

These ...the
are thoroughly
truly credible
the... issue...

Hepper Spray Times

December 2004

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

"...Thou are a very ragged wart."*

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EAGLES SUE POLITICAL PARTIES

by Loren deBoom

Thousands of American eagles announced election day lawsuits against both political parties at a press conference on November 2nd in Homer, Alaska, claiming that their image has been irretrievably damaged.

"People look to us for honesty and integrity," stated eagle spokesperson Monica Boose. "Neither political party has any affiliation with us, and yet our image is constantly used by both parties to connote idealistic qualities which neither party can rightly claim."

"They have a point," agreed one pollster. "Most celebrities are represented by agents who drive hard bargains for photo opportunities and appearances. These poor eagles are being taken advantage of, and it has to stop."

"That's ridiculous," responded one resident of Homer. "These birds are pests. Come look at my yard. I get about a bucket of integrity a day all over my truck. No jury in Homer will side with them no matter how hypocritical it is for the political parties to pose with them."

Spokespersons for the Democratic

CHEMICAL INDUSTRY GETS GENEROUS WITH EPA

by Whittier DeOdds

The Environmental Protection Agency accepted \$2 million from the American Chemistry Council recently to help fund a study of the impact of chemicals on young children.

"Because they care," states Paul Gilman, answering inquiries as to what motivated the American Chemistry Council, which represents about 135 manufacturers, to assist in funding the study. "Everybody loves kids. Just because you love chemicals doesn't mean you can't love kids, too."

The vice president for science and research at the American Chemistry Council, Carol Henry, conceded that the study design was the EPA's, but insisted that her \$7.8 billion agency would still manage to have an indepen-



EAGLES announced their lawsuit at a press conference in Homer, Alaska.

and Republican National Committees declined to comment, stating privately that they were happy to negotiate with the eagles' legal representatives.

"We want to be fair," they commented off the record. "We believe we can find a mutually agreeable conclusion to any current controversy. Our graphics department has had no success using vultures, ducks, or little canaries."

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dent effect on the research done.

"Money is like that," she smiled. "If there is any indication that this study indicates that household chemicals are risky for children, our corporate boards wish to be on the record as having demonstrated their collective concern."

Critics questioned the \$2 million gift, arguing that the financial exchange would prejudice the study's academic and political independence.

"Nonsense," responded Gilman. "We started accepting money like this under Clinton. We would be more vulnerable to criticism if we took money from kids. Lucky for us, it's hard to raise \$2 million from lemonade stands and cookie sales."

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"NO VIEWER LEFT BEHIND" GUTS NEWS BUDGETS

Clara Table

A new program created to bring accountability to news broadcast organizations is proving problematic for news programs used to including gardening tips, movie reviews, and other fluff.

Based on the "No Child Left Behind" program, which cuts school budgets when learning standards are not met, the "No Viewer Left Behind" program is designed to reduce news organization budgets when viewers are unable to answer general questions about current events, health issues, geography, and other basic fields of knowledge.

"We thought as long as the schools are striving to achieve some accountability to parents, students, and the community, it made sense to put together some requirements for news outlets," explained one proponent of the new program. "I'm all for joke-cracking meteorologists and sexy sportscasters, but my neighbor thinks Baghdad is some new ride at Disneyland."

Critics argued that the program ran the risk of making the state of news coverage even worse than it already is, pointing out that the best journalists would be given pink slips and leave journalism in the hands of hacks, punks, and unpaid interns.

"That's all that's left anyway," responded one program specialist. "We're half product placement as it is. At this rate the Fox News budget will be around \$49.99 pretty soon."

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Possible new slogan for the City of Berkeley...

"...hey, baby, looking for a good time..."

ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, so, is it alright for ball-players to throw chairs into the crowd during a baseball game?

A: It is not uncommon for equipment to fly into the stands from time to time, but players should keep in mind both that chairs are rarely accurate in the strike zone, and that the people sitting closest to the field are often lawyers.

Dear Lena, why do some people take so much time to make up their minds about a presidential election?

A: Some of them are honestly busy, but a large ratio of late-undecided voters enjoy teasing pollsters and phone bank volunteers, and consider it highly entertaining to engage in long, cruel debates with them as the election grows near. These people have a special place for them reserved in hell.

Dear Lena, should they ban street shrines to shooting victims?

A: Yes, it is common knowledge that little candles and notes of remembrance cause crime. People should have to foresight to get shot in cemeteries, where the property values have a tendency to remain stable.

Dear Lena, should I worry about somebody putting a marijuana dispensary in my neighborhood?

A: Yes, you should, otherwise you may find the reggae music overwhelming.

Dear Lena, is touch-screen electronic voting really safe?

