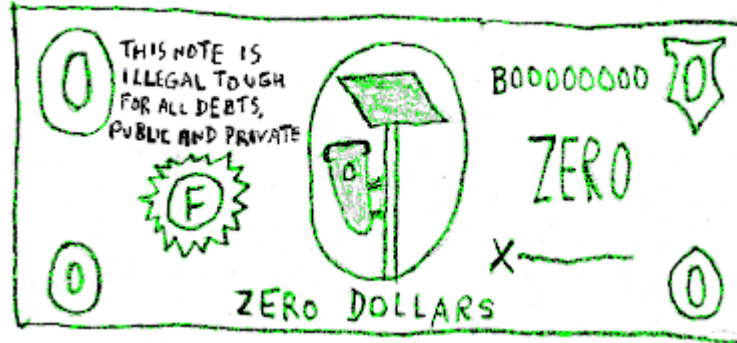


# The Last Word™

Issue #620

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## Money can't buy everything for Flock



It's time for the Flock fascists to smell reality fart-like.

The Flock Safety AI technate is so hated that its money advantage is having trouble overcoming the people – even in Kentucky.

H.B. 58 – a bill that would strictly regulate spy cameras like those of Flock – has been passed by state lawmakers. Stunningly, it has now been signed into law by Gov. Andy Beshear.

This is probably the first time in this decade in which anyone in a position of power – let alone Ant Farm Andy, of all people – has said no to the right-wing World Economic Forum agenda. The decade so far has been a WEF rubber stamp. Our “leaders” almost always go where the money is. But this time, Flock overplayed its hand.

The new law says information gained from these cameras cannot be sold. Plus, most data would have to be destroyed after 90 days. And periodic audits would be mandatory.

Embarrassingly, a handful of legislators tried to hamstring the bill. They know who they are. In addition, an even stronger bill that would ban these cameras altogether was bottled up. Recent actions also won't completely stop bodies like the FBI and ICE from illegally buying your personal data in some form, especially bank records, as right-wing activist judges have let the government snoop at those in violation of the Fourth Amendment.

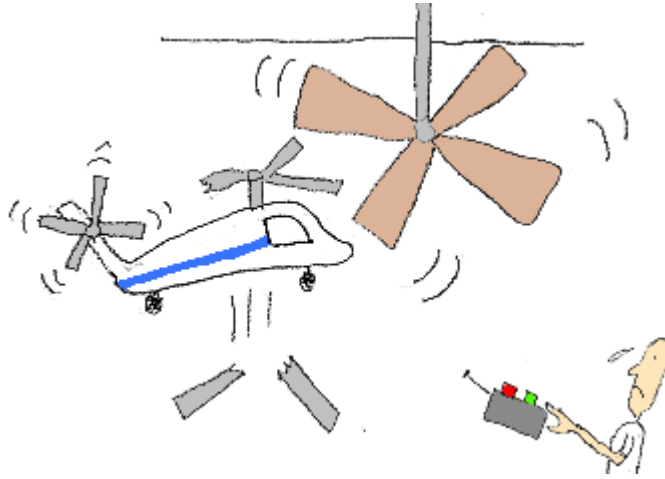
H.B. 58's passage came at the exact same time Dayton announced it would expand Flock surveillance, especially in places like parks. Dayton couldn't have picked a more self-owning time to make this announcement. This also highlights the folly of saying these cameras are strictly license plate readers. In other cities, there are numerous reports of Flock cameras being placed along walking trails or in amusement parks – where nobody drives.

Expansion of the police state is a strict article of faith that guides crooked bosses of both of our major political parties. Party and media kingmakers are surely going to send their knives out for politicians who supported H.B. 58. It'll be like what happened in Virginia when the Democrats defeated members of their own party who wouldn't go along with COVID totalitarianism. Betrayal comes naturally to party big shots. At least in Kentucky there were enough lawmakers who stayed around long enough to effectively fight Flock to some degree.

Groups that claim to litigate for civil rights have been weirdly silent on the biggest civil rights infringements of the 2020s – or even worse, they've supported these violations outright. This has followed an influx of money by suspect sources and changes in these groups' leaders, some of whom are now paid almost 7-figure salaries. It's an unchecked racket. Yet it takes a state like Kentucky to reverse this trend.

Take the L, Flocksters.

## Phones and guitars got wasted



Because this is a day ending in “America is fast becoming a police state”, we’ve been gallivanting about the public Internet for more stories of expensive or irreplaceable items getting ru or lost. The Internet is so public that you can almost hear it publifying. Pub-la-pub-la-pub! Hear that?

Anyway, we’ve found the usual stories of parents lamenting their kids scratching their cars in childish ways, such as the 3-year-old who used a rock to make a scratch running the entire length of the car. But one feller said his brother once used a screwdriver to carve his name into the hood of their dad’s Ford – then claimed he didn’t do it.

