

All hail the...
...the empathy-free issue ...

Hepper Spray Times

June 2009

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

"...Let's to supper, come, and drown consideration..*

Vol. XI No. 6

Panhandlers Offer to Help State Raise Money

By Cheyenne Retiring

No one is more sympathetic to the State of California's budget woes than panhandlers, who have offered to help the state out its financial difficulties with their legendary fundraising skills.

Media reports which usually state that panhandlers' daily take from begging on the street is on average \$100

a day are exaggerated, according to most panhandlers, but public generosity has not completely disappeared according to panhandlers' representatives.



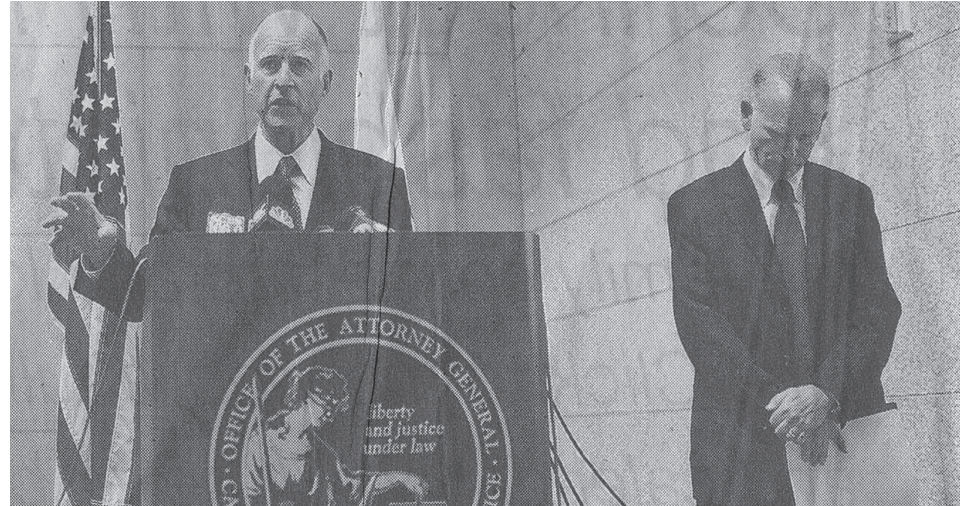
"I would recommend trying to look a little more sympathetic," commented one local panhandler. "Politicians are so used to the \$1,000 dinners and the \$500 shoes that they forget about the minimum wage and jobless crowd."

It's not an unsympathetic crowd according to statistics, which prove year after year that the poor give away a substantially larger portion of their money than the wealthy, who generally speaking are loathe to mix with or accidentally fund other than their own kind.

"I'd love to help California get on its feet," said one local panhandler. "But I keep thinking about how you could send someone to college for a year for the cost of keeping them in prison for a year, and I'm thinking we should just make that switch."

"Or do both," agreed another street beggar with a grin. "I'd be happy to wear a security ankle bracelet for the chance to learn a trade. I'd be ready to make that sacrifice."

* * * * *



THE STATE FRAUD SUIT against Wells Fargo for bilking customers who were assured that their suddenly unavailable funds were "as safe and liquid as cash" is compounded by a policy of putting smoky cooking stages and 90 decibels of amplified sound under the specific windows of customers who presume to object.

Wells Fargo Embraces Bad Neighbor Policy

By Cora D. Problem

"It was corporate's decision," stated Wendy Huang, Service Manager of the Wells Fargo Bank at University and San Pablo.

"It was a City of Berkeley decision," stated Wanda Salvatto at Wells Fargo's corporate Concord office.

"It's a West Berkeley Neighborhood Development Corporation decision," stated Michael Caplan at the City of Berkeley office of economic development.

"It's Wells Fargo's decision," stated Bruce Williams of the West Berkeley Neighborhood Development Corporation.

"It's a portrait of the efficacy of the city's planning process," marveled neighbors of the upcoming International Food Festival which sends neighbors running for the relative peace of the nearest freeway. "No one is responsible, no politician will help, lawyers get rich, and we get 90 decibels of pounding drums and sari fashion shows."

Wells Fargo spokespersons agreed

that the neighbors immediate to the sound stages would probably suffer, but pointed out that they probably suffered for only one day, unlike their auction-rate securities customerrrs.

"Those auction-rate securities customers have a real story to tell," stated Salvatto. "Orly Mager of Millbrae, for instance, had nearly all of her assets tied up in our securities, and she's still trying to get them back."

"We gave her a loan to help out," added Salvatto. "It's true that we lied to the neighbors of the food festival that we wouldn't subject them to the noise and smoke this year, but at least we didn't rob them like we did everybody else."

Neighbors agreed that being obligated to vacate their apartments every year was nothing compared to being robbed of hundreds of thousands of dollars in investments.

"All we're losing is our rights," they nodded in relief. "And everybody knows they're worth much less."

* * * * *

ASK THE EXPERTS



LENA DEETER knows the answers to everything forwards and backwards.

