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2023 NEWS

Lobbyist with Abramoff ties leaves firm

BY SUSAN CRABTREE AND KEVIN BOGARDUS | POSTED: 11/21/08 07:10 PM [ET] - 11/21/08 7:11 PM ET



Cassidy & Associates lobbyist Todd Boulanger, a former aide to ex-Sen. Bob Smith (R-N.H.) who went on to work with convicted lobbyist Jack Abramoff, abruptly left the firm Friday.

Another former Congressional aide, Trevor Blackann, 34, pleaded guilty Thursday to filing a false tax return that omitted at least \$4,100 in illegal gifts from lobbyists. Blackann, a onetime aide to Sen. Kit Bond (R-Mo.) and Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.), admitted to accepting gifts, including a trip to New York to see a World Series baseball game and "admission to and entertainment at" a strip club, according to court documents.

{mosads}Blackann's case stemmed from the wide-ranging corruption investigation in Abramoff's activities.

Court documents allege that a close associate of Abramoff identified only as "Lobbyist D" gave Blackann the majority of the gifts in 2003.

Information in court documents about "Lobbyist D's" career path closely follows Boulanger's time on Capitol Hill and on K Street. Before working at Cassidy, Boulanger lobbied for clients at Preston Gates, as well as Greenberg Traurig, alongside Abramoff.

In a brief statement from Cassidy & Associates spokesman Tom Alexander, Gerry Cassidy, the founder and executive chairman of the firm, said he had accepted Boulanger's resignation Friday afternoon and thanked him for his work.

"While accepting the departure, Founder and Executive Chairman Gerald S.J. Cassidy acknowledged this as a difficult time for Boulanger and expressed his appreciation for his diligent work on behalf of his clients while serving as a senior vice president at Cassidy & Associates," said Alexander.

As part of the trip, Blackann also accepted airline travel to and from New York City, one-night accommodations in an "upscale" hotel, transportation in a chauffeured sport utility vehicle, a ticket to the game and a souvenir baseball jersey, as well as free meals and drinks.

In return, Blackann admitted to obtaining a letter of support from Bond for someone seeking a political appointment to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, court documents allege. The lobbyists involved also sought federal legislation encouraging state public works agencies to rent rather than purchase construction equipment and contract only with companies that had "large dollar amounts of liability insurance coverage." The lobbyists' clients included an equipment rental company that would directly benefit from such legislation.

