



## FRIENDS OF THE MIDDLE NEWSLETTER #231 — SEPT. 21, 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.](#)**

### **The Lion and the Mouse**

(posted by Steven W. Baker / SteveB, Sept. 21, 2012)



I'm sure you know Mitt R0mney made some remarks recently indicating that he believes half of America (guess which half?) is a bunch of lazy, good-for-nothing moochers. They are no concern of his.

All those old widows collecting Social Security they and/or their husbands paid into for decades, often when they had very little money. All the Veterans too disabled to work. All the skilled construction workers, sidelined by the big banks' bubble, leaving nothing to construct. The former factory workers whose jobs were lost to the slave factories of the Orient because of high finance's decisions. People down on their luck. Pregnant mothers with little children. All dismissed by R0mney. Not his people. Maybe he thinks he's too good for them (us).

What the heck class did this elitist miss? I guess the American Right is more familiar with the likes of Ayn Rand than the great literature of the world. After all, what could a foreigner know? They don't seem to have read even the

great humanizing literature of America—*Huckleberry Finn*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Sister Carrie*, *Moby Dick*, and so much more—books that teach humility and the reasons for the necessity of respect, the nobility of the common man. Books that aid and abet empathy. If they have read, they have not absorbed what they have read. Art has been wasted upon them. Even when they read their Bible, they parse the true teachings of their Christ.

And I am reminded of Aesop's famous fable of the Lion and the Mouse. Romney, Ryan, Bachmann, Fox News, and Palin, etc., don't need to wade through *War and Peace* or Shakespeare (there's an hilarious idea), they could read something so simple that even a child can read to learn valuable lessons in life.

Let me show you what I mean...

"The Lion and the Mouse" by Aesop, retold by Rohini Chowdhury, not FOX News

A long time ago, ([http://www.longlongtimeago.com/lta\\_fables\\_lionmouse.html](http://www.longlongtimeago.com/lta_fables_lionmouse.html))

Once, as a lion lay sleeping in his den, a naughty little mouse ran up his tail, and onto his back and up his mane and danced and jumped on his head so that the lion woke up.

The lion grabbed the mouse and, holding him in his large claws, roared in anger. 'How dare you wake me up! Don't you know that I am King of the Beasts? Anyone who disturbs my rest deserves to die! I shall kill you and eat you!'

The terrified mouse, shaking and trembling, begged the lion to let him go. 'Please don't eat me Your Majesty! I did not mean to wake you, it was a mistake. I was only playing. Please let me go - and I promise I will be your friend forever. Who knows but one day I could save your life?'

The lion looked at the tiny mouse and laughed. 'You save my life? What an absurd idea!' he said scornfully. 'But you have made me laugh, and put me into a good mood again, so I shall let you go.' And the lion opened his claws and let the mouse go free.

'Oh thank you, your majesty,' squeaked the mouse, and scurried away as fast as he could.

A few days later the lion was caught in a hunter's snare. Struggle as he might, he couldn't break free and became even more entangled in the net of ropes. He let out a roar of anger that shook the forest. Every animal heard it, including the tiny mouse.

'My friend the lion is in trouble,' cried the mouse. He ran as fast as he could in the direction of the lion's roar, and soon found the lion trapped in the hunter's snare. 'Hold still, Your Majesty,' squeaked the mouse. 'I'll have you out of there in a jiffy!' And without further delay, the mouse began nibbling through the ropes with his sharp little teeth. Very soon the lion was free.

'I did not believe that you could be of use to me, little mouse, but today you saved my life,' said the lion humbly.

'It was my turn to help you, Sire,' answered the mouse.

Even the weak and small may be of help to those much mightier than themselves.

Now, I know I risk the danger of losing my readers from the Right, but I hope they will bear with us as I give them the bad news that we cannot interpret Aesop's tale literally. We must look at it symbolically, right? I mean, for one thing, animals can't talk or really think logically like the mouse and lion do in the story. That doesn't mean it's a stupid story, it just means that it's like the Bible, especially the Old Testament of the Jewish faith. Symbolism.

I see the lion as the rich and powerful of society. The kings of our "jungle". They can do pretty much anything they want, whenever they want—go to the Cayman Islands, install car elevators in their fancy garages, run for President. They run the show.

The mouse represents the poor and middle classes.

All creatures, all people have dignity and deserve respect. Everyone is important. We are in this together and no man stands alone. We are interdependent. The lessons are so simple, true, and obvious.

The rich depend on the poor and middle class to work, save, pay taxes, consume, and not to take to the streets in a destructive rage. The lower classes seem willing to shoulder this burden (though they are called lazy bums), but now the rich say they want to weasel out of their part of the bargain, abdicate their membership in humanity, and take the whole pie. The lower classes are sh\*t and are on their own.

