

the
freshly
indicted
issue...



"You can kick the ass of the rich. It's just such a big ass that it takes a long time."

July 2023

Pepper Spray Times



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

"...dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds..."

Vol. XXIII No. 7



THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY HAD MORE DIFFICULTY WITH PRODUCT PLACEMENT during their senate hearings than former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, who waved his Starbucks coffee cup around like there was no tomorrow.

Howard Schultz Still in Recovery from Vicious Senate Hearing

Former Starbucks CEO Bristles at Accusations of Tobacco Industry Tactics in Union Busting

By Phillip Ale

"The only reason we use tobacco industry tactics is that they're effective," protested former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz after his recent harrowing hearing before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP). "Nobody confuses the public better than the tobacco industry. We're just trying to learn from the very best."

Starbucks employees walked out of more than 100 stores in late March as Schultz was grilled by the HELP committee chaired by Senator Bernie Sanders in protest of Starbucks' anti-union tactics. More and more Starbucks stores are organizing unions and fighting to simply get their union votes acknowledged by the company, which typically stalls the process for years.

The National Labor Relations Board, or NLRB, filed more than 80 complaints against the company and finally threatened to subpoena Schultz, who previously had refused to appear before the senate committee for questioning.

Charges include illegal firings for union organizing, collectively bargaining, and advocating for better wages and benefits.

"They were relentless," thundered Schul-



SENATOR BERNIE SANDERS JUST SEEMS TO GET AS HOT AND BOTHERED as a Venti cup of Double Ristretto with Iced Vanilla Double Shot and Organic Chocolate Brownie Decaf coffee; Nonfat half-breve double blended upside-down with whipped cream and foam, extra hot Gingerbread Frappuccino, a Nutrasweet and a Sweet N'Low, finally touched with ice.

tz. "No billionaire should have to put up with such behavior, however legal."

Schultz has yet to address over 500 unfair labor practices charges, but will get back to the committee after fully recovering from the sheer indignity.

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Mickey Mouse Outsmarts DeSantis

By Eddy Bodyhome

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis's effort to restrict the autonomy of the state's largest employer appears to have backfired.

Disney World's spokesperson, Mickey Mouse, noted that DeSantis's appointees to the previously Disney-controlled oversight board had an opportunity to make an issue of board changes which circumvent the authority of its powers but apparently slept through the action perhaps watching cartoons.

"We're Florida's largest employer," stated Mouse gently. "And we excell at cartoons."

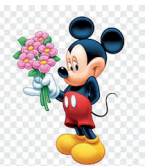
Brian Aungst Jr., a member of the new council, declared the new agreements "legally void", but Mouse pointed out that all of the new agreements were discussed and approved in open, noticed public fora "in compliance with Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine" law.

The former special tax district allowed Disney a degree of self-governance in exchange for picking up the tab for fire protection, policing, road maintenance, which will now be state taxpayers' burden.

The new agreement employs what's known as a "royalty lives" clause that continues until "21 years after the death of the last survivor of the descendants of King Charles III", in other words, a long time.

"The new board is now powerless over us," stated Mouse. "And hey, now we can have drag shows if we want to."

* * * * *



DISNEY'S SPOKESPERSON MICK- EY MOUSE enjoys great international popularity unlike Governor Ron DeSantis, who is currently in the best position to challenge former President Donald Trump but is less popular than dog poop.



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, what is Howard Schultz whining about? Is it all that hard being a billionaire former CEO of Starbucks?

Dear reader, yes, it is. Imagine trying to come up with those impossibly long names for coffee drinks and stay deadpan and sober. Try to be more respectful to those with much, much more money than you.

Dear Lena, could AI be programmed to write like you?

Dear reader, of course. And I would immediately program it to picket my editor's offices unto eternity for higher pay for me.

Dear Lena, Could AI be programmed to be a Starbucks barista?

Dear reader, never in a thousand years, which is probably why Howard Schultz keeps on whining.

Dear Lena, isn't it wrong to throw legislators out of office for violating rules of decorum? Doesn't it at the very least make the majority look petty?