One person said his daughter stepped on his \$1,000 guitar and broke it. Another said his job involved building robots, and his kiddo crashed one of his mobile robots—destroying a whole work project and costing the company \$6 million. Another said their sister bought a new iPhone and shattered it before she even left the store. Words starting with *F* were then uttered in front of a stranger’s toddler.

An employee of a phone store said a man purchased 2 state-of-the-art phones for his daughters, a phone for himself, and a tablet—costing \$4,000 in all. On the way out of the store, he slipped, tripped, and fell—breaking all of his new purchases beyond repair. He then demanded that the store replace the items for free. When the store refused, he threw the broken devices at the employee and threatened a lawsuit. The customer’s wife showed up later and spent another \$4,000 on items to replace the ones the man carelessly broke. She got insurance on these devices, but the kids kept breaking them, racking up huge deductibles. This led the man to show up at the store one day and cuss out the employee—causing him to be banned for life.

One person says a relative got a \$40 drone, which flew away after less than an hour and “was never seen again.” One commenter said they wanted a remote control toy helicopter for years, and when they got one, it lasted only 2 minutes before they flew it into a tree and broke it. One person said their brother lost a Game Boy Color console and all the games for it in an airport restroom. One said that when they were 8, they begged their parents to buy them an iPod Nano for Christmas. The day they got it, they dropped it on a concrete pavement and broke it. Another person broke a \$1,300 camcorder the day they got it. Another said their dog threw up on their brand new sofa 2 days after they got it. Another spilled red wine all over a friend’s new couch. Another dropped their \$1,000 hearing aid in a cup of coffee. Another had a glass lamp for all of 10 minutes before the cat broke it.

A person purchased an expensive bottle of cognac at an airport store on a business trip, but the bottle slipped out of the cart and broke in the bag. To keep the cognac from being wasted, he poured it from the bag into some Burger King cups and left a big trail of cognac to the restroom. He also spilled some on his suit. He drank both cups on his flight. One commenter said her boyfriend melted her brand new, very expensive scissors by stupidly sticking them in an electrical socket. One said their father-in-law who was over 50 got a new Ferrari. Within 2 days, he tried to impress his girlfriend by street racing with it, and he totaled it. And he went to prison.

Someone got a brand new camcorder and hid it in her oven. It was destroyed after only a few days when she forgot it was in there while heating up cookies. One person said their dad had just spent \$400 on a golf club, but the commenter broke it at a driving range. Another person said their daughter spilled a whole cup of apple juice on their laptop 3 days after they got it. One person bought a \$500 dining room chair, but on the way home from the store, it flew off the back of their truck. Another lost

a new handheld GPS device within a week. Another flew a brand new remote control toy helicopter into their living room ceiling fan. Another saw a customer exiting an electronics store with a new TV and accidentally dropping it on the pavement. Another said wind blew away a brand new trampoline. Another ruined a \$2,000 riding lawnmower by running over a protruded root. One person said they purchased a “really cool” clay tobacco pipe at a mall as a kid. (*Why???*) They saved up their allowance for months to buy this expensive pipe. Just after buying it, they set it on a ledge at the mall, and it fell off and broke beyond reclamation. One commenter kept buying phones for their mom, who kept dropping them in the toilet.

One person said they once worked at a pizza restaurant, and on a coworker’s 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, this coworker bought some very expensive liquor so all the employees could have a sip in the restaurant’s walk-in freezer. But the bottle broke in the freezer. The owner of the restaurant just happened to show up a few minutes later. Oops!

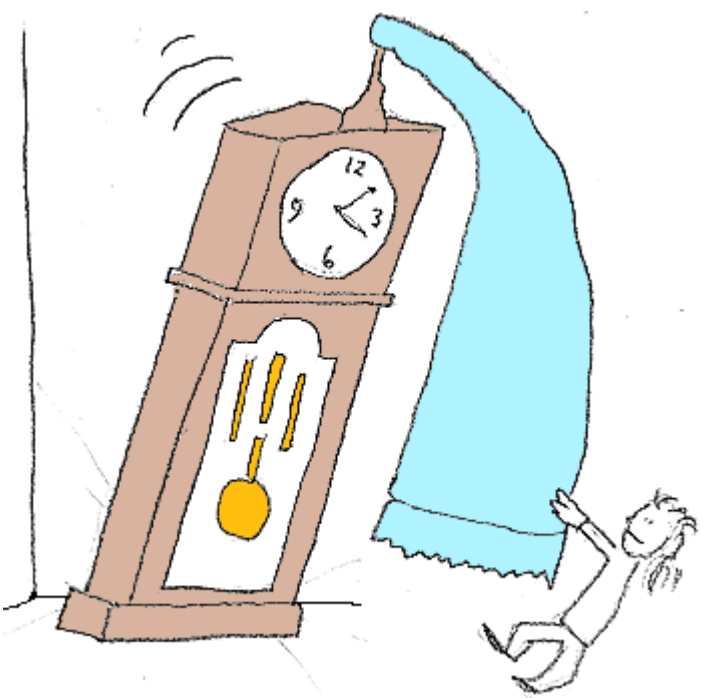
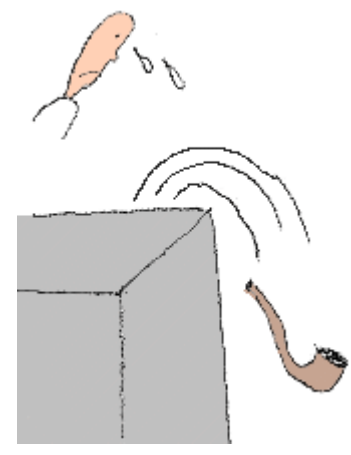
One commenter got a sled for Christmas and broke it the next day while using it. Another broke a new 52-inch TV by throwing a video game controller at it during a temper tantrum. A mover shattered a \$450,000 handmade marble table that belonged to a very wealthy family. A worker at a lab left a freezer open over a weekend, which thawed 3 years of samples and cost over \$100,000. A pipefitter at an oil refinery destroyed a valve, forcing the refinery to shut down for a while, costing the company \$10 million. One person lost a \$250 jacket on a train. Another lost a \$400 iPod when it was stolen at a party, and another lost a brand new digital camera on a flight. One person lost an \$800 gold watch, and another lost a \$1,200 watch at a Smoothie King. Another purchased a \$700 suit but soon found it eaten by moths: “It’s ruined.” The magic word! One person took their baseball card collection to school, and the whole collection was somehow stolen out of their locker.

