

SAVE OHIO LIBRARIES!

It's a catch-22. In this horrible economy, people are using the free resources provided by their local libraries **more than ever**. However, in this horrible economy, governments are having trouble funding the free resources provided by local libraries. Here in Ohio, Governor Strickland is contemplating a new state budget cut that would reduce our libraries' funding by an additional 52%, and that's on top of the 20% cut they've already seen in 2009. With this kind of reduction in funding, obviously the libraries would not be able to function on the same level on which they are currently functioning, nor with the same hours. If you live in Ohio, you can help the governor and congressmen know how harmful library funding cuts would be to each and every community in the state. Here is some contact info to help you do your part in saving the libraries:

[Click here to Contact the Governor's Office](#)

Contact the Governor's Office by phone @ (614)466-3555

Fax the Governor @ (614)466-9354

State Senator Steve Buehrer

Phone: (614) 466-8150

Fax: (614) 466-4250 ATTENTION STEVE BUEHRER

Email: SD01@senate.state.oh.us

For more information, click here:

www.saveohiolibraries.com

Thank you for your help! Closing library branches is harmful to communities in many ways and would affect everyone, even those who don't use the libraries themselves.

He Said WHAT?

The continuing saga of Illinois' embattled governor just keeps getting more and more interesting. As his impeachment trial opened yesterday, Rod Blagojevich took to the tv airwaves to defend (?) himself. I saw clips of a few of his tv appearances, and that's why I included the little question mark above. It didn't seem to me that he was doing a good job of defending himself. In fact, the ladies on The View noticed the same thing, with them noting, "Seems like you're doing yourself more harm than good." The View ladies then hilariously chided the governor, asking him to say "I'm not a crook" – Richard Nixon-style. Blago refused.

And of course by now you've heard about the Oprah for Senator announcement he made on Good Morning America – Blago has admitted that he actually considered Oprah Winfrey to fill Obama's old Senate seat. I'm not even going to go there – there were too many other gems that came out of Blago's mouth yesterday. Among them:

On his Larry King Live appearance, Blagojevich launched into a bizarre analogy involving cowboys and steer to describe his situation... I'm not going to go into detail; it was quite lengthy, but it's worth looking up on youtube or somewhere if you're so inclined. WHAT was he TALKING about?!?

Back to Oprah for a minute. According to Blagojevich, Oprah has more influence than all 100 United States senators combined. She does have lots of dough; as well as an uncanny ability to get women to diet and save money. But she doesn't have the power to declare war or pass legislation that changes lives... so no, Blago, not even close on that one.

Also on Larry King Live, Blago was shown clips of Saturday Night Live where they make fun of him, namely his thick mane of hair. "He looks like one of those Fisher Price toy people

with its hair on backwards!” Too funny! But Blago didn’t think so. “What show was that?” he asked. But a few sentences later, he talked about how they can make fun of him during skits or whatever and that he didn’t care. But if he had never heard of Saturday Night Live as he acted, how would he know it was a show comprised of skits? He was just trying to insult Saturday Night Live by acting as though he had never heard of it!

And throughout the governor’s press junket yesterday, he kept repeating – “The fix is in” referring to the “fact” that the Illinois House is impeaching him because they’re out to get him – not because he did anything wrong. I agree with Blago on one aspect – his impeachment is inevitable. In the meantime, I have to admit how fun it is to watch this guy in action and marvel at the fact that he was ever elected to such a major public office. I think he might be certifiably nuts!

Speaking Of Blagojevich...

In my previous post about Governor Rod Blagojevich of Illinois, I forgot to include a [funny clip from the Daily Show](#) featuring Mr. Blag... Mr. Blavo, um Governor Smith.

And if you have trouble pronouncing his Serbian surname, here is a pronunciation guide from wikipedia.com:

[Milorad “Rod” R. Blagojevich \(pronounced /blə'gɔɪɛvɪtʃ, born December 10, 1956\) is an American politician from the state of Illinois.](#)

A Stricken State

I took the tv away from the kids today (not that they watch it that much anyway) so I can watch the events in Illinois unfold as their governor Rod Blagojevich is arrested on corruption charges. No surprise there, just an interesting story being followed by a former resident of that state. In fact, we left Illinois for good in 2003 just months after Blago assumed office, which was mostly a coincidence, but I would say that his being elected to the governor's office did add to the feeling we had that the state was falling apart. It was that obvious from the beginning that Blago was no good. Over the years, I've been following news stories in Illinois by reading dailyherald.com, an online version of a suburban newspaper. Every time there was anything in the paper related to Blago, there was no shortage of comments from readers about the purported corruption of the governor. In October of this year, the governor's approval rating was a measly 4%. And today, the you-know-what has hit the fan. The governor of Illinois is in prison – the second gov in a row from that state to serve time, as a matter of fact. As we speak, err, as you read this, former Illinois Governor George Ryan is probably watching the Blagojevich coverage from the federal prison he currently calls home. I'm just curious if it makes anyone nervous that our new President-elect is from a state that can't seem to keep its leaders out of the slammer. Hopefully, Barack Obama can set a new standard for politicians from Illinois – that would be refreshing.