It certainly turned out well for the lion that he did not have a similar attitude. His largess with the mouse was paid back many times over, just as money in the hands of the lower class is turned over many times, generating wealth for all, whereas the money of the rich sits offshore in the Cayman Islands, or invested in some Chinese sweat-shop, out of the reach of our society.

What's really happening in America, now and for some time passed, is that so much wealth has been sucked to the top from the lower classes, they can't necessarily support themselves or consume, to the point that the economy is faltering.

I believe the evidence that has appeared in our *FotM Newsletter* proves this contention. I would welcome a debate from anyone. Maybe somebody who'd like to take my \$10,000 bet that R0mney is going to lose the election?

In the meantime, please buy a book, maybe a children's book, for any Republican you know and encourage her or him to READ! Better yet, forward the *FotM Newsletter* to them!



**FotM NEWSLETTER #231 (Sept. 21, 2012)—HYPERTEXT INDEX**

<b>DATE-ID</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>SUBJECT/TITLE</b>
<a href="#">20120921-00</a>		SteveB	<b>The Lion and the Mouse</b> by Steven W. Baker / SteveB
<a href="#">20120920-01</a>	09:20	SteveB	Fw: CREDO Action Action: Deadline Monday: Tell the EPA to Save the Bees!
<a href="#">20120920-02</a>	11:22	Art	Re: "G.O.P. Blocks Veteran Jobs Bill" (reply to all, FotM Newsletter #231)
<a href="#">20120920-03</a>	13:48	SteveB	From the Right: "Deciphering Mitt Romney's '47 Percent' Blunder"
<a href="#">20120920-15</a>	20:40	SteveB	"Romney Loses Ground in New State Polls"& "Romney Plunges in Key States"
<a href="#">20120920-04</a>	14:25	Ben	Photo: Today's Lunch at Apple
<a href="#">20120920-05</a>	14:36	SteveG	"Meet the 40 Senate Republicans Who Betrayed Veterans by Killing \$1 Billion in Jobs"
<a href="#">20120920-06</a>	17:06	Art	Re: "Meet the 40 Senate Republicans Who Betrayed Veterans by Killing \$1 Billion in Jobs" (reply to SteveG, above)
<a href="#">20120920-07</a>	17:37	Art	Out of Town
<a href="#">20120920-08</a>	17:43	Pam	Re: Out of Town (reply to Art, above)
<a href="#">20120920-09</a>	18:10	SteveB	Re: Out of Town (reply to Art, above)
<a href="#">20120920-11</a>	19:01	Art	Re: Out of Town (reply to all, above)
<a href="#">20120920-10</a>	18:33	Craig	Video: Jukejoint Handmedowns
<a href="#">20120920-12</a>	19:46	SteveG	"Empty Chair 'Lynchings': Anti-Obama Protests Gone Too Far?"
<a href="#">20120920-13</a>	20:07	Pam	Re: "Empty Chair 'Lynchings'..." (reply to SteveG, above)
<a href="#">20120920-16</a>	21:56	SteveG	Re: "Empty Chair 'Lynchings'..." (reply to Pam, above)
<a href="#">20120920-14</a>	20:32	Randrew	"Marijuana & Cancer: Scientists Find Cannabis Compound Stops Metastasis in Aggressive Cancers"
<a href="#">20120920-17</a>	23:58	Marci	Photo: '...the Mother of Invention' #7
<a href="#">20120920-18</a>	23:59	SteveB	Photo: Lynching Time

<a href="#">20120920-01</a>	09:20	SteveB	Fw: CREDO Action Action: Deadline Monday: Tell the EPA to Save the Bees!
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from CREDO Action:



The sudden bee die-off known as colony collapse has claimed about 30% of the U.S. honey bee population each year since 2006.

Scientists believe the pesticide clothianidin is at least partially to blame, but twice in the last year, the EPA has refused to intervene to review the pesticide's safety.

If we don't convince the EPA to reconsider, it will not review clothianidin again until 2018. By then it could be too late for the bees, and the one third of our food crops that bees play a crucial role in pollinating.

The EPA is currently accepting public comments on its latest decision not to declare bee die-offs an emergency situation and suspend the use of clothianidin. Now is a crucial moment to make our voices heard for the bees.

Tell the EPA: Stop stalling. Ban the pesticide that's killing bees. Submit a public comment to the EPA now.

The science of colony collapse is complex, but increasingly scientists are pointing to the class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids — which includes clothianidin — as a major causal factor.<sup>1</sup>

The pesticide, which is used to treat seeds like corn and canola, expresses itself through the plants' pollen and nectar — the honey bees favorite sources of food. Neonicotinoid pesticides are relatively new, and their use coincides with the rise of colony collapse.

