



# TAKE BACK YOUR TIME

OCTOBER 24 WWW.TIMEDAY.ORG

"People who cannot find time for recreation are obliged sooner or later to find time for illness "  
- John Wanamaker, 1838-1922 American Merchant

"Nothing is impossible to a willing heart. "  
- John Heywood

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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - JOHN DE GRAAF

Wow! Time flies. I'd hoped we could get this newsletter out by early October but here it is the middle of the month. And what a month—or Fall—it's been! All of the financial shocks have left Americans gasping for breath and more stressed-out than ever before. With so much bad economic news, it may seem a little foolish to suggest that Americans need more free time. But in fact, when people are as stressed as we are, that just what the doctor is (or should be) ordering. In addition to vacation time, it might just be time to revive interest in four day work weeks, both to conserve fuel and to spread work around when companies feel forced to layoff workers. Board member Greg Wright has proposed a four-day 36 hour work week. Companies might also consider four days and 32 hours (if workers are willing to take small reductions in pay) and use to savings to keep more people employed. More on this in the next newsletter.

## OUR NEW PARTNERSHIP—VACATIONS AND HEALTH

Take Back Your Time is happy to partner with the American Resort Development Association on a campaign called "Take Two Weeks and Call Me in the Morning!"—a campaign to point out the links between vacations and health and call awareness to America's vacation deprivation. The campaign has a Web site: [www.vacationbetter.org](http://www.vacationbetter.org) with lots of information about the connections between longer vacations and better health. I am a consultant to the project and will be doing some media interviews stressing the health/ vacation

connection. In return for my participation, the American Resort Development Association has made a generous financial donation to TAKE BACK YOUR TIME. We are excited to cooperate with them in this important effort to educate Americans about the importance of vacation time for their health and appreciative of their donation.

In the same vein, we have been working closely with the travel industry in promoting more vacation time. We held a meeting September 10th at the Washington DC offices of the Travel Industry Association of America to begin plans for a June, 2009 National Vacation Matters Summit to be held in DC. Our new committee includes travel industry leaders, some of our board members and several academic leaders in the leisure and recreation field. Please let me know if you're interested in being part of the planning committee. We communicate by listserv and a bi-weekly conference call.

I have produced a nine-minute video on the importance of vacation time for KCTS, the Seattle Public Television affiliate. The program was filmed in Yosemite National Park in August, with beautiful photography by David Fox and Diana Wilmar. It was made possible by a generous grant from Sierra Club Productions. Please feel free to send the link to as many people as you can, show in your classes, etc. Here is the link, and another to my blog about the program:

<http://www.kcts9.org/video/the-vacation-aversion-extended-cut>

<http://www.kcts9.org/blog/the-great-vacation-squeeze>

## TAKE BACK YOUR TIME EVENTS

It's not too late to plan something for Take Back Your Time Day. We've heard of a few events, which will be held on the evening before, Thursday, October 23rd. Please let us know if you're planning anything and take photos if you can for our next newsletter. Maureen Wilt and her students at Central Missouri University have made some great t-shirts using our vacation posters. We'll have photos and ways you can purchase your own in our next newsletter. Remember that October 24th is the 70th anniversary of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which gave us the 40-hour work week and minimum wage, and was supposed to include a vacation law. Let's bring it up to date in the coming year with an Act mandating paid vacation for all American workers.

## THE ELECTION

Take Back Your Time is a non-partisan organization and therefore, does not endorse candidates. We do want to let you know what we know about the candidates' positions regarding our policy agenda however. Neither Senator McCain nor Senator Obama has yet endorsed paid vacation time. But interviews done by the NY based Families and Work Institute found strong differences between the candidates on the issues of family leave and sick days. Take Back Your Time strongly supports paid family leave, which is guaranteed in all of the world's countries except the US, Liberia, Swaziland and Papua New Guinea. Senator Obama has pledged to direct federal funds to states to help that provide paid family leave. He also wants to extend the Family and Medical Leave Act to cover businesses with 25 employees or more—the law currently covers businesses with 50 employees or more. Senator McCain does not support paid family leave although he did support the original Family and Medical Leave Act. As for paid sick days, Senator Obama supports the Healthy Families Act, as does Take Back Your Time. The Act would provide 7 paid sick days per year for American workers. Senator McCain does not support and “mandate” which would require employers to provide paid sick days. Be sure to vote!

