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Youth Action Network Newsletter

Brought to you by the YAN Squad

July 2007

Dear Amy,

We had a lot of trouble scraping together a newsletter for you this month. Hope you enjoy it!

The YAN Squad

Community Spots for the Youth of Today

Venny Nunez

Need some volunteer hours? Want to help your community just because? I hope it sounds good, 'cause you're about to get a big heaping dose of Austin community info. I'm going to run down some great volunteer opportunities around town, and if any of them catch your interest, I encourage you to investigate further. Local volunteers help strengthen our community bonds and just help a great atmosphere throughout the city. Do your part!

First off, I'm going to bring a well-organized outfit known as Austin Yellow Bikes to your attention. They're a community bike shop that advertises an offer you simply can't refuse: put in at least 12 hours of community service at the shop, and you'll have the opportunity to build your own bike from scratch for free! AYB provides all the tools, parts, and instruction, so no prior bike-building experience is necessary. They've been around since 1997, so don't worry about getting in over your head. You can find their operating hours here, and you can view the Q&A page here, which will most likely answer any questions you have about the project.

Second, we have the Rhizome Collective. Where to begin? If you don't know anything about the RC, you can check out their virtual tour page here, which is a comprehensive guide to just about everything this innovative group is doing. According to their tour page, their purpose is "the design and display of functioning ecological tools and technologies, created to give communities greater self-reliance over life's basic resources: water, food, energy production, waste management, shelter and remediation of toxins." They specialize in the creation of "autonomous technologies," which are designed to be operated and maintained by the folks using the device in the first place. If you'd like to get some first hand experience with the project and servicing the community, check out the events calendar here, and the volunteer page here. They even offer internship opportunities if you really enjoy the work that Rhizome does!

I'll be back next month with more cool volunteer opportunities around town, so if these don't strike your fancy, just wait it out. Or you could, you know, take some initiative and find volunteer spots on your own. No? Didn't think so. Until next time, dear readers.

Foie Gras: Disgusting Delicacy or Tasty Treat?

Ruth Goodson

After recently reading an article in the Statesman about foie gras, an interesting culinary delicacy, I was curious how my fellow youth would feel about it.

First, I'll explain how foie gras is made. Farmers take a mixture of corn kernels, pork fat, and salted water and force feed it to geese or ducks daily for about two and a half weeks, allowing the bird's livers to fatten up. The bird's livers are then sold to fine cuisine restaurants where they are usually made into a pate and served with steak or potatoes.

Some animal rights activists protest that the birds are mistreated and that this process would eventually cause death, if the bird's were not slaughtered first. But other officials have investigated the farms and are surprised at the results they've found. They found that the birds not only enjoy these treatments, but fight each other, swarming towards the feed, so they can be the first in line.

Now here's the big question: What do you think about foie gras? If you are interested in investigating it more, check out the site www.austin360.com and look up Dale's Dish-"The debate over foie gras heats up in Austin", to find out more information. Stand up for what you believe in and educate yourself.

Looking back on Juneteenth

Paul Dennis

Juneteenth (June 19th) is the oldest national celebration of the abolishment of slavery in the United States. The celebration commemorates the announcement of the liberation of enslaved Africans during the Civil War. Though the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed on September 22, 1862, with an effective date of January 1, 1863, it had little effect on slaves' lives. Juneteenth is a celebration of June 19, 1865, the day Union General Gordon Granger and 2,000 troops arrived on Galveston Island to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation. The general announced from a balcony, "*The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and free laborer.*" Since then the celebration has spread across the country and beyond. Texas was the primary home of this celebration for nearly a century and became recognized as a state holiday in 1980. Thirteen other states list it as an official holiday including California and New York. This year in Austin the Juneteenth celebrations began with a parade down MLK and Chicon, passing Garza High, and ending at Rosewood Park. This was an all-day celebration including a pageant, a run, and a battle of the bands. There were also booths set up for advocacy groups with free literature and volunteers to talk to.

Article Headline

Article Subheading

Know your target audience. Who are your most important customers, clients or prospects, and why? Know what is important to them and address their needs in your newsletter each month. Include a photo to make your newsletter even more appealing. Inserting a link in your article lets you track which topics attract the most interest.



Rest Yo'Self

Ariel Kay

Students, especially adolescents are prone to lack of sleep. Why teenagers especially? The workload from school, often having a part time job, and schools starting early in the morning, are only a couple of the reasons preventing teens from getting a good night's sleep. Most adolescents tend to go to bed late and wake up late when given the choice. Recent studies show that there is actually a chemical difference between children's' and adults' brain chemistry when compared to that of a teenager. The chemical melatonin, which induces sleep, is actually released later at night in a teenager's brain, causing a person's sleep pattern to shift during their pre-teens and teenage years. In other words there is a reason why your body seems to be on a different pattern than people younger and older than you. Now that this research has come into light many people are demanding that schools accommodate their students' health and start later in the morning, but until this happens, you'll have to train your body to go to sleep and wake up early. Sleep is a vital source of energy and rejuvenation for a person, especially a growing one. Resting your body can help you do well in school by increasing your attention span, improving your ability to concentrate, bettering your mood, and giving you a fresh start to your day. Sleep is also necessary to boost your immune system and your body grows most while it sleeps. "Sleep deprivation slows reaction time" and the National Traffic Administration reports that "more than half of the people who cause crashes because they fall asleep at the wheel are under the age of 26." Sleep loss can be very detrimental because young adults need more sleep than most age groups, anywhere from 8 ½ to 10 ½ hours per night is recommended to keep your body, mind, and spirit healthy. Giving your body rest is essential to balance your life of homework and hormones and there are ways to shift your sleep pattern to a more desirable one. Creating a regular sleep pattern helps your body know when to sleep and rise and be comfortable with it. Not straying too drastically from this pattern on weekends is helpful. Exercising regularly in the afternoon helps tire your body instead of get