Astonishingly, clothianidin was approved by the EPA based on virtually no scientific study.<sup>2</sup> Yet the EPA continues to allow its use.

Now, a group of senators have joined the call, writing a letter urging the EPA that waiting until 2018 to again review clothianidin and other neonicotinoids will be too late.<sup>3</sup>

There is no time to waste. Please submit a comment now urging the EPA to immediately suspend approval of clothianidin to protect honey bees and our food system:

[http://act.credoaction.com/campaign/epa\\_bees\\_stalling/](http://act.credoaction.com/campaign/epa_bees_stalling/).

Thanks for taking action for the bees, and safe food. —Elijah Zarin, Campaign Manager

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup>"Pesticides and Honey Bees: State of the Science," Pesticide Action Network North America

<sup>2</sup>"Leaked document shows EPA allowed bee-toxic pesticide despite own scientists' red flags," Grist, 12/10/10

<sup>3</sup>"Gillibrand Calls for Expedited Review of Harmful Pesticides to Protect Honey Bee Health," Senator Kristin Gillibrand

<a href="#">20120920-02</a>	11:22	Art	Re: "G.O.P. Blocks Veteran Jobs Bill" (reply to all, FotM Newsletter #231)
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Screw the troops...

This pretty well illustrates the Republican position on soldiers. I guess all that patriotic verbage about support for Defense and protecting the country really means support for Lockheed Martin, GD and the other big defense contractors. I guess I should have titled this "Screw the Country". Anything to defeat a proposal by the political opposition. Outrageous.

<a href="#">20120920-03</a>	13:48	SteveB	From the Right: "Deciphering Mitt Romney's '47 Percent' Blunder"
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"Deciphering Mitt Romney's '47 Percent' Blunder" by Rich Lowry, Politico

Sept. 19, 2012, (<http://www.politico.com/news/stories/0912/81420.html?hp=I3>)

The best defense of Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney's instantly notorious "47 percent" remarks at a May fundraiser is that he made a bad point badly.

Romney mixed up three separate groups of people: the roughly half the country that will inevitably support President Barack Obama, the half that doesn't pay federal income taxes and the half that receives government

benefits. Then he declared them all a collective lost cause. He will never win them over, or convince them to take responsibility for their lives. Next question.

In reality, these are three distinct groups. Many Obama supporters are rich. Indeed, we can be fairly certain all the attendees at the president's fundraiser with Beyoncé and Jay-Z in New York City the other day have hefty tax bills. Meanwhile, many of Romney's supporters — especially the elderly — don't pay federal income taxes and receive government benefits.

As a political scientist, Romney is an excellent former governor of Massachusetts.

Romney didn't come up with this construct on his own, however. On taxes, he was repeating a conservative talking point about the perils of 47 percent of the people not paying federal income taxes — though to be precise, 46.4 percent of "tax units" don't pay income taxes, according to the Tax Policy Center. Romney took this line of argument and blundered his way through it.

George Will says Romney speaks conservatism as a second language. At times, he sounds like the English-speaking German in a World War II movie who's infiltrated American lines and is asked who won the World Series. Even if he memorized the answer, he sure as hell can't tell you anything about Stan Musial.

But the point Romney messed up isn't particularly convincing to begin with — though it has been made by serious conservatives, like Romney's own running mate Wisconsin Rep. Paul Ryan. The argument is that if people aren't paying federal income taxes, they are essentially freeloaders who will vote themselves more government benefits knowing that they don't have to pay for them.

As my colleague Ramesh Ponnuru has pointed out, there's no evidence for this dynamic. It is true that the number of people without a federal income tax liability is up — it was just 28 percent in 1950. It is mainly the poor, seniors and lower-income families with children who don't owe income taxes. The poor lean heavily Democratic, but that's always been so. Seniors, meanwhile, have been swinging Republican, and there's no indication that families with children are becoming more liberal.

Many workers who don't pay federal income tax pay other taxes, including the payroll tax. Just 18 percent of tax filers escape both the income and payroll tax. People who aren't paying income tax don't think of themselves as freeloaders "takers." An April Gallup Poll found more discontent with taxes among people making less than \$30,000 than any other income group. Fifty percent said they pay too much, though the vast majority has no federal income-tax liability.

The deeper problem with the "47 percent" argument is that it is right-wing Elizabeth Warrenism. It reflects the belief that federal income taxes are an expression of our togetherness. If you aren't paying them — or aren't paying enough — you are a subcitizen.

Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.) says everyone should pay federal taxes, even if it's "the price of two Happy Meals a year, \$10." Texas Gov. Rick Perry has said it's an "injustice" that more people don't pay income taxes. Warren wants to tax rich people as a statement of our patriotic commitment to one another; some conservatives apparently want to tax poor people and seniors for the same reason.