## MRS. CALIFORNIA, 30S SUPPORTS TAKE BACK YOUR TIME

I was thrilled last month to receive an email and phone call from Jessica Cassidy, who is 2008-2009 Mrs. California, 30s, saying she supports what TAKE BACK YOUR TIME is trying to do to help Americans

regain family time. I asked her to write about what led her to support us—her moving issue can be found later in this newsletter. Thanks so much for your support, Jessica! And good luck in the 2009 Mrs. America Pageant!

## PLEASE DONATE

Please consider an end of the year, tax-deductible donation to TAKE BACK YOUR TIME



We are dependent on you, our members, for our support! Please donate NOW!

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR - KELLEY SMITH

Unless you've been visiting another planet for the last three weeks, you have been inundated with bad news from the financial world. Tough economic times make us all weary and discouraged. And, some might say, hard times bode ill for our hope for paid vacation, sick leave, or reclaiming personal time in any way.

I can understand such pessimism. Yet, the road for those who would reclaim their time from the seemingly relentless demands of employment has never been easy. Often, the time reclaimed is not spent sunbathing, yachting, or sightseeing. It might be spent *working* <sup>¾</sup> cooking a meal from scratch with the kids, washing dishes, or mowing the yard rather than hiring someone else. I am reminded of the old Amish phrase, "Many hands make light work." That is to say, often, the emotional satisfaction of working together with family and friends may be refreshing to the spirit. And, it's inexpensive!

Though it seems bereft of pizzazz and glamour, I want to remind those burdened with the current financial gloom of a tried and true idea <sup>¾</sup> voluntary simplicity. So, dig out your copy of Your Money or Your Life, More-with-Less Cookbook, or The Tightwad Gazette. Or, visit a library for these classics and newer books with suggestions to stretch a tight budget. Teach a young person to bake bread, repair furniture or clothing, or plant a garden.

In the process of sorting out our hopes and disappointments, we could rediscover community and family relationships. And with that can come strength and joy.

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## Feature Article by Jessica Cassidy, Mrs. California, 30s

NOTE: We are thrilled to have the support of Mrs. California, 30s, Jessica Cassidy. She is promoting family time and Take Back Your Time with the platform her selection as Mrs. California, 30s, offers her. She writes: As Mrs. California 30's (Beauties of America) I look forward to participating in the "Take Back Your Time" campaign along with promoting my personal platform "Family First." Jessica will also be representing her state at the Mrs. America pageant in 2009. She wrote this piece especially for our newsletter:

## TAKE BACK YOUR FAMILY TIME

By Jessica Cassidy

As a child I remember wishing that my family was more like all of my friend's families. My father was always gone fishing, hunting, at the archery range, out with his best friend, or just plain gone. My mother was so involved in herself and troubles with her marriage that there wasn't time for family and definitely not a sense of family unity.



There have been many life lessons that have made me realize the importance of family. There are more families spending less and less time nurturing their children and families as a whole. We are consumed with keeping up with "the Jones's" and not paying attention to what really matters in our lives.

As a pageant competitor for many years and now being in the Mrs. Pageant arena it was really important for me to have a platform that I really believed in. My platform originally started out as "Take Back Your Time by Getting Back to the Dinner Table." I diligently researched to strengthen my platform when I came across the "Take Back Your Time" campaign. I was ELATED! I couldn't believe that I had found an organization and others who believed as I did. I ended up revamping my platform, now called "Family First," and planned to promote it as much as possible because of things that had happened to me in my past. I felt it was my responsibility to at least help one individual so that they wouldn't have to endure some of the things that I had endured.

I was born and raised in the state of Michigan in one of the most popular and flourishing suburbs with the best schools in the state. I have two brothers. My father worked full time for GM at the Truck and Bus plant division and my mother was a homemaker. My earliest memories of my childhood seemed normal until the 6th grade. I was attending middle school in where I was involved in the choir, modeling, and was a champion equestrian. I had friends but I certainly wasn't the most popular girl in school and I was O.K. with that.

The day that it all changed was the day that I came home from a horseback riding lesson to find a half empty home, my father gone, one of my brothers gone, and the infamous business card of my father's attorney. My father had filed for divorce. I remember at that moment I couldn't move and felt completely numb to the world. My father had left me. It was the first of betrayals that I will remember for the rest of my life.

