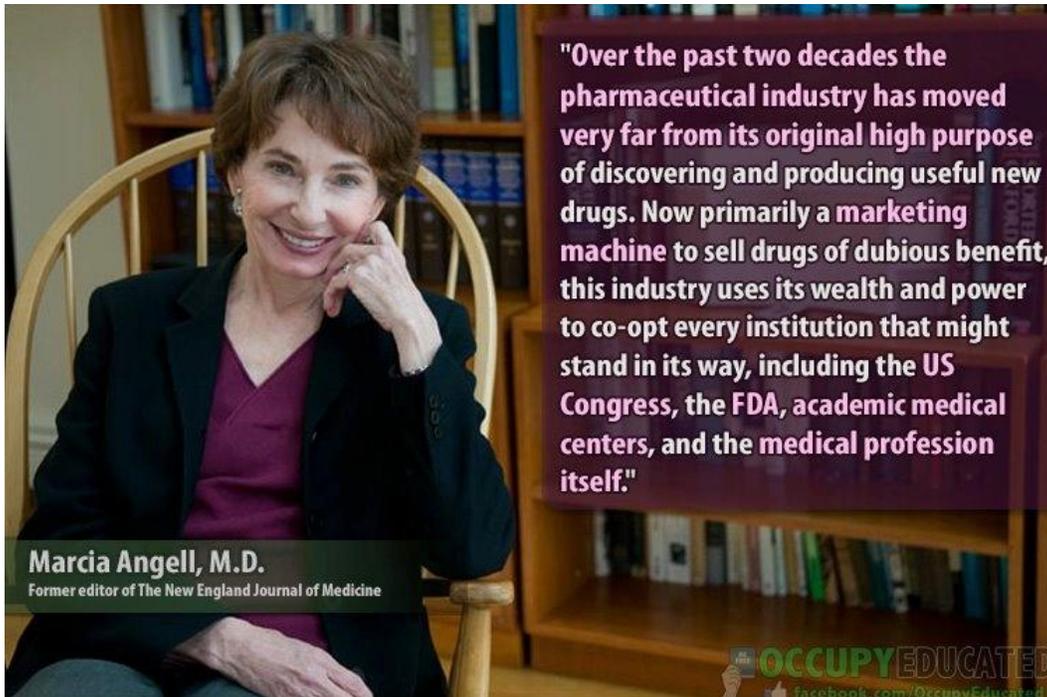
The country will have the economy of Uganda, but Democrats will be in total control.

20120816-19

23:58

SteveG

Quote: Dr. Marcia Angell on the Pharmaceutical Industry



20120816-15

18:11

SteveB

From the Right: "U.S. Chamber Calls Elizabeth Warren Greatest Threat to Free Enterprise"

Wow! Maybe Elizabeth Warren's not a L-A-D-Y! Holy cr*p! I love it!

"U.S. Chamber Calls Elizabeth Warren Greatest Threat to Free Enterprise" by Alison King, NECN

August 15, 2012, (<http://www.friendsoftheuschamber.com/blog/post/207/us-chamber-calls-elizabeth-warren-greatest-threat-to-free-enterprise>)

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce endorsed Mass. Sen. Scott Brown in his re-election campaign, and its political director attacked his Democratic challenger, Elizabeth Warren.

"No other candidate in 2012 represents a greater threat to free enterprise than Professor Warren," said Rob Engstrom, U.S. Chamber's political director.

Engstrom was in Boston to endorse Brown, but his words were more focused on Warren.

"Some of the comments she's made about throwing rocks at people who disagree with her is fundamentally unacceptable to the American business community," said Engstrom. **"She talks about blood and teeth on the floor - that's no way to lead."**

Warren supporters say this is not an endorsement from your local, hometown civic organization. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, they say, represents big corporations and rich people working to weaken financial reforms.

But from the 100-year-old Harry Miller Textile Company in Boston's Roxbury neighborhood, Brown proudly embraced the support.

