

Stick It To Beaver • The End of the World
The ACME Anti-Suicide Gown

ePasquinade

(formerly "Martha Stewart's Working")

Unemployment

Issue 8
May/June 2001

Poorly-Timed Advertising: Sidewalk Ads

eDitorial

On April 4, 2001, the Associated Press reported that the City Commission of Kalamazoo, Michigan, agreed to pay over \$30,000 to three men that were jailed, naked, by police officers under a suicide prevention policy, because of a shortage of anti-suicide gowns.

And then I thought, "Anti-suicide gowns? Wow!"

They could make a mint on these suckers. You put the gown on, and you're instantly happy. Kind of like wearable Prozac. Like a Hawaiian shirt, only different. Now, here's how I see it:

Bob St.Friggins, our VP of Sales, first saw the ad in the new issue of S&M Quarterly. It took him a while to convince the board that he wasn't reading "some kind of weird perv magazine," as Mike "Mack" Mackerson, our CEO, put it. After we were all convinced that he was reading Sales and Marketing magazines and wasn't some sort of bondage fetishist (we found that out later, after Bob died in a car wreck and Mack was called to collect the contents of his trunk), we started to really listen to his idea.

"Feeling depressed?" the ad read. "Think your teenager may have entered one of those internet suicide pacts in the Phillipines? Stock market plunge completely wipe out your assets? Have we got the product for you!" Here Bob paused meaningfully and looked up at us over his glasses. Mack was picking his nose, as usual, and Fred Pumpernickle was studi-

Editorial, page nine

Credits

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MARFORIO

Sirs:

You know what your magazine needs more of? Hats.

—Teddy Tenpenny
Tenpenny's Hats

Welcome to my letter to you. Stay tuned. When I return, you'll read about why I've written your magazine.

—Dan Rather
Station Break, NY

Love your letters! Especially the way you keep it down to a single column!

—Calista Flockhart
Waterspout, CA

Sure I'm not a virgin, but I'm no whore either. After all, the name isn't Saveitall or Savealittle.

—Eva Saveat
1-800-COLLECTOWN

I'm writing to inform you of my editor's decision not to interview you for the newspaper. This decision was based largely on several highly restrictive demands your editor-in-chief insisted upon.

To wit: (a) the request that we supply your, albeit small, staff with individual kittens from the local animal shelters, which would be confiscated and incinerated at that which they had grown up and "stopped being cute"; (b) the insistence of your editor to conduct the entire interview in your letters column and that of the Times over the course of five weeks, no more, no less; and (c) your reluctance to answer any questions that end with a question mark.

Give us a call when you come to your senses.

—Corky Starbuck (*Cub Reporter*)
The New York Times
New York, NY

This is your wakeup letter. So wake up! Wake up! Yo! Sleepyhead! Wake the fuck up! Wak—nonono, get that hand away from the Goddamned snooze! Don't you dare touch that fucking button, you fucking bastard!

Shit.

—Your wakeup letter
On the nightstand by the bed

What's round like an asshole, smells like an asshole, is tight like an asshole, produces shit like an asshole, plays drums and

A List Of Departments And Features That Have, For One Reason Or Another, Been Allowed To Retain Their Jobs In This Issue

FEATURES

8. *The End Of The World* by Holly Adams
10. *Beaver Gets Downsized* by Scott Leslie

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

2. EDITORIAL & CREDITS
2. MARFORIO (LETTERS)
4. THE MONTHLY EXCLAMATION!
4. JADED PRESS CLIPPINGS
6. ASK MS. PARANOIA
11. THE SHORT LISTS

A List Of Features That Have, For One Reason Or Another, Have Not Been Allowed To Retain Their Jobs In This Issue

- Adolph: *My Secret Life As A Gas Station Attendant
Fire The Handicapped!*
- Making Ends Meet By Selling Government Secrets
Faking Your Own Death And Screwing The Life Insurance Company So You And The Wife Can Move To Barbados And Live Off The Money For The Remainder Of Your Pathetic Little Lives
- Jobs I Have Lost
Cat Food—The Poor Man's Spam

sings like an asshole, and makes generic music for Disney movies like an asshole? I don't know, but I'll ask the barman at the pub while I'm getting wiped.

—Phil Collins
Dingleberry Pub
Orlando, FL

I liked the chickens so much I bought the farm!

—Victor Kiam
Wormfood, USA

Reports of the Beautiful Army, Generous Navy, and Cuddly Marines using a record amount of Ecstasy are adorably exaggerated. I'm an Attractive Private in this Sexy Man's Army and I've never seen so much as a Lovable Aspirin pass through these Supple Barracks.

—PFC TLC Evans
Fort Sweetcheeks, AL

This is it, folks. The doctor says I have about thirty seconds to live. It's been a good life and I'd like to leave you with a final thought from my deathbed: Just kidding! Man, you guys are so gullible!