One guy said his kid broke his laptop by closing it on a Lego. One commenter said his wife’s laptop was ruined when their kid poured milk down inside it. One proud papa said his kid’s diaper leaked shit all over a brand new sofa. One bloke said that when he was a young’un, he tore all the pages out of a rare book that belonged to his dad that was autographed by an admired military figure. Another commenter said a friend’s daughter completely repainted his Porsche. Another said his son threw an iPhone in a swimming pool because he was angry. Another said his young son shoved a cream cheese sandwich into a DVD player. Another said his son broke a TV at an Airbnb.

A commenter said that an elementary school friend of his kid used a pencil to poke holes in the leather seats of his car. Another said his aunt lost an antique Ulysses S. Grant campaign button—a family heirloom—at school. A commenter’s daughter shoved a plastic tomato slice down inside a disk drive. One poster said his son put some burning embers in an outside trash can, which caught on fire.

The fire spread to their car and destroyed it completely.

Yet another person said their dog chewed up a priceless book that was over 100 years old and numerous other items. Another commenter said that when she was growing up, she broke an irreplaceable candy dish—and tried putting it back together with glue before her mom found it. Another said that when she was about 6, she tried using an indescribably valuable grandfather clock for rock climbing by tying a blanket to a spindle on top and climbing up the blanket. All she accomplished was pulling down the clock and smashing it. Another said that when he was 5, he flooded his folks’ basement by sticking a garden hose in the vent for the dryer. Another said that when she was growing up, her mom got white leather furniture for the kitchen, but her brother and sister ruined all of it by covering it with shoe polish. Another woman said her son clogged the



bathroom sink, turned on the faucet, and left it running – destroying all the floors and counters, filling the bathroom drawers completely, and drenching a jumbo package of toilet paper. The cost: \$4,000.

Another poster said she found a kitten who then scratched up her dad’s entire record collection. Another said she saw some kids tear a glass sculpture off the wall at a museum while their mom watched. Another said her dog pulled down an entire china cabinet full of antique glass collectibles. Still another said her teenage nephew broke her sofa by jumping on it. A cat knocked a \$5,000 hearing aid into a toilet. A youngster decimated a \$1,500 tablet by placing an ice cube on it and letting it melt. One person said that when they were a kid, their parents got them a dog – who promptly knocked over and shattered a Waterford crystal lamp. These lamps can cost over \$2,000. Another commenter said their sister completely chewed up a rare Pokémon card worth \$2,500.

*The Day The Crayons Quit* it is not.

## Things get hairy for Reds ’stache

We’re gonna mention bubble gum. And you’re gonna laugh. If you don’t think you’re going to laugh, a big group of people might just come to your house with a huge tank of laughing gas and shove it under your nose.

This piece is similar to the fictional vignette about a person blowing a bubble while wearing a Superman costume mask with a hole cut out for the mouth, prompting an equally fictional YouTube comment about how they “wasted” the mask. It’s also evocative of the Halloween when they put out paper Big Boy masks, leading us to wonder if anyone ruined them by bubbling.

Let’s go back to when I attended the Reds’ Opening Day parade a few weeks ago. Evidently, somebody was selling or distributing handlebar mustaches – like the kind that baseball players 100 years ago supposedly had. A mustache like that looks so quaint and silly today that I only saw about 5 people wearing them. They might as well have just made Jim Photoglo the grand marshal. But I saw a lot of people wearing shirts that referred to a “ ’stache.”

After I saw these mustaches, I thought to myself, *What if?*

A humorous fictional narrative began forming in my mind. I was sent into uncontrollable laughter. According to this story, a person wore one of those mustaches from Opening Day. Then they bubbled – causing the ’stache to get gunked up with bubble gum.

