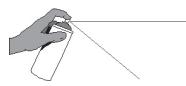


These are
truly
the...
*...the
wedding
issue...*



Pepper Spring Times

...or P.S.T...

June 2004



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

"Your joys with like relation...Go together..."

Vol. VI No.5

BUSH WANTS \$25 BILLION; CONGRESS SAYS WHATEVER

by Jill DeWine

Congress, shocked and stiffened by the sight of thousands of Iraqi prisoner abuse photos, offered no objection to giving President Bush \$25 billion in additional funds to track down those pesky weapons of mass destruction, find more fashionable headgear for Iraqi detainees, and hire design consultants to find a better flag design for the new, improved Iraqi interim authority.

"I'll give \$50 billion, I'll give \$100 billion," Senator John McCain, Republican, told Pentagon officials at a recent hearing. "Just make sure they make up a better story next time."

Senator Lindsey Graham, a Republican from South Carolina and a loyal supporter of the Bush administration, stated that "the Congress has an independent duty to find out what happened in that prison," indicating the misconduct at Abu Ghraib. "Barring that, we should at least try to look presentable at the televised hearings."

House Democratic leader Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco suggested that the Bush administration was lowballing the real cost of continuing military campaign until after the election.

"I've done extensive kitchen remodeling," commented Pelosi. "They're asking for about a third of what they really need."

Election challenger Senator John Kerry expressed dismay over the "sickening" nature of the photos displayed on Capitol Hill.

"Those pictures do not represent soldiers, and they do not represent the armed forces of the United States, said Kerry. "They do not represent the tal-

ented American internet porn industry."

The American people appeared to weather the scandal unfazed, telling a Pew Research Center poll that the war "was not going well" but adding that they would love another tax cut and one of those little iPod systems.

"We're not the experts," explained one Bart commuter backed up against the train wall by the local canine patrol. "We don't read the newspapers, either. We'd just love it if the trains would run on time."

Department of Defense deputy Paul Wolfowitz broke ranks with Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld over the Iraqi prisoner abuses, calling them "inhumane", but agreed that the photos themselves represent nothing at all.

"We learned this in the Rodney King trial," he explained. "Once the initial shock is over and people have the rules explained to them, they're usually willing to accept an expert's opinion. Remember that we're the ones who brought you the invisible weapons of mass destruction. We're considered experts on these existential issues."

* * * * *

SPIDERMAN STRIKES OUT

by Mel Practice

Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig hastily reversed his decision to allow promotional logos for the Columbia Pictures movie Spiderman on the bases after fans threatened to throw all their creepy little action figurines on the field.

"They do that anyway," grumbled Selig. "They do it to celebrate a play, to boo a call, hell, they do it to get the attention of a vendor. It's kind of like nudity in Berkeley anymore; nobody can tell if people are protesting or if it's laundry day."

Critics claimed that the promotional scheme with Columbia Pictures vio-

We Can't Draw Comics by guest artist Franz Toast



at first we had misgivings...

BIKE TO WORK SURVIVORS RAISE CASTS, GIVE THUMBS UP

by Elena Essewees

This year's local "Bike to Work" event was a roaring success according to survivors, who cheered each other's recovery efforts in various hospital wards and rehabilitation centers.

"I nearly got across Ashby Avenue," smiled one participant, waving the fingers of his right hand, which was resting in a sling after a shoulder dislocation. "Next year, who knows? I might get across all the way."

"I got farther this year than I got last year," offered another bicyclist, who was hit by a motorist opening a door

on College Avenue. "I had to walk the rest of the way because of the damage to my bike, but technically I made it."

"I saw one friend of mine nearly make it up University Avenue," commented an awestruck pedestrian who observed the brave crowd who ventured onto the busy streets with their two-wheelers for the annual event. "When he regains consciousness I'm sure he'll have some cool stories to tell."

Critics scoffed that the event costs too much in human injuries and defaced paint jobs, and should be stopped or modified so that all bicyclists are followed closely by medical teams.

"They have a point," responded another bicyclist. "The last time I was hit, the car that struck me was scratched up pretty badly."

Others championed the movement, which they described as cutting-edge.

"It'll get better," they insisted. "We're hoping someday it won't be cutting edge in quite as literal a way."

* * * * *

lated the purity of the game, bringing long-term sports fans to their knees in helpless laughter.

"Purity," gasped one fan rolling on the ground while clutching a foam finger, a clacker, a new hat, and a plastic cup covered with over a dozen cross-promotional logos and slogans. "I haven't heard the word purity since inter-league play."

"I haven't heard it since replacement ballplayers during the lock-out," chortled another fan.

"I haven't heard it since Barry Bonds turned into the Hulk," wheezed another, sending everybody in the bleachers off their benches and into the aisles.

