



## **Tailpipe tally**

The Worldwatch Institute says 41 million new cars rolled off the planet's assembly lines in 2003. About 4 million were in China, where sales and traffic are burgeoning. The Model T got better

gas mileage a century ago than Ford's average vehicle now. How does your vehicle stack up emissions-wise? Check it out at www.environmentaldefense.org/tailpipetal-

"Phillup the Pig" is the

serenely ceramic porker created to hold donations

ed at the Wil-Mar

from folks attending performances at the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse. The venue has been locat-

Thursday, May 20, 2004

#### **Jacquelyn Mitchard**

THE REST OF US



## **Discuss** suicide with kids

Melissa first wrote me before her son was buried.

"Suicide. People have to say it over and over," she said. "People have to see. He didn't die suddenly, accidentally. He killed himself. People have to know that even a kid who seems happy can be at risk. People are afraid to talk with me because my son killed himself. But I want it talked about. I want it talked about.'

It was a busy Friday. Adam, only 18 years old, had things to do — a new job, for one. Sure, he was a moody teenager. He had reason. He'd had scrapes with drugs in the past, but the random testing his parents insisted upon showed no traces of marijuana. He'd fathered a child when he was only 16. He kept a lot in, as boys will do.

Suicide was something Melissa and her husband didn't talk about with Adam. She figured, in many ways correctly, that he "was still (somewhat) a child . . . struggling to find a way, but slowly beginning to grow and mature . . . and none of his (mistakes) were so devastating they could not be overcome, or so I thought.

She thought that up until she found her son on a bathroom floor awash with blood that might have come from Melissa's own heart, his step-dad's police service pistol by his side.

When there is a murder in a school, or a fatal car wreck, grief counselors come. If it is a small school, perhaps the same thing happens with a suicide. But often parents are ashamed — they feel they've failed a child so much that even living is unbear able — and as Melissa says, she senses others assuring themselves that it couldn't happen to their girl, their boy.

In fact, it happens to more than 4,000 teenagers each year in the United States. Suicide ranks as the third leading cause of death among young people between ages 15 and 19. Girls try more often; boys more often succeed. Some are clearly depressed, but some are not. Many are popular.

However, for Melissa and her husband and Adam's older brother, also a quiet boy, now frozen in grief, it will last forever.

The questions will last forever, as they will for two fathers of my acquaintance whose beautiful ninth-grade daughter and whose funny sixth-grade son died by hanging. Her parents knew the moment might come. She had tried before. Even the fact that her mom was a mental health professional couldn't help.

More than 300 people gave money in memory of Adam, which Melissa donated to SAVE (Suicide Awareness Voice of Education), www.save.org, for suicide pre-

Adam didn't know how people cared.

He didn't think he could outlive the pain. A few days after I first spoke to Melissa, my 17-year-old son showed me a clip of a German animated film about a girl who cut her wrists. "This is the saddest thing you'll ever see, Ma," he warned, and he watched as my eyes filled. When it was over, I asked him to e-mail the clip to his health teacher, to use in the unit on suicide.

And I asked my own quietest child, who has lost a father and struggled mightily in school, if he thought about suicide. He said, "You ask me about it so much I don't get a chance to." Then he asked, "What would you do if one of us died?

I said the first stupid thing that came to mind. "Probably go with you."

"That would wreck the whole family," he said, and then looked hard at me. "OK, I get it," he said finally.