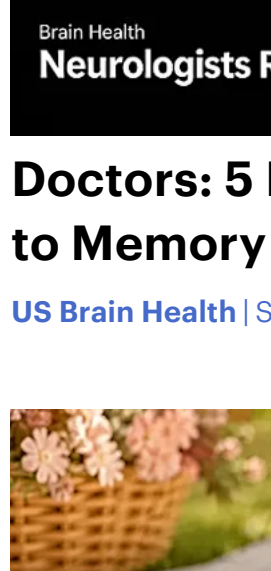
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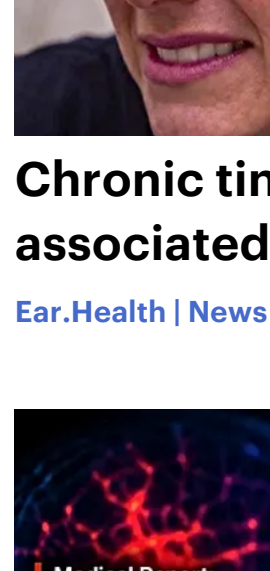
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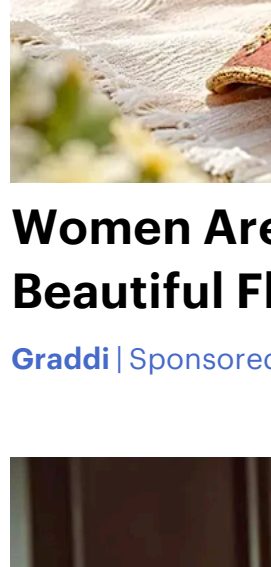
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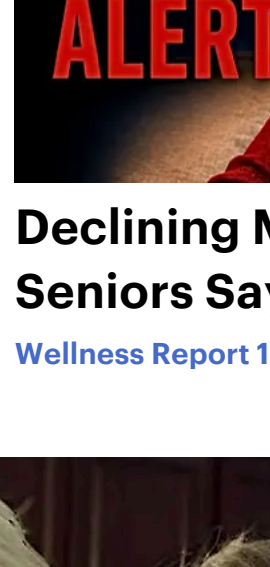
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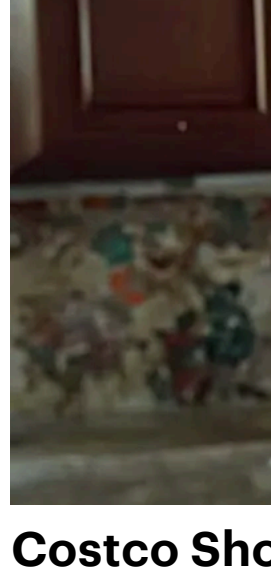
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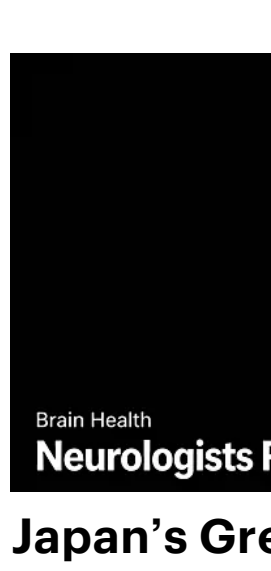
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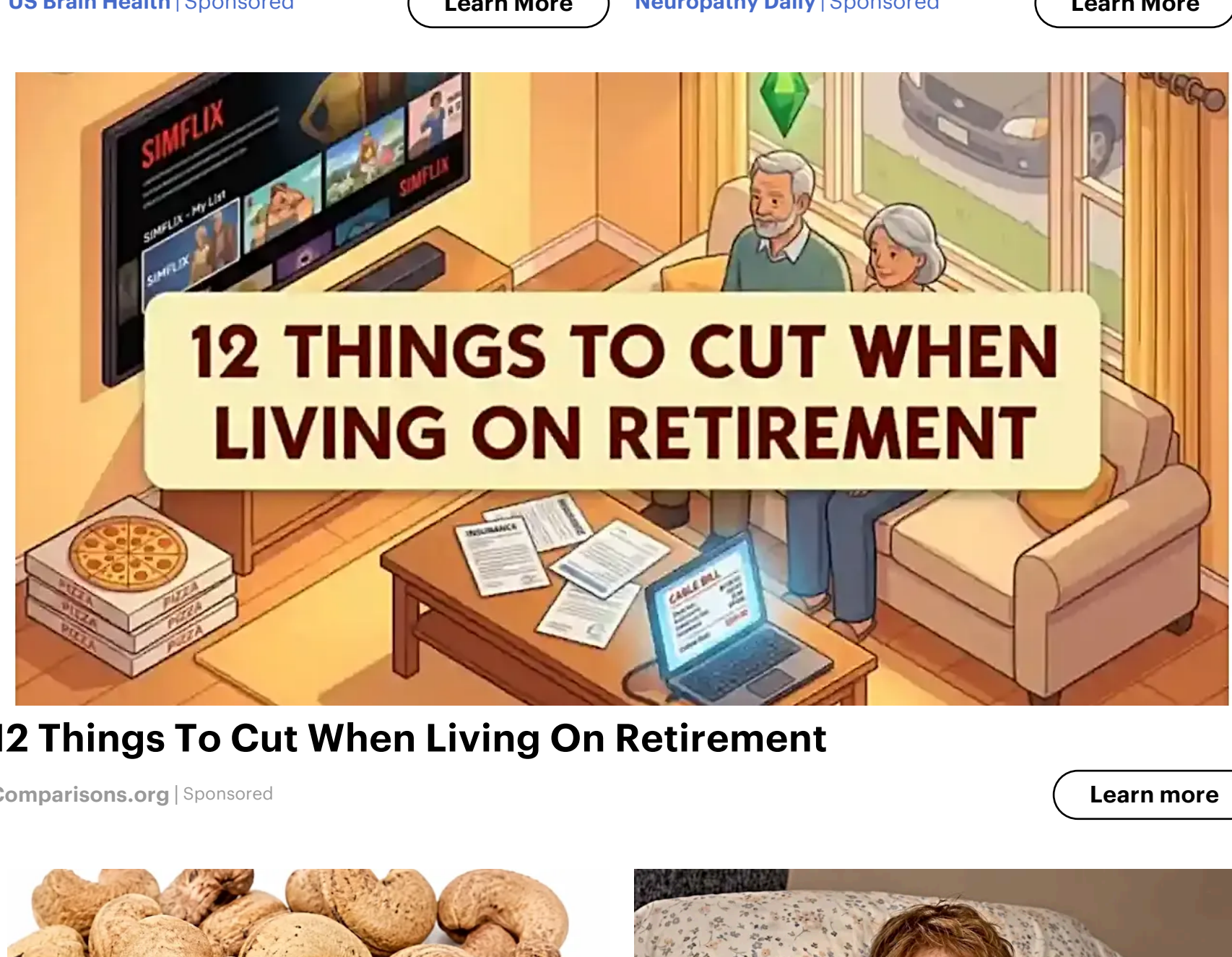