—Bob Hope
Deathbed Valley, CA

I would like to inform your readers of a danger many overlook. It's lurking in fast food restaurants in most of the world and it could cause you days of emotional distress.

Last month, I walked into my local McDonalds. It had been recommended to me by my bridge partner at the rest home, Madge, as well as many others at the home. I figured "fast food" couldn't be all bad if my friends enjoyed it.

Well, I ordered one of their "Big Macs" and, after getting comfortable in that death traps they call a "booth," I opened and bit into the sandwich. The searing heat was too much for my fragile and flammable flesh and my mouth immediately burst into flame.

I've filed a lawsuit with the company, but everyone should beware of the food at this so called "eatery."

Helen G. Burns
Weldon, CT

All lettuce shall wilt before me!

—Sir Geoffrey Eggplant
Lord/Ruler of the Cabbage Patch

Could I just leave this copy of Watchtower for you to look over? It's the purple issue!

—Prince
Minneapolis, MN



The Monthly Exclamation!

Some News Is Just Better Shouted

Volume 17, Number 8

May 2001

You're A Bitter Man, Charlie Brown Peanuts Characters Out Of Work

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (eP)—Several characters from the beloved comic strip “Peanuts” have brought a \$78-million class action suit against the estate of late cartoonist Charles M. Schulz after the series ended abruptly last year. Schulz, who died last February of a heart attack, had stipulated in his will that the long-running strip would not continue after his death.

Unaware of the clause, the “Peanuts” gang were stunned to find themselves out on the street after fifty years of service and are suing for damages.

“Good grief,” cried a disgruntled Charlie Brown. “The old man screwed us over something fierce. I remember a few years back, I had this honey of a deal to join ‘Beetle Bailey.’ Sparky [Schulz] wanted me to stay so he offered me a new ball glove and a boatload of heroin. So, blockhead that I was, I stood by him—and now look where it got me! I don’t have nickle one! All I’ve got is my Buster Browns and a guest shot on ‘Rosie.’”

“I could use some green—big time,” said Schroeder of no fixed address, “Sure, last month I did some back-ups for Boz Scaggs. But that shit doesn’t pay the bills. We gotta stick it to the man!”

Since 1950, Schulz’s “Peanuts” has been embraced by the baby boom generation, appearing in over 2,600 newspapers and 21 languages worldwide—more than any comic strip in the history of cartoons.

But according to reports, life was hardly a bowl of cherries working for the late cartoonist. A rigid taskmaster, Schulz forced Pig Pen to live in squalor at all times and often refused to take Snoopy for ‘walkies.’ To make matters worse, most characters found themselves working overtime selling products—everything from lunch boxes to sportscars to bathroom tissue—or face immediate termination.

“Let’s face it,” said Lucy Van Pelt. “The old man had us flogging some lame shit. Get Met? I’m 48 for Chrissake! How’s about Lucy getting laid already?? I’m ovulating over here!!”

Plaintives named in the suit include Snoopy, Woodstock, Linus Van Pelt, Franklin, Peppermint Patty and a little-used Martian character Schulz created back in the 1960’s named Uranus.

At press time, the Charles Schulz family could not be reached for comment. However, a lawyer for the Schulz estate said: “Wa-waa. Wa Wa Waa Waa Wa. Wa-Wa. Wa.”

Trial proceedings are expected to begin later in June.

Jaded Press Clippings

A family was apprehended at Bogota’s international airport trying to smuggle in a million dollars in cash. One of female travelers explained away the money by saying the Virgin Mary had appeared before the family and it had simply fallen into their hands. *Reuters*

After attempting to rob a bank with a toy gun, a 17-year-old from in Fort Worth, Texas, tried to elude police by ducking into a tanning salon and asking for a tanning bed. The owner became suspicious when she asked the out-of-breath teen if he was being chased. *Reuters*

Three brothers died digging a well in Taboao da Serra, Brazil, from what appeared to be gas poisoning after each descended to the well’s bottom. “One of them dropped something to the bottom and went down there to pick it up but fainted there,” said a duty police officer. “So his brother descended to check on him and also lost consciousness. And then it was the third brothers’ turn.” The official could not provide the ages of the dead brothers, but said they were grown-ups. *Reuters*

A man fired shots at the home of his ex-girlfriend in a community near Tucson, Arizona. Police later arrested Keith M. Livsey, who had driven a modified, gas-powered, red and orange-painted golf cart in the drive-by shooting. *Tucson [Arizona] Citizen*

A woman walked into Chicago Police headquarters and handed over a pair of testicles she said she had bitten off a man who had sexually assaulted her. The man found his way to a local hospital where he underwent unsuccessful reattach-

Tech Workers Forced Into Slavery Employees Discovered Aboard Slave Ship

COTONOU, Benin (eP)—Police have concluded their investigation into a ship that sparked a multi-national search for hundreds of suspected child slaves along the western coast of Africa.