"It means a lot to get the endorsement from the world's largest pro-business organization that advocates for jobs, job creation and job growth throughout this country," said Brown.

Meanwhile, the Mass. Democratic Party released a web video saying that Brown was leaving the Boston event to head to a New York City fundraiser at the home of Mayor Michael Bloomberg - an independent who has been outspoken in his support of Wall Street.

Warren has also pointed to votes Brown took in July against extending the Bush tax cuts for those earning \$250,000 or less. Brown says he wants to extend the tax cuts for all income groups.

"America's working families are on the ropes and they can't take much more and ... the Romney Ryan Brown approach is a punch in the gut to them," said Warren.

[How can she say such an awful thing? -SteveB]

"I know that Professor Warren would love to run against Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, but unfortunately she's running against me," said Brown.

[Is he maybe sort of trying to run away from the most unpopular governor in Massachusetts history? And the national debate is of no consequence? LOL! -SteveB]

20120816-05	14:05	SteveG	Fw: CREDO Action Petition: Tell Romney & Ryan to RSVP the Nuns!
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from CREDO Action:

Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan need to RSVP to the nuns.

"I'm not concerned about the very poor." That's what Republican Presidential candidate Mitt Romney said in a televised interview on CNN after he won the Florida primary.

And now he's doubled down on that sentiment by naming Paul Ryan, whose budget would give \$3 trillion in tax cuts to the richest Americans while drastically cutting food stamps for millions of poor Americans, to the Republican ticket.

Clearly, Romney and Ryan are dangerously out of touch. Thankfully, a group of righteous women who have dedicated their lives in service to the least among us have invited Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan to spend a day with them to learn about the struggles of some of our poorest citizens.

You may be familiar with "Nuns on the Bus," a group of courageous women who have been traveling to the Congressional districts that would be hardest hit by Paul Ryan's immoral Tea Party budget that gives money to the ultra-rich while stripping vital services from the poorest Americans.

Now the nuns are turning their attention to the Republican presidential and vice presidential candidates directly. But neither Romney nor Ryan has RSVPed to the nuns who have asked them to "spend a day with Catholic Sisters who work every day to meet the needs of struggling families in their communities."

In fact, the Romney-Ryan campaign hasn't responded at all to Sister Simone Campbell who issued the invitation on behalf of her Catholic sisters. If we can build more momentum for the "Nuns on a Bus" invitation to Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, we can help them get a response from the campaign and bring more attention to the immoral dimensions of their heartless policies for the poor.

We'll deliver your signatures to the Romney-Ryan campaign and to Sister Simone Campbell so that the Catholic sisters can use our petitions to help further their fight for social justice.

Click below to sign the petition:

http://act.credoaction.com/campaign/romney_rsvp/?p=romney_rsvp.

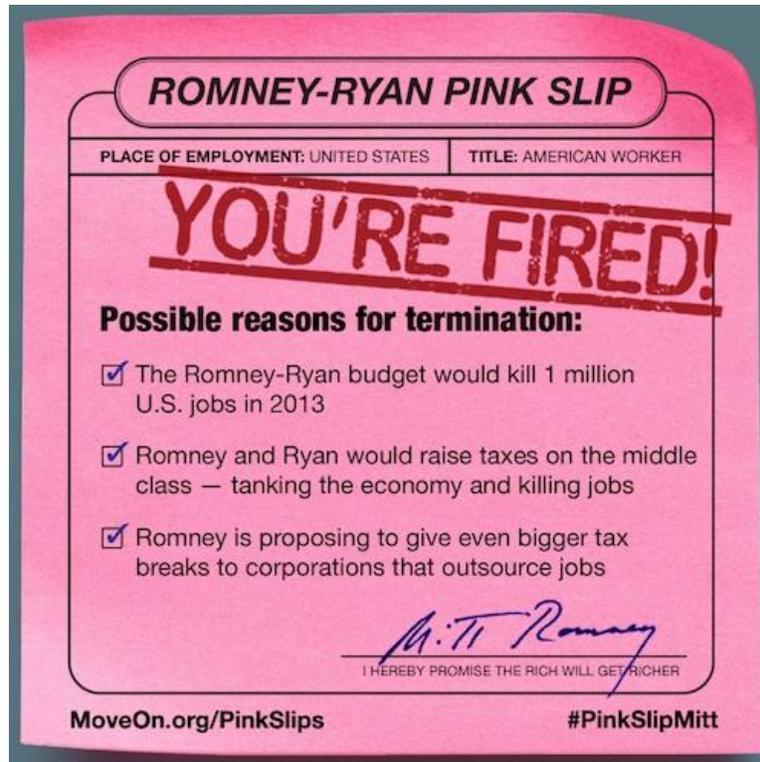
Thank you for standing with the nuns. Becky Bond, Political Director