How does this look in the real world? If a couple earning \$35,000 with two kids has no income tax liability thanks to various exemptions, deductions and credits (the child tax credit has been especially important in removing families from the rolls), how much should we tax them to get them to shape up and fly right? How much do they have to fork over to the Internal Revenue Service to learn a lesson in basic civics?

This line of argument represents a backdoor return to Country Club Republicanism, with the approval of part of the Republican base. Fear of the creation of a class of "takers" can slide into disdain for people who are too poor — or have too many kids or are too old — to pay their damn taxes. For a whiff of how politically unattractive this point of view can be, just look at the Romney fundraising video.

There is a separate problem of the growth of government, since roughly half of all households now receive benefits. Unreconstructed entitlements risk tanking the economy. Welfare traps people in dependency. Means-tested benefits like food stamps are creeping up the income scale. And the work ethic is eroding — especially among men without college degrees.

An alternative vision, not just a recitation of the president's economic failures, should be at the center of Romney's campaign. He needs to make the case for it cogently and consistently, with the fundamental American value of aspiration always in mind.

We're still waiting.

(Rich Lowry is editor of *National Review*.)

<a href="#">20120920-15</a>	20:40	SteveB	"Romney Loses Ground in New State Polls"& "Romney Plunges in Key States"
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Gee...I wonder why?

"Romney Loses Ground in New State Polls" by Janet Hook, *Wall Street Journal*

Sept. 20, 2012,

([http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444165804578008662614263532.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444165804578008662614263532.html?mod=googlenews_wsj))

Mitt Romney's path to the White House is getting ever narrower as a new round of polls shows him lagging in Iowa, Colorado and Wisconsin—three states where he had hoped to find new stepping stones to an Electoral College majority.

In Iowa, President Barack Obama has opened a 50% to 42% lead among likely voters in a Wall Street Journal/NBC/Marist poll, just four months after Marist found the two candidates in a dead heat.

Mr. Romney has been trying to make a serious contest of Wisconsin, home state of his running mate Rep. Paul Ryan, but the new poll found...

Continue reading at the [Wall Street Journal](#)...

"Romney Plunges in Key States" by The Daily Beast

Sept. 21, 2012, (<http://www.thedailybeast.com/cheats/2012/09/20/romney-plunges-in-key-states.html>)

There's more bad news for the Romney campaign as a new Wall Street Journal/NBC/Marist poll reveals he is falling behind in Iowa, Colorado and Wisconsin—places he had hoped to gain a foothold. In Iowa, Obama leads by eight points (50-42), just four months after the two were neck and neck in the state. Independent voters there favor Obama by a 10-point margin. Romney had been trying to bring Wisconsin, the home state of his running mate, Paul Ryan, into play, but the poll found he is trailing there 50 to 45 percent.

(Two other polls also gave Obama the lead in Wisconsin: <http://www.jsonline.com/news/statepolitics/three-new-polls-show-obama-leading-romney-in-wisconsin-tt6uhuj-170588626.html>.)

Other recent polls show Romney's prospects are dimming in critical battleground states like Florida, Virginia and Ohio.

There's precedent for it.

They do it sometimes, if there's an interesting ingredient in short supply.

A duplicate of the Bistro menu-card appeared at the station: alongside the expected card with "Creole Shrimp" at the top was a companion card, "Creole Frog Legs".

I'm conflicted on frog legs (of course), as the little guys are so doggone cute, and fighting a tough fight. But since frog legs are almost always farmed, and therefore sustainable, and have no impact on wild populations, and since I haven't had frog legs for nearly ten years... it became an easy choice.

Contrary to the cliché, they don't taste like chicken. Well, maybe they do, but they are most obviously something else. In color, frog legs look like chicken breast meat, but with the glossier sheen of dark meat. But they are neither: lighter, softer, very much more tender, frog legs have a slightly sweeter flavor than chicken, with a subtle flavor that is more like a cross between very fresh fish and chicken thigh, than chicken breast, but with a very smooth, simple texture. Springy, but soft and very, very tender. I had eight pairs of legs (I think), which varied substantially in size.

I am no expert on frog legs and their preparation, but with zero toughness, and zero stringiness, and an impeccably smooth texture, I have to guess that they must have been about spot-on. The meat stripped easily from the bones just by pulling the limb across my teeth, which is a darned good thing, since I had a book in my left hand. This could be the single the single most potentially messy meal I've eaten in years, but with a few extra napkins, I kept it under control.