My parents' divorce was just the beginning of numbness, betrayal, lack of family unity and parenting. Their divorce was completely vicious. My father immediately moved in with his new girlfriend and her daughter along with my brother. He had completely replaced his family with the blink of an eye. His girlfriend's daughter became his "little girl" and I had become the bargaining chip for child support, and alimony amongst other things.

My parents badmouthed each other constantly until one day my mother received a phone call from my brother stating that he had just walked in on my father, who had a gun to his head ready to take his own life. I'm guessing it was because his "new family," asked him to leave and the reality of his real family being gone had set in.

At that point my brother and father decided to move into his parents' home and my parents decided to reconcile. It seemed great for the moment but it took a turn for the worse when they finally called it quits; the divorce proceedings continued. My oldest brother and I were "awarded" to my mother and were to stay with her in the home that we grew up in and my other brother was to remain with my father.

My mother was very angry with what had happened to her life. Her rage and anger began to control her life and everyone in it. She hated everyone, every man, and herself. There a few incidents of this rage that I will remember forever. I remember my mother being so angry at my oldest brother for no reason and started screaming at the top of her lungs. She was filled with rage; she grabbed a crowbar and started swinging away

at my brother. My brother backed all the way into a corner in the bay window, and crouched into a ball to protect himself.

After receiving an extreme beating my brother had enough. Literally the next day he planned to move out and he did. He took a horseback riding position with a gentleman which provided room and board; he was 17. After my brother moved out I felt the most alone I had ever felt. I was scared for what would happen to me. Shortly after my oldest brother moved my other brother was fed up with his living situation with my father.

My father frequented the local bars almost every night which caused a bleeding ulcer from his alcoholism. He had no regard for his responsibilities to my brother. In my father's selfishness, this behavior continued for quite some time. He didn't take care of my brother nor do anything else associated with parenting. My brother grew more and more frustrated and alone. He had finally decided enough was enough, he petitioned the Friend of the Court for Emancipation. The Emancipation was awarded; he was one of the first Emancipated minors in the State of Michigan. He then moved in with my other brother.

I was now alone living in my mother's home without any siblings. I figured that my mother's anger and rage would pass with time but it just grew deeper. My mother started to verbally and physically take her anger out on me. Anything and everything I did was criticized, I was called every name in the book, and anything that I said that set her off warranted a back hand, smack, punch, hair pulling amongst other things. She would drag me to the country bar to receive attention from men; she attempted to steal my identity, pretended to be me on a number of occasions, and would put me in inappropriate situations all because of her jealousy and hate for me. This behavior continued for quite some time before I couldn't handle it anymore.

I made a report with the school that I was attending with the counselor's office; I was removed from my mother's home immediately only to be returned a day later. This angered my mother even more and the same behavior continued. I asked my father if I could live with him and he agreed. Custody was changed and I lived with my father for a year.

During that year I had to visit my mother and the physical and verbal abuse continued. In addition to that, my father's new wife was pregnant and I was on the outs. Even though my mother was physically and emotionally abusive I chose to move back with her because my father no longer wanted me. I was trapped.

I was a junior in high school and had only two years and then I would be free. Throughout those two years the physical and verbal abuse continued to the point that I moved in with my good friend and her family for about 4 months until her parents decided it was time for me to address my mother and her behavior.

Back at my mother's I was miserable; I did the best I could to make the time pass quickly. I made sure that I was out of the house as much as possible to the point that I spent the night at my best friend's house across the street at least 4 days of the week. Her parents and family were amazing to me. They were the beginning of rebuilding my foundation. They made sure that I was fed, had money for lunch, clean clothes, pretty much everything that I needed they offered. For all that they have done I will forever be grateful.

When I started to rebuild my foundation I met a young man. He and I dated for 5 years and lived together, then were married. Everything during those 5 years seemed very normal. His parents were great, his grandmother always made sure that I knew I was a part of their family and loved me. We married in June of 2000 only to be separated three months later and divorced after that. He had betrayed my trust and the sanctity of marriage. I wasn't in a financial position to rent an apartment myself so unfortunately I landed back at my mother's. For the most part my mother left me alone because I stood up to her and wouldn't let her abuse me.

After my divorce I literally tried to destroy myself. I went out and drank almost every night. It would be 2 drinks then 4 drinks just as long as it made me numb and I no longer had to feel what I was feeling. I didn't care about myself just as long as I could lead the life that I was.

