

All hail the...
...the back to school issue ...

Hepper Spray Times

October 2007



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

"...the rest the paper tells..."*

Vol. IX No. 10

WHEEL REINVENTION NEARLY COMPLETE

NEW ANTI-HOMELESS LAWS THRILL NOSTALGIC FANS OF OLD MEASURES "N" AND "O"

By Carlotta Lemons

"A surly crowd of naysayers at a recent public hearing refused to endorse Mayor Tom Bates's latest anti-homeless laws despite a power point presentation by the city's Lauren Lempert, who managed to keep a straight face while claiming that there was nothing Orwellian about the initiative's name.

"She's got talent," stated one amazed attendee. "She stated the Public Commons for Everyone Initiative's name at least four times without blushing or any overt signs of embarrassment."

"It's more than I could do," nodded a city hall staffer. "We're pushing the use of initials at this point, but I'm not sure it's necessary. Most people don't put their iPhones down long enough to notice what we're up to, and quit reading a long time ago."

"I'm not sure they know who George Orwell is," confirmed another staffer. "Only one of them noticed that we didn't bring the initiative itself to the public hearing, and only a few of them



MISGUIDED RADICALS showed up to oppose the traditional holiday attack on the poor, unable to appreciate that for most of Berkeley this is a hallowed tradition and ought to become a cultural landmark.



LAUREN LEMPERT begged the crowd to trust city officials and the police to solve homelessness and end poverty with citations, fines, jail sentences, and of course, pepper spray.

know the police make it up as they go, unburdened by the niceties of law."

The small group, one-third composed of city officials, was urged to make positive suggestions to address an as-yet-undefined problem, and stepped to the plate with creative suggestions:

- * make the City Hall steps a citation-free spot for public urination and defecation until public bathrooms are built;

- *require the police to take DNA samples of feces or urine to avoid false accusations until the Police Review Commission's effectiveness is restored;

- * open up City Hall and the North Berkeley Senior Center as all-night shelters until the housing program can be shifted away from condos and rental units only affordable to the upper middle class;

- * replace the single room occupancy (SRO) housing destroyed in the last few decades which put people on the street in the first place;

- *arm the homeless.

NEW RULES FOR POLICE HEARINGS

By Teresa Swaying

Berkeley police have requested new rules for misconduct hearings, which would keep complainants out of the hearing room and keep the investigation report out of complainants' nasty, nosy little hands.

"We're brave, but we hate having to see the complainant's face," explained one officer. "We might lose our composure with an accuser in the room."

Henry Wellington, president of the police union, added that it also should not be necessary for a complainant to have a copy of the investigation report.

"If the complainant was, in fact, present at the incident in question, they should presumably know what took place without additional notes. This way we save paper."

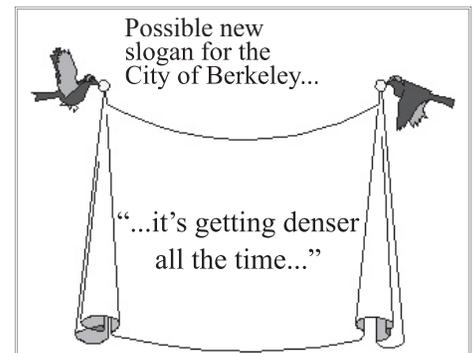
"The complainant is free to have designated additional literature," added Wellington. "We will allow copies of the current racing forms and also Harry Potter books.

* * * * *

Lempert maintained her straight face to the end, when a woman named Barbara walked in late and stated that the nearest park had three homeless people in it who were making her uncomfortable, causing staff to jump up and usher her into a corner so that she could be brought up to speed on the subtleties of policy oppression.

"She's in our corner, but she needs coaching," commented one staffer. "She's almost there."

* * * * *



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, my neighborhood is so dense there are fistfights over parking. Where am I really supposed to park my car? What's the good of having a car I can't move?