Here’s where this fictional story gets *really* funny. After seeing the mustache getting gummed up, a person observes in frustration, “Hey chief, you just ruined a perfectly good ’stache!”

This line comes from a real incident that took place. For a few months in my late teens, I was forced to deal with an unsavory organization. One day, one of my peers there opened a small carton of milk, took a big gulp from it, and spilled a considerable quantity of milk down the front of his shirt. All the while, he was being lectured not to get milk, but he grabbed a milk anyway. After drinking that one gulp of mill-milk and spilling some on his shirt, he got up and threw the rest of the carton in the trash. A staffer admonished, “Hey chief, you just wasted a whole milk!”

Apparently, the milk was spoiled, as it often was. It got wosted when it was allowed to spoil. Whose fault was that?

A Reds ’stache got ru in a fictional story.

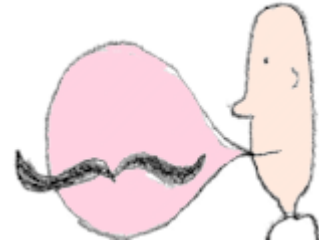
## A bunch of schools broke the law (imagine that!)

Another scandal involving America’s schools has been unfolding over the past few years – and it’s not unlike the same outrage that filled our schools for decades before.

Somebody made an online post about being forced to enroll in special education instead of regular classes when they were in school. This person was not intellectually disabled – but was considered by the school district to have some other disability, which caused the school system to illegally exclude them from regular class.

We don’t even need to tell you that this violates the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Even without these statutes, the school’s discriminatory actions were unconstitutional under the doctrine of equal protection.

This person says that because they were in special ed, they were not allowed to choose the same courses as other students. They also were not taught math, so that when they took basic algebra in college, they flunked – even though you’re supposed to learn basic algebra around 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



Somebody replied saying something very similar happened to them. In their case, the school wouldn't allow them to take driver's ed or participate in any extracurricular activities—even though students in regular classes could. This student's mom repeatedly asked the school to remove them from special ed, but the school refused to do it because it would "take too long." It turned out the school was getting extra money from the state for each student in that class.

Another reply was from someone with a son in a similar circumstance. He went on to graduate from college, but special ed left him so ill-prepared in life that he was never able to find a job. His IQ is probably high enough that he can join Mensa, yet now he's completely unemployable.

These sorry episodes are such a meaningless waste of good minds. And it all happened at the hands of a greed-driven policy of exclusion within our schools. Our schools failed, and they failed hard.

Make no mistake. What the schools in this article did was malicious. They set out to do harm.

Another website says that while parents can hire attorneys to help their case, school districts will—as a matter of policy—always outspend families to advance their own case. Of course, they use taxpayer money for it. A California school district squandered \$1 million and spent 7 years fighting to keep one child in special ed. Another district hired an attorney who threw her eyeglasses and a book at a child's psychologist during a meeting about the child's placement.

Schools have a knack for wasting talent. It's like how when I was in high school, my folks told me that if I received a grade for things I was actually interested in, I'd be a straight-A student—but since I didn't get a grade for these activities, I should just stop doing them. When schools waste students' talents, it's not just the student who suffers, but all of society. The student is prevented from contributing to society, so nobody reaps the benefits

of the contributions they would have made. Think of how many scientific advances this has cost the world. This is why we still don't have cures for deadly diseases. There is blood on the hands of our schools. In addition, legacy admissions create a problem similar to schools' special ed policy.

People are instinctively equipped to focus on projects that interest them. These projects bring consequences—good and bad—which fill a need. They're not being lazy. They're not intellectually disabled. They're not being bad. They're just doing what they naturally do.

Who is enforcing the laws? Statutes on special education have been violated by schools acting maliciously during at least 8 different Presidents (even good ones). If the government simply doesn't have the people power to enforce the law, who does? Maybe we need to start making citizen's arrests of school officials who flout the law. Schools that got extra money by wrongly sending kids to special ed should also be forced by the people to pay it back.

## When 56 is the new 65

We used to read about early 20<sup>th</sup> century eccentrics like child prodigy William James Sidis and reclusive brothers Langley and Homer Collyer. We also recall interesting 1980s characters like *Press Your Luck* contestant Michael Larson and lawn chair aviator Larry Walters. That's not to mention eccentric entertainers like Michael Jackson.

I've met someone who is weirder than all these other people put together—and I've discussed him in these pages before. But now we're at the point where he's more of a historic curiosity than anything. We occasionally read websites about unsolved crimes, and some open cases are so old that most people view them as historic events, not ongoing stories. The perpetrators are almost certainly dead now. This article is sort of like that. I haven't seen the feller discussed in this piece in person in 41 years, so I think it may be time to consider him a historic figure even though he's living.

We never came up with a snappy nickname for him like Yosemite Sam. Yosemite Sam was someone else from that era, and we didn't even come up with that. Someone who saw some Facebook photos of the subject of this piece said he resembles actor Ethan Hawke. We'll just call him Troy Diaper,



after Hawke's character Troy Dyer.