[20120816-09](#) 16:50 SteveG Fw: MoveOn Action: Get Out the Romney-Ryan Pink Slip Message Today!

from MoveOn:

Right now, not enough voters know about the 1 million job losses we're facing under Romney-Ryan. Can you join us by sharing this pink slip message with your friends?

<http://pol.moveon.org/pinkslipmitt4/share.html>



[20120816-14](#) 19:38 SteveG Fw: Working America Survey: What Do You Think About Paul Ryan?!

from Working America:

The pick is in. Mitt Romney has chosen Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin to be his running mate. Ryan is the author of the controversial budget that the U.S. House passed earlier this year—one which would radically change Medicare, Medicaid and tax rates for the rich. **What do you think about Paul Ryan's plan for America?**

As he hits the national campaign trail, working people need to know more about Ryan and what he plans for the country. For instance:

- Did you know that Ryan's budget would privatize Medicare, replacing the guarantee of coverage for retirees with a voucher to buy private insurance?
- Did you know that Ryan has supported privatizing Social Security?
- Did you know that Ryan would deregulate the big banks?

We'd like to hear what you think of Rep. Ryan and his agenda. Will you take our quick survey on Ryan and give us your input?

<http://workingamerica.org/Ryansurvey>

Thanks again for your support. Your voice matters.

In solidarity, Christian Norton, Working America

20120816-06 14:33 SteveBA Fw: Joke: Talk with Daughter

This gave me a good laugh.

A guy was telling his buddy, "You won't believe what happened last night..."

"My daughter walked into the living room and said, 'Dad, cancel my allowance immediately, forget the college tuition, rent my room out, throw all my clothes out the window; take my TV, and my laptop. Please take any of my jewelry to the Salvation Army or Cash Converters. Then sell my car, take my front door key away from me, and throw me out of the house. Then disown me and never talk to me again. And don't forget to write me out of your will and leave my share to anyone who wants it.'"

"Holy cr*p", replied the friend, "She actually said that?"

"Well, she didn't put it quite like that, she actually said... 'Dad, meet my new boyfriend, Mohammed. We're going to work together on President Obama's reelection campaign.'"

20120816-07 14:35 Art Re: The Real Miss America (reply to Marci, FotM Newsletter #205)

I thought you might find the following article about the Cheerleader Sniper from snopes.com interesting:

<http://www.snopes.com/photos/military/cheerleader.asp>.

20120816-08 14:39 Art Re: The Real Miss America (reply to SteveB, FotM Newsletter #205)

Good newsletter, but, as always, I am the wet blanket. The lady sniper story is not true. For starters, we don't shoot people in Pakistan, but she didn't shoot anyone in any Stan.

[Art is completely correct, though I really liked that a*s coming out of his mouth part. -SteveB]

20120816-10 16:55 Pam Pam's Update

If anyone cares, here's the latest. (Maybe that sounds snarky, and I don't mean it that way; I just don't assume other people have the same burning interest in my life that I do.)

Mark and I just returned from a two-week loop around New England, visiting my brother in upstate New York and culminating in four days in Lexington, MA, where my son David got married. I have no words to describe what that experience was like for me. Profound. Wonderful. Transformative. Beautiful. Amazing. Incredible. None of these words comes close, so I leave it to your imagination to picture a sunny day, a dazzling bride, and a groom with love dripping from every pore. It all boils down to love and family and being together at long last.