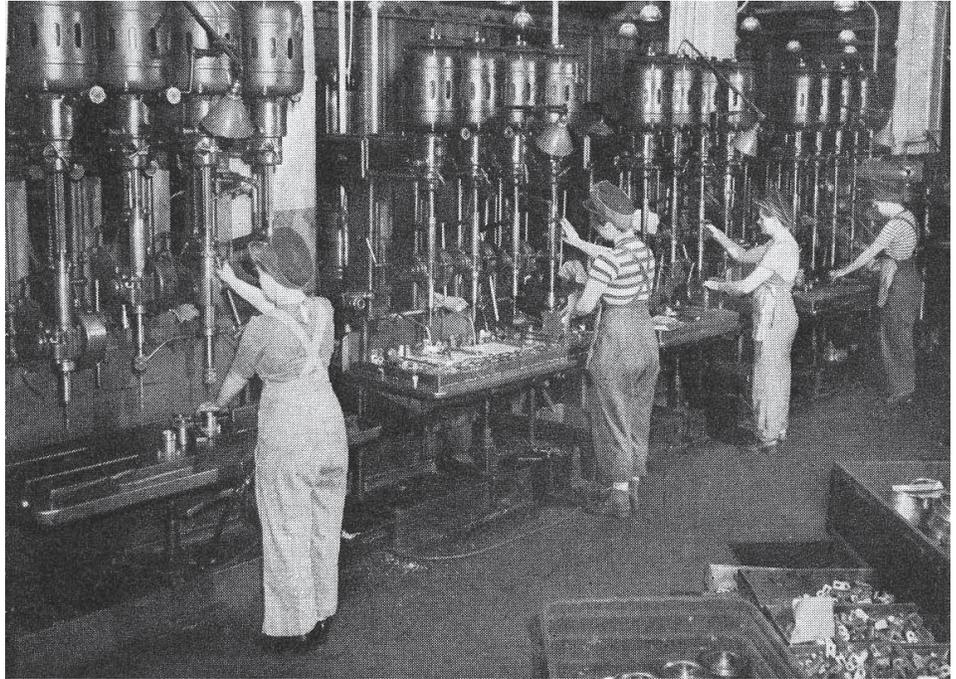
Dear reader, status, of course. If everybody on your block already has a Prius, then the next level of status is never moving it at all, which not only lowers your carbon footprint, but keeps your status symbol conveniently situated by your house while everybody else has to park in Modesto. Modesto, by the way, will still have plenty of parking for about six months, after which you will have to park in Nevada.

Dear Lena, I'm nervous about Mayor Tom Bates's idea of making urination and defecation punishable by fines. Are there any bathrooms around here? I've been getting friendly with the bushes since I hit town, and I need a bathroom map or something.

Dear reader, brilliant idea. You could make some serious money creating such a map, and annotating it with the relative distance, in terms of lattes, between the few facilities available. But if you get into a pinch, trot down to City Hall, where Tom Bates will personally escort you to his favorite urinal. Public urination is already illegal under some other code they're not bringing up, but this law is only selectively enforced, so you can relieve yourself without concern. And if you piss on the homeless or on the panhandlers, you'll probably qualify for a special prize from the mayor.

Ask Lena! She may not be right, but what expert is? At least she is absurdly generous with her expert advice. Contact her at cdenney@igc.org.

BRITISH PETROLEUM SAVES STRAWBERRY CANYON FROM VICIOUS DEER



CAREFULLY TRAINED SCIENTISTS at the secret "proprietary" branch of British Petroleum's Helios Project work feverishly to make sure Strawberry Canyon is never again plagued with thoughtless, shiftless wildlife.

By Staff Writer L. G. Pond

Grateful Strawberry Canyon residents wept in thanks at the news that a private company would finally step in to rid Strawberry Canyon of lawless wildlife, especially thieving herds of destructive gangs of deer which have been terrorizing the neighborhood without mercy.

"We can't control them, we can't live with them, and the government does nothing," stated a grateful Janice Thomas, signing a large, colorful thank-you note to British Petroleum, whose new research development building, part of the "Helios" project, could possibly put an end to both the deer and the other invasive wildlife which constantly harass canyon homeowners, hikers, and genetically modified microbes alike.

Experts agree the deer have had terrorist training, probably in Pakistan or Afghanistan, and have shown no remorse for the roses and vegetables they've devastated over the years.

"Many of the deaths are under-reported," stated one scientist. "Most of the grieving relatives are too frightened

to visit the morgue and identify the bodies."

"We can't be certain that it is religious-based hostility," stated another local expert. "To the untrained eye they seem very quiet, almost docile. But there isn't an inch of the canyon that isn't marked with their trails, which reflect an uncanny ability to move up and down steep canyon walls in almost complete silence."