Diaper goes back a long way. We went to elementary school together. Later, we were in the same 6<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom, even though he was 4 years older than me. He quit school in 6<sup>th</sup> grade when he was only 15.

He didn't even live in our school district. I don't know why our school let him enroll, as all he ever did was start trouble.

About 7 or 8 years ago, I stumbled upon an online post that called Diaper a "loser." I wasn't even looking for anything about him. He has also had multiple Facebook profiles. In his most recent, he claims to have graduated high school in 1987. That's bull. He was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade in 1984-85. He also claims he "retired early" a few months ago, around the time he turned 56.

Retired from what? What was his job? I can't find any evidence that he ever held a job in his whole life. He's been in jail more times than anyone can count though.

How can Diaper even afford to retire at 56? He wasn't even one of the more upmarket hooligans. Compared to me, he was like a billionaire, but he was a pauper compared to the bulk of his tag team partners. So who is supporting him? *Who???*

Like everybody else, he has a common law right to receive full retirement – when he's 65. He's not 65 yet. The rest of his goon squad has formed their political identities around working everyone else to death – literally. But he retired 9 years early – assuming he even worked in the first place.

Maybe it's just because his age has more than caught up with him. In his recent photos, he looks like a haggard old man with a sagging grimace. The swagger of a juvenile delinquent has faded away. He is a remnant of the past. He's like a real-life Rip Van Winkle. As he reappears after many years, the world has changed around him. A ridiculous feud he almost single-handedly started over 40 years ago looks antiquated now.

I'm reminded of some MTV promo ads that ran in the mid-1980s. They were set many years in the future and consisted of elderly people reminiscing about MTV. I receive AARP mail all the time, but my former classmates retiring drives the point home.

Every night, I stay up late, as I'm afraid to go to sleep because everything gets relived. Then, when I wake up each morning, my heart sinks when I realize I'm in such a world of hurt. You built that, Diaper. I long ago lost my future to this fascism.

Diaper is lucky that he is well-connected enough with people who are rich enough to support him while he is still of working age. If I lost my source of income, I'd be completely out of luck.

## Jewelry and wine glasses got wasted

Once again, prepare to be shocked as we've found yet more stories online of expensive items getting ruined all up. Read 'em and try not to weep.

One user related a story about her younger cousin – who threw away his perfectly good iPad when he was 6. His mommy asked him to clean his room, or else she'd throw all his stuff away. So he threw the iPad away himself so he wouldn't have to clean his room. Nobody noticed until after the garbage collectors had picked up the trash.

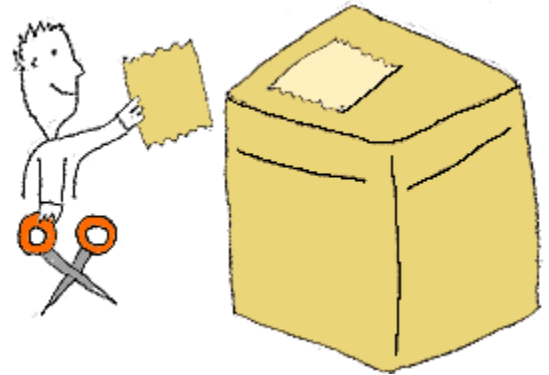
One commenter had a \$500 computer that her friend's 7-year-old broke by throwing it at another child. Another said she had a complete collection of Disney movies on Blu-ray (including nature documentaries and "all the classics") and numerous PlayStation 3 games. Her child ruined them all by jamming a whole bunch of them into the PlayStation at once and strewing the rest all over the floor and breaking them. Another person left 2 cats with a sitter during a 2-week trip, and the sitter let the cats pee all over the furniture. The furniture had to be thrown out.

Someone said that back during COVID, her nephews ruined the brand new carpeting at her mom's house by using permanent markers to draw social distancing circles all over it – costing \$8,500 in damages. A dog ate a diamond ring – but it was apparently recovered by following the dog around the yard for 2 days until he pooped it out. One commenter said she had her own half-acre permaculture forest at home to produce food – until one day when "a friend of a friend of the landlord



brought her kid over when I wasn't home." The adults encouraged the child to pick flowers from the forest to make a bouquet for his mom. Every flower was torn off, and dirt was spread all over the house: "My entire crop for the season was ruined and many perennials were killed."

One commenter posted a litany of stories that included her brother building a pyramid out of their parents' good wine glasses. You can guess how that ended, but apparently he hid the evidence. When they moved 8 years later, their mom said she thought they had more wine glasses and couldn't figure out where they went. Another sib inexplicably cut a big square out of a good ottoman. One person said her nephew flew into a tantrum because he was unable to play video games on her TV, and he threw a table at the TV—breaking both. A commenter said that when she was growing up, she and her brother knocked over an antique grandfather clock by throwing a balloon at it. Another said that when she was 7 or 8, her mom had an audiocassette of a talent show from a school where she worked, and she was supposed to make copies for teachers and parents. The commenter taped over the whole thing with herself clapping. A 2-year-old flushed a wedding ring down the toilet. A dog destroyed a brand new \$10,000 hardwood floor that took 3 months to install.



