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# Hepper Spray Times

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

October 2006



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

"Unscissored shall this hair of mine remain..."\*

Vol. VIII No. 10

## MAYORAL CANDIDATES EMBRACE, VOW TO WORK TOGETHER

By Lewis Change

Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates and his challengers held hands in a circle while dancing on a lovely green lawn recently, vowing to pool the money they would otherwise have spent on political campaigns and use it to "make a difference" in Berkeley.

"Why waste thousands of dollars, or hundreds of thousands, when we can fix a roof or plant a tree?" exclaimed Bates, as children's choir sang "Everything is Beautiful" in the background. "I'll feel a lot better whether I win or lose knowing that together we stood for something bigger than ourselves."

"And maybe we'll set a precedent for the future," chimed in Zelda Bronstein, one of the Mayor's challengers, placing a braided daisy chain on his head. "Imagine if all the paper wasted on thousands of lawn signs constantly being torn down and replaced was saved. We'd probably save at least a hundred trees, and a lot of wasted energy."

"I don't know why we didn't think of this years ago," nodded Zachary Runningwolf, also a candidate for the mayoral contest, skipping in a circle with the others. "We all care about the environment, and while there may be differences between us, the money we spend collectively on campaigns could be put to much better use."

"We could start a small business and employ people," agreed Christian Pecaut, another candidate pledging to raise money for the collective candidates' pool. "Or put in wheelchair ramps, or fix rooftops. There's just no excuse for another round of expensive



**MAYORAL CANDIDATES and friends dance in a circle while pledging to pool campaign funds instead of buying a lot of stupid lawn signs.**

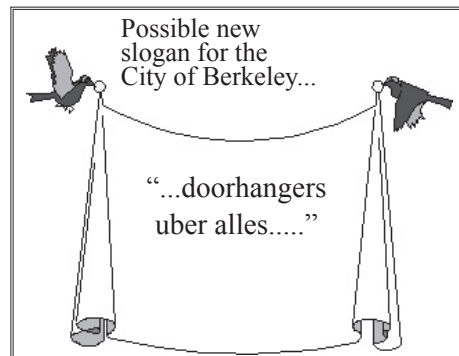
campaigns with ambiguous literature and confusing doorhangers when instead we could pledge to work together to do some good."

The candidates have vowed to use public resources, such as opinion pages in newspapers, the internet, and public forums, so that voters have a chance to make up their minds before the election, but pledged to spend no money on their personal campaigns while participating in fundraising for general community projects.

"Why not exploit this silly rivalry for the public good?" agreed one delighted member of the public. "I would prefer to vote for the candidate who spent the least money on his or herself, and the most on worthy community groups, which could really use the dough."

"It's the least we can do," smiled Bates. "After all, if we can't distinguish ourselves with a few well-placed remarks, we don't really deserve to be in public office."

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## GIVE WAR A CHANCE Hollywood Ditches Pointless Peace Signs

By Delia Hand

Eighty-four actors, producers, directors, writers and other Hollywood types signed a full-page advertisement in the Los Angeles Times, Variety, and the Hollywood Reporter earlier this month in a long overdue about-face for those used to hearing only about Hollywood's liberal attitudes and tedious anti-war activism.

Actress Nicole Kidman originated the advertisement "condemning terrorism", and was joined by William Hurt, Danny DeVito, Michael Mann, Bernie Mac, Sam Raimi, Michael Douglas, Vivica Fox, Sylvester Stallone and Ridley Scott, among others.

"War is not so bad," stated one actor who signed the advertisement. "The makeup is less glamorous, and it's sometimes hard to show off your figure in camouflage, but where would we be without our great war films, and what would we base them on without real war?"

"I'm trying to imagine growing up without films like 'The Great Escape', or 'Saving Private Ryan'," stated another actor. "Without real war available to the research departments of various studios, most of us would really be in the dark about how to get an honest air of authenticity."

The ad deplored civilian casualties in both Israel and Lebanon, but underscored the need to "support democratic societies" and to "stop terrorism at all costs."

Readers admitted they found the new message refreshing.

"We've heard all that anti-war stuff for years," explained one. "This is so different, so daring. It may be the Bush administration's message, but it's a new tack for Hollywood, and also going to sell better than this monotonous peace stuff, which never really caught on."

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# ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

**Q:** Dear Lena, how is spending \$50,000 on the goofy cleaning machines supposed to change things on Telegraph if the real problem is empty storefronts because nobody can pay the sky-high rents up there? It looks crazy to me; am I the only one?

**A:** Dear reader, you are not the only one; but you are one of only about five. Most people are in the early stages of shock and denial regarding the expenditure on sidewalk cleaning machines. The anger generally comes later. You'll note that only one man, closely connected to the mayor, is actually throwing confetti, which is a very lonely job.

**Q:** Dear Lena, why should anybody allow bigots to speak or print their letters? Aren't we supposed to stamp out racism and bigotry?

**A:** Dear reader, absolutely! These people should have duct tape permanently sealed across their mouths and never be allowed to touch a pencil or pen. All of their letters and any books they may have written should be burned, and if they go to the 7-Eleven they should only be allowed to buy very small cans of peas.

