



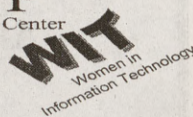
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Bush's tax-cut plan joins mainstream

WASHINGTON (AP) — George W. Bush's five-year, \$483 billion tax cut places the Republican presidential front-runner in the mainstream of GOP tax cutters — far less aggressive than flat-tax acolytes such as Steve Forbes.



BUSH

"You're going to get a big debate now — do you go with a flat tax approach or do you go with the tax cut approach?" Stephen Moore of the libertarian Cato Institute said.

Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley, meanwhile, continue President Clinton's approach of using modest tax breaks to accomplish social goals, such as protecting land from overdevelopment or helping the poor.

In a speech yesterday in Iowa, Bush never mentioned the flat tax but labeled his own plan to use projected budget surpluses to gradually reduce income tax

rates, abolish estate taxes, double the \$500 per-child tax credit and enact other tax breaks as "realistic and responsible."

"For me, tax cutting is not some abstract cause," the Texas governor said.

Bush emphasized his plan's benefits for the working poor and middle class, maintaining half of his income-tax cuts will benefit people trying to work themselves out of poverty.

He said 6 million people would no longer pay any income taxes, easing the burden on one in every five families with children.

"We will take down the tollgate on the road to the middle class," Bush said, adding no middle-class family would face a federal income-tax rate higher than 25 percent.

An analysis by the labor-funded Citizens for Tax Justice, however, estimated the plan's cost at \$1.7 trillion over 10 years and projected people earning \$89,000 or more would get 61 percent of the benefits, compared with 11 percent for those earning less than \$38,200.

Families wait for information of mass graves

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP) — It has been years since they disappeared, Leticia Lucero de Medina's husband, Ivan Kihara's brother, Saul O. Sanchez Sr.'s son and daughter-in-law.

For now, the families of as many as 100 missing people from Ciudad Juarez are left to closely watch the news as the FBI and Mexican officials search desert ranches for bodies.

"I hope they don't find his remains there, because I have faith that he might be living somewhere else," Sanchez, 73, of Laredo, said of his son.

With so many people vanishing from this border city since 1993, and with the police providing little or no information about the cases, relatives of "los desaparecidos" — "the disappeared" — formed a group in 1997 and bombarded Attorney General Jorge Madrazo with letters.

Newspaper article sparks lawsuit

DENTON (AP) — A weekly Dallas newspaper is being sued for a satirical article two elected Denton County officials allege defamed them.

The *Dallas Observer's* Nov. 11 edition included an article that attributed fictitious quotes to District Attorney Bruce Isaacks and Juvenile Judge Darlene Whitten, but was not clearly labeled as satire and was published in an area of the *Observer* usually reserved for news stories, the lawsuit alleges.

The article was identified as a parody in subsequent editions of the newspaper.

The story was a takeoff on a real story about a Ponder boy who was jailed for nearly a week after writing a Halloween story in which he shoots his teacher and other students.

Judge Whitten ordered 13-year-old Christopher Beaumont jailed. Isaacks ultimately dropped the case, and the youth was released.

The *Observer* story had a fictitious section about a 6-year-old Ponder girl jailed for writing a book report on the children's story *Where the Wild Things Are*

It contained quotations from the judge, who according to the story, ordered the girl's detention, and from Isaacks, who was quoted as saying officials were trying to decide whether to file charges against her.

A Dallas radio station and the student newspaper at the University of North Texas reported the story to be true.