But in the meantime, watching Blago's saga unfold is compelling – the reporters on CNN are saying that the breadth of the corruption is unimaginable. They're saying Blago engaged in a 'crime spree' while in office and the details are troubling – including allegations of \$8 million in funding being pulled from a children's hospital because its CEO did not contribute \$50,000 to Blago's campaign. And I'm

not writing this to pick on Blago or make any sort of political statement – it's not that I'm the type of person who smiles at the misfortune of others either, but hey, he did this to himself. I just feel badly for the residents of Illinois who trusted this man to be their leader and their representative, and now they're forced to watch with the rest of the world while he is exposed for what he truly is, giving their state a horrible reputation in the process. The main victims in this situation are the Blagojevich family, and it's sad that Rod's two young children will probably have to grow up now without a father in their lives. And unfortunately, Blagojevich is just the latest in a long line of corrupt officials from the Land of Lincoln. Since the early 1970's, 3 former Illinois governors have served time in prison, not including Blagojevich who is a current governor. Here's to hoping the politicians of Illinois can get their act together amidst their growing tradition of disreputableness.

Skipping Christmas

As a kid, I was a very avid reader – I would always read myself to sleep. Somewhere in my 20's though, I lost sight of my reading hobby; I guess that's when I got too busy and too tired to lie in bed awake at night and read. During my last pregnancy, however, I started reading before bed again, and it's something that I really enjoy, even though I often get too tired to make it through more than a few pages per night.

When I recently began reading again, I started by reading mostly non-fiction; it was really fun for me to unwind at night and learn something at the same time. I read a book about an Afghan girl who stepped on a land mine, lost her leg, and fled the Taliban by coming to America. I read a book

about a family that bicycled across the country – they had kids who were 13, 11, and 3 years old, and they made it from New Jersey to Colorado on their bikes. There was also the book about the Burnham's; they were husband and wife missionaries who were held hostage in the Philippines for almost a year. The wife wrote a book about their daily struggles as hostages – it was fascinating. Then I switched to a few fiction books by Christopher Pike, an author best known for his young adult horror novels. I read those as a teen, so as an adult, I decided to try his novels for adults – one I really liked and one wasn't so good – *Falling* and *The Blind Mirror*, respectively. I then started a book about the plight of Terri Shiavo, a woman who collapsed in the early 90's and suffered brain damage. Her case was in the national spotlight because her husband insisted that she would have never wanted to live hooked up to machines while her parents disagreed. The governor tried to help, and even the President of the United States tried to step in, but ultimately Terri's right to live became just another case in the courts and her husband won. Her feeding tube was removed and it took her almost 14 days to slowly starve and dehydrate to death. The case fascinated me at the time, and I found this book about it written by Mark Fuhrman of the OJ Simpson murder trial fame. Except that I'm having trouble reading the book since it's about a rather dark and depressing subject, and that's not really how I want to unwind before bed. Though I did learn something interesting from Mark Fuhrman: according to him, a coroner is an elected official who doesn't even necessarily have to have a medical degree. Hmmm...

A friend recommended the author John Grisham, and the other day I ran into the library, trying to be very quick since the family was waiting in the car. His books looked so large and lengthy and intimidating, so I grabbed the smallest one I saw called *Skipping Christmas*. I began to read it, and it's about a family called the Krank's who decide to skip Christmas one year. That sounds familiar, I thought, and after a quick trip

to imdb.com, I discovered that the awfully panned movie of 2004 called [Christmas With The Krank's](#) is indeed the movie based upon John Grisham's book, *Skipping Christmas*. So far the book is ok, but nothing that keeps me looking forward to reading it or anything. I have Grisham's only work of non-fiction on hold at the library, maybe I'll get up there today to get it because maybe I'm sick of fiction and it's time to go back to non-fiction... I hate to admit it, but I really like to read true-crime books before bed, mostly about murder. True, murder is a dark and depressing subject, but not in the same way as the story of Terri Shiavo; it's hard to explain. And it sounds kind of strange, but true-crime books are the ones I seem to be drawn to and I can't watch true-crime on tv in bed anymore – too many nightmares for my husband and I. One of the best true-crime books that I ever read was *The Stranger Beside Me* by Ann Rule. If you don't know, Ann Rule is a famous true-crime writer, and this book was extra-fascinating because it chronicles her relationship with the famous psychopathic serial killer, Ted Bundy. Ann Rule was actually friends with Ted Bundy – they met working at a suicide hotline together. The book chronicles their friendship while working at the hotline, while the murders were taking place, and after Ted was caught – very interesting read, and crazy that one of the most famous crime writers had a friendship (unrelated to her ever writing a book about him) with one of the most prolific serial killers of all time.

Cleaning up the streets?

Apparently someone who was attempting to clean up the state he governed needed to look in his own backyard. As more details rise from the controversy surrounding the sex scandal of New York governor Eliot Spitzer, one of the leading stars involved

in the prostitution ring is an aspiring actress/singer named Ashley Dupre. It is really unfortunate that a young person would feel the need to become involved in such a lifestyle... even living with the governor in an apartment in Manhattan until he walked out on her. Although she does not want to be thought of as a "monster," who can say whether or not she will ever be seen as anything but the governor's plaything. It just seems like a lot of young ladies (and men) who want to become stars are prone to controversy. Britney, Jamie Lynn (good name... wrong spelling), [Lindsay Lohan](#), and several others seem to grace entertainment periodicals and news broadcasts everywhere. Not very good role models for teenage youngsters. The evils that celebrity leads to.

Which is not to say that the main character in the mess is the young lady. On the contrary, it is disgusting that the man who had been praised for reportedly decreasing the amount of crime and smut in New York state would be such a hypocrite.