Dear Lena, maybe the blue versus red controversy over the stage paint job in People's Park has something to do with the blue versus red state thing they use during the elections. As a state-funded public university, shouldn't they try to stay out of that whole game?

Dear reader, the University of California does in fact have school colors, which are being slowly infused into the street signs, the awnings, and of course the People's Park stage's paint job. Be very careful if you tend to wear makeup or if your pets are easily dyed.

Dear Lena, I thought Schwarzenegger did that rainy day fund thing a few years ago - what's his excuse these days?

Dear reader, our editorial staff is tickled that you still think politicians need excuses for incoherent policy.

Dear Lena, I'm really worried about them letting all these prisoners out of jail. What if they mug me?

Dear reader, try not to lose sleep over it. Most of the people they let out are in jail for shoplifting overpriced snack food. They wouldn't know how to mug you if they tried, and they're terrible shoplifters to boot.

Dear Lena, yours is the only newspaper that hasn't shrunk. What's up with that?

Dear reader, it's a fact of life that as times get weird, the comedy quotient goes up. We are also unnaturally generous.

Ask Lena for advice about knitting home-made electric vehicles at cdenney@igc.org.



WHOEVER CONTROLS THE COLOR SCHEME at People's Park has so far left this lovely user-developed completely volunteer-built bench's color alone even though the forest green hue is potentially sending a message regarding some rival school.

UC Starts Stage Color War in People's Park

"Let a thousand paint brushes bloom..."

By Paula Fastwan

"It was red, then it was blue, now it's red again," reported a resident near the latest People's Park controversy. "We have some bets going on how long the red lasts."

The fresh coat of paint on People's Park's free speech stage painted by volunteers for the 40th Anniversary apparently did not suit the decor the University of California (UC) had in mind.

"Red is a Stanford color," mused one neighbor. "Perhaps they have a problem with that."

Park activists laughed as they repainted the stage a few days later with the traditional slogans and decorations.

"They could have discussed the color with us, or the design, or *something*," stated one painter. "They're pretty dedicated right now to having no communication with us at all."

People's Park is teeming with UC personnel, none of whom would comment on the red versus blue controversy.

"It's like the crips and the bloods, man," stated one frisbee player. "UC will pick a fight over anything just so they feel like they're still in the game."

"It's very hard on all the UC personnel assigned to the park to have nothing to do but ticket people who donate

spare clothing to the poor," stated one neighbor. "Try to imagine never getting to use your gun, your taser, your pepper spray, and wearing 40 pounds of equipment around your waist while everybody else is blissing out."

"We have nothing against blue and gold," added another park stage painter. "We have a design concept of our own with blue and gold bears saying 'democratize the regents.'"

* * * * *





WHILE MOST BUSINESSES ARE FOLDING UP, the vision quest business is booming thanks to a brimming bucket of confused consumers who don't know whether to spend, save, or blow their money fasting in the wilderness.

Vision Quest Business Booms

By Beata Standstill

The bleak economic landscape has discouraged a lot of entrepreneurs, but one group is delighting in the very conditions which confound most business owners, asserting that they are precisely the conditions which support their potential success.

"We thrive on confusion," offered one vision quest entrepreneur. "The more mixed up people are, the more you can convince them that spending insane amounts of money to fast in the wilderness will do them good."

The vision quest entrepreneurs don't claim credit for the concept, which many cultures claim as part of their rite of passage ceremonies.

"We're just among the first to commercialize it," stated another vision quest entrepreneur. "The Indians apparently had no interest in making a profit out of it, and they sure missed a hot ticket."

"People actually seem to feel thankful for the opportunity to experience, cold, hunger, and even danger in direct proportion to how much they are charged," stated one vision quest business owner.

He offered this statement as proof:

"On my first vision quest, in the high desert in California, I wasn't paying attention to where I was walking and I almost stepped on a rattlesnake. The gift of the rattlesnake was warning me by buzzing. It taught me a lesson in being aware of my place in the natural world and staying attentive to my surroundings." - *Mark Stefanski, Marin Academy science teacher and vision quest guide.*

"It should be noted that this guy not only *enjoyed the experience* of almost stepping on a rattlesnake, he went back on a second vision quest and some fool let him become a guide," stated another vision quest entrepreneur. "You don't have to feed them, you don't have to shelter them, you just give them a brochure and the more trouble they get into the more emotionally committed they become to the idea that it was all doing them lots of good."

"It's only natural," stated a vision quest investor. "Otherwise they'd have to recognize that they got rooked. People are suckers. And we're just skimming the cream."

* * * * *

UC President Yudof Hires Four Million Dollar Public Relations Team

By Hunt N. Peck

"Our brand is in trouble," explained University of California President Mark Yudof as he announced the creation of an expert team dedicated to rescuing the disgraced University of California from its scandal-ridden nadir.

"Marketing is not a dirty word," said Lynn Tierney, the \$239,000 a year strategist who heads the team hoping to change the tendency of people at the other end of their fundraising phone calls to laugh hysterically.

Yudof's own compensation package of \$828,000 remains an issue considering that UC is accepting fewer students and raising fees nearly 10% while handing out bonuses and perks to top administrators.

