

These are truly the...
....the both fashionable and patriotic issue...

Pepper Spray Times

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

July 2004



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

"How shall we do for money for these wars?*

Vol. VI No.6



ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN ASHCROFT'S warning about Al Qaeda's new look took fashion designers by surprise; watch out for people who look like this.

AL QAEDA'S NEW LOOK

Luis Change

Attorney General John Ashcroft shocked security experts and fashion mavens alike by announcing that Al Qaeda is preparing for an imminent attack, had changed its look, and that the probability was high that future attacks would come from groups of people that looked more "European."

Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge confessed that he had no supportive intelligence regarding the possibility of an imminent attack, and that the announcement had taken him and his entire department by surprise.

"I thought I was on top of things, but I rarely read Vogue," he stated. "I like the look, don't get me wrong, but we wish Ashcroft had let us in on it a little sooner. Our current airport and border profiling is a little off the mark."

Critics argued that the new look was too retro and silly-looking, and that the updated profile would stand out much more than the old one in an airport line.

"Nobody wears that look outside a sock hop," scoffed one. "Ashcroft's intelligence has inhaled a little too much fog of war."

Administration officials dismissed critics' call for cooperation between different branches of national security efforts as "wimpy."

"Fashion takes courage," observed one administration official. "Sometimes you have to step out and strut."

In related news, the Department of Homeland Security revealed a new alert level which bridges the ambiguity of just such a moment by offering a level of magenta with polka dots on a repeated pattern of reversed question marks which can be moved between any other two alert levels to signify both an ambiguity of alarm and a lovely pattern suitable for summer house guest-room wallpaper.

"I love it," enthused one European-looking fashion watcher. "I wish they would make it in towels."



PRESIDENT BUSH asks the Pope for spare change for the war effort.

BUSH HITS UP POPE FOR DOUGH

Barry Senchals

President Bush, faced with a shortage of ammunition after the protracted conflicts in both Afghanistan and Iraq, used his recent personal audience to the Vatican to beg for money.

"I know he's good for it," stated the President. "You should see it in there, all the gold candlesticks and stuff. I'm not Catholic, but we've got more or less the same god and the Pope is rolling in it."

Experts agreed that the current rate of expenditure has forced the Army to arrange for additional two additional contractors to increase bullet production, which has an additional need for 300 million to 500 million small-caliber rounds this year.

"It's either that or quit shooting people," confirmed Dan Carlson, a spokesman for the Army Field Support Command. "Civilization efforts in Iraq

 have come a long way, but we're not sure they're ready for something as advanced as rational persuasion."

"The guy is a piece of work," stated the Pope, shaking his head after the historic meeting. "Thou shalt not kill", after all, isn't really rocket science, but I can't seem to get my message through."

"I'm sure I'll get the money," bubbled Bush as he headed for Air Force One. "Either that or I'll get a lot of little Catholic soldiers enlisting, and I hear they follow directions really well."



THE COVER of Martha Stewart's Living magazine reflects a change in tone.

MARTHA STEWART'S LIVING SUCKS

by Giuseppe D. Pants

Fans of super-homemaker Martha Stewart expressed dismay at the latest issue of "Martha Stewart Living", which features an extremely spare approach to basic decoration and a crucifixion theme.

"I thought the last supper suggested menu was both original and very tasteful," said one faithful reader. "But I can see how others might object."

"It's blasphemous," countered one offended reader. "I found the crown of thorns celebrity model photo-shoot to be in very poor taste. I know she's been through a lot, but we expect more from Martha. She's the modern arbiter of good taste, not to mention financial oversight."

Craftsmasters worldwide had a different opinion.

"Her tool selection is impeccable," commented the editor of a national crafts magazine avidly perusing the pages. "Constructing a crown of thorns is much harder than it looks."

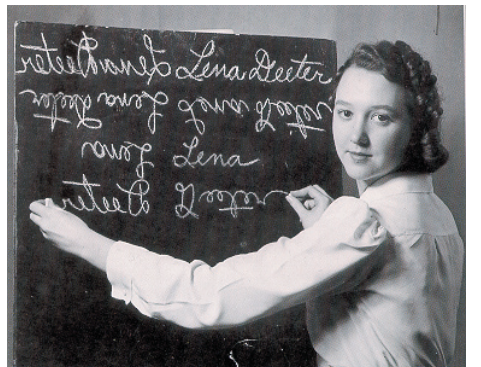
"She's a trend-setter," countered a Living magazine spokesperson. "You'll be seeing this martyr look in clubs on both coasts and in hot spots all over the world. The Goths and the punks were half-way there. We think the world is ready."

"She can't be serious," commented one local hostess. "I know acupuncture is all the rage, but this nail thing is a bit much."

"It worked for me," affirmed a young Stewart fan, shaking her hair back to reveal nails in her earlobes which matched those in her palms. "It helped me quit smoking. And I also buy it for the myrrh perfume inserts."

