The climate is right for Al Gore's Nobel Prize
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Compared to the U.S. presidency, it might feel like a consolation prize.

But take a bow, Al Gore. You have every right to bust your buttons over this shiny new Nobel.

I know a thing or two about prizes. Like almost anyone who's worked in the news business for 15 minutes or more, I've won an armload of them. Hardly any are worth the brass, glass, crystal or wood they're made of.

You write a 10-inch puff piece about a Boy Scout or a four-eyed engineer. Pretty soon, you'll be clutching an ornate "Friend of Scouting" plaque or a "Golden Slide Rule."

We never get tired of giving prizes in my field. Some days, all we do is sit around, giving prizes to each other.

In my learned opinion, there are only three prizes worth showing up at the awards dinner for. The Pulitzer, which is the big back-pat in journalism. The MacArthur, which has the greatest nickname of any prize ("The Genius Grant") and comes with a couple of hundred thousand dollars in cash. And the Nobel. Any Nobel. Although - not to get choosy here - I always thought Peace would be better than Literature, even though Faulkner won Literature and made a very cool speech when he did.

The Nobel Peace Prize! No one ever says, "I'm sorry, I can't turn up in Oslo for that!"

Please, don't bore me with talk of Oscars, Emmys, Grammys and whatever the Internet people give each other these days. I've met winners in all those categories. Believe me, they're no brighter than you and I.

So let the debates continue about Al Gore and global warming and that movie he made about the earth getting hotter and the polar bears losing their ice caps and Manhattan about to be underwater one day.

Gore missed out on the U.S. presidency. But he got one heck of a consolation prize. It's way better than a "Golden Slide Rule." And he didn't have to write any puff pieces about tiresome engineers.

HOT AIR: It's great the delay-plagued airlines at JFK have called a "delay summit" with federal aviation officials. Now which airline will be first to reduce its jam-packed flight schedule? Hello? Hello? This is your captain speaking! Anyone?

RED, WHITE AND SLINKY: It's made of plastic now. It comes in neon hues. But the beloved, low-tech Slinky can still walk down the stairs. And it's still made in America - Plymouth, Mich., to be exact. Isn't that saying something in this year of Chinese toy recalls?

BOO! The Center for Nursing Advocacy is pleading with Party City and other Halloween retailers to pull those sexy-nurse costumes off the shelves. "The stereotype that nurses are sponge-bath sex zombies has bedeviled real nurses for decades," the group purrs.
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ASKED AND UNANSWERED: What? Judith Giuliani was so busy during the last debate she couldn’t find a minute to call? … If Joe Torre’s yanked out of pinstripes, will Yankees broadcaster Suzyn Waldman be the only one shedding tears? That’s hard to believe … Are Long Island nursing homes really the new singles bars? Isn’t it time for some senior-class sex ed? … Why all the nooses suddenly? … Anyone still opposed to GPS devices in Islip town cars? Fuel use is plummeting without all those “I’ll-just swing-by-home” trips during the work day … How could the three Newsday Pulitzer medals have been stolen without some high-level inside help? Any ex-execs have anything to confess? … What exactly have federal immigration-enforcement officials learned from last month’s botched-raid debacle? They’re still claiming they did nothing wrong … Can anyone top "Chickaboomer" blogger Marty Davis’ nappy nickname for the returning Don Imus? To Marty, the l-man’s now "Don ’Ho” … If prices keep falling and foreclosures keep skyrocketing, will Long Island real estate ever reach the point of just being “overpriced?” … You know, instead of “outrageously, ridiculously, insanely overpriced?” … Will Barbara Corcoran have to change the name of her new CNBC show, “Millionaire Broker?” … “Thousandaire Broker,” anyone? … Does anyone find irony in the fact that double-dipping pension hog (and Suffolk County personnel director) Alan Schneider is the Suffolk County personnel director? … Is Britney’s new record really called "Blackout?” … Why is New York City launching a new $30 million ad campaign? Because so few people have heard of New York City? … What about all those people sent to prison on ex-narc Bernie Kerik’s uncorroborated testimony? Shouldn’t prosecutors be taking a fresh look at those convictions? … Do all those Hamptons-bound helicopters really have to buzz residential neighborhoods? Why can’t they fly over the water? … Maintenance is important, but do the George Washington, Throgs Neck, Bronx-Whitestone, Cross Bay and Henry Hudson bridges plus the Lincoln and Holland tunnels all need traffic-clogging repairs the very same weekend? … Now that Sri Chinmoy’s gone, what are the poor Guinness people going to do? The Queens-based spiritual leader held and inspired more world records than anyone.

NOBEL WAR PRIZE

1 Dick "Greeted as Liberators" Cheney.
2 Paul "The Oil Will Pay" Wolfowitz.
3 Alberto "Torture Memo" Gonzales.
4 Donald "Unknown Unknowns" Rumsfeld.
5 Tony "I’ll Have What He’s Having" Blair.

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