One person said someone gave her a beautiful gold necklace when she was 10 and she misplaced it immediately. It was gone for good. One commenter said her family let their puppy chew up her \$300 sandals. They were "ruined in minutes" and "my family simply laughed." One woman said that she and her husband bought a red living room set costing thousands. The day after it was delivered, their 2-year-old scribbled all over every piece—including each cushion—with a black permanent marker.

A commenter said she had a glass gumball machine that was 4 generations old. One day, her stepbrother was running in the house and knocked it off the shelf—shattering it. One poster said he and his wife went on vacation in Savannah, and he lost an \$800 gold bracelet on a carriage ride. In another case, a property manager found \$6,000 that belonged to an elderly tenant that had been stolen by her delinquent grandson and hidden in a book. One commenter said Amtrak baggage handlers broke an irreplaceable sculpture that was packed in a thick suitcase. Another said her daughter got a beautiful gold ring with a sapphire on it, but one day she tried to clean it with boiling water. She fell asleep while the water was boiling. The hot water broke the sapphire and melted the gold.

One commenter said he and his wife got their son a Nintendo as a reward for his academic success. Only a few weeks later, the wife hid the Nintendo in a pile of newspapers because the kids kept arguing over it. The newspapers got taken out with the trash—with the Nintendo buried in them. One bloke said he spent \$500 on a fancy CD player for his car. It was stolen after only 2 days. Another person posted, "I want to fix up these legos that were ruined by my partners ex." The magic word again!

Stuff got stolen, lost, or ru.

## More people farted and pooped

To stave off the incursion of anti-smiling laws, here's another batch of stories we found online of weird school behavior. Read it now before it reads you!

Someone said that in elementary school, a student stood on a table and pulled down his pants and underwear. That reminds me of the time when I was in grade school when a classmate stood on a desk in class, took off his shirt, and waved it around. He grew up to become an investment banker. Somebody else said that a science class assistant in 8<sup>th</sup> grade used a smoke bomb to blow apart a locker in a locker room. Everyone knew it was him because a burn mark suddenly appeared on his arm. Another student somehow broke into the library using the book return slot.

One student got up in class, tore a page out of his textbook, and blew his nose on it. The he vomited out the window and walked out of class. Nobody saw him again. A 2<sup>nd</sup> grader "always used to pick his bogeys and wipe them on other people's chair." Another student tried sharpening his finger in the pencil sharpener in class.

A middle schooler shit on the floor in English class. A student crapped on the restroom floor and built a "nest" of toilet paper around it. One student did all sorts of interesting things: In 5<sup>th</sup> grade,

he was suspended for peeing down several slides on the playground. In middle and high school, he kept loudly farting in class. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, he interrupted a class discussion about Edgar Allan Poe to ask what rats taste like. He shit in a locker room shower in high school. A weird one indeed.

The antics of the future investment banker mentioned a few paragraphs above have dredged up more memories of that class. It was a class for older kids, but I occasionally went there for math. The teacher for that class was also the gym teacher. One day, a student refused to use paper for his math assignment, and the teacher exclaimed, "What do you think God made paper for?! To blow your nose, wipe your butt, and to do math on!" One other time, a student stuck his arm in the curtain for the window and pretended it was a sling. This loosened the curtain rod so much that later it fell down with a big bang.

With this article, we conclude the series of school stories from our stash. I'm sadly too old to add any new stories myself. I don't miss the bad schools I attended one bit. But the down side is that there's no new stories.

Maybe people act up in retirement homes just as much as they act up in school.



## Time to sideline NFL antitrust exemption

By the 2000s, TV network scheduling became a twisted mess, especially when the NFL was involved. For example, Fox wouldn't schedule enough time for a football game, and the game would invariably run late. As a result, series like *King Of The Hill* and *The Simpsons* would almost inevitably be joined in progress, and only a few minutes of the show would be seen.

This sometimes happened even in the rare event that a game ended on time. The game might end right on time, but the network would air a postgame show, followed by about 10 commercials, and then the opening theme of the show that was being delayed. After yet more ads, the network would join the rest of that show in progress.

But if you take away sports—especially the NFL—people will notice.

Now the FCC is opening a probe into the NFL for moving games from over-the-air TV to paid streaming platforms that nobody subscribes to. It's even triggered an investigation by the government's antitrust division—which almost never gets used. There are even vague rumblings about revoking the NFL's antitrust exemption.

You'd think nobody would oppose the government taking at least *some* action. But if there's a weird opinion out there, you can be sure to find it on the Internet. Somebody actually posted that the FCC has no jurisdiction over broadcasting, because "TV has changed."

Damn right, TV has changed—for the worse—because the FCC usually chooses to exercise its jurisdiction only when it feels like it. It's the same for radio. They closed down Tantrum 95.7, yet they refuse to regulate major broadcasters. In reality, contrary to what the aforementioned poster said, the FCC most certainly does have jurisdiction over broadcasting. That was one of the main reasons the FCC was established.