Officials say the Nigerian-registered MV Etireno, which was originally thought to have left Benin with nearly two hundred fifty child slaves aboard, was found to actually contain hundreds of laid-off dot-commers who were sold by their former companies into slave labor in order to raise money in the failing economy.

A Hewlett-Packard official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, confirmed the charges Monday, saying, “We struck a deal with the slave-traders and were given fifty bucks a head. A couple of people raised objections, but then Carly said that they were all slaves anyway with what we paid them, so what difference did it make?”

The dot-com slaves were kept in primitive conditions in the ship’s hold, with no internet access, cell phone coverage, or Starbuck’s coffee. Says one man sold into slavery by Oracle Systems, “It was the worst week in my entire life. First they say I’m laid off, then they tell me they’ve found me this great new job overseas, and then I find myself in this hellhole. I’m sure when I get back I’ll have a million e-mails to answer.”

UN officials say that, due to air-tight contract agreements, there is little they can do as apparently these employees signed their own lives away when they were first hired. “This falls under the ‘Selling of Soul’ clause that is standard to most high-tech employment contracts. So really it’s their own fault,” stated UN spokesperson Mary Kay Frunciati. “The fact that they were unable to access the internet is deplorable, but not illegal.”

Meanwhile, former Vice President Al Gore today began a campaign to have the right to internet access added as a Constitutional Amendment. “I invented the internet,” he said in a recent press conference. “This situation in Benin is a tragedy and a violation of everything America stands for. I think it’s time we made sure that the basic human right to internet access never gets taken away.”

Shades Rendered Unnecessary By Diety God Teases Young Turk

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY (eP)—Trey Blickensderfer, 32, thought the pair of sunglasses he was purchasing from *Scads O’ Shades*, would make him look cool and impress the ladies at the bowling alley.

Little did Blickensderfer know, powerful forces were working against him in the form of God, ∞, of Heaven, UN. The resulting weather patterns created by Mr. God prevented Blickensderfer from putting the top down on his 1998 Mazda Miata and made the need for sunglasses unnecessary for an estimated forty days and forty nights, including weekends.

Mr. Blickensderfer’s lawyer has filed for physical and emotional damages against Mr. God for an unspecified amount. ★

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ment surgery and was questioned by police. The woman, 42, was treated at another hospital and released. *Chicago Tribune*

Jessica Staves, 17, of Eau Claire, WI, persuaded a 15-year-old boy to stab her by offering him \$1,000. She was convicted in January for helping to vandalize a church and having sex with a 14-year-old boy in the church’s chapel and sentenced to two years of probation and thirty days in jail didn’t want to return to jail. *Eau Claire [Wisconsin] Leader-Telegram*

Danny Miller, an accountant in Phoenix, Arizona, has been campaigning to have a salon manager at a local PETsMART fired for using his dog, Mocha, as a mop to clean the dog’s own urine from the store’s floor. *Phoenix New Times*

Todd Poller, 45, of Bixby, Missouri, was drinking with friends when he grabbed a five-inch perch and tried to swallow it. Poller died from asphyxiation and suffered lacerations to the inside of his throat from the fins. *AP*

Leonard D. Devore, 57, of Walled Lake, Michigan, was charged by police with criminal recklessness, failure to stop after an accident, operating while intoxicated, public indecency, public intoxication and resisting law enforcement for rear-ending a 2001 Chevrolet van driven by Richard A. Muse, 39, of Homewood, Illinois, then leaving the scene. Muse reported the accident to Boone County sheriffs, who alerted Clinton County sheriffs that Devore was northbound and could be entering the county. A deputy located the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop. Devore exited the vehicle completely naked and started yelling “that this was a free country and he could do what he wanted.” The deputy attempted to handcuff him, but he resisted. A

This magazine was recently declared the winner of the Ernest A Irving Award For Excellence In Alliteration.

Dear Ms. Paranoia

Dorothy Com in Silicon Valley writes, "Ever since the big layoff I've felt insecure and depressed. What can I do to perk myself up? And, do you think the economic downturn is a Commie plot?"

Gentle Reader:

As dear Mother used to say, "There is no depression that can't be cured with a bottle of Johnnie Walker." Ms. Paranoia advises you to do two things: 1) Go on a drunken binge and hope that you still have friends when you're finished. 2) Eat a lot of pork products.

Regarding your Commie plot theory, you are closer than you think. Remember the dreaded Soap Cabal? Ms. Paranoia has not been able to mention them lately due to a nondisclosure agreement made during the settlement of a court case. Therefore, she cannot really say anything other than, if you want to know whose fault it is that the tech sector is failing, look to the non-tech sector most desperate for attention. And consider also that millions of laid off workers will need to scrub themselves vigorously with soap to remove the deep feelings of shame and to cleanse their hearts soiled by the foul stench of corporate servitude. Therefore, Ms. Paranoia encourages those victims to instead embrace the grime of shame and understand that it is only by wallowing in abject misery that one can come to truly understand that the evil of corporate America must be fought every single day. Put down your soap and rise against your oppressors! Or, better yet, appropriate the soap and use it as a weapon. My forthcoming book, *Stage a Revolution With Your Pantyhose: A Guide to Overthrowing the Government Using Everyday Household Products*, has detailed instructions for building an effective catapult using a trashcan, pantyhose, a mop, and some soap-on-a-rope.