The Creole sauce was zesty without being completely fiery, also a good thing given the mild flavor of frog legs; there were large chunks of chayote squash, bell peppers, purple onion, and eggplant. All of these were cooked wonderfully: the onion was partly transparent, sweet, and crunchy; the chayote squash was firm but not chewy. The eggplant, a vegetable I normally abhor, was actually quite OK, as it was firm and toothsome, and in the spicy Creole sauce, not particularly conspicuous. The Gouda grits underneath were delicious, and I am not a grits guy at all.

A yummy meal, just right for me today:



Creole Frog Legs over Smoked Gouda Grits

20120920-05

14:36

SteveG

"Meet the 40 Senate Republicans Who Betrayed Veterans by Killing \$1 Billion in Jobs"

"Meet the 40 Senate Republicans Who Betrayed Veterans by Killing \$1 Billion in Jobs" by Jason Easley, Politicus USA

Sept. 19, 2012, (<http://www.politicususa.com/meet-40-senate-republicans-betrayed-veterans-killing-1-billion-jobs.html>)

Forty Republican members of the United States Senate betrayed veterans today when decided that denying President Obama a victory was more important than spending \$1 billion to create jobs for vets.

The Veterans Job Corps Act of 2012 would have spent \$1 billion over five years to put veterans to work tending to federal lands, and in the nation's police and fire departments. Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) based her plan of FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), but Republicans opposed the bill because they said there is no proof that it would work.

Republican Sen. Tom Coburn claimed that there is no evidence that jobs for vets will work, "What we have is a bill that's brought to the floor that has good intentions behind but shows the absolute laziness of congress in terms of really digging things out. issued their duplication report on the job training programs for veterans, four of them do exactly the same thing. None of them have a metric. So we don't know if they're working, and we haven't held a hearing to find out if they're working. But what are we doing?"

It doesn't matter to most Senate Republicans that the CCC put 2.5 million people to work. When confronted with an actual jobs program for America's vets, including the 220,000 who served in Iraq and Afghanistan, the majority of Republicans claimed the plan, which was already offset, was too expensive.

Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL) claimed that the bill would have pushed the VA over its spending limits, and gave forty Republicans a reason to vote no on jobs for vets.

The good news is that five Senate Republicans didn't join with their party. Sen. Scott Brown (MA), Dean Heller (NV) Lisa Murkowski (AK), and Maine's Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe all voted with the Democrats, but in the end the bill fell two votes short of clearing the procedural hurdle, and died in the Senate.

Here are the 40 Republicans who voted to keep America's veterans unemployed:

Alexander (R-TN), Ayotte (R-NH), Barrasso (R-WY), Blunt (R-MO), Boozman (R-AR), Burr (R-NC), Chambliss (R-GA), Coats (R-IN), Coburn (R-OK), Cochran (R-MS), Corker (R-TN), Cornyn (R-TX), Crapo (R-ID), DeMint (R-SC), Enzi (R-WY), Graham (R-SC), Grassley (R-IA), Hatch (R-UT), Hoeven (R-ND), Hutchison (R-TX), Isakson (R-GA), Johanns (R-NE), Johnson (R-WI), Kyl (R-AZ), Lee (R-UT), Lugar (R-IN), McCain (R-AZ), McConnell (R-KY), Moran (R-KS), Paul (R-KY), Portman (R-OH), Risch (R-ID), Roberts (R-KS), Rubio (R-FL), Sessions (R-AL), Shelby (R-AL), Thune (R-SD), Toomey (R-PA), Vitter (R-LA), Wicker (R-MS).

Mark Kirk and James Inhofe did not vote.

If any two of the Republicans on this list would have decided to put our veterans first, this bill would have moved forward. Instead, Senate Republicans thanked veterans by denying them jobs.

Senate Republican leaders actually fled from the media and refused to take questions at their weekly press conference today. If you are represented by one of these senators, take the time to attend one of their events and ask them why they don't want veterans to have jobs.

Between Mitt Romney's secret videotape and today's Republican Senate vote, it is clear where the Republican Party stands. I guess our returning veterans are also part of the deadbeat 47%, and the Republican Party decided to honor our obligation to those who served their country by denying them access to employment.

If this is what Republicans consider patriotism, I don't want to be their kind of patriot. Our veterans deserve better, and our nation's deserves better leadership than this.

Only 48 more days until we get to go to the polls and vote for candidates who truly do support our troops.

<a href="#">20120920-06</a>	17:06	Art	Re: "Meet the 40 Senate Republicans Who Betrayed Veterans by Killing \$1 Billion in Jobs" (reply to SteveG, above)
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Just so we know who to hold accountable. Remember, the watchword is "Screw the Troops".

<a href="#">20120920-07</a>	17:37	Art	Out of Town
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Beckie and I are headed out for about a month effective Saturday. Long planned trip to Turkey. Timing could have been a little better, but life's an adventure. Not sure how good communication will be, but if I am not up much. it is not because I don't care.