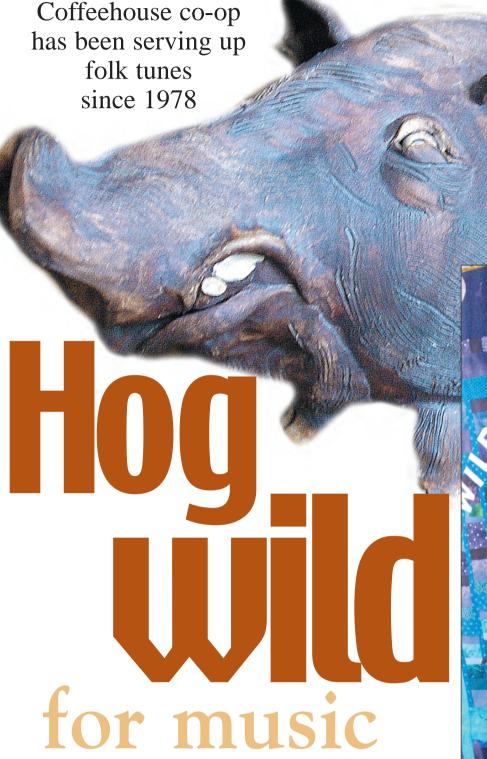
Bring up suicide with your kids and they will think you're nuts. Tell them the truest old cliche in the world: Nothing, no matter how awful, ever gets worse by talking about it. Tell them that if they want to end their lives, to promise to wait, say, a week. Something could change. Tell them that death is forever.

Do it for all the Adams in the world.

Jacquelyn Mitchard welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Media Services Inc., 435 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1400, Chicago, IL 60611 or tmseditors@tribune.com.

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■ Ask the Expert 4F ■ TV 5F



**By Nadine Goff** Special to The Capital Times

is nose was only inches away, but "Phillup the Pig" wasn't scarfing down the delicious homemade brownies at the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center that Friday night near the end of April. Serenely ceramic, the patient porker was there so people could stuff his belly with

ably in large denominations. Everyone else was there to listen to Bowen Marvik play his original music on acoustic guitar and, perhaps, enjoy some tasty treats at what many people call "The Hog," a family-friendly coffeehouse dedicated to the promo-

donations of green stuff, prefer-

tion, preservation and enjoyment of traditional folk and acoustic

The Hog's proper name is the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse. It was born 26 years ago, when a group of people from the Madison area decided they wanted to create a venue that offered decent coffee, healthy food and a smoke-free, alcohol-free environment where people could perform and listen to folk music.

They considered a lot of names for the organization they were creating, including the Listening Room and Banish Misfortune. Someone who was perusing the LP collection belonging to the tenants of the apartment on East Johnson Street where the

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MICHELLE STOCKER PHOTOS/THE CAPITAL TIMES

Chris Lipo, treasurer of the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse, also created an attractive quilt decorated with little pigs playing musical instruments for the Hog's 25th anniversary celebration.

#### What's up at the Hog

The Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse cooperative presents folk music concerts at 8 p.m. Fridays in the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, 953 Jenifer St. Admission is \$2.50 for the public and \$2 for members, except for an occasional special event, usually co-sponsored with other organizations. Here's a list of upcoming concerts:

May 21: "Master musical storyteller" Garnet Rogers in a special event concert in cooperation with the Madison Folk Music Society. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$17 at the door. Advance tickets are available at Borders East and West, Spruce Tree Music, Orange Tree Imports and B-Side Records. May 28: Madison singer-songwriter Amelia Royko.

For additional information, go to the Wild Hog in the Woods Web site. If you'd like to become a volunteer, call Kim Genich at 233-5687.



DAVID SANDELL/THE CAPITAL TIMES

Melissa Matthay (left), owner of The Knitting Tree, features new designs in two books, which she wrote in collaboration with Sheryl Thies.

## Knitting needles fly at shop on Monroe

By Debra Carr-Elsing The Capital Times

There's nothing subtle about Melissa Matthay. She lives each day with the same distinctive flair that she puts into her designs for knitwear.

Her enthusiasm for life — and knitting – is contagious and fun to be around. It's probably a big reason why customers are drawn to her cozy yarn shop, The Knitting Tree, 2624 Monroe St.

"I'm so in love with knitting — excitement just pours through my fingers," says the flamboyant shop owner.

There's also a lot of creativity coming through her fingers, which are rarely idle. She knits at 5:30 every morning before the rest of her family wakes up, and she often can be spotted at the grocery store, knitting up and down the aisles while her 10-year-old son pushes the cart.