Truman Arpeggio of Kalamazoo, Michigan writes, "My vacuum cleaner broke and now I have a major problem. You see, it is not sucking. Yet, one might also say that it sucks because it broke. Therefore, by the simple fact of it not sucking, it sucks. I couldn't say that it sucked, but I also couldn't say that it didn't suck. This made my brain spin so far out of control that I am now in a mental hospital trying to deal with the paradox. My fear is that I may have totally disrupted the space-time continuum. Help!"

Gentle Reader:

As dear Mother used to say, "That space-time continuum has caused me more problems than even that damn chip the aliens implanted in my neck!" The continuum is a very delicate, sensitive fabric. One must be very careful not to upset it in anyway, and if one does insult it by acci-

sergeant arrived and assisted in cuffing him. *Frankfort (IN) Times*

A man wearing nothing but a paper bag over his head walked into a store in Bismarck, ND, screamed for five to ten seconds, and left. *Bismarck (North Dakota) Tribune*
About fifty women, some bare-breasted, gathered on the State House steps in Boston recently, carrying signs that identified them as the Booby Liberation Organization. The protestors claimed to be protesting the state's indecent exposure law that men to go topless, while it's a crime for women to do so. Supporting the women were one man who wore a bra and other men who went topless in "goddess" costumes. *Boston Herald*

In a recent murder trial in Des Moines, Division of Criminal Investigation criminologists told jurors that 106 stains were found on a Holiday Inn bedspread in the room of the crime scene, with thirty-eight of the stains being semen. *Des Moines [Iowa] Register*

After making an appeal earlier this year after oil spills on the coast of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Conservation Trust has been sent a thousand fifteen-inch penguin jerseys, some from as far away as Japan, to protect the birds from preening themselves and ingesting the poisonous oil. *Reuters*

Two people in Trincomalee, Sri Lanka, were injured when a curious driver set off an anti-personnel mine in the town's administrative offices. He was apparently trying to take the device apart. *Reuters*

A taxpayer sent his \$642 tax payment to the Columbus Income Tax Department in the form of a cardboard box containing 642 stale peanuts. Department administrator Melinda Frank said the taxpayer

dent, gifts of flowers and chocolate are generally not enough.

Ms. Paranoia regrets to inform you that, after a full investigation of your case, she has become firmly convinced that, not only have you disrupted the space-time continuum, but that you are personally responsible for the following:

1) *The election of George Bush to the Presidency. The period of upheaval and confusion immediately following the election coincides exactly with the timeframe of your vacuum quandary.*

2) *The breakup of Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise's marriage. This seems to be a delayed result, but the ripples of disruption always move far into the future.*

3) *Battlefield Earth. Recall that when dealing with the space-time continuum, upheavals can affect events both backwards and forwards in time.*

4) *The acquittal of Puffy (P-Diddy) Combs. How else could a black man have been acquitted of gun charges?*

5) *Robert Downey Jr.'s arrest on drug charges. The warp in the fabric spontaneously produced a mysterious woman and a Wonder Woman costume. Further examples of such spontaneous creation of absurd objects can be found in Douglas Adams's seminal exposé of the dolphin conspiracy, The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.*

6) *The comic strip Cathy. Perhaps the most egregious of all. This comic strip was not only spontaneously generated, but it was retroactively generated to appear as though it had always existed.*

Shame on you, Mr. Arpeggio. Shame. Ms. Paranoia hopes that you are institutionalized for a very long time, and that they make sure that you never use a vacuum again.

Frank Legume of Pensacola, Florida writes: "I have a question on a point of etiquette. My grandson recently got laid off and I'm wondering if it is proper to send him a card. If so, what kind of card? Congratulations? Sympathy? Should I include money?"

Gentle Reader:

As dear Mother used to say, "That damned Hallmark company is filled with Masons. Never trust a Mason." Ms. Paranoia suggests that you pause to consider the following before you decide to send that card:

A team of colleagues, which has since been driven underground, recently uncovered evidence of a massive conspiracy between the US Postal Service, Hallmark, and the Freemasons. Obviously, both Hallmark and the USPS benefit from this arrangement because they both make money on the transaction. The Masons are involved because they enjoy some measure of power in the government and have significant financial interest in Hallmark. The Masons are instrumental in getting the government to endorse frivolous holidays (such as Valentine's Day and Grandparent's Day—Ms. Paranoia would like to see them approve National Abductee Remembrance Day or perhaps Implant-Related Amnesia Awareness Week, but that's a different story).