Keep up the good fight. I can't help but think it is because of people like you that we are seeing the tide turn.

<a href="#">20120920-08</a>	17:43	Pam	Re: Out of Town (reply to Art, above)
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We'll miss you. Stay safe.

<a href="#">20120920-09</a>	18:10	SteveB	Re: Out of Town (reply to Art, above)
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Have a great and safe trip! We are going to want to hear all about it, of course!

Take care.

[20120920-11](#) 19:01 Art Re: Out of Town (reply to all, above)

Getting help packing:



[20120920-10](#) 18:33 Craig Video: Jukejoint Handmedowns

Hey everybody,

Please check out this YouTube animation that our bass player, Tim Foley, put together. We have entered this original song in this year's ArtPrize. It makes me smile.

You can see details of all of our upcoming shows at: <http://www.jukejointhandmedowns.com/>.

Video: "(not a big one) Jukejoint Handmedowns ArtPrize Entry" by Tim Foley (and the band)

Sept. 20, 2012 (<http://youtu.be/erqjxnNEsu8>).

Animated music video for the song '(not a big one)' by the Jukejoint Handmedowns. This song has been entered in the 2012 song competition for ArtPrize in Grand Rapids and can be voted on by registering online and/or visiting St. Cecilia's during the week of Sept. 19-29 2012. Our voting code is 53301 and the official entry site is here: <http://www.artprize.org/tim-foley/2012/not-a-big-one>.

[I highly recommend you all give this a listen. You'll be happy you did. -SteveB]

[20120920-12](#) 19:46 SteveG "Empty Chair 'Lynchings': Anti-Obama Protests Gone Too Far?"

If true – sad and scary...

"Empty Chair 'Lynchings': Anti-Obama Protests Gone Too Far?" by James Eng, ABC News

Sept. 20, 2012, (<http://usnews.nbcnews.com/news/2012/09/20/13989510-empty-chair-lynchings-anti-obama-protests-gone-too-far?lite>)



A folding chair and an American flag hang from a tree in front of a home in northwest Austin, Texas.

At least two recent incidents in which empty chairs were hung from trees by rope have critics decrying what they say are racially offensive displays meant to symbolize the "lynching" of President Barack Obama.

In Austin, Texas, a homeowner hung an empty folding chair from a tree branch in front of his house and later attached an American flag to it. He reportedly told a Democratic political blogger who said she had concerns, "You can take it and go straight to hell and take Obama with you."

In Centreville, Va., an empty chair with a sign reading "Nobama" was strung from a tree in or near a park. "In short, this appears to be a crude metaphor for the lynching of President Obama," wrote the blogger who posted the photo.

The image of an empty chair has been associated with Obama ever since Clint Eastwood's headline-grabbing, non-conformist speech at the Republican National Convention three weeks ago in Tampa, Fla. The 82-year-old actor-director talked to an empty chair as if the Democratic president were sitting in it, criticizing and mocking the "invisible Obama" for 12 minutes.

"When somebody doesn't do the job, you've got to let them go," Eastwood said before making a throat-slashing gesture.

In Austin, Katherine Haenschen, editor of *Burnt Orange Report*, a Texas liberal-leaning political blog, said someone forwarded her a photo this week of an empty folding chair hanging from a tree in front of a home in the city's northwest. A few days later the homeowner apparently added a small American flag to the display, according to a picture taken by a neighbor and forwarded to Haenschen on Thursday. (Picture above.)

Haenschen said she called the man who she said lives in the home with his wife on Wednesday night to express her concerns about the display. Here's what she said he told her:

He replied, and I quote, 'I don't really give a damn whether it disturbs you or not. You can take [your concerns] and go straight to hell and take Obama with you. I don't give a [expletive]. If you don't like it, don't come down my street.'

NBC News tried reaching out to the man for comment, but a telephone message left Thursday morning was not returned.

Haenschen said the display has apparently caused "great consternation" in the neighborhood.

"There are other neighbors up there who are Republicans who find this as offensive as anybody else does," Haenschen told NBC News.

"Someone always wants to say, 'you're making a big deal out of it, it's just a chair.' But I don't see how you can dismiss the racial message of lynching a symbol of the first African-American president. It's really tough for me to see how folks might, after the Eastwood speech, not view this as a racially charged message and a symbol of a threat to the president's life."

Rosemary Edwards, chairwoman of the Travis County Republican Party in Austin, said she was not aware of the display. She said if anything racial is suggested by the display, it would be "deplorable."

In Virginia, a photo posted on Tuesday on Blue Virginia, a Democratic-leaning political blog, shows an empty chair with a handmade "Nobama" sign strung from a tree by a rope.



A chair with an anti-Obama slogan hangs from a tree in Centreville, Va.