"The recipes are very original," agreed another long-time reader chewing dubiously on a filet of fatted calf. "But I mainly buy it hoping for those inside stock tips."

ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, was Ronald Reagan a great man?

A: No, but he was a great clown, and this, too, is worthy of respect. He kept an entire nation laughing, crying, and gnashing their teeth for a long, long time.

Dear Lena, which Medicare drug card should I use?

A: First choose several large, competing law firms with specialties in accounting fraud, and pay them large retainers. Then ask each firm the same question. Several years and four or five lawsuits later you should have an answer; not a good answer, but an answer. Alternatively, you could do what most people do; throw a dart at a wall full of choices and find that your dart landed just across the lovely Canadian border.

Dear Lena, who really won the election last time?

A: The advertisers, who win every election regardless of who gets into office. Otherwise creative, intelligent people allow millions of dollars to be spent on crappy ads that teach nothing, ads designed to confuse the maximum number of actual voters. Advertisers win every election, and until honest election campaign reform they always will.



IRAQI WOMEN protest the abuses in American-run prisons, demonstrating how well democracy is thriving in Iraq.

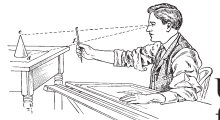
We Can't Draw Comics by guest artist Franz Toast



Terrorism's contemporary new look...

UNGRATEFUL TOWN KICKS GOWN'S BUTT

by Moira Bellion



Officials at the University of California reacted indignantly to the charge that the UC campus is costing the City of Berkeley upwards of \$10 million dollars a year, pointing out that there are perks associated with proximity to the campus which are often left out of the equation.

"What about the campanile? You may not be able to see it anymore from most angles, but it's still there, and just knowing that sometimes it shows the correct time is a community comfort," stated Assistant Vice Chancellor for Physical and Environmental Planning Thomas Lollini.

"He's right! You can still see it from over here!" called out a student standing on the balcony of the student union. "I'm not sure it makes up for the cost of registration, but it's one landmark they haven't bulldozed yet."

"They complain about cars, but this is Nobel-prize-winning exhaust," sniffed UC Director of Community Relations Irene Hegarty standing at the corner of Hearst and Euclid. "And someday when the students can actually cross this intersection they'll have quite a story to tell."

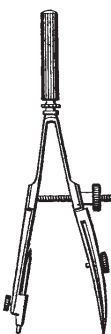
"For me it's all about the sewage," smiled one long-time Berkeley resident. "I may never be able to afford to go to college, but just knowing that I've played a role in paying for the proper functioning of the UC sewage system makes me kind of proud."

Critics argued that other cities get paid millions of dollars by universities agreeing to compensate for the property they take off the tax rolls and the burden on city services, but university officials scoffed that mere money was in any way comparable to the benefits of being close to the university.

"If you listen closely, you can hear the big brains whirring and clicking," responded Lollini. "You're not standing in line behind just anybody at the 7-11; you're standing in line behind the future CEOs and CFOs of Enron and Halliburton. It's all just a matter of perspective, and the perspective is much better from the campus."

SPAM ON

by John DeCrowd



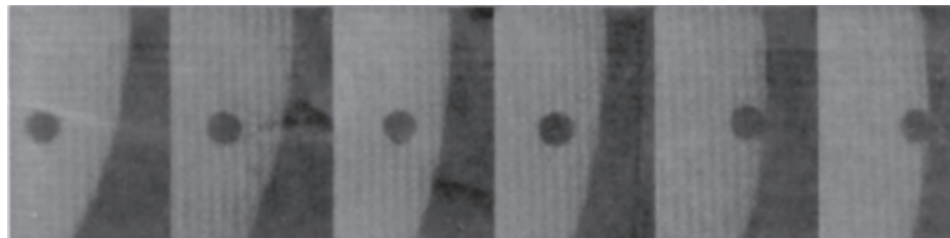
The Federal Trade Commission rejected a do-not-spam registry list recently as unworkable, news which was promptly lost in a cascade of sex-product ads, Nigerian bank scams, and mortgage offers.

"Spammers would just ignore it, anyway," declared FTC Chairman Timothy Muris. "We passed that do-not-call registry about telemarketers and now I'm

so lonely I don't know what to do. Nobody calls at dinnertime anymore."

Critics charged that Muris' personal life should not be influencing policy, and that honest internet trade was burdened by the avalanche of unauthenticated spam which threatens to overwhelm all human endurance in as little as five years.

"Nonsense," responded Muris. "Everybody's penis will be much bigger then, and the world will actually be a better place."



VENUS' RECENT TRANSIT and wardrobe malfunction on its journey across the sun revealed much more than Janet Jackson's Superbowl half-time display.

