

Find out why we're the BEST Hair Salon & Day Spa
CACTUS SALON
 visit www.CactusSalon.com or call our corporate office 631-586-4849



50% OFF
 1ST TIME HAIRCUT OR COLOR SERVICE
 GET COUPON NOW Sun-Thurs w/ selected stylist

Friday 9/03/2010 3:47 PM

Syosset

 80°F
 AccuWeather.com
 Long Island Weather
[Follow us](#) [Like us](#)

[Long Island Press](#)

Serving the opinion leaders of Long Island
[Subscribe Free](#)

- [Home](#)
- [News »](#)
- [Sports »](#)
- [Arts & Living »](#)
- [Columns »](#)
- [Contests](#)
- [Digi-Editions](#)
- [Events](#)
- [About »](#)

- [Special Series »](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Best of LI](#)

LI PRESS PICKEM  **SIGN UP FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A 7 DAY TRIP TO HAWAII AND OTHER GREAT WEEKLY PRIZES** 

26 people recommend this. Be the first of your friends. [Add Comment](#)

... the Reservation: The Koch Family Tea Party

[forey](#) on September 2nd, 2010



(AP Photo/The Free Lance-Star, Robert A. Martin)

Last week *The New Yorker* published a missive by Jane Mayer on one of the most dangerous families in America: billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch, heirs to the Koch family fortune forged by their father, Fred, himself one of the most influential conservative figures of the 20th century. Their fortune came, predictably, from oil, though their business holdings have been widely diversified since its inception.

What made this article so important was the painstaking manner in which Mayer unraveled the Koch Industries juggernaut to reveal a multi-decade effort by the Koch family to present itself as cultural and political icons whose

generosity is beyond reproach. Their donations to museums and think tanks give the impression they are part of the cultural elite, a seminal segment of the charitable establishment that funds areas of our society that government has left behind. This carefully managed image as benevolent billionaires belies the insidious nature of their true life's work as polluters, climate-change deniers and political dissidents who will stop at nothing to dismantle the system of regulation and taxation in America. In the past decade alone Koch Industries, a \$35 billion privately held petrochemical company, has been forced to commit more than a half a billion dollars to environmental remediation, lawsuits, fines and settlements for their scandalous business practices.



advertisement

The article sparked my memory of having run across the Koch name on two previous occasions. The first was when reporting on economic issues related to Indian tribes. In 1999 Koch Industries was found guilty of poaching oil from Indian reservations. The second was in researching Wendy and Phil Gramm's involvement in the oil speculation scandal during the summer of 2008—the former serving as a Distinguished Senior Scholar at the Mercatus Center, the Koch-funded think tanks at George Mason University synonymous with government deregulation. Wendy Gramm's staunch advocacy for deregulation and Phil Gramm's rampant legislative penchant for it eventually led to delightful little treasures like the collapse of Enron, oil speculation, black-market exchanges and the 2008 banking catastrophe. (Postcard from the recession: Dear Wendy and Phil. Thanks for this! Wish you were here. Signed, America.)

Every hazardous product manufactured by Koch Industries and every conservative and libertarian think tank established by the family members—Mercatus is eclipsed in absurdity by their other venture, the Cato Institute—pales in comparison to their most important creation to date: the Tea Party. This movement is the culmination of 40-plus years of radical free-market fanaticism beginning with the John Birch Society, of which father Fred was a founding member.

There is, of course, no central nervous system within the Tea Party. Nor is there a comprehensive platform or call to action other than to call for a return to traditional faith-based Christian values and less government intervention in our lives. For many Americans these are extremely palatable and positive concepts. But the true architects of the movement, such as the Koch brothers, who stoke the flame of discontent in America, are shielded from the public eye; it is as though the machines have come alive through artificial intelligence and are hell-bent on destroying humanity. This week, the anointed spokespeople and demagogues fronting the movement, Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin, hosted a bizarre yet extremely well-attended rally on the anniversary of Dr. King's famous civil rights march on Washington where he delivered perhaps his most famous "I Have a Dream" address.

Beck's hokey, milquetoast evangelism and Palin's gosh-golly, you-betcha wink-fest played perfectly to the assembled masses who celebrated, or rather, declared that...um...called for us to follow God—well, Christ really—and that we're going in the wrong direction because the right direction is... uh...backwards! Yes, we need to go backwards! (I watched the speeches and quite honestly I have no idea what the point of the rally was except to further the strength of the Koch zeitgeist through Rupert Murdoch's bully pulpit and impute the Obama administration for all that is wrong with America.)

This much I do know: The Koch brothers are powerful and evil. Mayer's deconstruction of the Koch plan for America—or, if you prefer, plan to increase their personal wealth at the expense of the planet and all those who inhabit it—has also exposed the likes of Palin and Beck as the patsies they really are. They aren't quite stupid, per se, but intellectually inadequate to understand how they are being lulled into the menacing plutocracy that the Koch brothers have woven.