I look forward to returning to the political fray and FotM, even though I'm still reeling from the Ryan choice for VP and can't bear to think about what might lie ahead.

[20120816-11](#) 17:07 SteveB Re: Pam's Update (reply to Pam, above)

So great you're back and with such good news! And a wedding is maybe the best way to celebrate family...and with near perfect timing in this case, it seems to me.

Best wishes for the lucky couple are flowing out of Bolivia at this moment.

I'm thinking Romney really made a mistake with Ryan. I'm hopeful anyway.

Can't say much more right now. Our Snicker-Doodle tables and chairs are being delivered in just a few minutes, so got to be there.

[20120816-12](#) 17:34 Art Re: Pam's Update (reply to Pam, above)

We all missed you and we all care. Now get back to work.

[20120816-13](#) 19:35 Pam Re: Pam's Update (reply to Art & SteveB, above)

I just read a couple of articles on Obama--in *Harper's*, no less, that bastion of liberalism. I feel rather confused. I read one thing that calls Obama out for catering to the Republican agenda in hopes of getting concessions, which never come, and another that praises him for pulling us back from the brink. All I know for sure is, he's the lesser of two evils, and the other one (R,R) is too frightening to contemplate. All politicians speak in clouds of smoke, and I'm sick of their evasions. What's worse is the segment of the public that sees Obama as a socialist and Republicans as the rescuer of the little man. Ryan is a blinkered ideologue with the sympathies of a toadstool. Romney is a Mormon weirdo who talks out of both sides of his mouth. I can't stand any of it.

I read another great article by Atul Gawande in the *New Yorker* about our health care system and how lousy it actually is, especially in rural, southern areas. He lays out a plan that would do a lot to ameliorate things--modeled on an Iranian system, would you believe--but it requires lots of oversight and standardization. A sort of McMedicine, if you will. Doctors with egos will find it hard to swallow, but unless we change, we will, literally, die. You really ought to seek out this article, as it exposes a lot of the squirmy things that hide under the rock of "the greatest health care system in the world."

It's so depressing to me that we humans can't ever emerge from the mire of our own selfishness and greed. The few who try are always swamped by the ferocious ones who will stop at nothing to achieve whatever it is they want. I feel so lucky, personally. North Carolina isn't in a drought. Our supermarkets are full of delicious, healthy food, and I can afford \$3.60 per gallon for gas. Even more, finding David has brought an abundance of love into my life that I never dreamed of experiencing. I have discovered that it is possible to love wholeheartedly when a piece of you is no longer missing. Everything changes. So I am split down the middle. Part of me rejoices at the beauty and joy that is my life, while part of me despairs and fulminates. One thing I do know is that a sentient person can never be totally happy, merely grateful for a reprieve.

[20120816-16](#) 20:13 Ben Photo: Lunch at Apple

It was yummy. You know how tasty fish skin (certain species, anyway) can be when it's paper-crisp-crunchy, a rich amber color, thin, and lightly seasoned? This wild steelhead filet had that. And the underlying filet was butter-soft, almost creamy, and delicately fork-flaky. Delicious! This was a bigger fish than the usual farmed variety, too, so the filet was thicker than one generally sees with trout. Chef Patricia's almandine sauce was fabulously rich; I'd

almost asked her to go light on it, then figured, well, I don't have to slurp it all down, do I? So I didn't, and I am glad I didn't, because it really highlighted the fish and rice perfectly!

The brown rice was properly *al dente* and played well with the other items on the nicely arranged plate. Broccolini may not be my favorite vegetable - mainly because it's difficult to manipulate while reading a book - but today's was a joy. (I suppose that when I am alone and reading, I'll just have to cut it all up before commencing the Feeding, as I did today!)