VENUS' TRANSIT COSTS CLEAR CHANNEL \$2 MILLION

by Vera Heights

Planet Venus' wardrobe malfunction during its recent transit across the sun outraged television censors at the Federal Communications Commission, which promptly fined Clear Channel nearly two million dollars.

"It was much worse than Janet Jackson's half-time show," stated one FCC spokesperson. "We couldn't believe our eyes. We taped it, and we've been watching it over and over again."

Clear Channel protested that they had nothing to do with the transit of Venus. "We don't control the solar system," stated a Clear Channel spokesperson, to the guffaws of a room full of reporters at a recent press conference. "We had no idea of the explicit nature of Venus' show."

Administration officials declared that they were checking their intelligence on the matter of solar system and universal control.

"They control 1,250 radio stations," stated one FCC spokesperson. "If they don't control the solar system yet, it's just a matter of time."

UC FACULTY FAILS TO BACK NUCLEAR OBLIVION

by May B. Later

An online poll conducted by the University of California Academic Senate expressed strong support for the university's continued management of the nation's largest nuclear weapons labs at Livermore and Los Alamos, but failed to completely back nuclear oblivion.

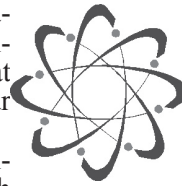
"The financial scandals, the missing equipment, the mismanagement of classified materials, none of that should interfere with the university's management role," affirmed Regent Peter Preuss of La Jolla in San Diego County. "I consider it an endorsement of my chairmanship of the oversight committee."

The poll is a near-reverse of a similar poll taken in 1990, when 64% of UC faculty voted against renewal of UC's weapons lab contracts.

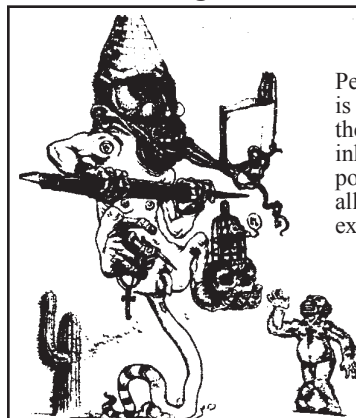
"We're a lot more gung-ho these days," affirmed S. Robert Foley, UC vice president for laboratory management, who oversees the weapons labs.

Critics argued that the university should have no role in weapons production, and that the lab contracts represented a distortion of traditional university roles in science and research.

"Bunch of whiners," commented Foley. "Weapons of mass destruction have gotten a bad rap lately, but the faculty will come around on nuclear oblivion. As the long-term changes in the polls show, it's just a matter of time."



MOST CITIZENS are having trouble figuring out how to make intelligent choices on the new voting machines.



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

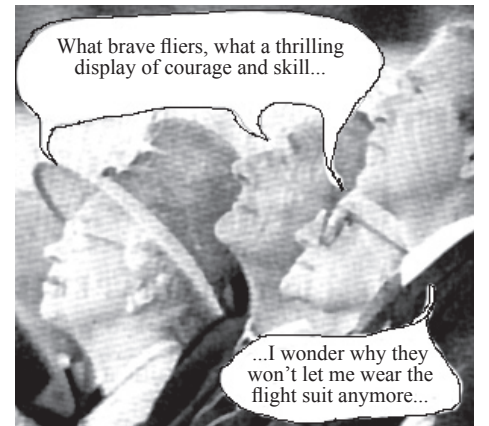
We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

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

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mailed to your door for a hefty bribe.
* King Richard II



What brave fliers, what a thrilling display of courage and skill...

...I wonder why they won't let me wear the flight suit anymore...

PICK A CARD, ANY CARD

by Joe Mama



Medicare drug discount cards are getting little response from seniors, according to Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, and worrying officials that the drug benefit touted as the Bush administration's primary health care advance was a bust.

"What's wrong with these old farts?" commented Thompson. "So maybe the pharmaceutical companies can hike the drug prices after people sign up for a card; that's just part of the gamble of living, and old people love to gamble."

Administration officials confirmed the statement that they would be putting "all-court pressure on them to sign up", refusing to comment on whether or not that pressure would involve techniques not covered by the Geneva Convention.

"Legal will be checking with Boalt Hall Professor Yoo on that," confirmed Thompson. "These seniors can be tough nuts to crack."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR...

June 5th, 2004

Dear Pepper Spray Times,

Are you tempting me to be sick? I think your print out is awful. My Father, deceased now for 20 years, was brutally pepper sprayed simply walking down Tele. Ave I am sure it is an awful memory. If you knew the tears I have cried at the loss of him seeing something like this just destroys my faith in society. I think you and your Pepper Spray Times ought to take a hike. Why tempt Satan is that you're (sic) goal?

Sincerely,

E. F. R. M. Guergas

Dear Reader,

We are taking up an immediate collection for the ironically impaired.
Grace Underpressure, Editor