And then, there's the rest of us. Most Americans don't have the time or inclination to peel the onion of American politics to reach the rotten core. We are busy raising families, helping neighbors, putting food on the table. In between, however, we are pummeled by talking heads who decry the evils of the left and of the right and tell us how government is either at the root of your woes or the answer to your prayers. Right now, the Koch brothers are riding high by deriding the government and playing the recession for all it is worth. But Jane Mayer peeled back this particular onion to reveal its true inner core and, as expected, not only does it stink, it might even make you cry.

If you wish to comment on "Off the Reservation," send your message to jmorey@longislandpress.com

More articles filed under [Columns, Off The Reservation](#)

Tags: [Charles Koch](#), [David Koch](#), [Enron](#), [George Mason University](#), [Glenn Beck](#), [I Have A Dream](#), [Jane Mayer](#), [Jed Morey](#), [Koch Family](#), [Koch Industries](#), [Martin Luther King](#), [Mercatus Center](#), [Off The Reservation](#), [Phil Gramm](#), [Rupert Murdoch](#), [Sarah Palin](#), [Tea Party](#), [The New Yorker](#), [Wendy Gramm](#)

(Last updated on Friday, September 3rd, 2010) and filed under [Columns](#), [Off The Reservation](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

Popular Articles

Most Recommended

[Recommend this?](#) [?]

Selected for you by a sponsor:

[20 Celebs Who Are Awesome In Person](#) *(The Frisky)*

You might also like:

[Bethany Benz: Bethany Benz aka Caviar Doing Porn](#) *(Long Island Press)*

[Lindsay Lohan Poisoned? New Google Trend Confuses Internet Users](#) *(Long Island Press)*

[Top 10 Eco-Oriented Green Words on Urban Dictionary | Long Island Press](#) *(Long Island Press)*

[Oval Office Makeover: The Oval Office Gets a New look | Long Island News from the Long Island Press](#) *(Long Island Press)*

advertisement



Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website

**Your
Dream
Builder**



- Kitchens
- Baths
- Dormers
- Master Suites
- Extensions
- Commercial Building

**516-794-4030
www.jarro.com**

Message

Long Island Events

EVENTS [Post an event](#) ▶

3 FRI	4 SAT	5 SUN	6 MON	7 TUE
----------	----------	----------	----------	----------

**Arte Latino II Exhibit -
Presented by Smithtown
Township Arts Council
Friday, Sept. 3, 2010**

Tony Orlando at Lakeside

Theatre Eisenhower Park
Friday, Sept. 3, 2010

Character Bounce
Friday, Sept. 3, 2010

Cover Stories



[Hurricane Earl and Long Island: Preparation, Plans](#)

- [Mosquito Spraying on Long Island](#)
- [Long Island's Special Taxing Districts](#)

Popular Searches

- [kristin green](#)
- [lindenhurst](#)
- [theresa barth](#)
- [amityville](#)
- [hurricane earl](#)
- [best of long island](#)
- [restaurants](#)
- [obituaries](#)
- [mandy jenkins](#)
- [mandy jo jenkins](#)

Advertisement

GET OFFICIAL
LIVESTRONG™
GEAR

AND SUPPORT
THOSE LIVING
WITH CANCER.



SHOP NOW

www.store-laf.org

LIVESTRONG™
LANCE ARMSTRONG FOUNDATION

Things to do

- [Long Island Press](#)

- [2010 Jones Beach Concert Calendar](#)

CURRENT ISSUE

- [Contact](#)



[VIEW FREE](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#)

- [Dix Hills Performing Arts Center Contest](#)
- [Do This](#)
- [Extreme Makeover: Home Edition on LI](#)
- [foot2](#)
- [footer](#)
- [head2](#)
- [header](#)
- [Long Island School Closings and Delays](#)
- [Movies](#)
- [MyCapture](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Star Wars Photo Contest Entries and Winners](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [Traffic](#)
- [upe](#)
- [Video Jones Beach Concert Calendar](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Home Contact](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [Masthead](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Best Of Long Island](#)
- [Cars](#)

Copyright © 2010 - [Long Island Press](#)

Sponsored by [NY LI 701 Archives](#)

- [Dix Hills Performing Arts Center Contest](#)
- [Do This](#)
- [Extreme Makeover: Home Edition on LI](#)
- [foot2](#)
- [footer](#)
- [head2](#)
- [header](#)
- [Long Island School Closings and Delays](#)
- [Movies](#)
- [MyCapture](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [Star Wars Photo Contest Entries and Winners](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [Traffic](#)
- [upe](#)
- [Video Jones Beach Concert Calendar](#)
- [Weather](#)
 - [Contact](#)
 - [Masthead](#)
- [Advertise](#)
- [Best Of Long Island](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Contests](#)
- [Digital Edition Archives](#)
- [Dix Hills Performing Arts Center Contest](#)
- [Do This](#)
- [Extreme Makeover: Home Edition on LI](#)
- [foot2](#)
- [footer](#)
- [head2](#)
- [header](#)
- [Long Island School Closings and Delays](#)
- [Movies](#)
- [MyCapture](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)

- [Star Wars Photo Contest Entries and Winners](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [Traffic](#)
- [upe](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Weather](#)