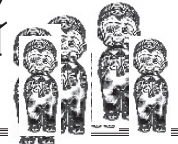


All hail the...
...the back to school issue ...

Hepper Spray Times

September 2009



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

"..and leave no memory of what it was."*

Vol. XI No. 9



GOVERNOR ARNOLD Schwarzenegger finally decided to do something dramatic about the budget problems.

California Sells Bottom Half to Mexico

By Theophilus Pun

"We needed to try something new," explained the spokesperson for Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger about the recent sale of approximately half of California to Mexico, which accepted the deal with moderate reluctance.

"It's changed a lot," commented one spokesperson for the Mexican government, "but it used to *be* Mexico only a few dozen years ago, and almost everybody speaks Spanish anyway."

Governor Schwarzenegger insisted that it was a logical step toward fiscal responsibility.

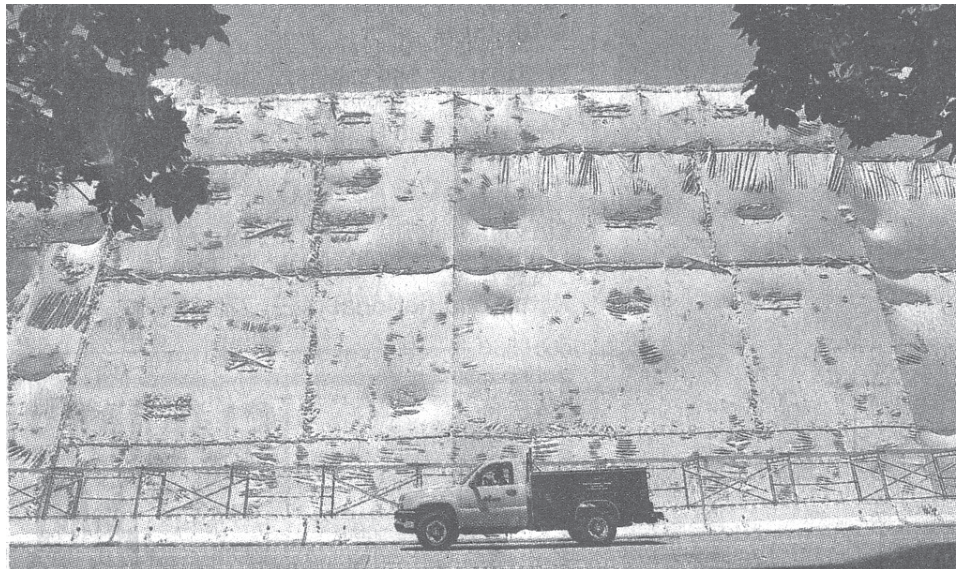
"Maria won't let me close the schools, and I can't politically survive closing the prisons," stated Schwarzenegger. "I had to do something."

Critics argued that it was high time to raise taxes on oil companies and big business, and perhaps revisit pesky Proposition 13 rather than gut the schools and reduce payments to the disabled and the poor, but were thoroughly ridiculed by the governor's staff and the entire legislature, which agreed that the sale of southern California was probably the best move.

"It's either this or tax the rich," pointed out one lawmaker. "There's a certain amount of sacrifice we're willing to adopt to get California out of budget trouble, and frankly, this is a very small sacrifice to make."

* * * * *

If You Build It They Will Come and Marvel at All the Empty Condos



OAKLAND'S CITY WALK condo project would have plenty of people living there if they hadn't wrapped it tightly in plastic to make sure absolutely nobody could get in and start living there.

By Theodora Thwing

Experts have finally unraveled the mystery of the Bay Area's simultaneous surplus of both condos and homelessness.

"It would seem sensible to actually house people, it's true," commented one scientist. "But after studying local housing policies for years we've concluded that a successful economic turnaround depends on housing *other* people, people we don't have here yet."

"People with lots of money," explained another scientist. "People with so much money that they eat out every day and spend a lot of time at the movies and buy a lot of unnecessary stuff. That way the local businesses can really boom."

"They're absolutely right," acknowledged a local resident impressed with the scientific research. "The local businesses can't really count on me. I've cut back on spending. I haven't eaten out in years."

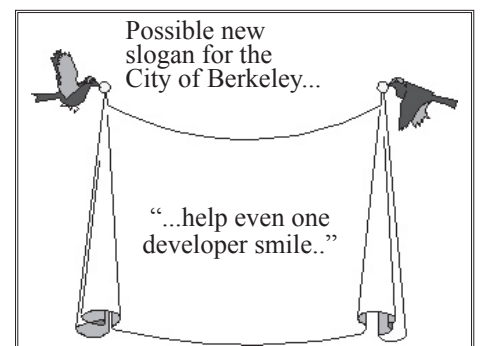
Economists agree that poor people are the problem, and that a quick infu-

sion of high-end condos are the best approach to changing the culture of poverty even if they sit empty.

"They may be empty and surrounded by homeless people with shopping carts, but they're still a beacon of hope. If we can light a candle for the next developer we might make a real difference in their day."

"Developers have it hard right now," agreed one city council representative. "If we can help them smile, even for one day, then it's all worth it."