Seared Wild Steelhead Trout Almondine over Brown Rice with Broccolini

[No wonder the world's oceans are practically without fish! ;-) Looks delicious, as always, what a lucky lunch-eater you are. --SteveB

20120816-17 20:22 SteveG "The Big Lie of the Day: Republicans Balance Federal Budgets"

[If Republicans like balanced budgets, they should remember back to the historically rare surpluses of the Clinton Era/ They were produced by **a Democratic President and a Republican Congress WORKING TOGETHER IN COMPROMISE!** Oops! Guess Republicans don't want balanced budgets **THAT** badly! --SteveB]

"The Big Lie of the Day: Republicans Balance Federal Budgets" by @LOLGOP, *The National Memo*

Aug. 15, 2012, (<http://www.nationalmemo.com/the-big-lie-of-the-day-republicans-balance-federal-budgets/>)

The Lie: Republicans have a plan to balance the federal budget and care deeply about fiscal responsibility.

The Truth: The last Republican President who ever balanced the budget was Dwight Eisenhower.

Between 1998 and 2000, President Bill Clinton's Treasury Department paid off more than \$360 billion in debt. As a result of 115 straight months of economic expansion that began after an increase in the top income tax rate —

which was virulently opposed by the right — the huge deficits left by 12 years of Republican rule had been transformed into a surplus.

Within months after taking office in the narrowest victory of nearly any U.S. president—by only one vote in the Supreme Court—George W. Bush had begun to turn that surplus back into deficits that grew and grew, despite funding two wars on emergency supplemental bills that were not figured into the budget.

Vice-President Cheney laughed off the promises that the Bush tax breaks would pay for themselves and the budget would be balanced: “Reagan proved deficits don’t matter.” But deficits do matter to Republicans...whenever there is a Democratic president.

Since they woke up from a coma on the day President Obama was elected, Republicans have pushed two Big Lies: The President is responsible for the deficit, which is nearly entirely the result of Bush-era choices that the Republicans refused to abandon, and the deficit is responsible for the poor economy.

In both instances, the opposite is true.

Using the deficit as a battering ram, the GOP pushed for the rapid adoption of a Balanced Budget Amendment to the Constitution, which would ignore the true causes of the deficit—tax breaks, the wars and an unfunded Medicare expansion—and demand huge cuts to Medicaid, Pell Grants and every service the government provides.

Paul Ryan proposed a budget plan with these draconian measures yet impartial experts warn that his budget doesn’t balance for decades. The largest expenditure in the Ryan budget is interest on the national debt.

Eager to prove how conservative he is, Mitt Romney signed up for a balanced budget plan that works even faster than Ryan’s, by cutting even more government services. And he pledges to do it without asking rich Americans like himself to ever pay a nickel more in taxes.

Like the majority of Republicans in Congress, Romney has signed a pledge to never say aye to any new taxes. Forget asking the rich to contribute what they can. Under Romney’s plan they’ll pay even less. Of course, to do this Romney would have to demand that the working poor and the middle class pay up to \$2000 a year more to make the math work.

And when does Mitt Romney’s budget balance? Don’t ask Romney senior adviser Ed Gillespie (who also advised George W. Bush). Yesterday Gillespie told CNN’s Wolf Blitzer, “Uh...Wolf, I’m not sure of that myself, actually. I’ll get that to you though and I’m sure it’s on our website.” Don’t count on it.

Why? Romney purposely released a budget that can’t be scored, and thus makes no serious projections. No one can say he isn’t a Republican now!

Republicans have long abandoned any impulse to open a real discussion about the federal budget in hopes of distorting the debate. They’re attacking cuts that eliminate wasteful spending in Medicare, while proposing trillions in cuts that would do real damage. They’re blaming deficit spending for a bad economy that only deficit spending can help us to escape. They’re promising to balance the budget with Paul Ryan’s smile and the magic of trickle-down economics.

And how did that work out last time?

Oops. The Romney family makes a huge Freudian slip:



Okay, so it's fake, but it IS a brilliant use of Photoshop! It's not his family (his kids are grown) and here's the real photo:



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dana8295/5978302474/>

Daybreak over Indiana (Dana Maddox)



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

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