

# OPINION



**New Prices  
Effective  
May 1, 2014**

## Martin Cleaning Service

**Carpet & Upholstery  
Cleaning  
Residential &  
Commercial Services**

**Minimum Service CHG.  
\$45.00**  
A small distance/travel  
charge may be applied

### CARPET CLEANING

**2 Cleaning Areas or  
more \$30.00 Each Area**  
**Pre-Spray Traffic Areas**  
(Includes: 1 small Hallway)

**1 Cleaning Area (only)  
\$40.00**  
Includes Pre-Spray Traffic Area  
(Hallway Extra)

**Stairs (12-16 stairs - With  
Other Services): \$25.00**

**Area/Oriental Rugs:  
\$25.00 Minimum**

**Area/Oriental Rugs (Wool):  
\$40.00 Minimum**

**Heavily Soiled Area:**  
Additional \$10.00 each area  
(Requiring Extensive Pre-Spraying)

### UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

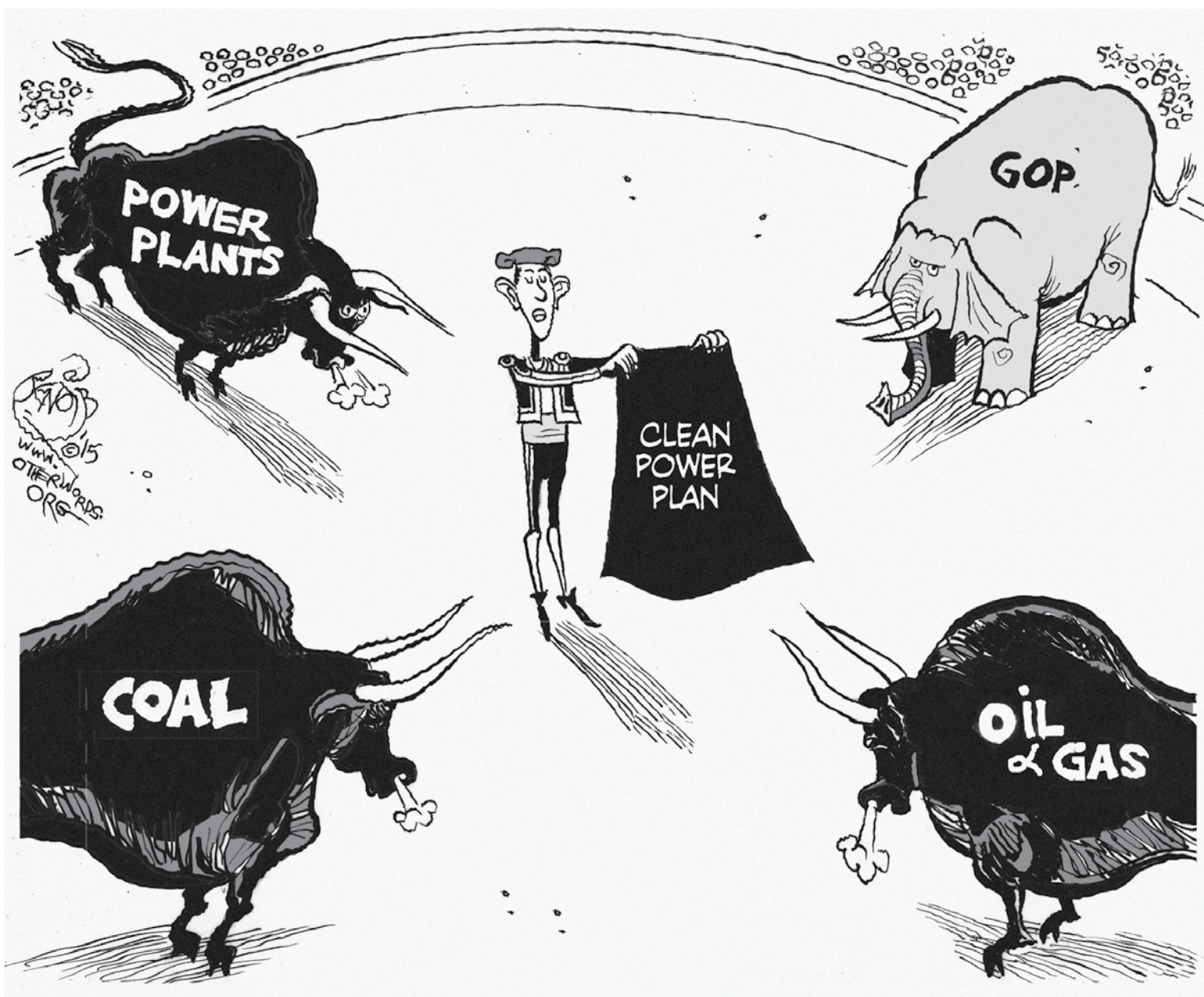
Sofa: \$69.00  
Loveseat: \$49.00  
Sectional: \$109 - \$139  
Chair or Recliner: \$25 - \$49  
Throw Pillows (With  
Other Services): \$5.00

### ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- Area & Oriental Rug Cleaning
- Auto/Boat/RV Cleaning
- Deodorizing & Pet Odor Treatment
- Spot & Stain Removal Service
- Scotchguard Protection
- Minor Water Damage Services



**SEE CURRENT FLYER  
FOR ADDITIONAL  
PRICES & SERVICES  
Call for Appointment  
(503) 281-3949**



## Our Democracy is Increasingly Unhealthy

### Where there are signs of hope

BY TOM H. HASTINGS

In our wonderful land of America we have ongoing debates, discussions, and principled differences. To the extent those are happening by citizens focused on the issues and not on character assassination or violent threat, those robust modes of discourse are the heart of a healthy democracy.

Our democracy is increasingly unhealthy. And we are degrading the image and desirability of democracy around the world as a result. This is a reversal of a century-long trend around the world of more democracy that peaked in the 1990s.

Autocrats are not only making a comeback, they are doing so with more populist support. From the racist frontrunner can-

didacy of Donald Trump to the atavistic emergence of a caliphate in the Middle East, we see a rollback of engaged, respectful, vigorous citizen participants in politics.

Where there is a resurgence of focus on civil society participation, however, we see signs of hope, such as pockets of social activism in West Africa that focus on the lessons from Martin Luther King and the US civil rights movement, or a consortium of Palestinians struggling to transform their liberation struggle to democracy-friendly nonviolence.

Rightwing politicians declaim on American exceptionalism; they name the USA as the one nation that offers the best hope for humankind. Sadly, they then practice the “might makes right” model of imposed democracy—an oxymoronic enterprise indeed. Democracy cannot be installed at gunpoint any more than love can,

or empathy, or altruism—all of which drive more and better democracy, while guns and bombs—Francis Scott Key notwithstanding—erode it. Metrics of democracy—citizen participation, inclusion, minority rights, transparency, nonviolent transition of power—are all best promoted and practiced without death threats.

Citizen engagement is at the heart of the free press—the very paper you hold or are reading online is the pulse of a democracy worthy of the name. When you engage—read it, write a letter, share it with others—and do so in a way that maintains healthy respect alongside healthy debate, you are bolstering our democracy and showing the rest of the world a better model that they will emulate.

The true “arsenal of democracy” is not a nuclear navy nor a Hellfire missile rain of death from the sky. It is you, seeking information, sharing your

thoughts, caring for the hearts and minds of your neighbors, even the ones with whom you disagree—especially the ones who anger you with an opinion you find objectionable.

I teach several courses that revolve around these concepts and I love watching students evolve from apathy and fatalism to outrage and violent ideation to care, capacity, and human agency.

True, some never move off the cynical dime, some get stuck on pugnacity and demonization, but those who pass into the stages of engagement and rational, careful analysis and discourse are the ones I am confident will do the most good for democracy in our land, and, by extension of this evolving American experiment, the rest of the world.

*Dr. Tom H. Hastings is core faculty in the Conflict Resolution Department at Portland State University and is founding director of PeaceVoice.*