"Jeez, what's the big deal," commented Geoffrey Ammer, President of marketing for the Columbia Tri-

ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Q: Hey Lena, if Ralph Nader debates Ralph Nader's ego, who wins?

A: It's unclear at present whether Ralph Nader's ego will let Ralph Nader in the debate, but assuming it does, the smart money is on his ego, which is rumored to be planning a spectacular wardrobe malfunction.

Q: Hey Lena, was Martha Stewart really guilty?

A: Heavens, no. Martha Stewart's real mistake was being powerful, wealthy, and female simultaneously. Women worldwide should take careful note; a well-folded napkin can be a very dangerous thing.

Q: Hey Lena, how does the Mars mission affect my life?

A: The Mars mission gives you actual, measurable scientific hope for a better world. You may never live in this world, it may have no water or cable tv, but just knowing it's there is theorized to bring you inner peace.

Q: Hey Lena, is it true that Mars really stinks?

Yes. For your vacation on Mars I would advise nose-plugs, a large supply of air fresheners, and a portable fan. Mars apparently smells a great deal like your local dog park.

.....

Star Motion Pictures Group. "We're just trying to get kids interested in the game. That is, those kids who have credit cards and might be interested in a box seat."

"It's a shame," offered one A's player about Spiderman's getting the boot. "We were kind of hoping he could pitch."

* * * * *



POETRY CORNER

Abu Ghraib Haiku 5-7-04

Rumsfeld was sorry.
The gorilla surgery
led the evening news.



...so everything was alright...



Possible new slogan for the City of Berkeley.
...la bike dame sans merci...

HISTORY GETS OLD FOR LANDMARK COMMISSIONERS

by Boris A. Drink

The Landmarks Preservation Commission recently decided that a pioneer cottage recently discovered to have been built in 1878 was too old and rundown to be considered for landmark status, despite pleas from historical societies all over California.

"These people need to come up with something new and quit living in the past," commented one commissioner. "Almost every application we get is for this stuff from another millennium."

Critics argued that you can't hold the moderate disrepair of a 126 year old house against it, and that recent appointees are working with pro-development groups to disable the commission.

"Nonsense," responded another commissioner. "We're just taking a different approach. These people just need to be more patient. The new stuff they build after they demolish the old stuff will be history someday, too."

While the controversy swirled over the 1878 cottage, the local press enjoyed its cherished but controversial spring tradition of targeting commissioners still fixated on preservation, a practice which critics describe as "unsportsmanlike". Chronicle writer Patrick Hoge defended the targeting tradition as a kind of art.

"You try to shoot just in front of the commissioner's nose or head," he explained about the technique, which is legal in Vermont. "You don't actually hit them, you just stun them with the concussion of the charge."

* * * * *

SELLING BODY PARTS MAY SAVE BUDGET

by Cora DeMatter

Officials are scrambling to shrink the budget, digging through creative suggestions to try to make ends meet.

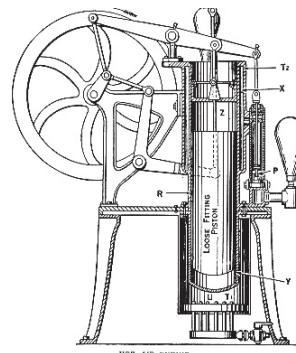
"I like the espresso concession idea," nodded one official. "The council members and commissioners, not to mention the public, could really use some help during those post-midnight legislative sessions."

Staff agreed that espresso sales would help, but pointed out that the most lucrative suggestion, charging the public for speaking at public comment periods, would not only erase the shortfall but fund public works and arts projects for years to come.

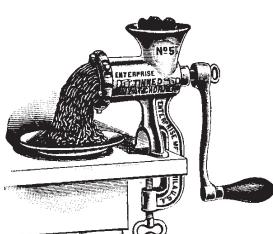
"There's an endless supply of hot air in this town," offered one staff member. "If you set up a micropower station downtown and charged by the minute, you could gold-plate City Hall just like they did in San Francisco."

City officials agreed that gold-plating City Hall was a worthy goal.

Others are eyeing UCLA's body-parts sales scandal as a possible meth-



A BASIC hot air engine might solve an enormous amount of the city's budget problems.



"I figured out the ending right away," commented a college student who watched the show with her public policy class. "He didn't have the manners of a millionaire."

Critics complained that the Secretary of State should have made the explicit photographs of the incidents public sooner, but most citizens disagreed.

"This is the guy who put a curtain over the nude statue with the balance," pointed out one defender. "He's probably kind of shy about the whole thing, at least until they do all his plastic surgery or something."