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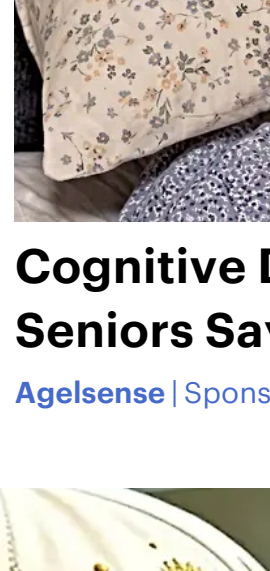
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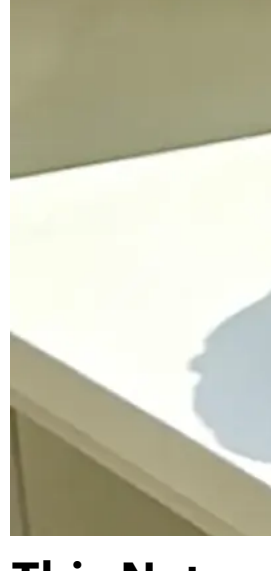
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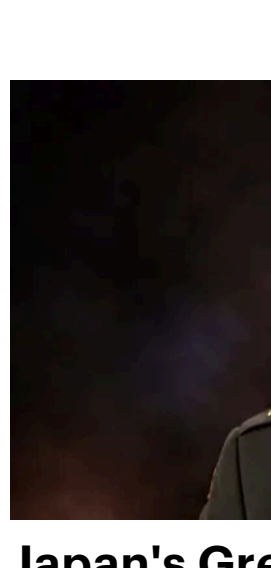
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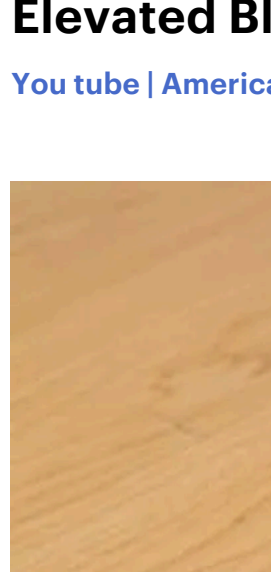
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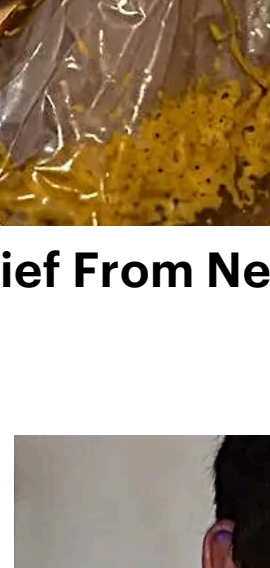
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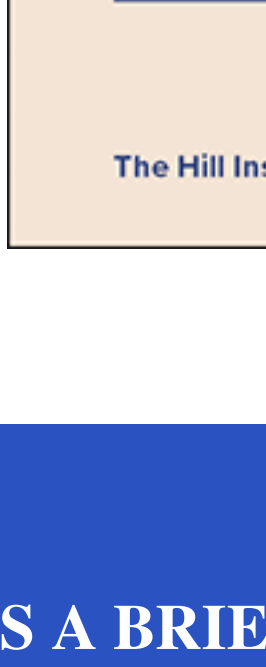
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