**Q:** Dear Lena, I am worried about those new playing fields they want to put near my house. Does this mean noise, crowds, trash, etc? Should I worry?

**A:** Dear reader, of course not. Just drop by Memorial Stadium and note the quiet, tidy crowds who attend football games. Sports fans are always deeply respectful of neighborhoods.

*Ask Lena anything! She is an expert. Write or mail her, and she will give you expert advice.*



**BEFORE:** Telegraph Avenue merchants used to have to clean their own storefronts the way merchants in other areas of Berkeley do, and invest in their own equipment, shown here, at considerable personal cost to themselves.



**AFTER:** This \$25,000 sidewalk cleaner is one of two machines the Berkeley City Council believes will bring mountains of profit to Telegraph Avenue, which in turn will thrill the citizens city-wide who are footing the bill.

## MAYOR GETS BEHIND 'GREEN' MACHINE; CRITICS SAY MILEAGE STINKS

*By Linda Near*

Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates drove one of two new \$25,000 sidewalk cleaners on Telegraph Avenue recently, celebrating his commitment to upgrading the commercial district by making sure the confetti being sprinkled around by his city hall staff was being, like, totally sucked right up.

Local merchants and residents eyed the swirling brushes warily, acknowledging that indeed, the machine was pretty good with confetti.

"We don't get much confetti up here," mused one merchant. "But if it starts to rain confetti, it's clear the city sure has a great new way to show it who's boss."

Critics argued that the city's expenditure was a waste, pointing out that someone besides the mayor would eventually have to be committed to driving the machines, and that it would have been cheaper to buy a broom and a dustpan and pay some of the unemployed people on Telegraph Avenue to sweep up debris.

Defenders of the mayor's new street cleaning machines expressed surprise that anyone else would need to drive the machines.

"The mayor looks great in the saddle," exclaimed District 7 Councilmember Kriss Worthington. "I assumed he might stay right where he is."

Critics argued that the machines get

worse mileage than a typical Hummer, and were nowhere to be found in areas of the city which have much more challenged sidewalks, such as University Avenue in Berkeley.

"We're not sure why the sidewalk cleaners are never found down on University Avenue," acknowledged one of Mayor Tom Bates' aides. "We think they like hanging out in front of the record stores up near the campus. I believe one of them is taking classes."

City hall staffers admitted that there are people on University Avenue who have been stuck to the sidewalk for several years.

"We thought it was some kind of art project," chuckled one staff member. "You know how this town is."

Merchants concerned about the commercial health of Telegraph Avenue businesses fretted that the new machines were clearly great with confetti, but might have difficulty sweeping away the homeless people and street artists which they feel are responsible for Telegraph Avenue's problems.

"Some of our homeless are pretty thin and weak," commented one merchant, "but I think the Mayor is being a little unrealistic. His wife Loni Hancock, on the other hand, was a little more clear-headed when she was the mayor. She just sent up a dump truck."

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# BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL PLEDGES TO REDUCE OWN SALARIES



**ORDINARY WORKING FAMILIES** like this one deeply appreciate the Berkeley City Council's willingness to reduce their salaries, so that they don't lose touch with the hardships of being low-income in the Bay Area.

By Alan Aday

The Berkeley City Council, which in the past few years had been on a mission to raise their personal salaries despite deep cutbacks for other city hall staff and services, agreed recently to reduce their own salaries by 50%.

"It's so refreshing!" exclaimed a local resident, shaking his head at the surprising news. "Normally politicians just find that little moment when they think the voters aren't watching to pop another couple of thousand dollars in their pockets, and always claim it's some kind of necessity."

"We just don't need the money," stated District 8 representative Gordon Wozniak. "I was donating a lot of my salary to what I thought were worthy causes anyway, and it finally dawned on me that the public was in a better position to choose their charities. Why not let them?"

"The money was really a temptation," added District 4 representative Dona Spring, "but we realized we ran

the risk of turning our council seats into jobs, and there's a danger that we might become strangers to the real world. And it sure beats merit-based pay."

Berkeley city council representatives used to be paid only a modest stipend to ensure that they were not lured into public office by the money, and would have to remain an active part of the workforce, a tradition which changed after the institution of a "progressive" majority only a few years ago.

"In the past, the council couldn't help but appreciate what kind of bite a tax hike was on an ordinary salary," stated one observer thoughtfully. "The more they vote themselves these pay hikes, the less they understand ordinary people's financial pressures."

"We should have done it ages ago," stated District 6 representative Betty Olds. "If people aren't running for election because they're motivated toward public service, they should work in the private sector."

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# KPFA DEFENDS BANNING OF LABOR SHOW PROPOSALS:

## "Paperwork Overwhelming"

By Jordie Man

Listener-sponsored KPFA's Program Council took the unusual step of banning proposals from the KPFA Labor Collective recently, explaining that the Program Council was uncomfortable with the tone of the collective and felt the collective needed a "time out", or mild punishment, for overwhelming them with paperwork.