Someone must have been looking out for me because out of the blue I started exercising, stopped drinking as much and started to take life more seriously. I guess I started to have a small sense of hope. I ended up meeting my now husband at the gym I was working out at. We started dating slowly as he had been divorced and hurt in the past. He quickly learned that I was on a road to destruction. He put his foot down to my behavior and said if you want to be with me your lifestyle and behavior have to change. He was in no mood to be a part of my destruction. I listened because for the first time in my life I trusted him 100% that he wasn't going to hurt me.

Our relationship grew; we moved in together and then married. Throughout our relationship he and his family continued to teach me unconditional love and what it was to be a part of a true family unit. They always made sure that I knew if I made a mistake that the bond of a family is not easily destroyed. They accepted that I had a horrible past, had no clue about family, and didn't have the ability to communicate properly. His family continued to love me and offer me the tools to be a successful wife and mother.

A year after we were married my life changed yet again; but for the better. I gave birth to my first and only child, Trae. This moved me even more than the love and support of my husband's family. At that moment I finally figured it out. Family is what life is about! From that moment on I would do anything in my power to raise my son properly and teach him the things that I was never taught. I vowed to never miss a moment that was important to him and to parent the best I knew how.

Because of my past I have chosen a path that is a lost art; that of a time when you put your family first. I have chosen to take back who I am and take back the time that is mine for my family. It is important for all of us to take a good look at who we are and how we can be more nurturing to our families. Our families and our children are hurting because for lack of being part of something greater than any one individual...a family unit. The choice is ours to not let another child experience what I have.

I am looking forward to promoting "Family First" and "Take Back Your Time" and to making a difference in the lives of others because I have first hand experience of how vital and important it is to nurture our children and families in the most volatile world.

Warmest Regards,

Jessica L. Cassidy

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## From Our Board Members

### From Greg Wright (Los Angeles, CA):

I have received an e-mail informing me that [ftn@cbsnews.com](mailto:ftn@cbsnews.com) is an e-ddress for suggesting questions to be asked of the U.S. presidential candidates in the upcoming October 15th debate. I've asked the time issue-related query below. This might be a good place to also suggest questions about, for example, the U.S. being the only industrial country without mandated vacations for employees.

**TO BOB SCHIEFFER AND CBS NEWS ([ftn@cbsnews.com](mailto:ftn@cbsnews.com)):**

**QUESTION FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES IN THE OCTOBER 15th DEBATE:**

Would you support a modification of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to redefine the full-time work week as 36, instead of 40 hours, to enable **a new Four-Day Work Week of reasonable Nine-Hour Days** -- to reduce gasoline use, carbon emissions, and U.S. trade imbalance, promote energy independence, generate jobs, and increase the overall quality of life in America?

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**From Anmarie Widener**

**DOES PAID FAMILY AND SICK LEAVE IMPROVE OUR HEALTH?**

By Anmarie Widener and Adam Korobow

There are no U.S. micro level studies (at the individual level) that statistically show the health impact of paid leave. This study is the first of its kind, sampling over 50 thousand children using the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, a survey sponsored and conducted by AHRQ, the Agency for Health Research and Quality. This study is the first of a two part study examining the health impact of paid leave. Given the current debate in Congress on the importance of mandated paid leave, studies like these are timely and necessary if Congress is going to make policy decisions that are efficient and effective.

The ability for working parents to meet the health needs of their children and families may be contingent upon the important component of paid leave. This paper analyzes the impact of paid leave on child health outcomes.

Having no paid leave from employment may be an obstacle for families needing to care for the health and illnesses of family members or their own health care needs, as an infinite number of anecdotal evidence shows. Yet many U.S. working parents continue to lack paid leave[1]: 70 percent of private sector employees in the U.S. are not entitled to paid sick days to care for a sick child or other family member; 77 percent of low-income families and 48 percent of all private sector employees have no paid sick days at all (Lovell, 2004; Levin-Epstein, 2006).

Even general paid leave such as paid time off (PTO) (leave that includes time for illness and holiday and personal time all wrapped up in a set number of days per year) is not universal for U.S. employees. As far as vacation time goes, 23% of private sector employees have no paid vacation; 31% of female workers have no paid vacation; and 37% of low income female workers have no paid vacation time (Ray & Schmitt, 2007; De Graaf, 2008).