Yet it's actually surprising that the FCC is getting involved with the NFL case at all. But we won't believe they're really serious unless we see results.

If something used to be free, how can we justify making people pay for it now?

This also reminds us of complaints that have been bobbing along TV audiences for over 40 years. There are several online posts about the past practices of what used to be the CBS affiliate in Knoxville. Many years ago, this station kept preempting network programming by showing the same Statler Brothers special over and over. This show appeared 4 times in only a few months. Somebody described how CBS kept advertising a movie they wanted to see, but the Knoxville affiliate instead showed the same Statlers special that it had already aired 3 times before.

The only thing viewers could do was play solitaire 'til dawn with a deck of 51!

## Whiners on their worst behavior

Every morning, I wake up and immediately call my stockbroker to ask how many chronically ill people went to the doctor over the previous 24 hours without having to pay at least a \$30 copay.

Just joking! Unlike some Kentucky legislators, I don't obsess over things like that. I don't even have a stockbroker.

There was recently a bill in Kentucky that would have established very steep copays if someone covered by Medicaid visits a doctor. What's the point of Medicaid—or any insurance—if people still have to pay for things that are supposed to be covered? It's like how states have started going after patients' children to make them pay back Medicaid expenses after the patient dies. If your home burned down in a fire, would State Farm seize your new house to cover what it paid out?

What's particularly idiotic about the Kentucky bill is the reason for it. Lawmakers didn't say it was because of a tight government budget. Maybe they knew nobody would believe them, because there's always money for tax handouts for developers and the rich, and the country has its biggest war budget in history. Instead, legislators said the Medicaid bill was needed to "change behavior."

Seriously, they said that.

That's like if the police caught someone who burglarized your home and charged you \$30 for you to "change behavior." It's like if your kids go to school and are charged \$30 each day to "change behavior", even though they didn't misbehave. It's like if you walk on a public sidewalk and get a bill for \$30 to "change behavior." Healthcare is a *need*—and a *right*. It's generally not a matter of "behavior."

There's so many things wrong in this land, yet lawmakers' big worry was Medicaid beneficiaries not having to pay a copay. The horror!

Imagine how big of a whiner you'd have to be to think that's the worst thing going on in society.

This was as copays for prescriptions were already increased twice so far this year.

If we're worried about affordability and wasted money, one of the first things we should look at is oil company profits. Gasoline is over \$6 a gallon in some parts of the country, and while the illegal Iran war is one factor, price gouging by oil companies that's been going on for years has been proven to be another. In addition,

each U.S. congressperson gets a food allowance of \$92 *per day*. An allowance like this was only established in 2023. Congress was doing fine for themselves before.

The entire sorry episode regarding the copays was fueled by dominionism—which wraps fascist ideology in the cloak of religion. The dominionist platform includes support for regressive taxation, which includes not only replacing a graduated income tax with a flat income tax, but eventually replacing this flat *percentage* with a flat *amount*. Dominionists call this biblical, but they can never cite anything in the Bible to back it up. In fact, Amos 5:11 condemns taxing the poor to serve the rich. Dominionists also recently offered a version of the Balanced Budget Amendment that would have exempted military spending from being cut. Needless to say, they also do not believe in separation of church and state.

It's not just the Kentucky legislature that has its share of dominionists. For example, the Missouri legislature has been a dominionist orgy for decades. And it's not just the states. It's the federal government too. U.S. House Speaker Mike Johnson is a dominionist. So is Office of Management & Budget Director Russell "Quick Draw McGraw" Vought. During Vought's confirmation hearing to be deputy director in Trump's first term, Bernie Sanders asked Vought about his dominionism. Vought then grumbled that this grilling was an unconstitutional "religious test."

It wasn't a "religious test." It was a necessary test of Quick Draw's suitability for a government post. Dominionism isn't compatible with a secular republic. George W. Bush actually did have unconstitutional religious tests for some of his nominees though.

Today's young adults have it even worse than we did. If COVID biostatism didn't steal high school or college from them, legacy admissions stole the latter—and thus their entire career. Among Americans in general, the poorest economic group is now also the largest—as the percentage has tripled since the 1970s. Thus, nobody needs to be ruled by arrogant, malign fascists who hide behind religion to slash healthcare funding and Social Security. Why are we supposed to listen to these zealots? Give us one good reason. One good reason now.

There is no middle class in a 1% economy. There are a few people who rule—acting as if it is their divine right—while everyone else lives like shit. This is why things have become progressively worse. Your meager wages buy only stale food and inferior goods. This goes with the territory under



dominionism. The melding of religious fanaticism and market fascism is a spectacular policy failure, creating scarcity and jacked-up costs for the public. The difference between today and a freer time couldn't be clearer. We've endured decades of malaise under this suffocating regimen instead of the electrifying progress and innovation we could have had.