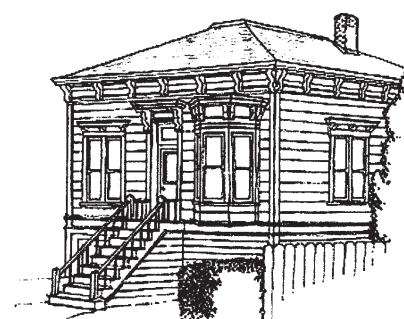
Not everybody was satisfied with Rumsfeld's testimony.

"Apology is not enough," commented one observer. "He should have had to eat a bug."

* (actual headline; apologies, we couldn't resist Scott Lindlaw and the Associated Press' efforts to make our day a little more fun. -Editor)

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Pioneer cottage discovered in West Berkeley



KERRY DENIES BEING "COOL"



PRESIDENTIAL candidate John Kerry worries that he might lose the uncool doofus vote.

By Felicia Flock

Recent revelations that a 1970's FBI report on John Kerry concluded that he was "cool" has left Kerry scrambling to distance himself from the discredited bureau.

"I wore my share of paisley, but that shouldn't single me out," protested Kerry. "My advisors assure me that I'm fully capable of representing dorkbutts and bamas."

Others agreed, pointing out that the FBI's surveillance of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, among other groups, was a shameful waste of tax dollars.

"We may have depended on the FBI to tell us what was cool in the old days," they said, "but we have MTV now for stuff like that."

"He doesn't seem that cool to me," offered one local youth dubiously, "but then the FBI hasn't gotten anything right in a long time."

* * * * *



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE Donald Rumsfeld stating that the system works.
BUSH STANDS FIRMLY BEHIND RUMSFELD*

by Lauren Standards

Polls agree that the American public seems satisfied after seeing Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld testify before a congressional hearing regarding the torture of Iraqi prisoners by American servicemen and servicewomen.

"The system worked," agreed one voter. "The investigation is pending and anyway he probably didn't get much chance to think about what song he was going to sing. That Simon guy is just hard on everybody."

"It was just a bunch of bad apples," nodded another who watched the hearing testimony. "They always turn up in the lower ranks, and later in the show the tribe figures out who they are."

"I figured out the ending right away," commented a college student who watched the show with her public policy class. "He didn't have the manners of a millionaire."

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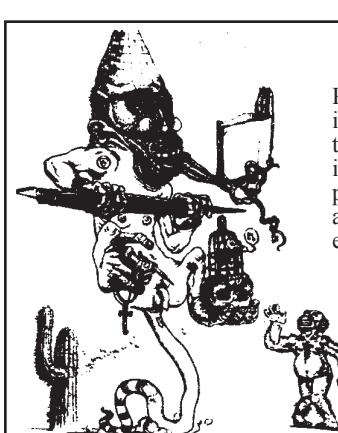
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We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

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Available at some of the finest public meetings, or mailed to your door for a hefty bribe.

* The Winter's Tale



VOICE OF THE VOTER...

--Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau: "Washington

never warned me about moments like this when I got off the boat in Rhode Island. I loved those two English cannons, by the way, and I'm keeping them no matter who wins this election. The Army of the North stuff keeps me on the run, so I'll have to vote absentee, but I'll probably vote Napoleon's recommendation since I'm a pensioner.

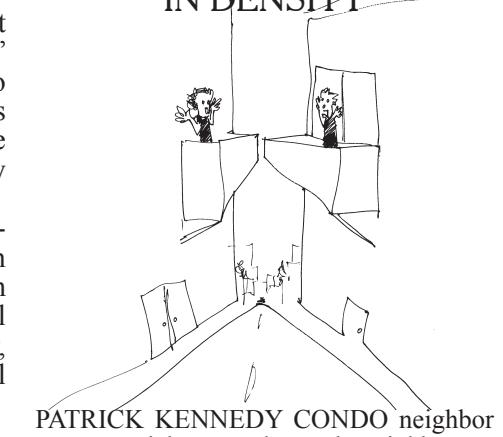
--Rodeo Rider: "Whoohoo, woo, aioowhoohoo! I make my mind up during

the grand entry and adjust it later by the bronco's ferocity and the rider's performance. I'm especially impressed by calf roping, but

I'm a trick rider myself, so I'm a tough customer. Bush has some fine horses, but he's not much of a rider and that's a fact. I'm a dusty old fart, but I ain't dumb."

--Jean Paul Sar-tre: "It doesn't take much to convince me that's it's all absurd, but while I don't believe in the reliability of reason, my nine months in prison will always bring me to the polls. Pointless, perhaps, but one must demonstrate one's freedom to act or one never gets the distinction of being banned by the pope."

MORE ADVENTURES IN DENSITY



PATRICK KENNEDY CONDO neighbor meets Patrick Kennedy condo neighbor.