"There's no trick to knitting in the dark, ither — I do it all the time," Matthay quips.

"OK, OK, I know I'm over the edge, but varn speaks to me. I find inspiration for designs everywhere I look.'

In fact, Matthay is so inspired that she creates about 100 new designs each year. String 20 of those years together, and you've got the amount of time Matthay owned the Yarn Co. in Manhattan, which was rated Best of New York.

While living in the Big Apple, Matthay started designing for 7th Avenue. Eventually, she became a designer for top international yarn companies.

This passion and bent for high fashion are evident in her two latest books, "Little Box of Scarves" and "Little Box of Sweaters," which were written in collaboration with Sheryl Thies, a marketing executive and knitting instructor at Matthay's shop.

"Melissa's designs are fantastic, and they're no-fuss knitting," Thies says. "My job is to simply follow her around and turn little pieces of paper into a pattern.

"I add my organizational skills to her designs, and it works out very well.'

What's unique about these latest knitting books — which were published by Martingale & Co. and sell for \$19.95 each - is the packaging concept. Each

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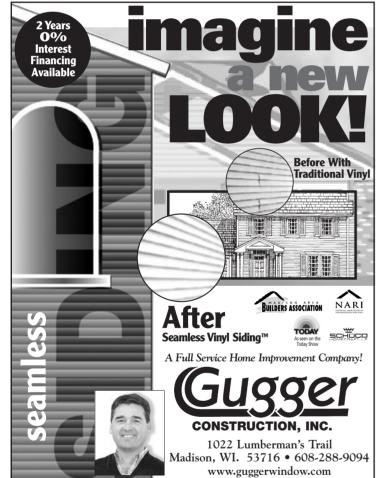
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## How to deal with co-worker from hell

Q. I work in "cubicle land" where noises carry, and a coworker in the next cubicle is driving me crazy! Her behavior is obnoxious, and her personality is worse. How do people survive in this kind of environment and stay sane?

A. Working in close proximity to other people can be a real challenge, especially when there is the illusion of separate space created by partial walls. You can, in fact, be sitting closer to the person in the next cubicle than you would be if all the walls were down and you were working in one large open

While it may be obvious to the casual observer that one will hear phones ringing and machines beeping when there are no walls, your letter pointed out the human side of such a close encounter. "Sharp slurping from the ever-present latte cup, loud yawns, grunts and groans every time she moves, phlegmy smoker's hacks and the ever-present smell of smoke on her clothes."

So, let's start with the obvious. Have you tried using earplugs or wearing a headset and listening to music?

Have you talked to this person about how her behavior affects you? I realize that when someone is so oblivious to how she is being perceived, she may not understand your concerns, but you could make the effort.

Another obvious solution is to ask to be moved to another cubicle. Your other co-workers may not be happy about this

**Lois Bartels** ASK THE EXPERT



solution if someone needs to sit next to this person. But at least this approach would alert your supervisor to the problem, and then he or she can choose to deal with it or not.

If your supervisor talks to the person and things change, your problem is solved. If you are told that you just have to live with it, then you can actually thank your antagonist because you are going to be forced to move to a new level of detachment, and that's a good thing.

Detaching from another person's behavior is one of the hardest things there is to do. Right now I'm sure that you hear every burp, slurp or creak that comes from the neighboring cubicle. They are so annoying because you have gotten to the point where you feel justified anger and each time you hear or replay the scenarios in your head, they feel more intolerable. But the truth of the matter is if those noises went away you would probably hear noises from the jerk two or three cubicles away.

There will always be people who don't behave according to our personal standards. We can Detaching from another person's behavior is one of the hardest things there is to do. Right now I'm sure that you hear every burp, slurp or creak that comes from the neighboring cubicle.

choose to focus on them or we can choose to focus on what is ours. For instance, hearing the slurp is one thing. It's the thought that follows that counts. Do you say to yourself, "There she goes again" or "If she grunts one more time, I'm going to explode!" or do you say "Bless you"?

