

In the Hallways: What is your opinion on the demise of Facets?



"Facets is such a wonderful publication, it shouldn't just be thrown away." -

Wendy Gapinski



"I've never read it or anything, I don't know what it's all about." -

Megan Brietzke



"It's sad that people aren't being recognized for their talents." -

Chelsea Werda



"I don't think it's fair that sports gets more funding than other activities." -

Brittany Posthumus



"If something as good as Facets is gone, I wonder what could go next." -

Nadine Daw



"They should probably keep it, if it's something that students read." -

Linelle Sylvester

The public good or private gain: The conundrum of our society

There is little doubt that many in the conservative movement over the last 10-20 years have eagerly sought to roll back the size, power and waste of government since the Great Depression era, and perhaps rightfully so.

Yet one wonders if current policy makers and supporters of austerity measures concerning scaling back government and government services, particularly through tax reductions, truly understand the full implications of this movement in so far as these policies are detrimentally affecting the most basic public service institutions in our society.

With the major financial challenges that our little college here in Northeast Michigan is facing at the moment, many of us fellow citizens have been pressed towards pondering whether or not our state and country realize the full potential of tax reduction policies and other conservative economic measures, like privatization of social security, and the general notion of a society of "private ownership" that President Bush eluded to in his inauguration speech.

There is no doubt that a little bit of belt tightening could never hurt an obese society such as ours, but perhaps there is potential for cutting off

one's circulation if the belt is tightened too much.

Is this austerity that we are experiencing simply a scaling back, perhaps a forced restructuring of public services leading towards the goal of a more streamlined and vibrant series of public services, or is this process a radical and perhaps hostile reaction against government and the public sector among narrow special interests with deleterious affects on some of the core functions of society, like public education and social security nets for the elderly and disabled?

Is the intended result to undercut the viability of such services as public services, or is it meant to simply empower people and invigorate the solvency of such systems?

Can the private sector adequately provide a safety net for the elderly, uninsured, and disabled, or is there some sort of public obligation to protect at least the weakest among us with principles of redistributing wealth and to enforce equal standards and applications of rights, privileges and obligations in our society?

Can the private sector adequately educate America's public towards the public good as opposed to the narrow ideological objectives of private interests like denominational religious orthodoxies or cults or even special interest organizations who might otherwise educate America's youth?

Where is the end to the

reverberations of tax reduction and the ambitions towards structural change in our government and society, especially given the flux of our current economy here in Michigan?

What I find even more perplexing than these questions with no clear answers is that the mainstream society which sees the need and desire for reduced taxation must realize that for these services to be provided, regardless of whether they are public or private, people will have to pay for them one way or another.

There is a need in a compassionate society with a diversity of underprivileged for some degree of redistributive wealth that is objective and not laden with particularistic parochial obligations.

Let's just hope that in the process of finding a more efficient and hopefully effective manner of providing basic public services that we as a society do not compromise the public good for simple and narrowly focused private interests or gain, financial or otherwise.

In my mind this trend towards a "society of ownership", subsequently holding the public sector to the wall, potentially puts public institutions at the mercy of narrow private interests, especially if this process goes too far, and I would suggest that President Bush and the current

conservative agenda regarding austerity through tax reductions and privatizing social security, for example, are undercutting government's ability to protect the public good. Michigan's simultaneous movement in this direction compounds the problems facing us Michiganders.

Perhaps its time to stabilize the zealous nature of structural reform before the change insights destruction and counter-reactive forces. After all, Adam Smith, the conceiver of the modern capitalist system of economics who defined the values of the private sector, clearly recognized the value of government providing some

basic public services out of absolute necessity for the individual and private interests to be understood within society as a whole, and that government has a responsibility to provide some basic services, among these things are public infrastructure and public education.

If the pendulum of change is not tempered soon, the momentum could be destructive instead of constructive. Public education and basic social security are being severely challenged. Let's hope that they do not get undermined by threats of the unknown, neglect, or the ill-conceived.

Kuehnlein's Corner



Timothy K. Kuehnlein, Jr.

Click here for a free iPod!

By Chris Engle

Sports/A&E Editor

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't have to clear out a dozen bulk emails from my inbox offering me "Free iPods" in return for completing a survey or providing personal information.

Lately, simply deleting these emails is not satisfying enough, so I've started scrolling through the message to see who it's from, what they want, and if they provide a link where I can unsubscribe from their mailing list (since I don't remember subscribing in the first place). If they don't include an unsubscribe link, or they make me type my email address to unsubscribe (so they can sell it back to another spam company), I reply to that message. Sometimes the message cannot be sent, and the replies usually don't lead to a response, but it's a good way to vent frustration and let the companies know that you aren't buying into their bullcrap.

