

...the
flag waving
issue ...



All hail the powerful...

Pepper Spray Times

July 2011



It's paleaceous ...it's free...if you can find it

"...together with the common lag of people..."*

Vol. XIII No. 7

Downtown Not Quite Empty Council Raises Parking Fees in Urgent Effort to Completely Clear the Streets



THE DOWNTOWN BERKELEY ASSOCIATION IS REALLY HOPING to replicate this pastoral effect when it finally clears the streets completely of problematic people.

by Lou Sennet-Up

A majority of the Berkeley City Council voted recently to raise hourly parking fees. "There's still a few people loitering downtown," stated one council representative who asked not to be named. "We have to find a way to clear the streets completely to keep the Business Improvement District people happy."
"This usually works," explained another council representative who wished to remain anonymous. "Hike up the parking rates and even more people run off to the malls and big Emeryville theater complexes."
The council voted to raise rates by twenty-five cents to \$1.75 an hour in a "premium" zone in which presumably "premium" people would enjoy being singled out for premium rates because they are just very special people.
Critics pointed out that parking hassles and costs were the number one complaint of Berkeley shoppers, but were dismissed by City Hall insiders who responded that those complaints were neck and neck with complaints about completely empty storefronts with nothing to buy.
Ironically, the increased parking rates are being driven by a need to hand over even more money to the Downtown Berkeley Association (DBA), which institutes poli-

cies which make doing business in Berkeley costlier and more expensive with each passing year, contrary to its ostensible mission to improve the business climate.
"We need a raise," explained John Canner, Executive Director of the DBA. "And there's still a few people wandering around down here. We need to clear the streets completely to make sure none of them sit down."
In other news, the DBA invited the public to make suggestions for the films it plans to show in a nearby parking lot hoping to leach away the business of a stubborn contingent of theater-goers who insist on coming downtown.
"I suggest 'Les Miserable'," offered one downtown passerby. "It will fit with the rest of the theme of cutting services for low-income people while padding the pockets of the large property owners."
"I suggest that Chaplin movie where he boils and eats his shoes," suggested renowned theater critic Dan McMullan. "It gives a really creative suggestion to people who have run out of funds."
"How about 'Apocalypse Now'?" suggested a panhandler. "Sounds about right."
* * * * *

Pavement Rated Good for Every- thing But Sleeping

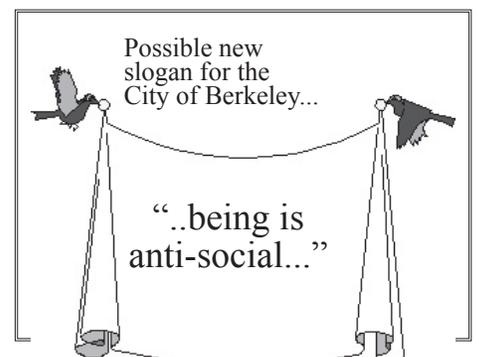
by John DeParty

Berkeley's pavement rated "fair" according to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), for biking, driving, roller-skating, skateboarding, dog-walking, and sitting.



"Sleeping is still kind of tough," stated an MTC spokesperson.
Local residents affirmed that while not perfect, Berkeley's streets function pretty well overall for wheeled vehicles as long as their drivers pay attention.

"I really enjoy slaloming through potholes," stated one local bike rider. "It keeps me alert and on my toes."
"It's like natural speed bumps," affirmed a Prius driver. "A sprinkling of potholes makes the best speed around 25 to 30 miles per hour, so everybody saves gas and accidents are reduced."
Pavement conditions got thumbs ups all around except from those who use them as mattresses.
"It's still pretty cold," acknowledged a Berkeley resident shaking out his sleeping bag near the University Avenue overpass. "I try to find some honest dirt somewhere so it's muddy but not as hard on your bones."
"I'm thankful there's still some dirt left," added another fellow seated nearby. "This town has a love affair with concrete. And empty condos."
* * * * *



Controller Cuts Legislators' Pay

Lawmakers Plan to Panhandle on Berkeley Streets to Make Up the Difference

By Wyatt Rabbit

Governor Jerry Brown's decision to veto the unbalanced California budget left lawmakers without paychecks thanks to Proposition 25, which strips lawmakers of their salary and any reimbursement for travel and living expenses if they do not pass a budget by midnight on June 15th.