Dear reader, yes, it does. But it also makes no sense to make it easy for them to take you. Whatever else politics is, it's a wrestling match where you should never expect that your opponent won't take advantage of an easy shot. In Tennessee the large, riled-up crowd of observers may inspire some sanity to creep back into the room, but shit like this happens all the time down at your run-of-the-mill city hall. Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin sold out Berkeley's future in a bad deal with the University of California in a secret, back-room meeting because he knew he could mischaracterize it any way he wanted to in a press release with a big photo of him shaking hands with the chancellor. Nobody even had a chance to read the numbers, let alone the fine print. The Tennessee lawmakers should be reinstated as the legally elected representatives they are. But they should know that at least in Tennessee that same stupid hammer can come right back down.

Ask Lena about the art of creative protest at cdennney@igc.org.

How Artificial Intelligence Won't Change Anything But Is Being Hyped Anyway

By Eli Salatime



Editor Grace Underpressure's note: We're fortunate to have Professor Barry N. Ground available to clear up the myriad misconceptions about artificial intelligence (AI) before everybody mistakenly opts into it by pressing some pretty button. Our interviewer is Eli Salatime, a reporter we hope to replace soon with an app.



Barry N. Ground is dedicated to explaining the concept of artificial intelligence to people who think it will iron your shirts someday.



Salatime: "AI has been called 'the most powerful foundational technology' ever to have existed. Is this true?"

Ground: "No, not really. The invention of the phone machine remains the most powerful foundational technology ever to have existed. Nobody has to sit around waiting for a phone call ever again. It changed the world.

Salatime: "So AI won't change the world?"

Ground: "Not really."

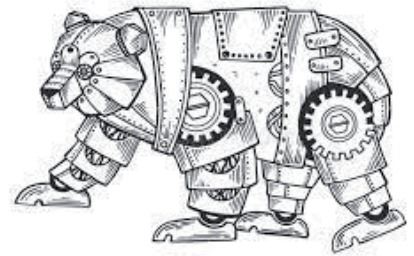
Salatime: "They say that AI will change education and how we learn to read and write. Is that true?"

Ground: "That's just silly. Keep in mind that the first thing people do with AI is figure out how to cheat. They want it to write their homework paper and sure, it can do that. But so can the guy sitting behind you in chemistry if you pay him enough. And that guy needs the money.

Salatime: "What are the best and worst case scenarios for generative AI's integration into everyday life?"

Ground: "You keep thinking that everything is going to change, but it's all going to be pretty much the same as what's going on right now with or without AI. Thousands of people are thoroughly misled, misinformed, distracted from anything that matters and feeling isolated and left out. None of that will change."

Salatime: "Okay...so maybe it will affect our jobs? How will AI technology affect the job market



NO ONE CAN TELL THE DIFFERENCE between this mechanical bear and the real thing. and jobs?"



Ground: "Again, this doesn't really represent anything new. The tendency to want to automate jobs and sidestep having to actually hire anybody is also not new, and you'll note that people didn't really take to the all-machine coffee shops where dang it all, you still have to encounter actual human beings in the form of other customers. The super-slow little sandwich-carrying robots always require a human handler walking around behind them because they're so easily pranked by people who want to put hats over their sensors or add a post-it note that says 'one less job'. AI won't solve or change anything. *What the media covers, the media sells.*"



Salatime: "So will anything change at all? Why was I given this interview? Why is AI all over the front page of what's left of my newspaper? What am I missing?"



Ground: "You're just part of the big hype. The same thing happened with Uber and Lyft; your product doesn't have to actually make money if you can convince people both that it is inevitable and that it will have a positive effect on something somewhere, something like education or your chance to get into college or making your job easier or doing your laundry. It's like those little pods in the cardboard box of laundry detergent. Did they solve a problem? No. Did they help anybody? No. Did they seem new? Yes, yes yes, and probably made just enough money to justify the incredible cost of paying out the lawsuits on all the kids who thought eating those things was like eating candy. AI is just like spell check, only dumber. Give learning to spell a try. It's not that hard."



THE REAL INTEREST IN AI IS how you can make it help you cheat on your job, which will be interesting, if not helpful.

