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Postmarks Online.

Letters are posted as we receive them during the week, and before they are printed in the paper, so check back frequently to see new letters. If you'd like to send a letter to the editor, follow [this link](#).

[Click here](#) to view this week's printed Postmarks.

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Date Received: Tue., Dec. 14, 10:26AM

BULL CREEK FOUNDATION PROUD OF RECORD

Editor,

In response to Mike Fitzsimmons complaint about us ["Postmarks," Dec. 10]: Bull Creek Foundation is an all-volunteer group since 1994 working to promote, preserve, and improve the balance between nature, recreation, and sustainable development in the Bull Creek Watershed, the "other" Edwards Aquifer water supply creek in Austin. We helped develop the PARD Adopt-a-Park Program, and then adopted the Bull Creek Greenbelt in 1997. Since then, volunteers have enjoyed thousands of hours improving it.

First, we had to stop vehicles driving in the creek and rutting the entire greenbelt. Then we began a monthly Saturday volunteer workday. We work with experts (local to federal), using proven techniques to improve the biodiversity along Bull Creek while building, improving, and maintaining an educational trail for all to enjoy. We have fixed erosion problems and provided a safe, enjoyable, educational, accessible trail. Our work includes participating in the city's Long Range Watershed Master Plan, which deals with water quality, flooding, and erosion. Together, we've made breakthroughs in landscape practices to improve water quality for fishes and other creek critters, curbed sewage spills with permanent fixes, restored biodiversity and fostered native plant recovery with selective invasive removal, clearing excess cedar growth, and planting natives. Wildlife abounds, is prolific, and increasing. Life in Bull Creek is good and getting better every day because of the volunteers who give generously and intelligently of their time and talents. We appreciate, embrace, and encourage all species to coexist in a scenic urban setting. It's working!

*Skip Cameron, president
Bull Creek Foundation*

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 12:26PM

CANNABIS HAS MEDICINAL VALUE

Dear Editor,

Regarding "The Supremes Take a Hit" [News, Dec. 10]. My best friend and co-author George McMahon is one of the patients who receive medical cannabis from the United States government's Investigational New Drug Program. He uses his government marijuana to treat pain, spasms, and nausea related to years of surgical and pharmaceutical maltreatment, multiple injuries and trauma, and a rare genetic condition called Nail Patella Syndrome. Prior to being admitted to the federal marijuana program, George had been through 19 major surgeries and several near-death

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the federal marijuana program, George had been through 17 major surgeries and several near-death experiences, and he was taking 17 pharmaceutical substances on a daily basis. For the past 14 years, George has smoked 10 prerolled government joints each day. During this time, he's had no surgeries or hospitalizations, and he no longer takes any pharmaceuticals (aside from the occasional antibiotic).

Like all the patients in the federal program, George is living proof that cannabis has medicinal value. The program was opened in 1978 under the guise of "research," but officials have not published even a single study on the patients they provide the marijuana to. It's almost as if they are afraid to confirm what they already suspect: Cannabis-based medicines can provide safer relief than many of the pharmaceutical alternatives. But it's too late. The genie is already out of the bottle.

*Christopher Largen
Co-author of Prescription Pot and Junk*

Denton

[Editor's note: For more on George McMahon, see "A Quarter Ounce a Day," by Andrew Slaton, News, June 20, 2003 (austinchronicle.com/issues/dispatch/2003-06-20/pols_feature.html).]

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 12:13PM

Y'ALL OUGHT TO VISIT CANADA

Dear Editor,

While I enjoyed Marjorie Baumgarten's Dec. 10 review of *A Silent Love* [Film], I was amused by her referral to Montreal as the melting pot of the Americas.

As a transplanted Canadian (now a U.S. citizen) I must disabuse her of that notion. Toronto is even more multicultural. And, oh yes, Canada doesn't issue "green cards" but various kinds of "landed immigrant" status.

It's a different country, you see, not part of the USA. They say travel broadens the behind, but y'all ought to visit Toronto or Montreal – you might be amazed and impressed at what you find. The world doesn't end at the Texas state line.

Diane Barnet

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 12:00PM

HOMELESS SCAPEGOATED

Dear Editor,

Having repeatedly slandered the homeless for alleged pooping and peeing on everybody's door, parking garage, and parking lot, the Downtown Austin Alliance/East Sixth Street Community Association now demands the city surrender economic sovereignty over sales in the downtown area. Apparently nothing is to be sold in the downtown area, unless the DAA allows it, between 7pm and 7am. Aside from the question of how this will deter panhandling, where the hell are the "progressives" on this being an overwhelming infringement on small business, especially microbusinesses that might want to exist without the blessing of an overbearing lobby, which seems to believe that it alone is authorized to tell everyone who is and is not appropriate to exist on the streets of Austin? Essentially, from the local media reports, the DAA is asking the council to regulate the homeless further because there is panhandling occurring in downtown Austin! Further reports state that the ARCH perimeter "crowd," which is allegedly doing all things nasty and illegal, represent only 1% of the homeless, who are panhandling to support their addictions. Austin officially recognizes the homeless population to be about 6,000 people, so the ordinance is being applied to this class in order to affect 60 people (that is 1%). Further examination by the local news revealed that most of those panhandling have homes. Doesn't this eliminate the need to pass this ordinance at all? Apparently not, because there is no report of the almighty DAA backing down; instead they have 90 days to mount a new attack. Everyone can now look for the council to be flooded in Darwinian e-mails accusing the homeless of doing the most grotesque offences imaginable. Is it too politically improper to suggest that some of the Sixth Street clientele is most

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likely to be "doing the doo"?