A recent report from the Center for Economic and Policy Research reviewed the national policies of 21 wealthy countries that support parents' work/life balance and ranked the U.S. last when it comes to the generosity and length of paid leave (Ray, Gornick, & Schmitt, 2008).

We hypothesize that children whose parents have access to paid leave will have more child wellness visits and healthcare visits which result in better child health status because parents will be more likely to take time off work to care for health needs. In this paper, we test the hypothesis that having access to paid-leave will increase the likelihood that a child will receive either a wellness visit or what we will call a care visit. We consider the cost of a physician visit as being comprised of two components: 1) the out-of-pocket price paid to the physician and 2) the opportunity cost of lost wages if the parent has to take time from work that is not reimbursed.

Having access to paid leave should reduce the overall price of a physician visit since the opportunity cost of foregone wages is removed from the decision. In other words, if leave from work to visit the doctor is not paid for, then this should result in a higher price of a physician visit, and might lead people to undertake fewer visits. Thus, offering paid-leave should reduce the price of a physician visit and might result parents being more likely to take their child to a physician when care is needed, assuming parents can use paid-leave for their children (Clemans-Cope, et al, 2008).

We know that parents without paid leave are less likely to take their child or themselves to a doctor when sick. When they do, many lose their jobs; in fact, one of the leading causes of job loss is taking care of children's health. In 2007, an estimated \$28.4 billion in lost productivity was due to job turnover, going to work sick and spreading illness, and present but not productive employees due to the employees' own illness and stress (presenteeism). And children in low income families are more likely to have poorer health compared to children in higher income families.

Our sample consisted of children in high, middle, and low income families between the ages of 0 and 17. Children had to be in families with at least one working parent employed all year, thus single and dual parent families are included. We use data from multiple years of the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS). MEPS provides nationally representative estimates of health care use and expenditures for the U.S. civilian non-institutionalized population and is sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

About 94 percent of the children in our sample have health coverage; 74 percent of these children have private health coverage while the rest are covered by a public plan. The average age of a child in our sample is approximately nine years. Average total parent income is about 60 thousand dollars. Most children have at least one parent in the household (88 percent) who completed high school (or has a GED equivalent). Approximately half the children in the sample (46 percent) have a parent in the household who has a college degree.

About 68 percent of children in our sample have at least one parent who has access to paid sick leave. For children who have two full-time working parents, access to paid sick leave rises to about 92%. Single parent households have the lowest access to paid sick leave, 43%. Access to paid sick leave also rises sharply with household income. About 20% of children in households which earn less than \$20,000 per year have at least one parent that has access to paid sick leave. For children in households with income of greater than \$60,000, access to paid sick leave for at least one parent rises to just over 85%.

Children from households where at least one parent is working and the household has access to sick leave receive a higher average number of wellness visits, 1.09, as compared to children whose parents do not have access to leave, 0.96.[2] This difference becomes more pronounced when looking at the number of wellness visits by households where both parents are working and have access to paid leave (1.06 visits) compared to households where both parents work and have no access to paid leave (0.85 visits). When we examine care visits, the same result is found, namely that children with parents who have access to paid-sick leave exhibit a higher number of average annual care visits (2.82) than children whose parents do not have access to paid-sick leave (2.25).

The largest magnitude determinant in our models of both wellness and care visits is whether a child has some form of health coverage. Having at least one parent in the household with a college degree increases the odds that a child receives a wellness visit and a care visit. Having at least one parent with high-school degree or GED also increases the odds of a visit but the magnitude of this effect is smaller than having a college degree. Paid sick leave had the next largest impact on likelihood of receiving a wellness or doctor visit. Specifically, having access to paid sick leave increased the odds of a child receiving a wellness visit by 1.14 while paid sick leave increased the odds of a care-based visit by 1.18. We also list the corresponding *average marginal* effects from the logistic regressions. In particular, the average marginal impact of having access to

paid-leave across our sample is to increase the likelihood of a wellness visit by about 3% and increase the likelihood of a care-based visit by about 4%. Only having health insurance (approximately 20%) and education level (approximately 6%) had a higher impact. Paid leave is statistically significant at the 95 percent level in both the wellness and care-based models. Moreover, the magnitude of the impact is close to the same impact as estimated by the logistic regressions, namely, having access to paid leave is associated with about a 3% higher likelihood of receiving a wellness visit in a year and a 3% higher likelihood of receiving a care-based visit.