Spokespersons for the deer protested that the deer have as much right to traverse the canyon as the large trucks carrying toxic material, although they conceded that the deer have fallen somewhat behind in their permits.

"Deer can co-exist with toxic waste, tritium, and genetically modified organisms," stated one deer spokesperson. "They just need a chance to prove it."

"Don't let Bambi fool you," countered a British Petroleum expert, dusting off his white coat while polishing test tubes. "We've just been lucky that so far they're unarmed."

* * * * *

UNDER THE OVERPASS DEMOCRACY: THE GREAT PRETENDER

By Maud Noteven

The question of whether Under The Overpass Democracy should be considered a legitimate connection between citizens and Berkeley City Hall is currently being raised by critics whose political opponents claim Under The Overpass Democracy detractors are simply too lazy to frequent local underpasses and participate fully in the pure democratic opportunity represented.

"Anybody can live under an overpass and be represented," states Under The Overpass Democracy supporter Robert Vogel. "Absolutely anybody. We do not discriminate against anybody, unless you want to argue that people who do not live under the highway overpasses are not equally represented. But those people can all come and join the people who live under the highway overpasses at any time, and they will be made welcome."

"The issue is not whether the people who live under the overpasses have opinions on local issues, nor that they are not entitled to those opinion," responded critic Steve Martinot. "The issue is whether or not the staff or the politicians at Berkeley City Hall should be paying any attention to these opinions at all."

Martinot's point is supported by others who claim they would love to spend more time under the overpasses near the freeway, but that living up in the Berkeley and Oakland hills reduces their access to the area under the overpasses, and thus means they have little

or no chance to weigh in on the issues under discussion by the under the overpass group.

"It's discrimination," stated one Berkeley hills resident. "Sure, we could start our own group, but the Under The Overpass Democracy group got a headstart and has obvious council support."

Critics claim that a vote or a poll on local issues ought to include all of Berkeley rather than be dominated by a particular interest group.

"Why should those people under the overpasses get listened to more than anybody else?" groused another hills homeowner. "We may have better shoes, but we have needs, too."

Residents of the area under the overpass near the freeway agreed that their interest group tends to represent the typical non-homeowner better than the propertied interests in town.

"It's true that our focus is different," stated one shivering veteran adjusting his blanket. "We're not nearly as worried about property taxes and mortgage rates."

"But we have a lot in common with the people in the hills," added another overpass resident. "We're just as baffled by the public art, and we can't figure out why they keep re-designing the BART plaza either."

"They have an equal right to free speech," agreed another homeless man. "Tell them to grab some cardboard and come on down."

* * * * *

SF CITY HALL CANCELS CHRISTMAS

By C D. Boidie

San Francisco City Hall staff acknowledged yesterday that after brainstorming for months on the wisdom of cancelling the Castro Street Halloween celebration, they decided instead to cancel Christmas, the much more controversial and disruptive holiday.

"The stores get so crowded," pointed out one staff member. "You don't get to linger at the cosmetics counter and try for a new look during the holiday crush, and it's really annoying."

"I think we all needed a break," agreed a local pickpocket. "It's true that the stressed-out Christmas crowd is the easiest to work, but I do just fine with the tourists, and I confess I'm tired of the hype."

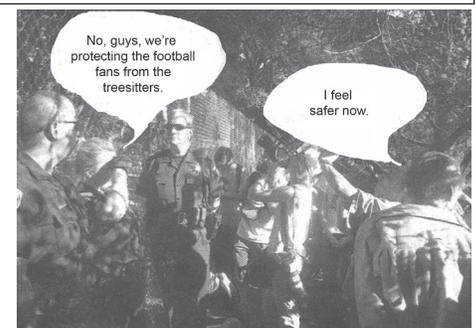
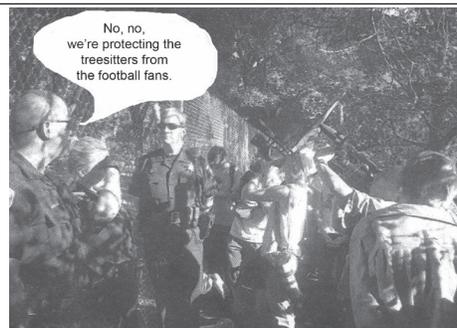
"I think it fits with the new consciousness about global warming," stated a San Francisco resident. "I love the fall, and I love the winter, but the whole gift exchange is a little idiotic what with only the wealthy left in town anyway. We don't really need much, so we're giving each other carbon footprint offsets this year."