A: Of course. All the little electrons have been carefully trained in political neutrality, and have promised not to wear red or blue on election day. While you may receive no paper proof of the way your vote was recorded, you will notice an over sense of well-being once you let go of your neurotic need to control small, unimportant matters.

SUCKY SCULPTURE ON THE WAY FUELED BY POWERBAR MILLIONAIRES

by Greta Nunion

A controversial sculpture rejected by the San Francisco Art Commission got a thumbs up recently from Berkeley's Public Art Committee, one member of which insisted that aesthetics are "not our role."

"We kind of figured that out," commented one pedestrian hurrying past the public art at the corner of Shattuck and Addison. "But since you can't park your bike on it, kids can't play with it, and it's mildly offensive to look at, I'm coming up empty on what the Berkeley Public Art Committee's role actually is."

Insiders admitted that the incredibly ugly blue globe with the white guy crawling up the side was probably going to be planted at the Berkeley Marina because wealthy and politically well-connected PowerBar millionaires had decided that it was a tribute to David Brower, who is too dead to object.

"It's a relief to understand how the process works," offered one Berkeley resident philosophically as he strolled past the large red tuning fork on Center Street. "I assumed that there was a dartboard or a bingo spinner involved."

"I thought it was an effort to make me feel small and disoriented," commented another pedestrian walking by. "I appreciate finally knowing that they're not trying to upset me personally."

"Rich people are a larger obstacle to fine art than most people appreciate," offered one local artist. "They buy these things, they commission these things, and then everybody who sees it just assumes that it's art."

"Who else could afford this game?" responded another. "Poor people would probably pay to have this thing rolled into the bay. Not that I'm suggesting anything at all."

Critics argued that before rolling into the bay, the memorial sculpture was likely to be the target of people with objections to the implied theme of global human dominance.

"That's a silly thing to worry about," responded one commissioner. "There's nothing in this city that isn't the target of protest. I think the worst that's going to happen is people are going to put funny hats on the guy crawling up the side of the thing, and that might be kind of fun."

"I actually like the PowerBar sign



EVEN THE ARTIST who drew this rendering of the proposed David Brower memorial sculpture, which has never been assembled, seems sketchy about it.

better than this thing," muttered one annoyed attendee at the meeting, referring to the large candybar advertisement still sitting on top of the tallest building in town. "The PowerBar sign is a little bit Warhol, at least. This out-of-scale white guy kind of dominates the planet the way he's clambering up the side. I think Brower would have puked."

"These poor people just don't understand art," commented Jennifer Maxwell, one of the Power Bar set. "The main point we need to focus on is that this just won't fit in my living room."

"She has a good point," commented one homeless woman selling items on a blanket near the on-ramp. "But let her know that if someone finds me a living room I'll do my best to fit it in."

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I dreamed I voted for Bush...

in my maidenform bra



SCIENTISTS CONFIRMED that this 3-foot-tall adult hominid was not only a voter but consistently voted absentee.

PYGMY ANCESTORS ACTUALLY VOTED

by Colin Home

Recently discovered archeological evidence from a remote island in Indonesia proves definitively that a highly evolved race of very small people, who used stone tools, actually voted in their local elections.

“Discoveries don’t get better than that,” said an excited Robert Foley of Cambridge University’s department of biological anthropology, holding shards of little stone ballots in his trembling hand. “The find is startling, and the ballot design is remarkably advanced.”

“Of course they voted,” scoffed a local employee at the Registrar of Voters. “There couldn’t have been much advertising in those days, or lawn sign stealing. Those pygmies had the advantage of weighing the issues without getting bombarded with misleading campaign ads every minute. I get so mad I’m tempted to make paper dolls out of my sample ballot.”

Evidence uncovered at the site suggested that the pygmies also benefitted from a complete absence of misleading last minute mailings and door-hangers.

“We’ve found no evidence of postal service or doorknobs,” confirmed anthropologist Marta Mirazon Lahr. “I’m convinced there was a complete absence of annoying pre-recorded election phone calls.”

“History has lots to teach us,” agreed Foley. “Someday I hope we evolve to the point where we, too, can eliminate wasteful, repetitive campaign materials, and maybe even holiday catalogs.”

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MARTHA STEWART TRANSFERRED TO ABU GRAIB PRISON

by Anita Job

Home-maker superstar Martha Stewart was transferred from her Alderson, West Virginia prison to Iraq’s notorious Abu Ghraib’s new women’s wing in what critics describe as an effort to quell criticism that she got off too easily.

“This is no substitute for the justice craved by anyone who’s tried to follow one of her exotic recipes,” scoffed one angry observer. “This won’t satisfy our lust to crush that rich, spoiled cookie-maker once and for all.”