* * * * *



Possible new slogan for the City of Berkeley...

"...help even one developer smile.."

ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, I keep getting asked to join my friends' social networks, and I don't want to upset them by saying no, but honestly, it's exhausting reading all this garbage. None of these people seem to have an actual life. What should I say to them?

Dear reader, tell them the truth. Social networks are destructive. If they get into your sock drawer you will never find a matched pair again. They also get all over your sweater. These people are not your friends and if they "friend" you, you should blow up their car to teach them a good lesson.

Dear Lena, I think holding a cell phone to my head for hours is hurting my wrist and maybe even affecting my shoulder. I want to look cool, but I just don't have the strength. What should I do?

Dear reader, if you aspire to hours of cell phone use, you need to build up the appropriate muscles in your wrists, upper arms, and back. Put down the cell phone and hold a loaded gun to your head instead. Walk at least ten blocks a day in this position, and I guarantee you will speed the process.

Dear Lena, I know everybody's doing it, but I can't seem to text and drive at the same time. I keep running into things. Is there some kind of seminar I can take?

Dear reader, yes, but it's expensive. Send \$20,000 to the Pepper Spray Times, and we'll get back to you. In the meantime, hold that gun up to your head like the other guy.

Ask Lena for advice about muskrat dancing at cdenney@jgc.org.

New Voting Method Gets Enthusiastic Thumbs-Up

Public Apathy, Junk Mail Key Ingredients in Success

By Jordi Lightful

"It was that garbage vote that inspired us," acknowledged one local city councilmember explaining the latest innovation in Berkeley's municipal voting procedure to a confused member of the public trying to understand how throwing his ballot away was counted as a "yes" vote for higher garbage fees.

"It was genius," chimed in another council representative. "We knew that if we asked people to affirmatively vote for a garbage fee increase the majority that doesn't vote at all would weigh in against it. So we required an affirmative vote to *stop* the fee."

"It's the marriage of inertia, apathy, and a funding increase," contributed a council staff member. "This way we can count the majority of people who don't even know there's an election on *our* side for a change."

"We can get the public to affirm anything we want this way," smiled one council representative in relief. "No more worrying about whether or not the public has the facts. The more fact-free and out of it the public is, the *better* this new system works."

* * * * *



SEE HOW EASY IT IS to be a political participant? By *not* returning her ballot to City Hall, this woman raised her own and her neighbors' garbage fees while choosing the right canned beans for dinner.



COURTESY OF THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THIS TYPICAL COSTUME WORN DURING THE PLAGUE OF 1720 is just the beginning of the nightmare national health coverage would bring.

Health Care: "Worse Than Torture"

Public Beggars for Less Coverage

By Nona D. Above

Politicians scrambled to accommodate nationwide demands for less health coverage as fears of a health coverage plague reached a fever peak.

"Please, please don't give it to me," implored one attendee at an impassioned town hall meeting. "I can't bear the sight of bubbling aquariums and waiting room magazines."

A majority of the American public which wants national health care is trying to impose health coverage on the *rest* of the American public, which is so frightened of health care that they've vowed to organize and vote out of office any politician who gives it to them.

"Just try to give me comprehensive coverage with no deductibles," seethed one voter holding an American flag. "If I see a single payer system coming my way I will shoot it dead."

"Lock and load," agreed another voter. "Anybody who tries to lower the rate of medical bankruptcies has to get through me."

"I have no pre-natal care and I like it that way," chimed in another angry voter. "I like getting my medical information the traditional way — through the internet and from the tabloids."

"That's right," added her husband. "Michael Jackson had a doctor, and look what happened to him."

* * * * *



BERKELEY OFFICIALS TRIED VALIANTLY to block a recent petition to overturn their downtown development plan, but failed to stop the signature gathering and may have to suffer the indignity of an utterly public vote.

Democracy Destroys Downtown Plan Planners, Plan Promoters Distraught

By Nelda Toodadoor

The Berkeley City Council's majority expressed fury recently when two minority members easily collected almost twice the signatures necessary to overturn a recently affirmed albeit controversial "Downtown Plan."

"It's a good plan, damn it," fumed pro-plan Mayor Tom Bates. "It has buildings, it has incentives, it has little sidewalk cafes with people sipping latte's and lemonade. I'm so upset I could just steal a newspaper if there were any left."

The Downtown Plan, if left alone to work its magic, would have transformed the downtown's empty buildings into bustling centers of commerce, changed barren storefronts into sparkeling displays of the latest goods and gadgets, and exchanged dozens of scruffy looking people for shiny, good-looking ones who love nothing better to do than spend their money.

"It's proprietary information," com-

mented experts from the economic development department regarding the exact mechanism for transformation. "But we know it would have worked."

Critics commented that every single plan the council has implemented for boosting business has failed, including fooling with street lighting, re-arranging the BART Plaza every few years, and changing "quality of life" laws so often that nobody can tell who's violating the law anymore, but were quickly dismissed.

"This plan would have been different," sighed Bates. "This one would have changed everything."