* * * * *

PST SALUTES THE ANTI-CEQA HAIKU CONTEST WINNERS

Curated by Beau Legged



CEQA is evil
everything under the sun
is all CEQA's fault

never trust CEQA or
it will poison your omelette
and lie to your kids

you may think CEQA
is good but really it is
bad bad bad bad bad

hush dough for porn stars
is nothing compared to the
wreckage by CEQA

don't ever be caught trusting
CEQA which will totally
destroy your whole life

things were going fine
and then was totally wrecked
when CEQA came in

CEQA looks benign
but trust me you should never
ever trust CEQA

CEQA promises
to protect nature but it
stops all progress dead

CEQA's idea
of a good thing really is
all these stupid trees

CEQA is hostile
to the very idea
of any progress

* * * * *



OUR BANKS ARE NOT COMPLETELY un-
regulated. They just are treated with some deli-
cacy in case their feelings get hurt.

Best Ten Ways to Regulate Banks

By Bjorn Loser

* if they start to get out of line, begin to
leave the bitters out of their cocktails.

* if they wreck things up they get lots of
arched eyebrows during the golf game

* if they make a mess of things they have to
wait for a court at the tennis club

* all of a sudden no more all expense paid
trips to the Caymans

* suddenly their favorite club chair goes out
for reupholstering and never comes back

* inexplicably really tall people in sun-
glasses stand behind their desks and say
nothing

* all of a sudden the whole lunch room
stops talking when they come in and stares
at them

* if they screw up their office gets recar-
peted with something really ugly

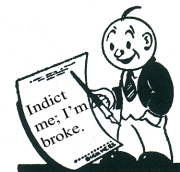
* it suddenly happens that their kids start
getting chosen last for dodge ball

* nobody eats whatever they bring for the
company potluck

* * * * *

Republican Candidates Beg for Indictments

By Skip N. Stones



"I need to get out
of the single digits,"
stated one Republi-
can contender consid-
ering getting indicted
for the next presiden-
tial election. "Repub-
lican voters have no
interest in platforms
or talking about is-
sues, so I think I have
to light my hair on
fire while I skydive
in body paint to get
some coverage."

"Indictment doesn't seem like the easiest
route, but the money looks sweet," nodded
another Republican candidate. "I'm trying
to decide between fraud and prostitution."

"I'm up for car theft," stated another Re-
publican candidate. "If your getaway is fast
enough you can catch some nightly news
footage and then you just apologize. Car
theft is like family entertainment in my part
of town. You get points for a nice ride."

Others warned that a criminal record may
in fact not be the accolade in the future it
appears to be in current political currency.

"It's hard to get a job with a felony con-
viction," admitted one state representative
who wished to remain anonymous. "I'm
hoping to cut some corner with a really
outrageous misdemeanor."

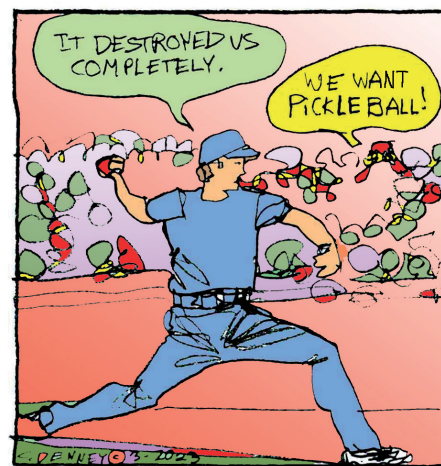
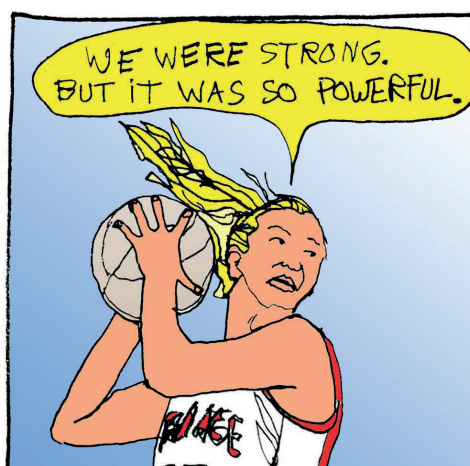
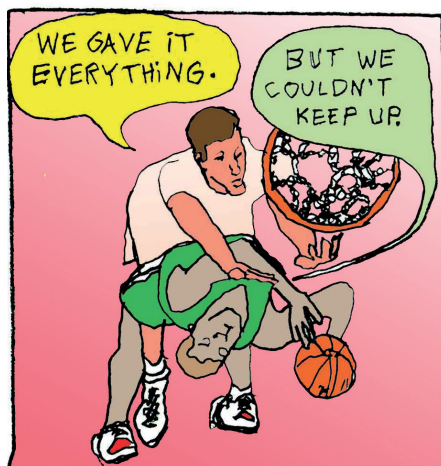
Trump rallies, on the other hand, are hav-
ing trouble hitting critical mass.