The blogger, who goes by the username "lowkell," said photos of the display were taken with a cellphone by someone who was leaving the KORUS festival, an annual gathering organized by a local Korean-American association, at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville over the weekend.

"Obviously, it's beyond grotesque (it also boggles my mind that this was allowed to be put up, let alone to stay up, at a festival presumably visited by thousands of people - wtf?)," lowkell wrote.

Lowkell told NBC News the photo was forwarded to him by a source who "wants to remain anonymous."

The display was on private property neighboring the park, a park official told the Centreville Patch. The park is about eight miles from Centreville High School, where Obama appeared at a campaign rally in July. It was not known who put up the display.

The Secret Service said it was looking into the empty chair incidents. "The Secret Service is aware of this and will conduct appropriate followup," spokesman Brian Leary told NBC News.

Lynching, the killing of people, usually by hanging or shooting, by mobs who take the law into their own hands, occurred most frequently in the U.S. from the late 1800s through the 1950s. Most of the lynchings took place in the South, and most of the victims were black.

<a href="#">20120920-13</a>	20:07	Pam	Re: "Empty Chair 'Lynchings': Anti-Obama Protests Gone Too Far?" (reply to SteveG, above)
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I know of a lady, now deceased, whose entire family was lost in the Holocaust, not her parents, but all the rest of her relatives. No one in her family ever talked about what had happened. My friend is researching a her story and writing a novel about it. Some years ago, my friend was semi-in charge of a dorm, ie., residential college, filled with mostly smart, sometimes nerdy kids, but the top floor was taken over by a crew from New Jersey who were off the hook. They referred to themselves as "the posse." My friend took her mother and her best friend, the Jewish lady, on a tour of the dorm and explained that one entire floor was basically under the control of a bunch of louts who didn't care about anyone or anything. The Jewish lady, who my friend didn't know at the time was Jewish, took my friend's chin in her hand, looked straight into her eyes, and said, "There's always a posse."

The cretins who "lynch" chairs are part of that posse. They are always lurking, waiting, and hoping to intimidate the "smart kids" and the "nerds" because it makes them feel in control. Deep down they are terrified, and what scares them most of all is letting anyone know they are afraid. So they bluster and threaten, and their stomachs churn, and their heart rates rise, and they chew their pillow at night. They are hollow and corrupt, and they are dangerous, like a venomous snake is dangerous. I've been trying for a long time to understand evil, and I think I'm beginning to. Some people, for whatever reason, are so consumed by envy, rage, a sense of victimization, and a feeling of helplessness that the only recourse they see to redeem their withered egos is by scaring the shit out of others. Most people aren't like this, thank god, but the few who are are like a virus that can bring down a healthy body. It doesn't take many because their effects are so lethal. Just look at the Middle East.

<a href="#">20120920-16</a>	21:56	SteveG	Re: "Empty Chair 'Lynchings'..." (reply to Pam, above)
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Your friend is right, there is always a posse.

I have a hard time, a real hard time with the hanging of the chairs. In the mid 80's or so we were living in Terre Haute, Jason I believe was in elementary school. We were by 25th and Wabash, heading north on 25th was a KKK parade.

Somehow, being naïve, prior to 2008 I had thought as a country we had progressed further as a civil society. As time has progressed beyond 2008 I don't think we are much beyond the 60's and have little hope that we progress.

With a heavy heart I say maybe tomorrow will be different.

<a href="#">20120920-14</a>	20:32	Randrew	"Marijuana & Cancer: Scientists Find Cannabis Compound Stops Metastasis in Aggressive Cancers"
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"Marijuana and Cancer: Scientists Find Cannabis Compound Stops Metastasis in Aggressive Cancers" by Robin Wilkey, Huffington Post

Sept. 19, 2012, ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/19/marijuana-and-cancer\\_n\\_1898208.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=mostpopular](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/19/marijuana-and-cancer_n_1898208.html?utm_hp_ref=mostpopular))

A pair of scientists at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco has found that a compound derived from marijuana could stop metastasis in many kinds of aggressive cancer, potentially altering the fatality of the disease forever.

"It took us about 20 years of research to figure this out, but we are very excited," said Pierre Desprez, one of the scientists behind the discovery, to The Huffington Post. "We want to get started with trials as soon as possible."

The Daily Beast first reported on the finding, which has already undergone both laboratory and animal testing, and is awaiting permission for clinical trials in humans.

Desprez, a molecular biologist, spent decades studying ID-1, the gene that causes cancer to spread. Meanwhile, fellow researcher Sean McAllister was studying the effects of Cannabidiol, or CBD, a non-toxic, non-psychoactive chemical compound found in the cannabis plant. Finally, the pair collaborated, combining CBD and cells containing high levels of ID-1 in a petri dish.