"That's where the image-building team comes in," he chuckled. "When they've done their magic the public will appreciate that the students are superfluous to our whole game."

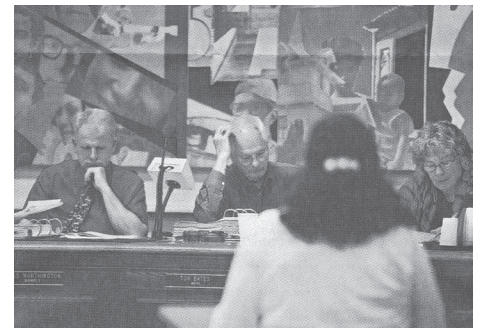
The image-building team hopes to keep the bonuses and perks for top administrators under more of a fog.

"The elimination of newspapers helps a lot," stated Tierney. "We have our own newspapers, and plenty of bucks in the budget for distribution. We're about to get some really positive press."

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A NEW IMAGE TEAM will try to put some lipstick on UC's battered reputation.

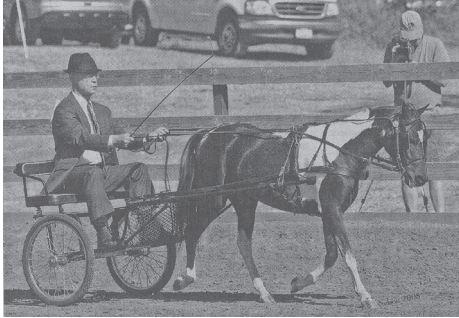


THE BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL considers public comment to be a form of torture.

CALLS TO CORRAL UC REGENTS GET RAVE REVIEWS FROM DISGUSTED PUBLIC

By Barry Senchals

University of California regents reacted with dismay as state lawmakers proposed legislation to regulate the



STATE LAWMAKERS are suggesting a variety of methods for reining in the out-of-control spending of the UC regents, who created two brand-new \$400,000 jobs while increasing fees nearly 10% for students.

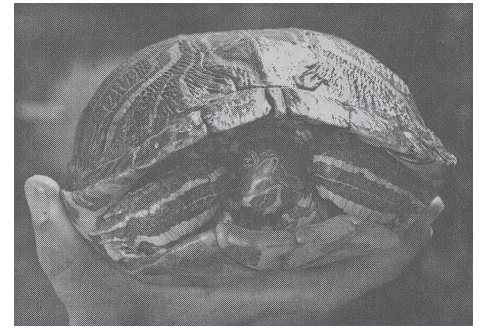
out-of-control spending of the university system's governing body "before they gold-plate their asses," according to one legislator.

"We're stunned," stated Richard Blum, a member of the Board of Regents. "Year after year we toss money down the drain on public relations projects, perks, enhanced retention deals for top-level administrators, and capital projects - anything but the students, faculty, and supporting staff. Usually nobody pays attention."

The Senate and Assembly bills sponsored by teams of both Republicans and Democrats seem to have struck a chord with a grateful public.

"The regents need a wake-up call," nodded one local resident. "I'm definitely for regulation, even the moderate use of some enhanced techniques."

Critics argued that enhanced techniques of persuasion were illegal, but were brushed off by university spokespersons, who pointed to Professor Yoo's celebrated work on the subject when he labored for the Bush administration's legal team on Guantanamo issues.



THIS GRAPHIC illustrates the current posture of the isolated UC regents, who have minimal exposure to the outside world and are less vulnerable than UC workers and the ordinary public to economic hardships.

"We are not endorsing these techniques, of course," stated a spokesperson for UC President Mark Yudof. "But I believe it is safe to state that techniques as previously used qualified at the time as completely legal."

Experts are considering a preserve in Strawberry Canyon where the regents could range freely but be monitored by neighbors and concerned quail.

"They need guidance and care," stated one lawmaker. "Free-range regents will be healthier for everyone."

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Next Issue: Shadow-boxing with Celebrities' Shadows

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CENTER FOR ECOIDIOCY by Nathan Undergod



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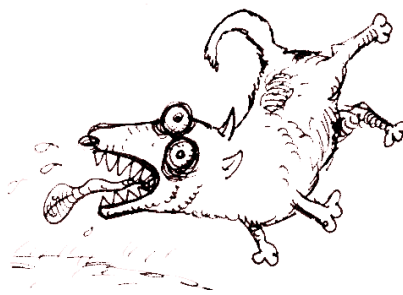


Pepper Spray Times
1970 San Pablo Ave. #4
Berkeley, CA 94702
cdenney@igc.org
www.caroldenney.com

Pepper Spray Times Staff

Editor.....Grace Underpressure
Art Director.....Egon Schiele
Comics.....Don D. Ferrera
Staff.....Cheyenne Retiring, Cora D.
Problem, Lena Deeter, Paula Fastwan, Beata Standstill, Hunt N. Peck, Barry Senchals, Nathan Undergod.

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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* Anthony and Cleopatra

We appreciate those who understand that satire is serious business.