In her book, "Loving-kindness," Sharon Salzberg says: "The difference between misery and happiness depends on what we do with our attention." You can focus on the noises your neighbor makes or you can turn your attention inward and deal with yourself.

Start by putting your work aside (after all, you probably aren't accomplishing much anyhow if you are busy telling yourself how annoyed you are) and breathe deeply. After a couple of deep breaths, breathe normally and count your breaths. "In: one," "Out: one and a half," "In: two" and so on until you are completely focused on your breath. Stay with your breath as long as you can. You are developing a discipline to help you detach from your neighbor.

After a couple of minutes, stop and write down what you are feeling (mad, sad, glad, hurt, ashamed, afraid) and then follow those feelings beyond

the trigger (your neighbor). You will probably find other things that are bothering you about your work environment.

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While writing, develop a set of positive statements that you will say to yourself every time you experience something negative about your neighbor. Suppose she complains about her kids. Say to yourself, "May you live with peace and ease." Then when she coughs say, "May you be physically well."

Amazing things start happening when we focus on our own thoughts and behaviors. Sometimes annoying co-workers quit or get transferred. You might get promoted. Things around us change when we change. It's like having a hanging mobile. Flick one segment of it, and the whole thing moves. It's the same in the office. Things will change for you when you change.

Lois I. Bartels, Ph.D., is a personal and professional coach, career counselor and owner of Lifework Resources. Her career counseling and lifestyle coaching focus on helping people identify their values, interests, skills and talents and applying them in ways that result in a satisfy ing life. If you have a question for her, please mail it to ASK THE EX-PERT BARTELS, The Capital Times PO Box 8060, Madison WI 53708 or e-mail it to lifework@charter.net. She may be reached at 608-277-5058.

### Wild

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organizers were meeting one night in the spring of 1978 suggested "Wild Hog in the Woods," a tune listed on an album by the Fuzzy Mountain String Band. Not everyone present was

certain they wanted to name their fledgling organization aner a song mai one organizei says "is about a wild boar that eats people and has the bones of 1,000 men outside his cave." But a fanciful metamorphosis changed a lot of minds.

"We argued about it a lot," remembers Ken Rineer, a founding member of the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse cooperative. "And then people started creating fun images of little pigs playing musical instruments."

Cute little piggies and a long history are only part of what makes the saga of the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse such a remarkable success story. The heart and soul of this nonprofit cooperative are the member volunteers who've managed to create and sustain an institution with no hierarchy and no paid staff.

Attend one of the Hog's monthly organizational meet-

ings and you may see people like musician booker Ramona Johannes, sound runner Bob Weitzel, "coordinators' coordinator" Kim Genich, or treasurer Chris Lipo, who also created an attractive quilt decorated with little pigs playing musical instruments for the Hog's 25th anniversary celebration.

missions on that recent Friday night. An accomplished hammered dulcimer player, Doran also urged audience members to fill up Phillup the Pig if they enjoyed Marvik's finger-picking guitar concert, since most performers are supported only by audience contributions.

What you won't see at the monthly meetings is anyone hogging the floor. These volunteer coordinators really do know how to work together cooperatively.

As durable and effective as it has been, the Hog's organizational structure has sometimes worked against it. The organization has no office and no telephone number. Although it now has an information-packed Web site (see sidebar), until relatively recently the best and most effective way for newcomers to contact a coordinator was to attend one of the

Hog's Friday night coffeehouses, which have been held at the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center since 1993. In a city with so many entertainment options, perhaps only the determined and dedicated were likely to find their way to the

The legal capacity of the

Wil-Mar Center's Yahara Room,

where the Hog holds its concerts, is 200. But the biggest maybe you'll see Ben crowd in recent memory, Doran, the man in according to several coordinacharge of collecting ad-  $\,$  tors, was about 140 people. Coordinators say that lately

attendance has varied, running from five to 75, depending on who's performing.