your body temperature up and wake you up as exercising does in the evening or at night. Avoiding stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol after 4 pm is very helpful in allowing your body to fall asleep easily. Relaxing your mind before you sleep is needed, listening to soothing music or meditating is really good. Try not to be near bright light, even watching movies or TV, or staring at a computer screen before you go to bed, can keep you awake longer. Don't nap too much during the day, usually not more than 30 minutes. Making your room comfortable and your sleep environment relaxing makes it easier to go to sleep and stay asleep. Studies show people sleep best in a quiet, very dark, cool room. So turn up the AC, get thick curtains, and fly to dream land.

Source:

http://www.kidshealth.org/teen/your_body/take_care/how_much_sleep.html

Be Featured in the YAN Newsletter!

Write a paragraph about a time you overcame a personal hardship and email it to us at mpowers@austinvoices.org.

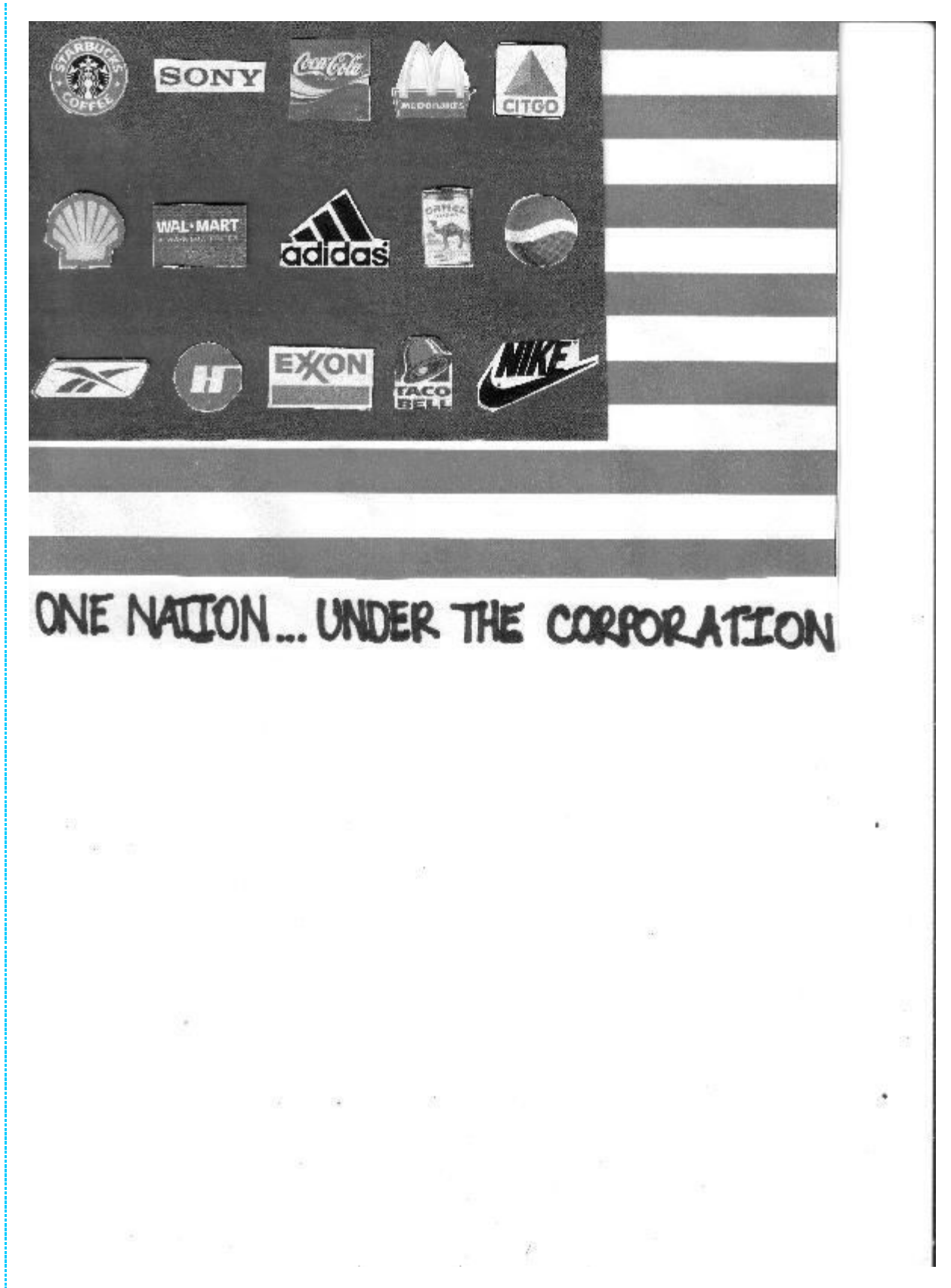
We will feature our favorite response in our newest column of the newsletter, the personal experiences column.

Youth Community Event

Daisy Lanier

We the People, a Youth Organization founded by Garza students and alumni has announced that THE WAR IS OVER! On Friday, August 17 at 5pm, they intend to celebrate the peace and mourn the loss with an "End of the War Parade" to City Hall, and a concert featuring music by The Public Offenders, the CAV Super Band, and more. Join us at the Capitol to end the war! "After all, we pay for it, die for it-certainly we have the right to end it."

More info: www.myspace.com/youthwarisover



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