Lawmakers dismissed concerns about their finances, pointing out that according to most media sources, the streets of Berkeley, California, are so easy to mine for money that they could easily make up the difference.

"Somewhere between \$100 and \$500 per day," stated one lawmaker calmly. "Everyone seems to know this for a fact, and it is useful common knowledge for those of us who really need to make up



PANHANDLERS have an easy time making money--about \$500 a day according to most media coverage. Most of them also have enough to retire, but just really love the work.



Controller John Chiang just couldn't make the numbers work even though he looked at the budget every which way, and even offered to buy lunch for any lawmakers who run out of lunch money until the next budget.

the shortfall."

"Campaigning is really expensive," agreed another lawmaker drawing "need help" on a little cardboard sign. "I need to bring in so much money every day to stay on my fundraising schedule that I'm thinking of hiring people on Berkeley's streets to help me, where apparently the money is really, really good."

Controller John Chiang's decision meant that each of the state's 120 legislators lost about \$400 a day until they passed a balanced spending plan, which went uncommonly quickly once their pay began to get docked.

"We have so much in common," explained another lawmaker. "And we really enjoy our work."

"And each other's company," stated a pale looking Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento. "It's not about the paycheck, anyway. It's about public service."

* * * * *

Food Pyramid Booted



Most People Thought Old Symbol Was Some Kind of Exercise Machine Which They Hate

by Leslie Verly

First lady Michelle Obama booted the Agriculture Department's traditional food pyramid out, replacing it with a plate of portions labeled with actual food in an effort to address mass confusion over whether the little guy climbing the pyramid was supposed to start eating it, or was just marching around getting exercise.

"Nobody could get a comprehensible message out of it," stated one Agriculture Department expert. "Some people thought he was just standing there like a spokes model."

"Other people thought he was going down backwards for some reason, like he'd dropped his watch," stated another expert, shaking his head. "Nobody thought it had anything to do with food."

The Agriculture Department had considered a lot of symbols, spent over two million dollars, and worked with focus groups involving more than 4,500 people trying to figure out how to get people to eat better while being bombarded with commercial

messages to eat junk.

"It's better than the pyramid, but that's not saying a lot," said Marion Nestle, professor of nutrition at New York University looking dubiously at the plate. "Junk food is winning this game."

AT LEAST this symbol seems to have something to do with food, unlike the other one which seemed like a bizarre exercise routine at a gym you don't go to.

"It's a plate," offered one focus group member while experts nodded their heads furiously. "The food looks pretty awful, but I get that it's a plate of food."

"People like plates of food," sighed one expert in relief. "This is real progress."

* * * * *



We Can't Draw Comics

by Franz Toast



New People's Park Plan Provides "Welcoming" Conditions for Uncomfortable Rich People

By Jules N. Crusted

Details are still sketchy, but the draft outline of the new People's Park Plan has exciting possibilities for a complete upgrade.

"We're looking for G4 People's Park," stated Telegraph Business Improvement District Director Roland Peterson. "With all due respect to the landmark of old, we need to move with the times."

- Income-based admission system
- Dress code
- Picnic food standards requirements
- Tobacco-only smoking regulations
- Reservations required
- Sitting for 10-20 minutes at a time
- Only Armani bags
- No tie-dye
- Approved sports only
- No video equipment or cameras (police excepted)

The university of California (UC) expressed enthusiasm for the plan.

"We want that elbow-length white glove crowd," affirmed a UC spokesperson. "If there are any left."

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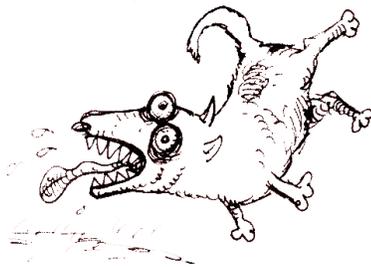


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* Timon of Athens

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.