"For as long as I remember, the Hog has been on again, off again with audiences," says Karen Gogolick, who made her debut as a performer at the first concert at the Wild Hog in the Woods Coffeehouse when it opened in November 1978 at the Green Lantern Eating Cooperative at 604 University

The Hog has always kept admission prices for concerts low, but Gogolick, who now earns a living playing and singing with her husband, Rick Roltgen, in KG & the Ranger, says while there's sometimes an advantage to low prices, too often people incorrectly assume low prices mean low quality.

The quality of the perform-

ers at the Hog is high. Survey the list of upcoming events at the Hog, and you'll notice that most of the performers are well established and have impressive resumes But there is still room for

newcomers. The Web site notes, "It's a Wild Hog tradition to offer one or two performers an open mic between the main performer's two sets. "The Hog has a certain repu-

tation that precedes it," says Doran. "It opens doors if it's on vour resume."

ut that's not the only reason performers are eager to play at the Hog, he adds. "It's about the grace of the space — the ambience is wonderful, and it has great, natural acoustics." Tradition, not numbers, is much more important to the Wild Hog in the Woods coordinators who attended the April meeting. "I've never seen a musician get ticked off because nobody showed," says Genich.

"You can't guarantee numbers: You have to go back to the grace," Doran insists.

Perhaps grace and gratitude are among the reasons why, although Gogolick is no longer an active member, KG & the Ranger played at the Hog last year. And like the rest of the performers who entertain there, they were paid only by audience donation.

## Knit

Continued from Page 1F

publication is a sturdy box that contains 20 patterns on durable, laminated cards with stepby-step instruction.

If an idea appeals to you, slip the card into your knitting bag and take it with you.

"In addition to great garment designs, we're selling portability and convenience," Thies says. Full color photos are fea-

tured on each pattern card, as well as easy-to-follow instructions and schematics. Creative options allow knitters to jazz things up a bit or tone them

"Knitting doesn't have to be Greek," Matthay says. "It really can be very simple and straightforward.'

Matthay embellishes many of her designs with unique features, such as feathers around a neckline or fringe on the sleeves. At The Knitting Tree, she often creates personalized designs for customers.

"I love designing sweaters and mixing up colors," she



Pheasant feathers adorn the neckline of this hand-knit sweater created by Melissa Matthay of The Knitting Tree.

says. "I'm much better at writing a pattern than I am at following one. It's a lot more fun that way!'

And, from beginning to end, lots of changes tend to happen before a project is complete.

"Knitting is making an enormous comeback," Matthay says. "Scarves are very fashionable now, and they're so simple to make."

There's appeal, too, with novelty yarns — eyelash varieties and fur — that have be-

come very outrageous and fun. The end result is knitting classes — especially the ones geared for children — at Matthay's yarn shop are filling up a

month in advance. This renewed interest also is being fueled by the rising popularity of knit scull caps or beanies, which are worn by many skateboarders and music celebrities, Matthay says.

Hundreds of natural fiber and exotic yarns are included in the large inventory at The Knitting Tree, where visitors enjoy meeting Matthay's shop dog, a 5-month-old golden retriever named Keo.

"When I discover a new type of yarn, I have to get it in every color, then I have to design something in every color," Matthay says.

"I've been knitting for 25 years — I was 2 when I started," she jokes.

Nowadays, Matthay begins a knitting project on Fridays. By the following week, the completed project is on display at her shop.

She designs sweaters to go with each new pair of shoes,

### Meet the knitting books' authors

In celebration of their two latest books, "Little Box of Scarves" and "Little Box of Sweaters," local authors Melissa Matthay and Sheryl Thies will host a book signing from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, May 26, at The Knitting Tree, 2614 Monroe St.

The event will include a trunk show of the original sweaters and scarves featured in the books, which include step-by-step instructions for no-fuss knitting. Copies of the writing duo's first Martingale publication, "Basically Brilliant Knits," also will be available.

For information on knitting classes, call the yarn store at 238-0121 or check out its Web site at www.knittingtree.com.

for example, and creative juices really start to flow when she gets a colorful purse or interesting jewelry.

The final design is never plain, and neither is she.

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