"It works for me," stated one homeless man panhandling at the corner of Market Street. "I find hearts are warmer when it gets cold. It has nothing to do with Christmas, or whatever they call it now. Out here you either die or you don't."

* * * * *

Next issue, Drive-by Shooting with Celebrities

We Can't Draw Comics by Franz Toast



NBC11 LAUNCHES NEW INTERACTIVE NEWS SHOW

By Joey Toodaworld

Television news stations are allowing viewers to converse with on-air anchors in an effort to vie for the attention of the last dozen people still watching.

San Jose's NBC11's new interactive format is an effort to recognize that reporting is no longer a one way street, but is a "conversation" between the professionals reporting the news and a bunch of yahoos who want to hear their own names read over the airwaves.

"Not necessarily a *good* conversation," stated anchor Jessica Aguirre after reading some online comments. "Please tell Jack in Pleasanton that while his comments on my wardrobe are warmly appreciated, I will not be removing articles of clothing during the show."

"Local tv has been very late in coming to the online party," stated Tom Rosenstiel, director of the Project for Excellence in Journalism, a media think tank. Rosenstiel pointed out that CNN and CBS have already caved in to pressure from bloggers to respond to the more free-wheeling online world of opinion, digression, and gratuitous insult which is, if not educational, often more entertaining than the news.



NBC CHANNEL ELEVEN is inviting viewers to chat with live news anchors in the hope that having Jan Boyd mention them by name or comment on their messages will be of more interest to them than the actual news.

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



Pepper Spray Times
1970 San Pablo Ave. #4
Berkeley, CA 94702
cdenny@igc.org
www.caroldenney.com

Pepper Spray Times Staff

Editor.....Grace Underpressure
Art Director.....Egon Schiele
Comics.....Roger Dondis
Staff.....Carlotta Lemons, Teresa Swaying,
L. G. Pond, Maud Noteven, Lena Deeter, C.
D. Boidie, Doug Minkler, Franz Toast, Joey
Toodaworld



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

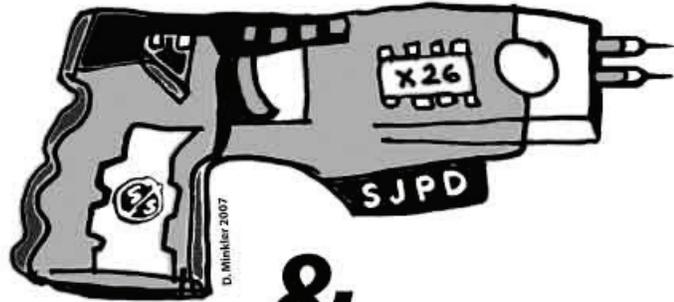
best exemplified by...

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

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

*Henry IV Part 2

Judge, Jury



& Electrocutioner

To date more than 289 citizens
have died after being tasered.

Ban Tasers

The Coalition for Justice and Accountability (408) 287-9710
Silicon Valley De-Bug (408) 453-2517 svdebug@newamericamedia.org
For information on the international struggle to ban tasers see:
www.truthnottasers.blogspot.com

This poster is a art/law collaboration between poster maker Doug Minkler and attorney, Aram James.
For information contact: Aram James, ABJPD1@juno.com (415) 370-5056

"The pace is blistering," admitted one tv news veteran trying to respond to online comments, watch the live broadcast, and cue the anchors as the broadcast copy altered. "But we take our jobs very seriously as professional journalists. We want to respond to our viewers more personally. Especially these last twelve or so."

Critics argued that the younger viewers being courted are unlikely to mistake the broadcast news for MySpace, and are likely to use the opportunity

to launch practical jokes and pranks if they make time for it at all.

"Newsroom personnel are not smart enough for the flash mob crowd," stated one observer. "Television news is already a wasteland. Now it will be a wasteland full of the Facebook equivalent of Nigerian business scams."

"We hope people will give it a chance to work," said NBC11's Jan Boyd. "Otherwise I'm going to end up topless."

* * * * *