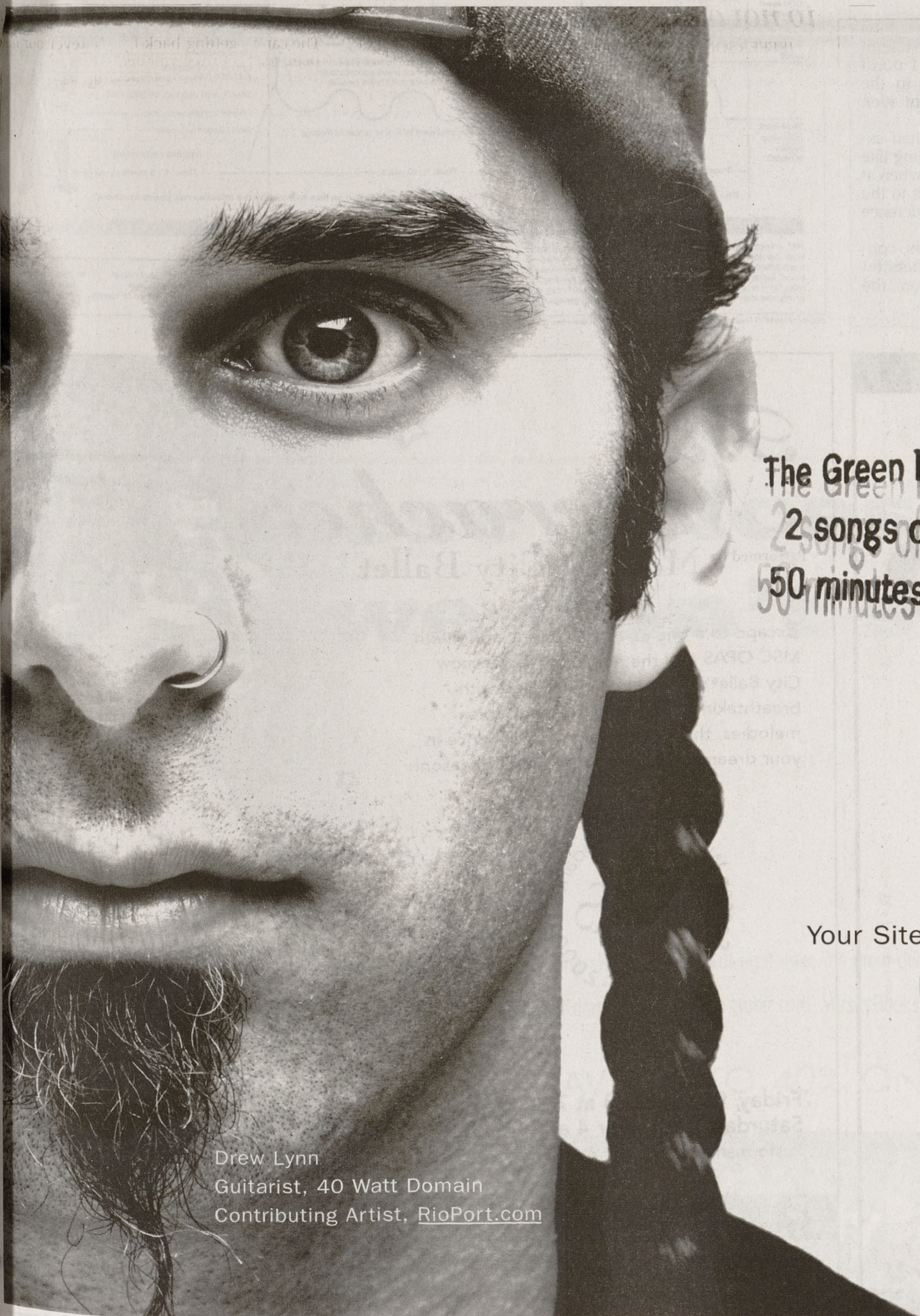
"As a direct result of this story, there has been harm to my reputation," Isaacks said.

Mike Whitten, Judge Whitten's husband and attorney, said he asked the *Observer* for a retraction.

When the newspaper refused, he sued Tuesday on behalf of his wife and Isaacks, who are seeking unspecified damages.

Observer editor Julie Lyons acknowledged the newspaper received correspondence from readers who believed the article was true but said the paper will fight the lawsuit on the grounds any reasonable reader "would have known the story was not true."

The article was "a legitimate editorial on an actual news event," she said. "It is not libelous."



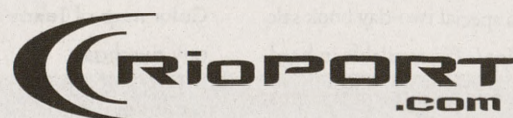
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