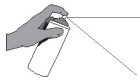


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Hepper Spray Times

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

October 2005



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

"My mind exceeds the compass of her wheel..."

Vol. VII No. 10

UC: Trees Cause Homelessness

by *Walter Walter Everywhere*

The University of California's intensive research on homelessness has produced an unexpected breakthrough which may represent an unparalleled scientific advance: homelessness is caused by trees.

UC staff immediately took chainsaws to several trees in People's Park on September 14th, 2005, raising the eyebrows of citizens still crawling out from under a hail of propaganda about the new, cooperative relationship they were supposed to have between town and gown.

"Shouldn't they have discussed this?" queried one neighbor staring at mounds of sawdust and felled logs in the west end of the park. "If this causes trouble it's my property and my kids that get caught in the middle. Couldn't they have sent a letter? Especially since I just got a letter hitting me up for money?"

"There wasn't time," explained Irene Hegarty of the University of California's Office of Community Relations. "When we figured out the connection between homelessness and trees, we knew we had to move fast to save people from one more night on the cold, hard street."

Critics objected that the connection between trees and homelessness was unclear, and that the university was leaping to conclusions and causing unnecessary tension.

University officials acknowledged that the research was highly scientific and unlikely to make sense to ordinary people without scientific backgrounds.

"We consider our results conclusive," stated one UC scientist involved in the study tearing the foil off a bottle of champagne. "We knew that trees and homeless people were often sighted in the same vicinity, but we had no idea before now that the relationship was causal."

"It's definitive," agreed another UC

PG&E SAYS PUCKER UP AND KISS OUR BUTTS

by *Lida Candle*

Heating prices, which have risen 20% per year for the last three years, will rocket 40% higher this winter according to PG&E, which is encouraging people to take steps to prepare for the impact.

"It's a good year to take up jump-roping," the utility stated. "Twenty minutes of jump-rope jumping will get your blood pumping so that you won't even notice that you're paying \$150 bucks a month for heat and it's still only 30 degrees in your living room."

PG&E is offering payment and discount plans, but critics object that the plans are only for people so low income they couldn't possibly afford Bay Area rents, let alone heating bills, and the few that benefit from them immediately become ineligible and get their service terminated anyway.

"I was only warming up my hands on the pilot light," said one local PG&E customer. "PG&E thought that somehow I could pay off my bill in 12 months, but I only got deeper in debt to them. They cut off my service months ago, but my cat and I are getting used to cold food, and we keep each other warm."

"It's a good year to have a really fluffy cat," acknowledged a PG&E spokesperson. "And a coonskin cap and a bearskin coat and a whole lot of money."

* * * * *

scientist. "Homeless advocates everywhere should be celebrating this remarkable breakthrough."

"We could get a Nobel Prize out of this," acknowledged Hegarty. "I'm just proud to be a small part of it."

BUSH INSULTS HURRICANE;

"Not Normal" Bush Description Considered Offensive

by *Arrieta Nendyette*

President Bush's reference to hurricane Katrina as "not a normal hurricane" has stirred outrage among citizens who insist that Bush should refer to the hurricane as "challenged" or "special", rather than abnormal.

"He should apologize" stated one local civil rights organization. "Hurricanes can't help what they are. Maybe this hurricane was just special."

Critics objected that there was nothing special about hurricane Katrina at all. Both the National Weather Service and the National Hurricane Center accurately forecast the hurricane's path and potential for devastating the coast, making it obvious, critics claimed, that the government was unprepared to handle a category 4 hurricane, and that Bush's vacation in Crawford, Texas, was clearly a higher priority than protecting vulnerable citizens stranded on their roofs without food or water.

"That implies that there is no intelligent design at work here," responded one New Orleans evacuee. "And that just can't be right. I have to tell you I truly think that hurricane was special. What else could actually get the government to repair our levees?"

* * * * *



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, aren't the people on the southern coastline who got flooded just a bunch of lazy bums and whiners for not getting out of there before the hurricane?

Dear Reader, of course they are. They should have hopped on a plane and come to visit Disneyland, where I hear the weather was really nice. I don't know what they were thinking.