Further analysis on the impact of paid leave on subgroups within the dataset are needed. For example, what is the impact of paid sick leave on asthmatic children, on children with special health care needs, on school absenteeism. These types of breakdowns as well as distinguishing between types of paid leave (e.g., sick, family, and vacation) and their differential impact on child health outcomes are necessary to tease out the actual true impact of policies that support paid leave.

Paid sick leave has been found to significantly increase the likelihood of receiving child wellness and child doctor visits. Working families may depend on paid leave policies to make *time* to give quality care without fear of losing one's job and to decrease the cost of a doctor visit. Paid leave may be one mechanism by which parents are better able to participate in preventative care for their children, to manage their child's acute illnesses well, and to ensure their children are growing in safe and healthy environments.

A more integrated health system would consider not only decreasing costs and increasing health insurance coverage, but also increasing an individual's ability to receive care when ill while maintaining gainful employment. True cost-cutting mechanisms emphasizes prevention which means making time to care for one's own health and the health of their family members, before acute illness occurs. Access to paid sick leave may be one mechanism employees depend on to provide healthcare for themselves and their children.

Anmarie J. Widener, MSW, Ph.D., is a health policy analyst at LMI, a not-for-profit government organization based in McLean, VA. Adam Korobow, Ph.D., is a research fellow at the LMI Research Institute.

[1] We are interested in paid leave as opposed to unpaid leave. The Family and Medical Leave Act (1993) provides 12 weeks of unpaid leave to workers; about half of all private sector employees are eligible. A survey by the Department of Labor found more than three quarters of eligible employees reported needing but not using FMLA because they could not afford to take leave without pay (Cantor, et al, 2001).

[2] We tested this difference using a Wald Test and found statistical significance at the 1 percent level.

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**From Alison Link:**

Hello all!

I am currently at the World Leisure Conference in Quebec City. Last night I had the opportunity to visit a phenomenal exhibit on free-time at the Museum of Civilization. It is a wonderful implementation of leisure education...that everyone should know about and visit!

Here is a link to learn more:

<http://www.mcq.org/en/presse/presse.php?idEx=w1639>

If you have the chance to visit before September 2009 in Quebec, make every effort or find a way to bring this exhibit to your community.

I congratulate the museum and Andre Thibault (and his students) for all of their work to create this innovative interactive experience for people of all ages. As a leisure educator, it really moved me. And I have to admit that I lost track of time while in the exhibit...I was one of the last to leave the museum!

If you would like to know more about it from my perspective, please feel free to be in touch...

In addition to the many interactive components...there are many poems and written pieces that relate to "time" that are in line with all of those emails that were going around on this listserv about "time".

Here are the opening words for the exhibit (I was told that I couldn't take pictures so I typed this from my hand written notes.):

### **Standing up to time**

As time goes by in current times, we have to speed up to catch up with time and as our times proclaim that time is money, we are spendthrift with time: no slacking--ever, down with down time, we work against time, we struggle to get as much time a we can in no time, we're always out of time, always hoping to gain time, always making up for lost time. Is it a sign of the times that we feel time deprived at all times and by measuring out multiple duties by the moment, our lives have become a never ending long distance race against the clock? It may be time to turn back the clock on time and disarm it by "pastimes". The things we do from time to time to just pass the time and have a good time. if we take time off from everyday routines by taking time for recreation, the hours will melt away. Then we are recreating time, which is only a heartbeat away from BLISS.

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### **From Maureen Wilt:**

I've blown up and laminated several right2 vacation posters for window displays around campus and made copies of all of them to put around campus for TBYTD. My students voted to have the life, liberty, and the pursuit of ... poster on the back of one of our TBYT day Tshirts this year and the playground rules poster on the back of the other. They are very excited about the campaign this year.

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## **IN THE NEWS**

### **TAKE BACK YOUR TIME BOARD MEMBER WINS 2008 INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING INDUSTRY'S AWARD FOR THE #1 GIFT BOOK**

*Gifts from the Mountain: Simple Truths for Life's Complexities* by Take Back Your Time board member Eileen McDargh earned the highest honor in the gift book genre. Hailed as an eloquent masterpiece, the judges found it "insightful and enjoyable with a great blend of nature and real life."

Recognizing excellence in independent publishing The Benjamin Franklin Awards™ is named for America's most treasured printer/publisher. The 2008 Awards competition drew more than 1,800 entries and judges represented all areas of the industry: major newspaper and trade media reviewers, bookstore and library buyers and reviewers, non-competing publishers, artists and writers who serve the industry.