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still owes \$642 as barter is not an acceptable form of payment. *Columbus [Ohio] Dispatch*

Kimberly Merson, 24, a substitute teacher at a high school in Carroll County, Maryland, was arrested in May—for fifteen counts of child sexual abuse; five counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor; third-degree sexual offense; perverted practice; and distribution of obscene material. She told police she had provided alcohol to the students, invited them to her home, stripped and danced for them, fondled them, had sexual intercourse with them and performed oral sex on them at Merson's home, two of the students' homes, in Merson's car and in one student's car. *Baltimore [Maryland] Sun*

When police recently responded to a 999 emergency call in Manchester, England, they discovered a cockatiel standing on the push button phone with the receiver off the hook and lying next to it. *Reuters*

A dozen inmates in Bogota, Colombia, asked to be re-admitted into prison just three days after escaping, taking advantage of a Colombian amnesty law that says the state will look the other way if an escaped convict voluntarily returns to prison within 72 hours. *Reuters*

A ten-year-old Austrian girl was attacked by a swarm of 150 ticks as she rode her bicycle through a meadow near her home. Luckily, the girl had been vaccinated against the sometimes fatal tick poison. *Reuters*

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A Jaded Press Clipping is one that reports something so utterly mindblowingly... er, Jaded, you can't help but send any you come across to our special Jaded Press Clipping Email Vault at jpc@epasq.com. ★

The End of the World

BY HOLLY ADAMS

It all started the morning the toaster oven exploded, and Asif said that it foretold the end of the world.

Asif came from one of those countries where they worship elephants and don't eat meat. Sometimes he got a little weird. Like when Kathy spilled her coffee and he proclaimed it meant she was going to lose all her money. That very day her wallet got stolen, and Asif just sat back and said that sometimes, he exaggerated a bit. So when Asif said that the world was going to end, you could bet that most likely, we'd just get caught in a rolling blackout and get to go home early. Anyway it didn't matter; Asif was a damn good programmer.

"Well the world has to end some day, Asif," I said with annoyance. He just shrugged and went back to his cube. I followed him and watched as he settled into his chair and pulled out a hefty notebook of specs for the new ERP system. "So what's going to happen?" I taunted. "Bush accidentally hits the big red button? God finally decides he's had enough? Sorry, I meant Ganesh."

Asif sighed and put down his mechanical pencil. "Maybe 'Ganesh,'" here he paused meaningfully and stared at me, "will just take YOU down and leave the rest of us."

"Oh very funny Asif. Like some big-headed elephant cares about little old me." I wandered back to my cube and opened Eudora to check my email. The usual crises in accounting—invoices not printing again—and a couple of forwarded jokes from Sam over in web design. Meeting with the boss at 2—better come up with something so it looked like I had been busy. Companywide

meeting today at 3. Excellent—that meant that for at least an hour, we wouldn't have to work. After 4 o'clock I could just wander the halls and pretend to look busy. So pretty much I would only have to work until 2pm today. Nice.

I poked my head over the cube wall. "Hey Asif, companywide meeting today. Maybe a nuclear warhead will hit the auditorium and take us all down." Asif shrugged again. "Could be."

I sat and read *Fuckedcompany.com* until about 10, threw together a little code to make the invoices work, forwarded a few jokes to Sam, and then went to lunch. When I got back, Asif was still plugging away at his specs. "Don't work so hard Asif, you make the rest of us look bad." He grunted and I went back to my cube to pull together some notes before the meeting. That took about half an hour, and then I sat and read the new issue of *The Onion*, doing a quick alt-tab to an open spreadsheet whenever the boss walked by. I always saved Dilbert's List of the Day for last, so I hoped the companywide didn't last too long.

At two o'clock I wandered over to the boss's office. "Hey Dan, take a seat and close the door," Bob said affably. I sat in one of the hard scratchy chairs and watched as Bob finished up an email and then leaned back in his plush leatherette chair. "So Dan, I just wanted to have this meeting to prepare you for the companywide today."

This got my attention and I sat up. "What's up, boss?" Bob liked to be called "boss." It made the bozo feel important. It usually did the

trick whenever he got on a rant, and if he asked us to come in on a Saturday, a little ego-stroking usually got me out of it.

"Well, as you are well aware, our stock value has fallen and revenue flow isn't hitting the books on the positive. We need to be proactive in our use of company resources, and there's going to be a few involuntary separations. You can expect the attrition rate in our department to be about 50 percent."

After puzzling through this statement, I said, "You mean there's going to be layoffs?"

"Indeed," Bob said. "The decisions were based on performance, production, and focus on our corporate manifesto. Some people in our department didn't hit the quality standards we set and so we are going to have to enforce mandatory permanent leave. Any questions?"

Jeez. Some people in our department were going to be pretty pissed off. "Do these people know yet?"

"No," said Bob. "HR will hand out slips at the meeting."