Dear Lena, do I really have to pay to rebuild New Orleans and Biloxi? I can barely fill my tank anymore. I would rather buy a nano thingie.

Dear Reader, I couldn't agree more that it seems very unfair. They could just have Mardi Gras out here instead. And besides, if they had only left all those corpses tied up to stop signs they would really have pulled in some unusual tourist trade.

Dear Lena, shouldn't George Bush have done more to help before the hurricane hit?

Dear Reader, you're forgetting that he cut his vacation short. Who knows what kind of fallout there will be as a consequence of that. That poor guy really needs his beauty sleep. But I do think next time they'll lean on the networks for sunnier hurricane forecasts.

Dear Lena, is this whole hurricane thing because of global warming? I hear we're having more hurricanes than we usually do. Is there anything to it?

Dear Reader, no, not at all. It's just a really, really, *really* bad year for hurricanes and polar ice caps. We shouldn't leap to conclusions until the waterline reaches the top of our hubcaps.



NEWS ORGANIZATIONS KNOW that without some raw emotion stuff like this Katrina thing gets really, really old.

NEWS CREWS DISGRACE THEMSELVES AGAIN TRACKING KATRINA

by Annette A. Droptodrink

News crews from all over the nation convened on the nation's southern coastline, demonstrating flapping rain-wear, sacrificing expensive hairdos, and guessing on national television about a story they knew nothing about.

"I'm going to try to get from here to that crevasse," promised one young newscaster in a yellow rain slicker barely hanging onto a light post before releasing his grasp and disappearing down a Mississippi street like rolling tumbleweed.

Media experts defended the yellow-slickered newscaster, pointing out that his unscheduled exit was technically news, since it was actually happening, and was technically true, which put the event way ahead of most coverage.

"We were flycasting between eight to fifteen rumors an hour on the air while the hurricane hit, and our rate got higher in the aftermath. The fellow who let go of the lightpost at least wasn't making anything up, although he may have been guilty of overly involving himself in the story."

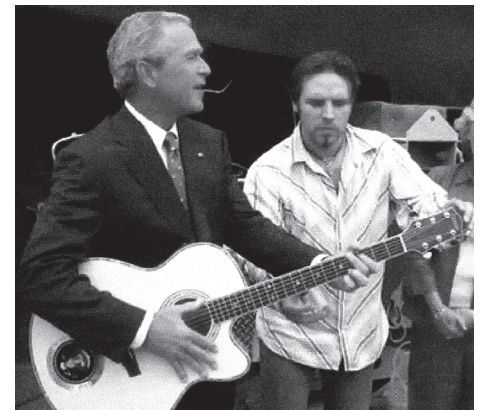
"Perhaps we should have run it in the sports segment," mused one television executive. "We could have contests, sports commentary, even cheerleaders. God knows these refugees are kind of depressing. Why the hell didn't they just book a flight to Maui?"

"We didn't evacuate because they always predict disaster," said one Mississippi resident ruefully prying wreckage off his front porch. "If we paid any attention to the predictions of disaster on the evening news we'd have to evacuate on a continuous basis."

Administration officials defended the news coverage for blaming the victims of the hurricane for finding themselves without food, water, or means of escape.

"It supports our basic conclusion that the poor are just a bunch of lazy bums," affirmed one White House operative who wished to remain anonymous. "We never have to worry about too many tax breaks for the wealthy or special deals for huge corporations while gutting programs for the poor, eroding public education, and siphoning off the young for war. The press knows the poor just aren't photogenic."

* * * * *



PRESIDENT BUSH almost hits a G chord trying to cheer up the hurricane refugees by singing them a little song.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – BERKELEY PLANNING COMMISSION
NORTH BERKELEY SENIOR CENTER, 1901 HEARST AVE.
(AT MARTIN LUTHER KING), BERKELEY
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2005 – 7:00 PM**

**PROPOSED SIXTY-NINE (69) UNIT CONDOMINIUM PROJECT
TWO (2) COMMERCIAL UNITS, TWO (2) LIVE-WORK AND SIXTY-FIVE (65)
RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS**

TRACT MAP 7661: 1116 - 1132 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, BERKELEY

Berkeley Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on the above matter, pursuant to Section 21.16.044 of the Berkeley Subdivision Ordinance (5793-N.S.), on: **Wednesday, September 14, 2005, at the North Berkeley Center, 1901 Hearst Ave. (at Martin Luther King), Berkeley.** The meeting begins at 7 p.m.

