



The Salt Lake Tribune

TUESDAY, May 11, 2010

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The Thumb

The Salt Lake Tribune

Updated: 05/07/2010 03:12:01 PM MDT

THUMB DOWN: Land grab » Rep. Rob Bishop, R-Utah, thinks 2,000 pages of Interior Department documents would make illuminating reading. Bishop believes the department is contemplating a land grab similar to the surprise designation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in 1996. The documents, which are linked to a leaked memo about the possibility of designating new monuments, could prove or disprove Bishop's suspicions. But the department has foolishly, and perhaps illegally, denied his request, giving Bishop just 383 pages. The decision also gives the appearance that the feds have something to hide. These are public documents produced by public employees using public tax dollars. As such, they should be released for the immediate edification and education of the congressman. Let Bishop have his fun. We might even learn something.

THUMB DOWN: Cats and dogs? » Prosecutors are from Mars; bank robbers are from Venus. That didn't keep Salt Lake County District Attorney Lohra Miller from going to the end of the Earth to try to help an acquaintance receive a favorable sentence in federal court. Curtis Brad Cordery, 22, was being sentenced for robbing a credit union, and Miller wrote a letter reminding the judge that long sentences for convicts who pose a low risk for re-offending can "increase the likelihood for future criminal behavior." Miller knew Cordery in his teens when the pair participated in

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falconry, a sport in which trained raptors are used to hunt small game. There are no rules prohibiting prosecutors from advocating on behalf of convicts. But it does seem to defy the law of common sense.

THUMB UP: Green thumb » Everyone's probably heard of Internet dating services. Well, now there's a local Web site that makes matches of a different kind. Sharing Backyards puts people who have space in their home gardens together with folks who want to work the earth but don't have enough soil of their own. It's operated by Wasatch Community Gardens on its Web site www.wasatchgardens.org. Click on the "Garden" tab. The program uses an interactive map to match prospective gardeners with garden owners in Salt Lake, Weber, Summit, Cache and Utah counties. The idea is to put neighbors

together in the garden. People who have more land than they can work by themselves can get help from people who don't have a garden to work in. There's no screening of applicants. People have to do that themselves. And they have to decide how to share the harvest. But it could be the beginning of beautiful friendships.

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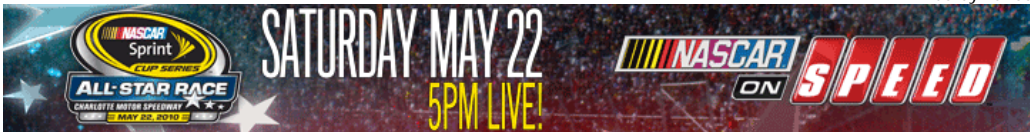
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