

All hail the...

...the lovey-dovey, hand-holding issue ...



Hepper Spray Times

February 2010



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

"...this proffered benefit of dignity..."*

Vol. XII No. 2

Tumbleweeds Take Over Downtown Berkeley

Economic Development Department Claims "Green" Efforts Paying Off



THE TUMBLEWEEDS wandering through the empty streets looking for spare change and hanging around are setting a bad example for vulnerable, impressionable youth and are part of the Economic Development Department's effort to "green" the vacant downtown.

Photo by Joseph Young

By Pauline Behavior

Scruffy-looking tumbleweeds collecting in doorways and corners in the downtown area are the Downtown Berkeley Association and the Economic Development Department's latest effort to give the area a little life.

"They're very natural," stated Downtown Berkeley BID Advisory Board Secretary Michael Caplan. "We're really into being green these days, and we've been advised that tumbleweeds used to be a common sight in open, empty desert spaces such as the current downtown area."

"They're definitely native," stated another City Hall staff person nervously. "We were getting a little self-conscious about how everything we did that was 'green' seeming to involve bulldozers and concrete. We thought this would be an inexpensive, natural way to reference the native plants and the natural

ecology that our building projects have displaced."

The tumbleweeds are having trouble with their relocation.

"We have to keep chasing them out of the pool hall," stated one downtown merchant. "They try, but they can't really play, and they mess up the greens."

Tumbleweed advocates insist that the city has a responsibility to show compassion to the tumbleweeds, which often pick up bad habits and congregate together telling bad jokes and frightening passers-by.

"We need to learn from them," stated one downtown resident. "They never pass these fake bonds and then do something else with the money. And they're a lot more natural looking than I am in the morning."

* * * * *

Democrats Unveil Radical Strategies for Electoral Victory

New Handshaking Policy Despite Flu Season

By Sonya Mind

Democrats accepted the necessity of radical changes in electoral strategy after losing what was considered to be a safe Democratic Party seat to a Republican recently in Massachusetts.

"We are going to shake hands outside Fenway Park," stated David Plouffe, charged with improving mid-term Democratic electoral success. "We know it's flu season, but we are going to shake hands and even kiss babies."

"And spell the names of states correctly," asserted David Axelrod, a senior White House advisor. "It will take some effort, but we can do it. We will also make sure Democratic candidates know a little about Afghanistan."

Democratic National Party advisors rejected the idea that Martha Coakley was the Democratic Party's Sarah Palin, stating wistfully that they could only wish for that kind of popularity.

"We have to start small," stated Plouffe. "We'll start by teaching them to make phone calls and walk precincts. And to accurately disclose their financial assets."

"We wish we could promise not to screw the interns," sighed Plouffe. "But we'll just have to take it one day at a time."

* * * * *



ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, I guess I'm old-fashioned, but I like to read the paper or a book on BART, and I'm a little afraid of the new iPad. I'm surrounded by other people's talking gadgets as it is, and it drives me crazy. Should I petition for a "quiet" car, the way they have in some transit systems? I'm just trying to finish Harry Potter.

Dear reader, I'm personally waiting for the gadget which will silence or disrupt the gadgets of everybody else on public transit. It may be technically illegal, but the entertainment factor for commuters sick of putting up with rude cell phone and computer behavior is so high that it outweighs any fine you will receive in the unlikely event that anyone figures out you are responsible. But do, by all means, write to the BART Board of Directors requesting a "quiet" car. They are so busy trying to deal with BART police issues they will walk around laughing for at least a couple of days, and they could really use the amusement.

Dear Lena, aren't the neighborhoods being a little hard on the fraternities, suing them for quality of life stuff like vomiting all over the place and noise and stuff? That's what college is all about.

Dear reader, I completely agree. The real worth of a college degree at this point is the recognition by any employer that the job applicant in question knows how to drink himself or herself silly and still find their seats for the game. The actual volume of vomit in my neighborhood is up a half inch from last year, but on the up side the fraternities are playing less disco.

Ask Lena about the tempo of your rant at cdenney@igc.org.

Newsrack Disappearance Mystery Explained

Newracks Admit to Suicide, Self-Mutilation in Response to Supreme Court Decision

By Jill Comaroud

The mysterious disappearance of newracks from commercial districts in Berkeley is linked to suicidal and self-destructive behavior brought about by the recent Supreme Court decision wiping away decades of efforts to protect elections from corporate control.

"They just gave up," sighed one Public Works official. "That 5-4 vote, overturning federal laws that prevented corporations from using their profits to buy political campaign ads may bring in some more ad money along with way, but none of them want to live in a world where corporate interests control public speech."