PROPOSED PROJECT INFORMATION: The applicant proposes to create a sixty-nine (69) unit condominium project comprised of two (2) commercial units, two (2) live-work and sixty-five (65) residential units at 1116 - 1132 University Avenue, Berkeley. The units are to be created in two buildings – one units in a new five-story building on the north side of the property and seventeen units in a new three-story building on the south side of the property.

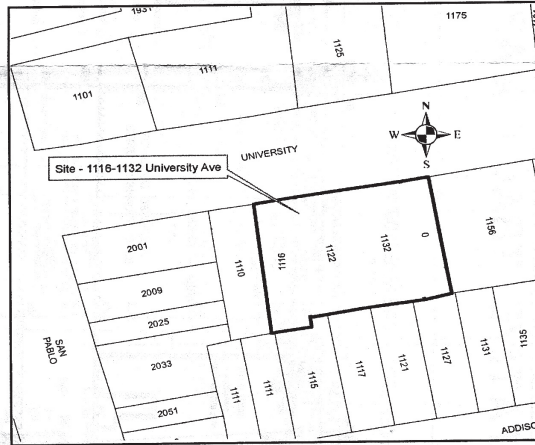
PROJECT APPLICANT: Gary Varum, 470 University Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94708.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW STATUS: The project is typically exempt under Section 15315 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, minor revision.

COMMENT: Tract Map No. 7661

COMMENT ON THIS APPLICATION:

MAKING SURE THERE'S NO ROOM FOR POOR PEOPLE is big business in Berkeley, Oakland, and come to think of it just about everywhere. Poor people just can't seem to buy politicians as well as other people.



Cell Phone Etiquette

Q: Should I get a ring tone with a comic or musical phrase?

A: Yes, just be sure your will is up to date.

Q: If the traffic is really backed up, can I make some calls?

A: Not a problem; the rest of us are armed.

Q: I find that when I'm shopping, or browsing in a bookstore, it seems quite natural to chat on the phone. Is this a problem, and if so, what should I do?

A: When you feel a temptation to do this, step outside and jump on your phone until you see little wires coming out of it.

Q: What do I do if my cell phone rings on the bus?

A: Hurl it out the window.

Q: What do I do if my cell phone rings in a restaurant?

A: Begin yelling "Fire! Fire!" and exit.

Q: I'm in a movie but I forgot to turn off my phone. What should I do?

A: Shoot yourself, if someone hasn't already done you the favor.

Q: I just bought the latest cell phone with the hippest features, so I need to be seen with it out all the time. Can I put it next to my plate, or on my desk at work?

A: Yes, as long as you place your most important accessory, a hammer, right next to it.

Q: So, what if I blow it, and I'm at the symphony and my phone rings. What should I do?

A: Line up at the exit, and pay every person \$50 as they leave the theater, with the accompaniment of an abject apology, then destroy the phone.

Q: So, if you don't like the new ring-tones, what should I use to signal an incoming call?

A: I would recommend snorting sounds, so that if it rings at all in public you suffer an appropriate amount of humiliation.

BERKELEY'S RESPONSE TO KATRINA: MORE CONDOS

Berkeley Works to Avoid Devastating Media Tragedy

by Pete DeRugs

Berkeley officials expressed shock over the news footage of Katrina evacuees helplessly begging for water and food, and took immediate steps to approve more condominium housing for the wealthy.

"Imagine if we had a tragedy here one day," shuddered one Berkeley housing official. "If we had a bunch of poorly dressed black people televised begging in our streets it would really take a toll on Charter Day tourism."

"No parent would send their kid to school here if we had a similar media tragedy," affirmed another university official. "As far as we're concerned, as poor as you're allowed to get is about \$50,000 a year. If you make less than that you put our whole image at risk."

"They're absolutely right," com-

mented one mother of three who's been on a waiting list for an affordable rental for three years. "If I try to get bus fare on the street from the alumni football fans when I run short at the end of the month, I have very little luck. My deepest concern is the image I might be projecting that things are not entirely ducky in the city of Berkeley."