Another way companies try to 'give away' s iPods is by placing giant pop-ups and banner advertisements on websites that have quizzes asking, "Which one is so-and-so?" followed by pictures of three talentless pop stars. Answer the quiz correctly (or just click anywhere in the banner), and you will be taken to a site where you can conveniently submit your email and home address to complete strangers.

Why do I rant on over some stupid advertisement? Because these companies are taking advantage of people who cannot see that they're just being led on with empty promises of free gifts. Unfortunately, these ploys can be effective, because people love free stuff and often overlook the fine print to do whatever they need to do to get their free gift, even if it means surrendering an email or home address, phone number, or other personal information. Companies then sell this information or use it

to send these people more advertisements or offers.

I want this to be a wake-up call to anyone who has ever considered cooperating with these companies in hopes of getting free stuff. Use some logic, people. Do you think someone is actually going to send you a \$250 gift as a reward for your ability to pick out Beyonce from a lineup? No. This only grabs your attention so that they can throw a bunch of offers at you. Even if you take an offer (freeipods.com has offers including auto insurance, movie rentals, etc), these companies are not obligated by any law to actually send the iPod.

To some, this information may seem like common sense, but companies do this for a reason- it works. My hope is that people will stop participating with these companies and they'll give up, and I'll finally be able to play Collapse online without having to stare at a giant flashing banner ad with Bono's face on it.

Kitchens
Counter Tops
Fireplaces
Baths

**ALPENA
KITCHEN & HEARTH**

"YOU'LL FEEL RIGHT AT HOME WITH US"

2071 W. M-32 Phone # 989-356-2422
Alpena, MI 49707 Fax # 989-356-6395
Email: alpenakitchhearth@chartermi.net

**VOTED THE NUMBER ONE
BANK/CREDIT UNION BY YOU!
H.P.C. Credit Union**

And now YOU can join OUR Credit
Union Family...

- * You are a relative of a current/deceased HPC Member.
- * You are over 55 and receive a retirement, Social Security or a Pension and live in Alpena County and surrounding areas
- * Or you are a student or employee at Alpena Community College, or any of these businesses...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABC Homes, Inc. Alpena Beverage Alpena Furniture & Flooring Alpena General Hospital Alpena Glass Co. Inc. Alpena Housing Commission Alpena Mall Alpena Medical Arts Alpena Star Advertiser Alpena Oil Alpena Supply Co. Alzheimer's Association American Red Cross Baker Manufacturing Bay Motel Catholic Human Services Clements Water Refining Services Computer Consultant Services District Health Department #4 Duffy's Computer & Supplies Eagle Engineering Employment Services Inc., and its Client Companies Erb Lumber First Baptist Church Fletcher Motel & The Grove Floyd Minton Cedar Post Co. Inc. G&L Ventures, Inc. (Owl Cafe) Glave Corp. G&K's Gordon Food Services Great North Foods Harborside Deli & Catering, Inc. Homant Propane Inland Lakes management In Other Woods JC Penney J.E. Johnson Contracting John's Electric King Venture, Inc. (Burger King) Komo's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L&S Transit Lafarge Corporation/Stoneport Lakeside Motel Lee's Magnaloy Coupling #1 Nails & Tanning Neiman's market Northern Radio Network Joos (WHBS, WHST, WHAK, WBMI, WELG) NuVision Old Town Cafe Ossineke Building Supply, Inc. Panel Processing Payless Shoes People's Used Cars Perch's IGA Pineview Nursing of Hillman Radio Shack Regis Restoration Ministries R.S. Scott & Associates Shalla's Service Station Speednet, LLC State Street Lube/State Street Auto Wash Sterling Software Solutions Straley, Hsley & Lamp P.C. Sunrise Side Dental Service Sunrise Side Realty Sunrise Supplies Tendercare Greenview Thunder bay Manufacturing Tile Edge Systems TJ's Professional Services Tom Hendricks, P.E. Twin Acres (19th Hole) Vintage Oil Waldenbooks Wal-Mart Wayne Wire Zolnerek Ins. Co.
---	---

- * Loans For Every Reason
- * Mortgages
- * Great Rates
- * Free Checking
- * No Fee ATM's
- * IRA's
- * CD's
- * Debit Cards
- * Christmas Clubs
- * Life Savings & Loan Protection at No Charge

... WE DO IT ALL!

H.P.C. Credit Union 1234 W. Chisholm St.
(989) 354-4698

Lobby Hours: Monday thru Friday 9:00 am - 5:30 pm
Drive Thru: Monday thru Friday 8:30 am - 5:30 pm; Saturday 9:00 am - 12 Noon