"Okay. Well, I should get back to work, so my production doesn't go down," I joked. Bob held out his hand and I shook it. Then I went back to my cube to read Dilbert, because I had the feeling this meeting would run a little long. Plus I'd have to go console a few people afterwards, I figured. I looked at Asif, slaving away over his specs. Poor guy, he'd probably be the first to go. No way were they going to spend money on that expensive new ERP system.

At the companywide, several people looked a little scared. I guess some other bosses had decided to warn their peons, too. HR

was showing a united front in the front row, and all the bigwigs were onstage, fidgeting nervously. Mack, our CEO, got up and shuffled through a few Powerpoint slides, too quickly to tell what they said. Then he launched into a long and buzzword filled explanation of our financial situation and next steps. Finally he came to the meat of the matter and handed the meeting over to the head of HR.

Nancy is one of those women who was probably really hot at one point and now just looked old and tired. Still, she always dressed in a snazzy suit and today she looked particularly nice. There was a lot of shuffling and grunting in the audience, and people looked really

eDitorial, from two

ously examining his shoe. Bob plunged on: “The new Acme Anti-Suicide Gown is 100% guaranteed to solve all your depression woes, or your funeral is free. Just slip it on, and watch those troublesome feelings of suicide go down the drain! Our patented Artificial Happiness Action(tm) will gently lift your depression and create an aura of calm. Buy one today!”

Bob stopped and said, “Do you see what I mean?”

Mack wiped his finger surreptitiously on the underside of the table and said, “No.”

Bob leaned forward conspiratorially. “We have layoffs coming up, right?”

“Yeeeeesssss...” Mack said slowly, still staring blankly.

“So, don’t you think if we give an anti-suicide gown to everybody we lay off, maybe they will go quietly and not shoot up the place like that guy did the last time we laid people off? Only \$9.99, I’d say it’s a pretty good investment.”

It was like sixteen individual suns were rising, very slowly, over the heads of every board member. You could practically see their

tense. Then she started reading out names. The person would get up and shuffle up to the front, take his slip, and shuffle sadly over to one side of the stage. Finally Nancy got to the IT department and started reading the names of some of our best people. This couldn’t be right, I thought.

Sam was one of the first to go and I felt sad that I would no longer get his forwarded jokes in my inbox every morning. They were going in alphabetical order, and when they hit the M’s, I was sure that Asif was going to be called but they passed right over him. So I was going to have to sit next to this sourpuss for a while longer.

When they called my name I

faces light up in comprehension. It was the first time everybody understood something said in a board meeting, so we quickly took advantage of it and ordered 300 of the gowns.

And it worked. On the big day, everybody filed almost happily out the door and nobody returned to shoot holes in Mack’s office door again. That made him pretty happy. Then we started giving the gowns out as bonuses. Production skyrocketed, so we gave them to the peons as well. It was amazing. Happy peons became productive peons.

Only trouble is, they’re all so damned happy they started singing, every day, from 8 to 5 and beyond. Drives Mack totally nuts. Then he saw an ad for industrial sized rolls of duct tape and ordered a couple hundred. They arrive next week. Until then, he’s started

didn’t hear it. They had to call it three times. I just couldn’t believe it. Me? I was one of the best programmers there. What was I going to do? I trudged to the front in a daze and didn’t come out of it until I found myself packing up the contents of my desk under the stern gaze of a security guard.

Asif looked up and I walked past him with my box of stuff. “Good luck, Dan,” he said cheerfully, and I stared at him. I wanted to kill him, the smug bastard.

“Cheer up, Dan,” he said. “It’s not like it’s the end of the world.”

Fricking toaster oven. ★

wearing a gown to work. He’s already started to whistle. —HA

About The Cover: The advertising firm of Selig & Crassner was short-lived for a reason. Of the top ten worst advertising campaigns in history, S&C accounted for seven. Among their failures, the “Here’s The Beef” ads for Trojan condoms, the “Be Unique” spots for the U.S. Armed Forces, and the “You Can’t Take It With You Either” spots for Mastercard. But the sidewalk ads for Target Department Stores on Wall Street were truly atrocious, not to mention responsible for many deaths during the market correction earlier this year.

Jennifer Layton, whose website *J Street* (<http://www.jstreet-humor.com>) rocks our world—and in a good way, not a Styx/Toto/Journey sort of way—snapped the shot during a recent trip to NYC. **Doug Moon** added the target. ★

Paranoia, from page seven

Ms. Paranoia thought that your question brought up an interesting theory, which she decided to investigate: Did the Masons work with that infamous Cabal to create an economic downturn? She ran into many problems with this theory. Namely, if people are laid off, they have less money to buy cards. But then, they also have less money to buy soap. This will require further investigation. Please hang in there and our office will get back to you. ★

nine

To Hell with your worthless Tech stocks...