"Wealthy people look much better on tv," agreed a young man resting on a sleeping bag near the overpass. "New Orleans would have been better presented if they had had an upper limit on just how poor you could be, the way Berkeley does."

City officials objected that Berkeley still has plenty of poor people.

"We chase them from one end of town to the other all the time," affirmed a local police officer. "They're in doorways, under bushes, out in the parks; I think we flushed about thirty out of the Bulb about a month ago, so we're clearly doing our fair share. And if housing costs keep skyrocketing, we'll have plenty more."

* * * * *

Bush Popularity Soars with New Orleans Pets

Canines and Felines Promise Republicans Electoral Support

by Bridget Highwater

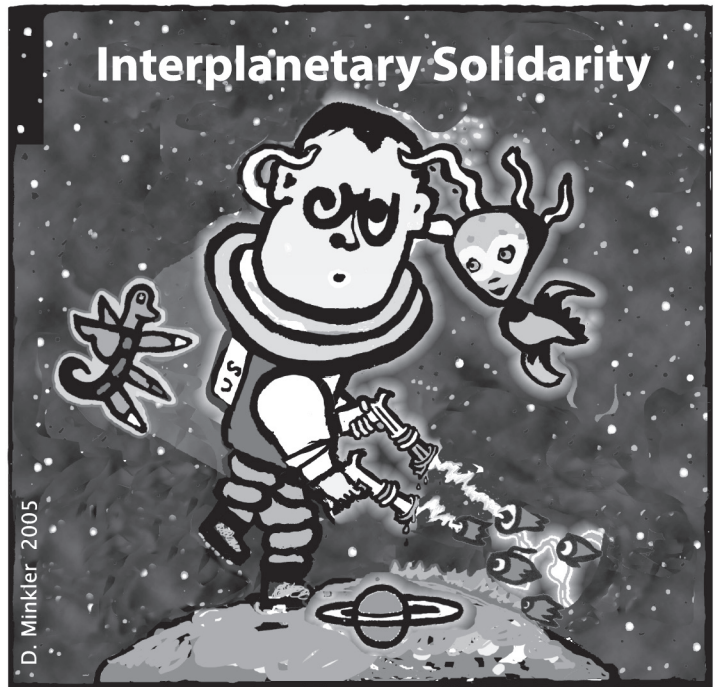
President Bush, whose popularity has plummeted in the wake of hurricane Katrina, has successfully shored up his support with canines and felines in the ravaged region, according to White House spokespersons.

“Not all of the evacuees are feeling supportive right now,” stated one White House official. “We do have some difficulty finding evacuees willing to have their picture taken with the President’s sympathetic arm around their shoulder. The dogs, on the other hand, are very friendly.”

President Bush was photographed several times with pets from Louisiana who wagged their tails and seemed to demonstrate great affection for the president, especially when fed. Cats, in addition, were seen to tolerate President Bush’s presense and indicate general willingness to be photographed in his vicinity.

Critics of the Bush administration voiced disapproval of what they described as Bush’s shameless exploitation of hurricane victims’ pets, pointing out that starving creatures were in no position to refuse food and water, and in addition were very inexperienced in political arenas.

White House officials dismissed these objections, countering that poor black Louisiana citizens were also



Think Galacticy, Act Globally

Following the failed oil grab in Iraq and Earth-wide plundering disguised as "free trade", the U.S. invades Space. There, the greedy Earth Imperialists encounter their worst nightmare—unions, social services environmental protections and interplanetary solidarity. Using telepathy and team work, the evolved space inhabitants easily convince the invaders to become green, eco-communists like themselves.

starving and politically inexperienced, but were having no trouble offering unprintable opinions about the Bush administration.

“These dogs are sincere,” stated one White House spokesperson. “Bush is really winning them over. They eat right out of his hand.”

“They’re almost as loyal as the press,” expressed one observer. “He doesn’t have to feed them much at all before they trot around behind him happy just to be in the room with him.”

* * * * *



DOGS HAVE YET TO articulate negative opinions about the Bush administration’s handling of the hurricane crisis.

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...

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We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.

* Henry VI Part 3