*Ricky Bird
Bastrop*

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Fri., Dec. 10, 4:34PM

RICH ARE TO BLAME

Dear Editor,

In regard to "The Supremes Take a Hit," [News, Dec. 10]. Rich corporation owners, those that make huge campaign contributions, have no problem treating their aches and pains with medication. Having lots of money, most of them purchase the higher-priced brand medicines for their ailments.

Poor folks usually use herbs, citrus fruits, plants to brew teas – make ointments, powder for capsuling, foliage for smoking.

All things in life have cause and effect. I think I remember, "for every adversity there is a greater seed of equal and equivalent benefit."

So why is it, when a person gives his life to producing products or services for the rich, exchanging the wear and tear on his body for money, he is expected to endure the pain associated with the deterioration with no occasion to elevate that unpleasantness?

The rich only care about the poor for purposes of making money like: late fees on utilities and credit accounts, court costs, necessitating prisons and their support industries.

Unless I am influenced by Monsanto, or Archer Daniels Midland, I can put a seed into the ground, and with blessings of sun, oxygen, and good soil, I can grow a plant that will feed me, cloth my family, provide building materials to construct my home, and fuel my car. There would be no profit for the rich – go figure. Do you think that is why cannabis is illegal?

*Debby Moore
Wichita, Kan.*

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Thu., Dec. 9, 12:15PM

PRESIDENT BUSH AND THE LEFT ARE THE SAME WHEN IT COMES TO ILLEGAL ALIENS

To the *Chronicle* and my fellow citizens,

It's ironic, isn't it, that President Bush *and* the left wing would have something in common. Ignore and excuse illegal aliens. The prez sez that we *need* them (*illegals*) to fill jobs that otherwise legals won't take.

OK, here, take a test. Drive around and take a good peek at any new construction or remodel or most any other construction-oriented activity, and guesstimate how many workers there have legal status. Now, picture my predicament. I am trained and work in many of those trades, am a born citizen of the U.S., and, well, darn it, I can't find steady work unless I sell myself short and work for \$8 an hour even though I have more than 25 years' experience. Even when I am forced to go to the city-sponsored day-labor place off 51st Street, so I might pick up some cash, and I am No. 2 (No. 1 is also a citizen), 30-40 illegals go out before us at the whim of the employers who themselves might be illegals (and also unlicensed as they drive out).

This year, as with most of the past 10 or so years, my family won't get a holiday visit or even gifts in the mail, just a phone call making excuses that they hardly believe. Thank god that this "silent invasion" is creeping northward and Home Depots everywhere have a crowd of illegals in front of them taking jobs and lowering wages. It shouldn't be too long before my folks *know* I was always telling the truth.

So, I wonder if more Republicans or Democrats hire these illegals? And also if they know that somebody's family in Mexico is having a nice Christmas because they were wired American dollars (which go a little further there), at the expense of my family here in the good ol' US of A?

"Uncle" Paul Mitchell

p.s. Illegals have a lobbyist named Bush, I don't?

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 4:38PM

RETURN TO FEDERALISM!

Dear Editor,

It is interesting how some "progressives" have raised the issue of states' rights on issues such as medical marijuana and gay marriage. I would welcome the retraction of the federal government back into its constitutional box but I doubt that federalism is what "progressives" really want. Ending federal control would require an end to federal funding because one always comes with the other. If the court rules that the states can make their own medical marijuana laws the feds can merely refuse to allow federal funds to be used for medical marijuana. Think about how much power the national health care plan progressives want would give the government.

A return to federalism, done right, would extend from education, food stamps, and school lunches to social security and the environment. Since the Barton Springs Salamander does not migrate across state lines or international boundaries the federal government would not have any say on its welfare. What happens to the salamander would be up to only the people of Texas. Federal taxes that fund these matters would be cut and the money would remain with the taxpayers as potential revenue for the states to access to run their own programs such as health care or school lunches.

"The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation and foreign commerce. ... The powers reserved to the several States will extend to all the objects which in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives and liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement and prosperity of the State." James Madison, *Federalist 45*.

Carl Anderson

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 1:58PM

LUCKY TO HAVE COUNCIL MEMBER MCCRACKEN

Dear Editor,

We are lucky to have a City Council person like Brewster McCracken who is willing and able to tackle the complicated process of developing design standards to improve the Austin quality of life.

He represents the kind of council member we want and need. The best and brightest citizens who are willing to bring all the stakeholders together to work through controversial issues to a satisfying compromise that honors all points of view.

