

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

January 2019

the post apocalypse issue...



# Pepper Spray Times



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

"...dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair..."

Vol. XX No. 1

## Robot Explodes in Flames

By Gideon Ahose

A robot exploded in flames during the holidays on the Berkeley campus causing a stir by shooting flames and smoke in Sproul Plaza.

University of California officials stated that the cause of the blaze is under investigation, but most likely will be traced to ill-intended activists in People's Park trying to say something or other.



UC CHIEF of police Margo Bennett says sure she likes to work from home but it's not the same as saying you're patrolling the campus and hanging out at the library instead.

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THE KIWIBOT'S SPONTANEOUS EXPLOSION on campus will probably never be explained according to Sasha Iatsenia, head of product at Kiwi, but can probably be traced to ruffians in People's Park or maybe the robot was just in a really celebratory mood.

would find some other handy activist group to implicate.

"It probably has something to do with global warming," commented UC

"We've been at this a long time," she smiled. "We really know how."

The company responsible for the robots really didn't want to talk about the explosion.

"All I know is it completely knocked the UC police misconduct stories off the front pages and we're going to pop a little champagne later."

"We have hundreds of these things all over town," admitted Sasha Iatsenia, who is the head of product at Kiwi and says there are as yet no services planned. "We don't really think this will put a dent in people's willingness to have them hanging out in their apartment building lobbies and business foyers. People are reckless and stupid and they love robots, so I think we're good. As long as we bring them a sandwich or a pizza I think we're golden."

Iatsenia admitted that their company picks up dozens of meals from restaurants, and then drives the robots which only deliver the last 200 meters, so the whole arrangement is fossil fuel laden and expensive as shit if you subtract the subsidies.

"It's more about changing the culture," she acknowledged. "We want people to accept robots, to like robots. We want them to forget how we're breaking vehicles codes every which way not the mention the ADA. We need them to have affection for us."

\* \* \* \* \*



BUSES ARE GREENER, CHEAPER, SAFER, and create less confusion and congestion on city streets than having thousands of individual private drivers in their private cars waiting around for an app signal.

## Uber, Lyft Have Blinding Epiphany, Discover the Bus

By Willoughy Stingmee

"We have a lot of smart people here but nobody thought of it," admitted Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi explaining widespread excitement over discovering the low-cost, environmentally sound economics of the bus.



RIDE-HAILING businesses are enchanted with the vehicles and business models of buses, which make so much more sense than trying to fit humans into pneumatic tubes.

"Unlike having fleets of competing vehicles exuding toxic fumes all day in frantic search of a fare at an unliveable wage, you have an accessible, predictable transit system that's cheaper, greener, and open to everybody."

Khosrowshahi admitted it makes his company look like a bunch of wankers.

"I just wish we'd thought of it," he said.

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UC POLICE ARE baffled by the distrust they encounter from the public and can't figure out where it comes from because the way they see it scenes like the one above are kind of fun for everybody.

Chief Bennett affirmed that the spontaneous robot explosion was under investigation but assured reporters that if People's Park activists couldn't be blamed they



# ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

**Dear Lena, so is the robot okay? That is so sad. When is the memorial?**

Dear reader, the robot is dead. The good news is that it is more easily replaced than most of the rest of us. Happy New Year.

**Dear Lena, the university just took a chainsaw without warning to the oldest trees in the east end of People's Park. What are they trying to say?**

Dear reader, it's a little known fact that the university's second motto after "Fiat Lux" is "Reprehendo sicco meus frigus chainsaw capitur", which in English translates to "Check out my cool chainsaw."

**Dear Lena, if the robots are going to blow up, shouldn't they stay away from lobbies, businesses, classrooms, etc? They seem like kind of a hazard.**

Dear reader, you have an excellent point. Good luck making that same excellent point to the tech-crazed world you live in that cares more about the exploding robot than the guy sleeping under the overpass. I'm rooting for you.

**Dear Lena, where can I get a chainsaw? Is there a tree left up in People's Park for me?**

Dear reader, check with the chancellor at (510) 642-3734.

