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Susan Yerkes

Technology vs. humanity: Who rules?

Are we entering the information age? Or have we reached its end?

When "computers filter all our facts," when "the Technology God says you can have it all," when "power, not limits; ownership, not stewardship; rights, not responsibilities" are touchstones by which we measure our worth—that, Neil Postman says, is when we must find ourselves as humans, or lose our humanity.

Postman, a charismatic prof at New York University, has written many books and articles casting a keen eye on modern culture.

Did you watch the Clinton/Dale "debates"?

Consider Postman's words in "Amusing Ourselves to Death," his 1985 book on life in the TV Age:

"In America, the fundamental political discourse is the television commercial. Like television commercials, image politics is a form of therapy, which is why so much of it is charts, good looks, celebrity and personal disclosure."

Earlier this month, S.A.'s Mind Science Foundation brought Postman to town to speak on one of his most powerful themes: finding a unifying narrative to lift us beyond "the god of the computer."

His powerful message galvanized a crowd that packed the Witte Museum auditorium. And afterward, at dinner with local scientists, educators and Mind Science supporters, he brought the message home again.

As the third prong of S.A. wizard Tom Slick's triad of research facilities (the others are the Southwest Foundation for Biomedical Research and the Southwest Research Institute), Mind Science was an apt sponsor for Postman's speech.

Foundation director Catherine Nixon Houston has involved some of S.A.'s finest minds in this smaller institute devoted to science and the mind. From studies on Alzheimer's to self-esteem, and speakers on topics from myth to virtual reality, Mind Science has formed bonds between scientists and the community.

This year the foundation is sponsoring the first phase of a new kind of study on TV violence.

Houston brought renowned child psychologist Dr. John Murray, who's done 20 years of study on the effects of TV on children, from Kansas to collaborate on new

Losing to win

Wine writer embarks on journey toward fitness and good health



STEWART F. HOLLANDER

Today, wine writer Bill Stephens weighs 320.4 pounds. Through Duke University's Diet and Fitness Center, he hopes to lose 120 pounds in the course of a year — and to gain a better quality of life. Joining Stephens at a recent wine dinner are Alexandra Marrier Lapostolle (center) and David A. Duran.

By BILL STEPHENS
Special to the EXPRESS-NEWS

I am obese. Today I am enrolling in Duke University's Diet and Fitness Center in Durham, N.C.

I know very little about the program except that it gets top marks from everyone. Their long suit seems to be the ability to get a person like me motivated to improve his quality of life through diet and exercise.

This is the first of a series of articles that, starting Oct. 28, will run weekly in the Monday S.A. Life section and will track the saga of my attempt to reinvent myself.

Along the way, I will share triumphs, failures and all the information I can gather about nutrition and fitness. For those who can't afford the Duke program, I will chase down less costly alternatives.

I have been overweight most of my life. I have been obese from middle age on. I think back fondly to the day I enrolled at the University of Texas at Austin as a freshman weighing 175 pounds and measuring a



■ See WINE/12F

Bill Stephens

Body Box Score

Measurement	Oct. 20
Height	5 feet, 9 inches
Weight	320.4 pounds
Goal weight	200 pounds
Actual fat	41 percent
Ideal fat	12 percent
Neck	17.25 inches
Bicep flexed	16.5 inches
Chest	51.5 inches
Waist	53 inches
Hips	56.5 inches
Thigh	25 inches
Calf	19.5 inches
Ankle	13 inches



POP CULTURE

Paws for Dogbert management

By LAURA LIPPMAN
Illustration by STEVE

First there was Well, first the Adams, who wanted to be a spy cartoonist, although couldn't draw that "Dilbert," his cult-the modern office ly successful after printing his e-mail ing readers to an

Best-selling "Do books followed, an Dilbert Principle," No. 1 on the New 's best-seller list. No successful manage has learned to deli over the writing of Dogbert, the canic who has just prod "Dogbert's Top 50 Management 100" (HarperBusiness,

But when we so for an interview, it class consultant's n't be available to he had time to dial resources, in hope a variety of techs would accomplish: trum of results to ton line.

Frankly, we did what he was talk: pulled some pity: his book and then times to fit.

Q: While Dilbert conveniently equi version of male-pe that makes him a satanic horn, not are so easily ident will I know if my r devil's disciple?

A: Look for soon remains the depe a status report an lodes a mistake of god manager ab meetings, takes c employees' idea; eise fails, hires c

Q: Why do cats good horses resour?

A: Cats seem h outside, but they d employees live o enjoy playing wit downsizing them.

Q: If I do betco

■ See DOGBERT/

LITERATURE