Beaver Gets Downsized

BY SCOTT LESLIE

Scene: The family room in the Cleaver household. The room is empty with the exception of Ward Cleaver who is leaning back in his easy chair, pipe in hand, intently leafing through a magazine called "Leather Bondage Boys." Beaver comes in the front door and Ward jumps before throwing his magazine behind the chair.

BEAVER (EXCITED): Hi, Dad!

WARD: Oh. Uh, hi, Beaver.

BEAVER: Hey, guess what?! We just had a test today—I got an A in personal hygiene! Isn't that keen?

WARD: Uh, Beaver, I think you'd better sit down. We need to talk...

JUNE (ENTERING, DISTRACTED): Oh, uh, hi, Beaver.

BEAVER (SITS): Say, why's everybody so gloomy all of a sudden? Is it about that squirrel I flushed down the toilet? I can explain... honest!

WARD (BITING THOUGHTFULLY ON PIPE): No, no. Beaver, your mother and I have been doing a lot of thinking. We've been grading your performance lately and you see, well, we're going to let you go.

BEAVER: What!?!

JUNE: Sorry, Beaver. We just needed a son that's more... reasonable.

WARD: Yes, where is that boy? (CALLING) Oh, Son! (EDDIE HASKELL ENTERS INTO THE ROOM WITH A BIG DOPEY LOOK ON HIS FACE. HE THROWS HIMSELF ON THE COUCH, ARMS BEHIND HIS HEAD.)

EDDIE: Howdy, folks! (TO BEAVER) Hey, squirt! You still here?

BEAVER: I don't believe this!

EDDIE: Well, get used to it, TV-boy. (TURNS TO JUNE) Why, that's a very nice sweater, Mrs. Cleaver.

JUNE: Why thank you, Eddie... But please, you're family now. Call me Mommie.

EDDIE (SMILING): Oooh, Mommie... I think I need a spanking. I've been bad...

BEAVER: Hey! Don't say that to my mother!

EDDIE: Aw, whadda you want from me? Your mom's a nice piece of ass.

JUNE (RUNNING HER HAND UP EDDIE'S ARM A LITTLE SUGGESTIVELY): Oh, Ward, isn't he cute..?

BEAVER: This isn't fair! How can you pick that *creep* over me?!

WARD: Now, now, Beaver. This is all for your own good. You know if you'd only given your mother those sponge baths like she'd asked, this never would've happened.

BEAVER: Yeah but gee. I didn't want to feel all funny and stuff...

JUNE: Oh, c'mon Beaver. They do stuff like that on the internet all the time.

BEAVER: Mom, this is the Fifties! The internet hasn't even been invented yet!

JUNE: Oh, you shut up.

(A DOUR WALLY SUDDENLY ENTERS THE ROOM CARRYING A MILK CRATE FULL OF CLOTHES AND FOOTBALL PENNANTS.)

BEAVER (SHOCKED): Wally! Hey, Wally! What are you doing!?

WALLY (BITTER): Just got my walking papers, Beave.

BEAVER: What?! Not you too!

WALLY: Yeah. I got traded to the Hendersons for a case of Yoo-Hoo and a fourth round draft pick.

WARD (LOWLY): Third round.

WALLY: Fascist!

BEAVER: Wally, don't go... we can beat this... we can get Lumpy and—

WALLY (IRKED, HEADED FOR THE FRONT DOOR): Get used to it, Beave. This isn't Mayfield anymore. This is fucking Stalingrad!

(WALLY EXITS.)

EDDIE: And good riddance.

WALLY (OFF IN THE DISTANCE): Asshole!

WARD (POINTING PIPE): Now Beaver, we'll give you an hour to clear out your things. Don't worry. I'm sure you'll find work. I hear they could use a few extras over on *Father Knows Best*.

BEAVER (RAVING, POINTING HIS FINGER): This is bullshit! You can't do this

cont'd on page twelve

Six Things To Do While Stuck In Traffic For Thirty-Six Hours

1. Completely reorganize your glove compartment—36 times.
2. Do makeovers on all the old ladies in the Senior Citizens Transport Van next to you.
3. Flirt with the gang members on the other side of the Senior Citizens Transport Van next to you.
4. Try to engage everybody in a little shirts and skins Bots Dots Swat.
5. Gnaw off your hind leg.
6. Order pizza and try to get Domino's to deliver to "The green Chevy just east of exit 45."

Five Little Known Demands In The SAG Negotiations

1. Sharon Stone no longer allowed to wear clothes in any film where she makes more than \$50,000.
2. Oliver Stone no longer allowed to direct in the nude in any film with a cast and/or crew.
3. Grips will now be known as gaffers and gaffers will be known as grips.
4. Any animal that bites a SAG member will be "put down," as will the animal's trainer.
5. XFL football players now included under the "Wrestling" umbrella.