"They need a dunk tank," observed one
Trump rally attendee enjoying the sparse
group of costumed believers wandering
through nearly empty rally grounds. "But
the guy is still a front-runner and I guess he
could do the job from his jail cell. Trump
may be an asterisk in the line of presiden-
tial portraits, but sure enough he's there."

* * * * *

We Can't Draw Comics

by Franz Toast



Drag Up! Marches Go Nationwide

Drag Up Fight Back Parade Movement Popular With All Ages



FINOCCHIOS female impersonator review is one of many beloved historic drag traditions in San Francisco.

march to counter anti-drag legislation popping up nationwide. "You haven't really fought back until you've fought back with magenta sequins."

Legal experts puzzled over the explosion of anti-drag legislation after Tennessee passed a vague law criminalizing "adult cabaret" where people of one sex impersonated another in any place where children might be present.

"Am I in drag if I wear pants?" huffed one Nashville woman dodging gunfire. "And wouldn't this require a lot of guesswork about what gender people are, or what they're imitating, stuff like that? My

By Sheldon Ground

"We've never had turnout like this before," shouted one of the over 500 drag queens in the front lines of San Francisco's "Drag Up Fight Back"

aunt Sarah is constantly mistaken for a man, but that's not her fault. She just kind of has short hair and a moustache thing going on."

"It's a puzzle," acknowledged one West Virginia legislator mulling over proposed anti-drag legislation. "San Francisco was actually the first city to enact a 'masquerade ordinance'

in 1863 prohibiting anyone from being in public if they were wearing clothing different from their legal or assigned sex. Our Senate Bill 103 proposes all minors in West Virginia be prohibited from being involved in drag shows and prohibited to see any drag shows. It leaves the whole Halloween question hanging out there. It makes you have to think twice about the sequin quo-



THE ODD THING ABOUT OPRESSION is that it tends to fire up opposition which unlike tight-assed, humorless right wingers really knows how to put the mama mia in a march.

tient in one's costume and whether a Robin Hood costume is a little too swishy in the first place."

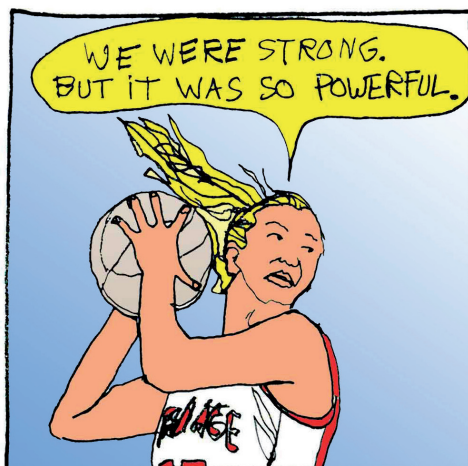
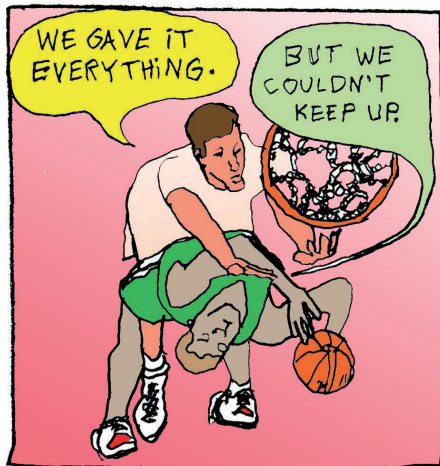
"I'm always in drag," admitted one intersex Tennessee resident. "I might as well turn myself in."

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Next Issue: reading phone books with celebrities!

I Want My Present Now

by Juan Nathan Undergod



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