## **A gun-toting Trumpist chewed bubble gum**

A fisherman brandished an AR-15 and chewed bubble gum. Judging by his red "Make America Great Again" cap, we wonder who he voted for. Let us guess. Must have been Jill Stein. Wait, no. Must have been Harold Stassen. Wait, no. Must be someone who defended Jim Wright from Newt Gingrich's hypocritical ethics complaint. Nah, we don't think so.

This clip features the Coast Guard and Florida Fish & Wildlife officers confronting the diehard Donald Trump follower for his gun misuse...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VrWDwQNPI8g>

This event actually caused an officer to speak the words "bubble gum." That got your attention, didn't it?

According to the initial report, a fisherman off the Florida Keys fired his gun at a commercial fishing boat. When we see the elderly fisherman detained by the Coast Guard on his boat, we notice he is chewing bubble gum.

The Coast Guard boat seems to be floating aimlessly as the man chomps his gee.

The man says he took his boat out on the rough waters alone 5 times a week, but when he got caught committing a felony by firing the gun, he suddenly acts like he's just a frail old man who can't hurt anyone. He's actually lucky the men he aimed the gun at didn't shoot back in self-defense.

After an investigation, the offending fisherman was arrested. As the arresting officer was placing him in the truck, the officer assured, "We have your hat, your keys, car keys. You got your bubble gum, which you need." Evidently, the man constantly chewed bubble gum to treat his diabetes. He insisted that the cops feed him more gum, but the officers made him wait until he got to jail.

He was charged with displaying a firearm during a felony, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon without intent to kill, and firing a weapon in public. He was sentenced to 3 years of supervised probation and ordered to pay \$933 – which apparently was still unpaid when that video was posted. The clip also says he went on to violate his probation.

But he didn't bubble.

## **Panama...Panamah-ah...Panama...Panamah-ah...**

The intelligentsia isn't very intelligent.

Ten years is more than enough time to build an effective response to Donald Trump's political rise. Instead, the "liberal" establishment has wasted its resources gibbering about stupid stuff and laundering money from socialites who claim to be progressive champions because they once read something about 1960s protests. What a disgrace.

The real populist progressives such as us can't build power, because we don't have money. But the elite opinion havers do – and they still accomplish nothing.

There was a period in the 2010s when some progress actually was made. Yet instead of hanging on to it, the intelligentsia realized that they had to have something to fight against to stay in business. So they actually funded things they claimed to oppose.

The entire web of organized "liberalism" needs to be put out of business. We used to support these groups. Now they're a hindrance, as they back ideas that are diametrically opposed to what they supported before. We haven't changed. They have. The corporate dough flowing in isn't just a trickle but an avalanche. Some of these groups now get donations from what had been known to be among the most right-wing companies in America. And it shows. It's a far cry from 15 years ago when income inequality was finally starting to get the attention it deserves. Now it gets zero.

The idea that these groups are champions of personal liberty is absolutely laughable. So is their "no kings" gimmick, as they supported public officials imposing COVID restrictions unilaterally, without any legislative or popular input. They even sued states and school districts for not enacting

mandates, absurdly claiming that a lack of restrictions violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (a law that is conveniently ignored the rest of the time). These lawsuits continued perhaps a year after vaccines were introduced – maybe longer.

And that is the bastepaste that holds the current disastrous decade together.

To bring about elusive accountability, we need to expose another example of how much our local economy was robbed on New Year's at the start of 2021. Again and again, we've shown how cities from Indianapolis to Bangkok overcame adversity and celebrated New Year's almost like normal.

But not Cincinnati.

No, not Cincinnati.

It's not just big cities that left us in the dust. It's small cities too. This example comes to us from Panama City, Florida...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kkkGJj0Q14I>

Panama City is one-tenth the size of Cincinnati in population, yet it rang in 2021 without any trouble at all. Restaurants and shops were open, and there was even a concert.

But not in Cincinnati.

And it's 95% because of Mike DeWine running his big yip. The other 5% was the city complying with this stupidity.

Think of all the small businesses that lost revenue or even went under because of this. Big corporations can afford to cover such losses. Small businesses can't. That's not to mention the fact that big companies were often exempted from rules that many regions enacted during the main lockdowns.

The lockdown culture that targeted schools and colleges went on to be as bad as the lockdowns themselves. Children are the future. Shame on any organization that would sacrifice children's well-being. After the poisonous abuse we suffered by school officials, we take it very seriously when groups we once supported accept tainted money to suddenly declare that committing child abuse is a constitutional right and civic duty.

There is an irreversible rot in our legal advocacy groups and other major organizations. These groups cannot be salvaged from this smoldering dumpster fire. They don't care that they've lost many more supporters than they've gained – as their few new supporters are corporate donors that have enough money to make up for the losses.

What we really need is real progressive groups that advocate for the people and aim to ensure accountability for COVID atrocities. Also, if we knew more details of who donated to groups that turned their backs on us, it would be easier to get to the bottom of this, but much of this data is not available to the public, as these groups abuse their nonprofit status.

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