*Gifts from the Mountain* is a beautifully illustrated book filled with watercolor paintings and wisdom derived from nature to help the reader cope with the complexity of modern life. The author was inspired to write the book after a backpacking trip through the Sierras. While considering wild onions or mosquitoes, river crossings or thunderbolts, McDargh imparts lessons for understanding the mundane and the magnificent, the difficult and the delightful, the ordinary and the extraordinary.

This is the second book award for McDargh. Her *Work for a Living & Still be Free to Live* was voted the #1 non-fiction book by California Press Women. Now, the life changing lessons about work and life gained from all her outdoor experiences which she crafted into powerful metaphors has won her this latest honor.

*"Life gives you choices. You can stay on one side and keep your feet warm and dry. Or you take the plunge for what you want. What's worse: to err for the things you did or to err for the things you failed to do?"*

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Since 1980, Hall of Fame speaker Eileen McDargh has helped Fortune 100 companies as well as individuals create connections that count and conversations that matter. Her other books include *Talk Ain't Cheap...It's Priceless! Connecting in a Disconnected World*, *The Resilient Spirit: Heart Talk for Staying Rightside Up in a World That's Upside Down* and *Work For A Living & Still Be Free To Live - Revised for the New Millennium* (one of the first books to address the notion of balance and authentic work).

Congratulations, Eileen! We're proud to have you on our board!

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## **Dads Need Work-Life Balance Too!**

**Sent to us by a Canadian reader:**

[http://www.huggishappybaby.com/info/lib/articles/article.aspx?section=library&article\\_id=4556&nc=633578420602956537&nockcheck=true](http://www.huggishappybaby.com/info/lib/articles/article.aspx?section=library&article_id=4556&nc=633578420602956537&nockcheck=true)

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## **YOUR LETTERS**

**From Washington State:**

I am not sure where the conference will be located, or if my schedule will allow me to either attend or help, but I would like to receive information on the conference. I am sure the reason I want to help is the same for many- thank you for working on something that seems so basic. When I see the people in management at the location I work taking their vacations religiously, while telling the rest of us we should just be glad we have a job- it is really disheartening.

**From Utah:**

I worked overtime for two months in order to finance taking two weeks off of work to be with my son. We camped in the mountains, hiked, climbed rocks, talked, and saw bears and mountain goats in Montana. I forgot for a few days that I actually had a job. When I returned to work, I was able to work better and worry less.

### **From Connecticut:**

In addition to the obvious health and productivity benefits; more vacation time would enable Americans to have a better relationship with the rest of the world. Most Americans are quite ignorant about the world outside our borders. Many of us have never traveled outside of our home state! If we had the time and opportunity to venture to other countries and experience other cultures, I believe we'd be more well-liked in the world. I know that if I only had the time off, I'd volunteer abroad.

### **From Central Florida:**

I was browsing the internet (trying to find out more about why Americans don't demand more paid vacation time) when I ran into your website. I am from Sweden originally. In Sweden everyone that works for one year gets five weeks paid vacation. When I first came to the States I was surprised that workers are so unaware about other countries. Most don't have a passport and I can see how that is all tied to low minimum wages and very short if any paid vacation. It's almost as this country being the "super capitalist" is built on ignorance about what is going on in the rest of the industrialized world.

People here think this country is the one that offers freedom and democracy more than any other country when that is not true. Most of the American people will never find out because it is not in their education to learn and since most never will leave the country they simply will not find out. I don't think it is freedom when people work for \$8.00/hour and get one or two weeks of paid vacation after working a year. When I tell people that Swedes have 5 weeks paid vacation some don't even believe me. I use to tell them that it is like that in most of the European countries and has been like that for many years.

Sometimes I think that USA is like Russia used to be when they would not let people travel and leave the country. Russia simply didn't want their citizens to know about the other world. Same thing here. People don't know and it seem as if it is kept that way for a reason. Hopefully we will have a new leader in the country soon and he might be very open for your ideas. You might be able to use contributions you get to advertise more online so more and more people get to know about you and what you work for. Workers are being exploited in the USA. Living from paycheck to paycheck while few others are living in incredible wealth. They are brought up to accept it that way. They just don't know.

**PLEASE WRITE TO US!**

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