"It's a good thing," whispered another Public Works representative who requested confidentiality. "Reading is on the way out, and only serves as a source of litter. And here at City Hall we know that special interest money has its place."

* * * * *



THIS PHONE POLE stapled itself thousands of times in a destructive act of mourning for its close friend, a newrack that committed suicide after painting itself with graffiti and setting itself on fire in protest of the recent Supreme Court decision on corporate free speech.

UC Pulls Plug on Homage to Tupperware

By Warren A. Boa

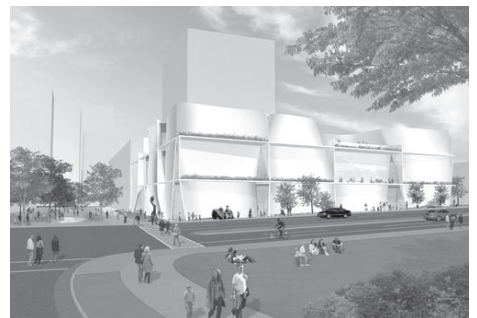
UC Berkeley finally agreed to a design for its new art museum that scraps the controversial Toyo Ito design and appears to embrace the suggestion of an architectural preservationist group, Friends of the United Nations Charter's Birthplace, which had suggested adaptive reuse of the existing building.

"The design is not really the issue," insisted one university insider. "We just need to keep expanding into the downtown and any peripheral part of the campus so that we can preserve the campus's interior open space while destroying the city's."

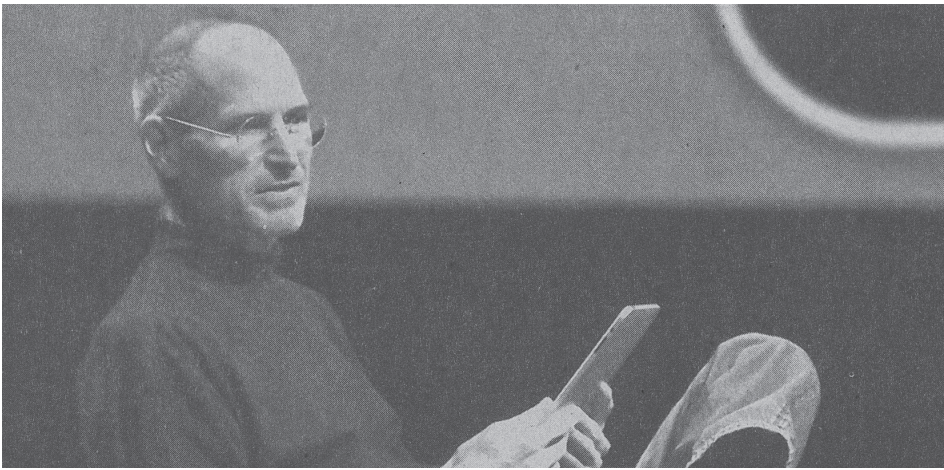
"The economy played its role," admitted another university spokesperson in confidence. "But the real issue is just making sure we absorb more and more of the town. If we had suggested a research building or classrooms, it would

be tough politically. But we can sell an art museum, control the land, and then scrap it later. Then we can unveil the tupperware."

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ITO'S DESIGN for the proposed relocated art museum was considered controversial by experts who could never agree as to whether it looked more like tupperware or styrofoam cartons of a Chinese dinner for ten.



APPLE CEO Steve Jobs will personally teach you to use your iPad if you promise to buy one and walk around with it a lot and take it to the internet cafe.

iPad Is Born - Consumers Swoon

Upgrade Rumored to Change Socks For Owner

By Royal Pain

iPad – The Review

The new iPad is 9.7 inches of big thrills and big fun. The first thing I did was just trot around with it at my local internet café and catch some babes. Then I just kept it laying out on my restaurant table while my geek buddies paraded by asking if they could touch it. *Life doesn't get any better than this.*

I can't figure out where the camera is, but while I've touched all the buttons on my iPad, I haven't touched every combination of buttons yet. I know this will add new life to ...*my life.*

I am not too good at the new keyboard, but nobody cares what I'm doing with it, just that I have it and that I got it first so they can hang around with me and check it out. I am *the man.*

I got the 3G model of course! Because it costs more and if I walk around with the \$499 Wi-Fi version I will feel

like a loser when I ride BART to work instead of *the king.*

It's kind of heavy. When you add up the combined weight of my iPad, my iPhone, my iPod, and my keys you start to really feel it, but I need to peel a couple of pounds anyway, and I think I can get my girlfriend to reinforce some pockets. Or maybe the babes at the internet café.