**Dear Lena, I'm interested in mastering thermal runaway. Is there a seminar?**

Dear reader, talk to Sasha from Kiwi. She and her robots have it down and are glad to give you a live, albeit unexpected, demonstration.

**Dear Lena, what are you hoping for in 2019?**

Dear reader, I'm hoping for just one person to decide *not* to run for president so we can still whip up a good game of croquet.

*Ask Lena about getting in on the startup of thermal runaway at [cdenney@jgc.org](mailto:cdenney@jgc.org).*

# Developer Ordered to Rebuild Demolished Architectural Gem Exactly the Way It Was

## "Whoops" Defense, Usually Effective, Falls Flat



A 1935 TWIN PEAKS HOME DESIGNED BY FAMED ARCHITECT RICHARD NEUTRA was simply remodeled in a slightly aggressive way by property owner Ross Johnston who points out that many of the original features seen here strewn about the property are exactly the same.

*By Wanda Ringaround*

Ross Johnson submitted his permit application to demolish a home at 49 Hopkins Street in San Francisco two months after he had knocked the whole building flat, but responded to city and neighborhood concerns by pointing out that this was, in fact, the traditional approach in most of the hyperized housing atmosphere in the Bay Area.

"Most Planning Departments appreciate that the permitting processes are streamlined when a contractor just does whatever and gets the permits after the fact," he stated. "I'm not sure what the issue is, since

Local historians, architects, and planners admitted that Johnston's assessment is, for



PROPERTY OWNER ROSS JOHNSTON tried to be discreet about the expressive new look for the architectural gem at 49 Hopkins by putting up a wall around the site, but argued that he was only concerned about the health impacts the view of the property might have on preservationists who tend to be sensitive types.

the most part, correct.

"Zoning Adjustment Board Commissioner Ryan Lau just tore down all but the front of his garage so he could both demolish and build a structure behind it with neither a demolition nor a building permit," acknowledged a Berkeley Zoning official.

"Of course it's illegal," pointed out another Berkeley zoning staff member. "But you can't credibly suggest it isn't a hallowed and well-observed tradition."

\* \* \* \* \*



THE ORIGINAL 1935 RESIDENCE as you can see just doesn't have the same wild excitement as the unbridled, unpermitted demolition.

you can usually intone the magic words 'housing crisis' and get whatever you want around here."

# It Really Doesn't Get Much Funnier Than This

By "Jorge" and "Sasha" from Kiwi

Kiwi uses many different processes in our delivery operations. One of those processes is relating to replacing the batteries on the robot in case the battery gets low. To help our operations team identify the health of our robots, we use a color visualization method to indicate their battery level: red for robots that need to get the battery replaced asap, yellow for robots that will need to be replaced within an hour, and green for robots that are fine.



THIS ROBOT looks just as cute dead as it did when it was alive because of the wonders of technology. .

On the 14th of December this year, one of the batteries for our robot that was idling started smouldering, eventually leading to some smoke and minor flames. A member of the community acted swiftly to extinguish the flames using a nearby fire extinguisher. Within moments of the incident occurring, it had already been contained. The Berkeley Fire Department arrived shortly thereafter to secure the scene, and doused the robot with foam ensuring there was no risk of re-ignition.

We took this issue very seriously. Immediately upon learning of the incident, our operations team was dispatched to attend to the robot. We promptly pulled all of our robots from operations, suspending our service until we were able to investigate the root cause. Customers that had orders in progress had their food delivered by hand, minimizing the impact on the service. At no time were customers or members of the public at risk.



Kiwi recently unveiled a new battery management process that will ensure that such issues would not be reproduced. Here are some facts:

We learned that the root cause was human error when replacing the batteries, where a defective battery was put in place of a functioning one. This rare occurrence of the battery experiencing thermal runaway.



SOME DUDE who wasn't even the robot's handler ran and got a fire extinguisher and put out the fire, inspiring "SOME DUDE" t-shirts with a picture of some dude bravely fighting the robot fire.

caused an exceedingly rare occurrence of the battery experiencing thermal runaway.

To ensure this will not happen again, Kiwi has put in custom software that will rigorously monitor the state of each battery.