Signature collectors charged pro-plan councilmembers with obstructing signature collection by harassing would-be signers, but agreed that the heavy-handed tactics had actually backfired and worked in favor of plan opponents.

"It's made us stronger, and heaven

UC Administrator Uses Back of Piece of Paper in Impressive Cost-cutting Move

By Zane O. Moore

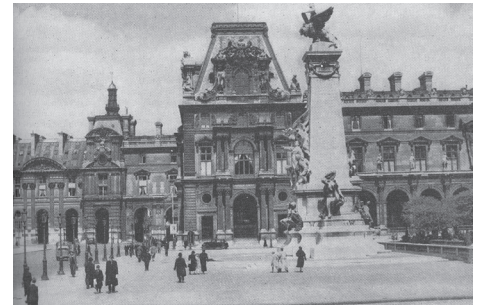
"It just kind of came to me," stated administrator Gloria Bounds, whose decision to utilize the back of a piece of paper as a cost-saving measure is the talk of the University of California system. "I suppose you could call it a kind of inspiration."

Bounds' move is the subject of a local documentary, and could earn her a commendation from the UC regents, who cautioned others about trying the procedure without extensive tests.

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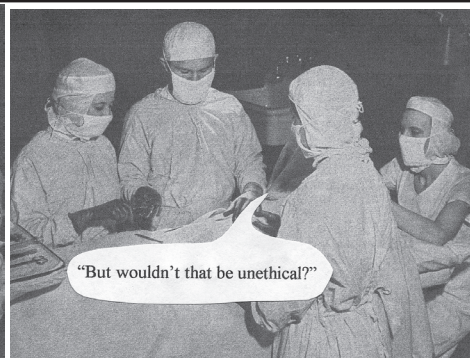
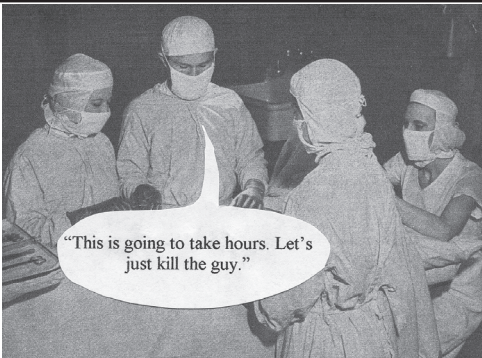
knows we have to be for the developer-driven counter move coming up," commented one signature collector. "Even more important, we need to get people ready for the avalanche of glossy, deceptive political fliers about to hit their mailboxes. That's where the real strength matters."

* * * * *



THIS IS WHAT the downtown area would have looked like if selfish signature collectors would have just stayed home and watched America's Top Model instead of unleashing all that democracy all over everything.

We Can't Draw Comics by Franz Toast



YOU CAN COUNT ON the inherent intelligence and common sense of the medical community to intuit what the proposed new standards of care will be, and to interpret them in appropriate and sensitive ways, just as they have for centuries.

What's Wrong With Yoo

Boalt Law Students Can't Figure It Out

By Dudley Weapons

Boalt Hall law students were baffled recently by a colorful crowd of protesters outside their classroom waving signs and objecting to former Bush administration lawyer and professor John Yoo's return to Boalt Hall after a stint of teaching at Chapman University in Orange County, Southern California.

"I'm just here to get an education," stated one student. "If I have to get it from a war criminal, then oh well."

"I'm sure he must have meant well by writing the memorandums which justified torture," commented another law student. "His legal theories may have sucked, but I'm sure he was motivated by powerful thrill of pure academic freedom."

Law School Dean Christopher Edley insisted that academic freedom to write sucky legal theories justify-

ing torture was in fact worth defending so that future lawyers would be free to come up with even suckier theories about even weirder ways to demean and dehumanize prisoners.

"Waterboarding does seem extreme," mused another law student watching the demonstration. "But sleep deprivation, loud, horrible music at all hours, hazing, gratuitous nudity -- all that sounds like regular college life to me."

Other law students agreed that there have to be some limitations to the treatment of prisoners of war, but agreed that Professor Yoo should be treated with respect and allowed to teach.

"After all," one law student stated, "it's not like he's trying to impose health care."

* * * * *



Out of the public school grows the greatness of a nation.

UESF is the union representing 6000 San Francisco teachers, paraprofessionals and other school workers. www.uesf.org 415 956-8373

Mark Twain

Next Issue: Making Jello With Celebrities

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CENTER FOR ECOIDIOCY by Nathan Undergod



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

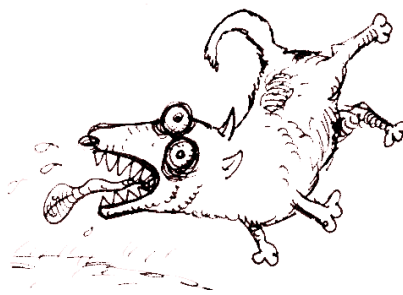


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Undergod

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



Hardly available anywhere; mailed or emailed to your door for a modest bribe. Plagiarize wildly; donations gladly accepted.

* The Two Gentlemen of Verona

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.