“We thought the sentence was appropriate,” stated Justice Department officials of Stewart’s sentencing, “but the implication that the transfer is other than routine is nonsense. We transfer prisoners all the time.”

“They have it all wrong,” confided one Justice Department insider. “Abu Ghraib has been thoroughly renovated, but there’s no question that the few weeks she’s spent at Alderson made a huge difference in the place. We were just hoping for some tips. That gal really has a way with a floral centerpiece.”

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MARTHA STEWART’S transfer to Abu Ghraib may simply be an effort to get some professional help with the prison’s renovations.

We Can’t Draw Comics by guest artist Franz Toast



BIN LADEN’S LATEST VIDEO is not making the critics’ top ten list.

BIN LADEN VIDEO PANNED BY CRITICS

by Selma Stocks

Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden’s latest video, released recently in a calculated effort to affect the presidential election, was panned by critics and public viewers as derivative, repetitive, and boring.

“It’s a great disappointment,” commented Chronicle Arts and Culture critic Steven Winn. “For audiences who are interested in his work, this latest release falls short.”

“What was once original seems stylized,” agreed Tribune reviewer Chad Jones. “If the filmmaker truly wants to address the American people personally, he needs to speak the language.”

Analysts suggested that the video reflected a subtle change in the Al Qaeda leader’s image, using the more diplomatic tone of a world leader.

“All his weight was being a fundamentalist Islamist. This is at his root. And suddenly he talks like a politician,” said Yigal Carmon, president of the Middle East Media Research Institute. “If he really wants to appeal to the American public, he needs to show up at a NASCAR race and eat some cheeseburgers.”

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PG&E REVEALS HOW IT GUESSES CONSUMER BILLS

by Jerry Pie

Pacific Gas and Electric, struggling to explain the admission that it estimates approximately 70,000 of its customers' monthly bills, recently revealed a complicated formula it claims it used to produce an accurate estimation of individual consumer bills.

"We never simply guess," stated PG&E spokesman Ron Low. "We make highly educated estimates based on a series of objective factors including interest rates, cholesterol counts, and depth of the Sierra snowpack."

"There's nothing fair about it," observed Bill Brill, who read meters for PG&E for 23 years before retiring. "My cholesterol count, for instance, is actually quite low."

"I kind of wondered about that," said PG&E customer Sheila Doorit, noting the steady increase in her monthly bills although she long ago stopped using her appliances or heat to save money. "Chewing up the meter reader was all the exercise little Fluffie tends to get."

PG&E countered that gambling was all the rage in California, and that it was positive its customers would come to enjoy the introduction of random factors and chance into what is otherwise a relatively routine matter with little or no entertainment value.

"People love to gamble," Low stated. "For heaven's sake, they voted for Schwarzenegger. We're positive that people will come to enjoy opening their next PG&E bill and greet its arrival with the same excitement they get from bingo."

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PG&E EXPERTS spend hours discussing the odds of particular consumers using more or less energy monthly, paying careful attention to the interest rates, Neilson ratings, and astrological charts.

FAITH-BASED METERS COMING SOON

by Linda Hand

A unanimous Berkeley City Council voted recently to replace 284 single space parking meters with Cale Parking Systems' pay station machines, which are touted as able to reject foreign coins, plastics, wood, and tofu products often substituted by creative East Bay drivers.

"Not again," sighed critics, who pointed out that the previous generation of new machines was also purported to be able to withstand local meter scoff-laws, and that it was so rare to find operative meters in town that functional meters often became shrines.

"We have faith," explained Peter Hillier, assistant city manager for transportation. "Faith is believing in something even when it doesn't make any sense. The Red Sox won the series. This could be the year we get our miracle."

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IRS INVESTIGATES CASSIOPEIA's "W"

by Cody Pendant

The Internal Revenue Service has launched an investigation into the constellation Cassiopeia, which has admitted to revealing a brightly lit "W" shortly before the presidential election.

"I'm not a 501C3," she protested in her defense, hanging her head downward. "I'm no more political than Orion, who looks like a big 'K'. Haven't I been punished enough?"

The IRS insisted that the targets of its investigations are confidential, but commented that any non-profit organization which gave the appearance of specifically supporting a particular political candidate would receive vigorous scrutiny.

"We have no doubts about our jurisdiction in this matter. Most people search heaven and earth for loopholes, so we try to be thorough."

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D. MINKLER 2002
THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE PERPETUAL WAR

The Pepper Spray Times gratefully accepts donations, death threats, mailing list additions, etc., at:



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Pepper Spray Times is made possible by the natural comedy inherent in the local political landscape and all its inhabitants,

best exemplified by...

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

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

* Henry IV Part 2