Creating workable solutions is hard and creative work. It is far more demanding and requires far more skill than merely tossing around simplistic hopes and dreams. Yes, we want to protect the environment, but how do we allow for developments that respect the environment? Yes, we want to help out the unfortunate. But how do we balance compassion with enhancing the downtown experience of our tourists, revelers, residents, and workers?

The courage to take on these challenges comes with risk; for the farther we reach the farther we can fall and disappoint those who put their hopes in us.

We have serious issues that require serious and tenacious leaders. We are lucky to have Brewster. We need more people like him.

Paul Silver

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 12:43PM

HAPPY BUSH WON

Dear Editor

Dear Editor,

It's time for me to leave the closet. I've been a registered Democrat for 22 years. I marched in two protests against the latest Iraqi war. I voted for Kerry in November.

However, I am now happy to say, "I am glad Bush won."

I have three reasons for my new Dubyaism.

Europe is not our friend. They have been stabbing Israel and the U.S. in the back for more than 30 years under the Euro-Arab dialogue with this Faustian pact, the continent sold its soul for oil. The continent is now rife with violence and bloodshed at the hands of Islamic radicals welcomed by this pact. It is the original "blood for oil." Couple this with the EU's unapologetic financial support of the Palestinian authority and Hamas and it is obvious that Bush was right to ignore Europe in regard to Iraq. They declared a quasi-war against us in 1973.

Multiculturalism and political correctness are divisive tools of limo-libbies. This abominable double standard is racist. By holding "disadvantaged" groups to a lower standard of behavior than that of the mainstream, we are saying that these persons are incapable of succeeding in the predominant culture. However, complain about the adverse effects of this misbehavior, and you are branded a racist. All reasonable discourse gets handcuffed by identity politics.

The left's own elitism has made it irrelevant. In fits of childish narcissism, they blame red-state ignorance rather than their own ineptitude for their loss in this latest election. They are way out of touch with the average American, and their whining just distances them even more.

Lefties are crying about moving to Europe to get away from red-state dominance. Go ahead. I suggest Spain. There's lots of sangria and Real Madrid on telly. Just don't cry to me when you can't hear the match over the loudspeaker of the mosque next door.

Joe Mitchell

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Mon., Dec. 13, 11:18AM

LET'S KEEP SINGING

Dear John Aielli (and his fans),

Don't be sad. I know. Can't sleep. Can't erase tape ("Slop ... No. No. No. She just threw it!" sequence) right after "Joy to the World." Can't, you know (Where's the joy, the holiday spirit we just sang about?), erase this world's insidiousness, pain, "... the hell has come ..." – you're still not sleeping – and stunning ignorance. Nope. Not anytime soon. To recap: This offender (Dec. 4 caroling at Capitol), evidently a young, maybe not even a teenager yet (grinch) girl, couldn't/wouldn't control herself, and struck John. That never, it's all good, I know, only good, (it's all good, only good) happens. So I stopped, dismayed, having just secured your truly-an-Austin-living-legend and ("Hey Lance; Stevie") treasure, John, (just listen) autograph. And looked around. Nope. No bad, inept and/or surrogate parents in sight. Certainly no absent ones ...

So let's keep singing, ev'rybody. C'mon, Austin. ("Don't be sad I know you will ..." – D.J.; "And so this is Christmas ..." – J.L.) With you, of course, John (don't be sad), leading the way.

Keith McCormack

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Date Received: Thu., Dec. 9, 2:30PM

SMOKING FRIENDLY RESTAURANT LIST?

Dear Editor,

Why has there not been a listing of Austin restaurants that have created city-approved smoking areas for their guests? I know of only two right now, those being Hill's and Trudy's with T.G.I. Friday's in the Arboretum now in the works. I am sure you have many readers who would like this information.

R.H. Hansen

[Food Editor Virginia B. Wood replies: It honestly hadn't occurred to us, and you're the first reader who has asked.]

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Discuss Chronicle Postmarks in our [online forum](#).

Date Received: Thu., Dec. 9, 11:03AM

BITTER ABOUT COACH

Dear Longhorns,

First of all, congratulations on making it to the Rose Bowl. As a longtime Cal fan, I say that with a somewhat heavy yet understanding heart. Texas is a premier program that truly deserves the BCS [Bowl Championship Series] bid it got.

Having said this, I am somewhat bitter against your coach for being the first among his peers to actually campaign for votes. It goes without saying that the end result may have turned out the way it did anyway ... but rather than letting the team's performance on the playing field speak for itself, he quite literally begged for others to vote for his team. Why he would do this is only a question he can answer himself. My suspicion is that he felt the team's performance on the field was not adequate to justify the votes – for a number of reasons that space will not allow me to state. Suffice it to say that my personal feeling is that it was utterly classless ... mind you, not the first time a classless act was done by a major college football coach, but certainly the first time when it comes to the B(C)S bowl scenario.

I will leave it at that for now. Congrats once again and best of luck to the players ... but not the coach.

Pat Clements

San Carlos, Calif.

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