The Labor Collective, which has produced numerous shows for International Women's Day, May Day, and Labor Day, picketed outside the station on Labor Day, bewildered by the ban on proposals.

"They only have 20 minutes of regular labor programming right now," stated Labor Collective chair Steve Zeltzer. "It's pathetic."

"We have 20 minutes of regular labor programming right now," countered Program Council facilitator Tracy Rosenberg. "It's overwhelming."

Rosenberg added that the paperwork for the collective's proposals was overwhelming as well, and burdensome to cart around.

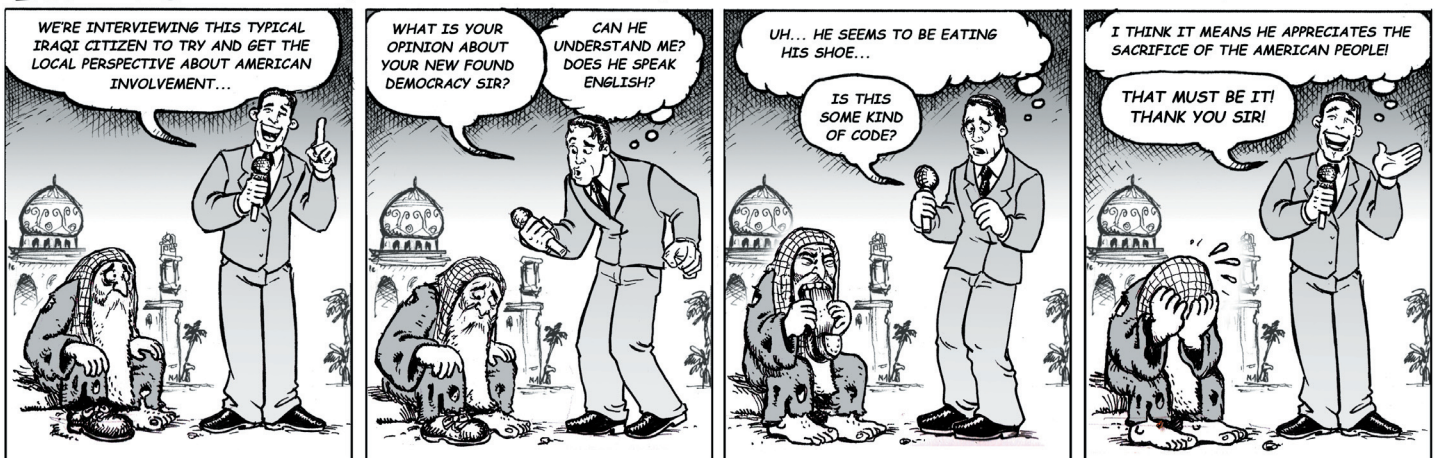
"It's a pain in the ass," she said. "Talk about labor."

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We Can't Draw Comics by Roger Dondis and Grace Underpressure

## BOOPISE CARMICHAEL, EMBEDDED JOURNALIST





# BUSH REQUESTS \$63 BILLION MORE FOR WAR; SENATE SAYS HEY HERE'S EVEN MORE

By F. D. Shoefits

"Is that all?" The Senate responded when asked to spend an additional \$63 billion for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Laughing uproariously at the thought that the country was spending too much money on wars with no particular point or strategic purpose, they voted 96 to 0 to add an additional \$200 million.

"The Pentagon is feeling a little in-



U.S. Senators gave the Bush administration more money than it asked for because, well, they're a darn nice bunch.

secure just now," stated Senator Kent Conrad, a Democrat from North Dakota who sponsored the additional funds. "We want to make sure they know they have our warm, unconditional love and respect, especially right before the election."

Appropriations are now at a \$469.7 billion dollar total, including approxi-



**DESPITE BEING TOLD TO STAND** several blocks away from most Republican candidates running for office, there are a few places left where President Bush is still welcome, especially in disaster areas such as Biloxi, New Orleans, Utah, and large, costumed stage shows.

mately \$10 billion per month for the current year.

The bill also includes \$1.8 billion to construct 370 miles of fencing and 500 miles of vehicle barriers along the border between the United States and Mexico.

Senators defended the border fencing, admitting that while the workers from Mexico are a necessary part of the American labor economy, the colorful pinatas decorating border flower stands were becoming overwhelming and must be stopped.

In the meantime, at least 2,664 members of the U.S. military have died in Iraq since the beginning of the war in March of 2003, and leading the Health Ministry in Baghdad to initiate plans to construct two new branch morgues to raise capacity to receive as many as 250 corpses a day.

"Business is booming," stated a spokesperson at the Ministry, "and getting better every day."

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## Next issue, Waterboarding with Celebrities



**THIS PROPOSED PLAN** was misidentified as the plan for Telegraph Avenue in our third-to-last issue, misidentified again as the addition to Memorial Stadium in our second-to-last issue, and then misidentified again as the proposal for the latest reconfiguration of the BART Plaza. The is actually the People's Park advisory committee's new plan for People's Park. We apologize for the error.

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...

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.

\* Pericles