"What we found was that his Cannabidiol could essentially 'turn off' the ID-1," Desprez told HuffPost. The cells stopped spreading and returned to normal.

"We likely would not have found this on our own," he added. "That's why collaboration is so essential to scientific discovery."

Desprez and McAllister first published a paper about the finding in 2007. Since then, their team has found that CBD works both in the lab and in animals. And now, they've found even more good news.

"We started by researching breast cancer," said Desprez. "But now we've found that Cannabidiol works with many kinds of aggressive cancers--brain, prostate--any kind in which these high levels of ID-1 are present."

Desprez hopes that clinical trials will begin immediately.

"We've found no toxicity in the animals we've tested, and Cannabidiol is already used in humans for a variety of other ailments," he said. Indeed, the compound is used to relieve anxiety and nausea, and, since it is non-psychoactive, does not cause the "high" associated with THC.

While marijuana advocates will surely praise the discovery, Desprez explained that it's not so easy as just lighting up.

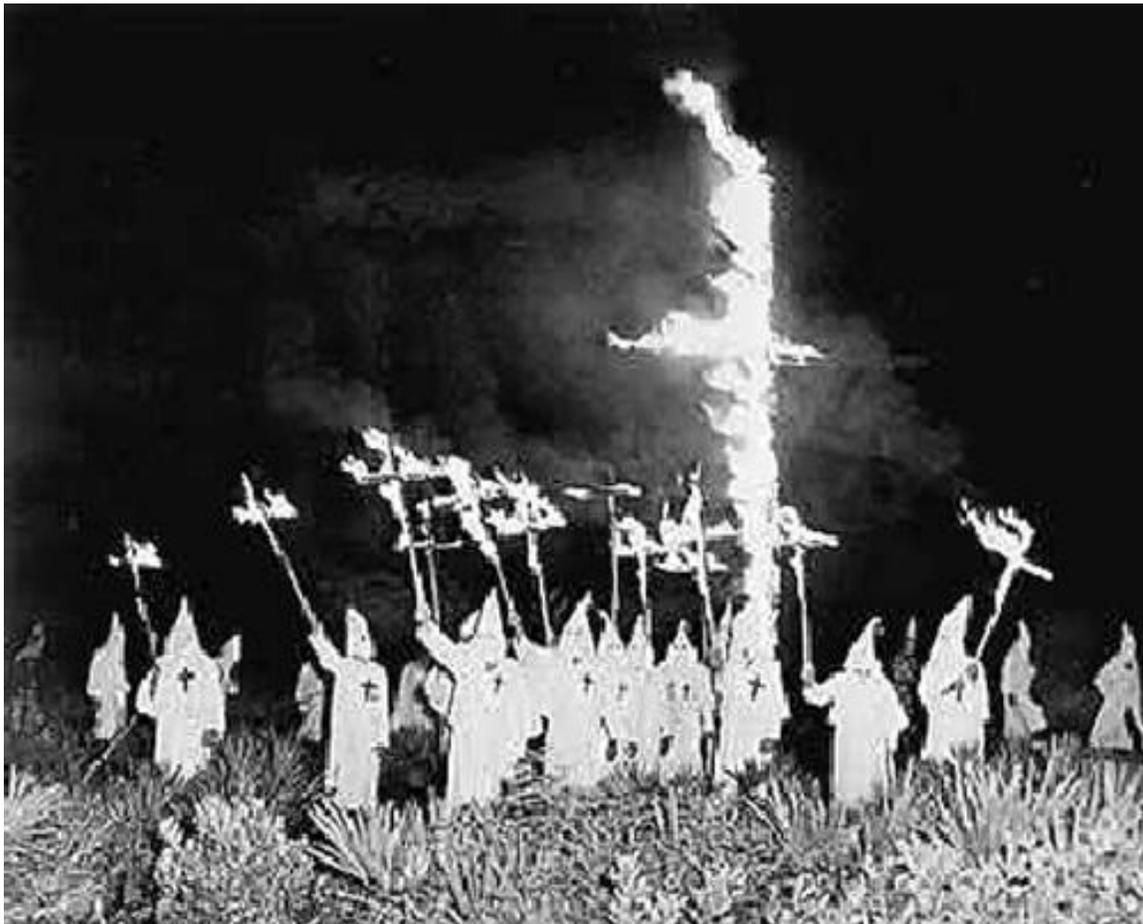
"We used injections in the animal testing and are also testing pills," he said. "But you could never get enough Cannabidiol for it to be effective just from smoking."

Furthermore, the team has started synthesizing the compound in the lab instead of using the plant in an effort to make it more potent.

"It's a common practice," explained Desprez. "But hopefully it will also keep us clear of any obstacles while seeking approval."



<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/ah-lynching.html>



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

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