Kiwi takes full responsibility for our Kiwibots. The safety of our customers, our communities and the wider public is our highest priority, and we will continue to hold ourselves to the highest possible standard. In the coming weeks, Kiwi will be announcing industry-first initiatives designed to help us fulfill the promise of being the global leader in safe, smart last mile logistics.

*Note from Editor Grace Underpressure: We couldn't resist leaning in and asking for more detail about "thermal runaway", and we're glad we did (see below).*

"Thermal runaway occurs in situations where an increase in temperature changes

the conditions in a way that causes a further increase in temperature, often leading to a destructive result. It is a kind of uncontrolled positive feedback."

-Sasha from Kiwi

*Second note from Editor Grace Underpressure: We believe we here at the Pepper Spray Times were among the first to be suspicious of uncontrolled positive feedback.*

\* \* \* \* \*



THE DEAD ROBOT INSPIRED a candlelit memorial on the UC campus where many students cried their hearts out until the next cute robot came trundling along.

## Civil War Finally Ends in South Carolina, Re-starts in Berkeley

by Jaque Treatment



The settlement of a lawsuit between the University of California and its local Republican Club resulted in a declaration of war by Civil War enthusiasts who admit the war is finally over in South Carolina.

"Our prospects are pretty dim around here," affirmed one Civil War re-enactor. "But Berkeley, the campus in particular, is a fertile field for our kind of event."

"It's very costume-friendly," affirmed another re-enactor. "And Berkeley is clearly up for our kind of mutual combat."

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We Can't Draw Comics - Train Meets Phone

by Franz Toast



# 2020 Picks Overwhelmingly Favor New Deal Favorites

By Beryl Lee There

Pundits eager to begin the next round of speculation for the 2020 Presidential election two years from now were surprised to find four secure front-runners among the contenders from the era of the New Deal.

"The public is fine with older candidates," offered one political observer. "The President is pretty old, Senator Bernie Sanders

is pretty old, former Vice President Joe Biden is pretty old, and nobody seems very concerned."

"That's what Vice Presidents are for," observed another media consultant looking at the results. "The New Deal candidates' age dovetails with their representation of an era when government worked for the people to better their lives."

"The concept seems new," mused another pundit, "but it's something older voters remember with affection."

"And older voters vote," chimed in another political consultant amazed at the popular numbers for the New Deal candidates. "Come to think of it, young voters vote now, too."

Critics argued that the New Deal candidates' being dead would make campaigning a challenge, but were dismissed.

"The enthusiasm is pretty high for New Deal candidates," countered another media consultant. "Their track record is going to be hard to beat. People have been through a lot, and the New Deal works are literally



SECRETARY OF LABOR FRANCES PERKINS and Eleanor Roosevelt at the 50th anniversary commemoration at the site of the Triangle fire, March 25, 1961, who manage, despite being dead, to be favorites today.

Eleanor Roosevelt / Frances Perkins  
Pres / VP 2020

all around them."

"These are real contenders," stated another expert. "They have my vote."

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Next Issue: Smashing food delivery robots with celebrities!

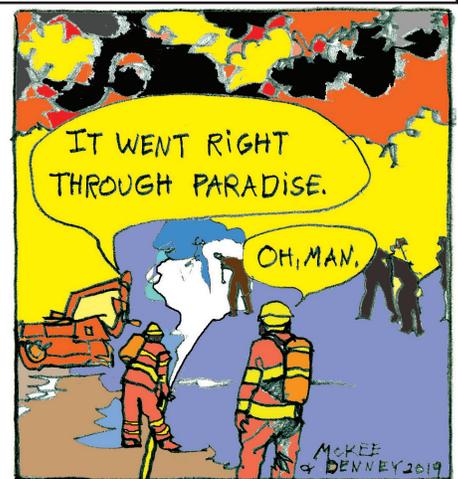


FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT AND HARRY HOPKINS in 1938 are a close second to Eleanor and Frances who really took the public's hearts by teaching about canning and knitting.

FDR / Hopkins  
2020

I Want My Present Now

by Juan Nathan Undergod



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\*Henry IV Part II

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