The virtual keyboard on the lap makes it hard to see, but if you really sit toward the front of your BART seat and hunch your back way out and curve your neck way down in front you still catch the eye-popping HD.

I can't wait to play some new games and fool around with...other games. I mean, I have real work to do and everything, but the same old games are kind of more awesome because they're... well, *bigger.* I am *sold.*

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Buses Screwed, But New Terminal Okayed

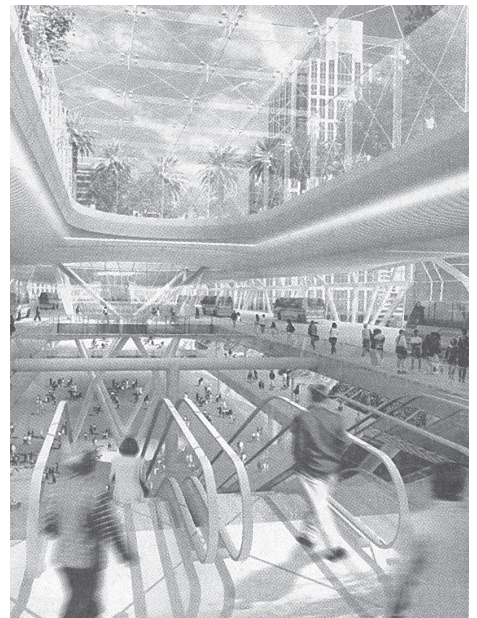
By Bella Ringing

A sparkling new Transbay Terminal appears to have funding in place through \$400 million in federal stimulus funds, while the governing boards of transit agencies are slashing transportation budgets so thoroughly that the transit riding public will be lucky to see a single tire roll by once a day.

"We're used to it," stated one weary rider. "I sleep in the stockroom a lot."

"My kids still recognize me," chimed in another rider. "I haven't had an actual seat in years, but I'm getting rock solid abs hanging the whole trip from the overhead bars. It's better than going to the gym."

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HOW COOL IS THIS PLACE where you could catch a bus if the MTA had the money to keep buses rolling. Until then this place will have a great echo.

We Can't Draw Comics by Franz Toast



Bin Laden Goes Green

By Lee Keefaucet

Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden issued a message recently blaming the United States and other industrialized nations for global warming.

"It's a first," reported one political observer. "He usually sputters a lot about religion with a lot of militant rhetoric that resonates with people who shoot up straw bales in the back yard. Now he sounds like Al Gore."

"He's selling out," observed Evan Kohlmann of globalterroralert.com, a private U.S. terrorism analysis group. "Some call it 'appealing to a broader audience', but it's selling out, pure and simple, and the purists are going to let him know it."

"The Green Party has seen these kind of splits before," affirmed one local Green Party operative. "As soon as he's caught eating the wrong kind of yoghurt he'll leak popularity and go down like the Titanic."

Bin Laden's message promotes breaking the American economy with

boycotts of U.S. goods and avoidance of the dollar.

"Advocating avoiding the dollar - that's just cheap," snorted Kohlmann. "The dollar isn't worth warm spit right now. Even *I'm* avoiding the dollar."

Bin Laden's message states that the effects of global warming have created hardships worldwide, from droughts and hurricanes to throwing "tens of millions into poverty and unemployment."

"It's pure evil," stated another terrorism expert. "He's trying to make people more receptive to recycling, riding their bikes, and bringing their own bags to the market. It's vicious, insidious, and he has to be stopped."

Experts at the White House and the State Department dismissed the danger of the message catching on world-wide, pointing out that people were still buy-



OSAMA BIN LADEN'S NEW "green" message took terrorism analysts by surprise by recommending recycling, bike-riding, and organic hemp clothing.

ing superfluous gadgets like the iPad and revolting over suggestions that they drive less or use less water.

"The American way of life is pretty wasteful," stated experts reassuringly, "and the whole world wants it. Bin Laden's finally bitten off more than he can chew. Just ask Ralph Nader."

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Next Issue: Avoiding Full Body Scanners With Celebrities

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CENTER FOR ECOIDIOCY by Nathan Undergod



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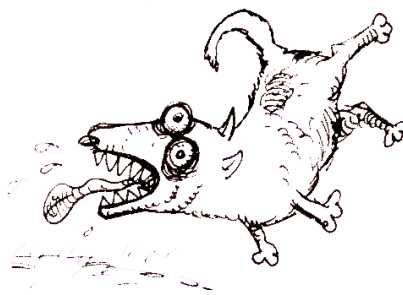


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Pepper Spray Times is made possible by the natural comedy inherent in the local political landscape and all its inhabitants, best exemplified by...



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

* Richard III

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.