Seven New Precious Moments Figurines That Reflect The Times We're Living In

1. "Me & Daddy Hacked The FBI's Website"
2. "Kathie Lee's Sweatshop Adventure"
3. "At The Rave"

The Short Lists

4. "Grandma's Medicinal Marijuana"
5. "Loving Is Sharing Communicable Diseases"
6. "Dawn's Early Retirement"
7. "Girl Rocking Preemie In Oxygen-Tented Cradle"

Ten Self Help Books We'd Like To See

1. "How To Make Your Laundry Do Itself In Ten Easy Steps"
2. "Self-Actualization For Dummies"
3. "Inhibition Unleashed"
4. "What To Expect When You're Not Expecting (Or, How To Answer The Age Old Question *So When Are You Having Kids?*)"
5. "What Color is Your Jello?"
6. "28 Days To A Better Ewe"
7. "Ten Stupid Things Self-Help Writers Make Money On"
8. "911: Dial Away Your Loneliness"
9. "Teasing Telemarketers With Tantalizing Talk"
10. "Life After *Survivor*"

Eight Numbers Between 1 And 1000 That I Am Not Thinking Of Right Now

1. Forty-two.
2. Two hundred thirteen.
3. One hundred eighty-seven.
4. Eighteen.
5. Nine hundred ten.
6. Seven hundred fifty-one.

7. Six hundred one.
8. Nine.

TV Guide Summaries Of Two Dick Wolf-Produced Television Police/Law Dramas If They Were Police/Law Comedies

"Law and Order": Green and Briscoe investigate the death of a prominent Wall Street broker. Special guests: The Weathergirls.

"Law and Order: Special Victims Unit": The unit is introduced to a new captain (Hal Linden); Munch and Fin investigate a Hooters.

Seven Things To Do While Waiting In Line

1. Play "Name That Tune" with the people around you. Winner gets to move up one space in the line.
2. The Hokey Pokey.
3. Use the opportunity to read aloud your Neo-Luddite manifesto through a portable loudspeaker.
4. Declare war on the line for Will Call.
5. Mentally calculate the percentage of your life you've spent waiting in lines.
6. Captivate the hearts of others in the queue with your stirring rendition of "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road."
7. Start a support group for people who have to wait in lines.

How To Get Your Ass Fired From Van Halen In Three Easy Steps

1. Become the lead singer.
2. Sing "Panama."
3. Repeat step two.

A One-Sided Dialogue I Composed In About Ten Minutes On A Three And A Half By Three And A Half Inch Sheet Of Memopad Paper

“Yes, Murphy. Please come in and sit down.

“I’d prefer if you sat. You see, Murphy, I have some rather bad news. As you know, our revenue has been sagging these last few quarters and we’ve had to do some belt-tightening.

“I know. I was disappointed to see the elimination of Import Beer Wednesdays too. Anyway, management had two options—eliminate Casual Fridays, or fire Murphy. The vote was unanimous.

“I’m your boss! Of course I can fire you. I can—

“What? A bomb in the building? Sure! You’ve planted a bomb in the building and you’re going to—

“What’s that in your hand? A TV remote? The detonator, huh. Well, then, you wouldn’t mind if I took it and pressed this button, here...”

A One-Sided Dialogue I Revamped In About Ten More Minutes After Cutting And Pasting The Previous Text And Modifying The Ending With Something A Bit More Ironic And Not Ironic In An Alanis Morissette Sort Of Way

“Yes, Murphy. Please come in and sit down.

“I’d prefer if you sat. You see, Murphy, I have some rather bad news. As you know, our revenue has been sagging these last few quarters and we’ve had to do some belt-tightening.

“I know. I was disappointed to see the elimination of Import Beer Wednesdays too. Anyway, I’m afraid management has decided to let me go.

“I know this means you’ll be unmanaged, unsupervised! I’ve no doubt you can manage yourself. Who was it that showed me how to save my email? You did. Who explained to me what all those buttons on the telephone were for? You again. You’ll do fine. “Me? Oh, I’ll find something. I hear Microsoft needs some quality management.”

Eight Characters Who Had No Business Being In The Military

1. Captain Crunch
2. Captain Kangaroo
3. Captain Beefheart
4. Captain Fantastic
5. Daryl Dragon
6. Cap’n Highliner
7. Beetle Bailey
8. Oliver North ★

Beaver, from ten

to me! I’m the star of this fucking puppet show! You’ll pay for this, mark my words! You haven’t seen the last of me yet! No sir! I’ll tell my friends! I’ll tell my lawyer! I’ll tell the world!

(BEAVER EXITS. SECONDS LATER, HE RETURNS.)

WARD (POINTS): Your room is *that* way, Beaver.

BEAVER (IRATE): And another thing. Fuck you! Fuck you—and the horse you rode in on! (LEAVES AGAIN.)

WARD (PAUSES, FINALLY): Eddie, go give the Beaver a little... severance pay. (EDDIE GETS UP, CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES. WARD GRABS EDDIE’S

SWEATER TO STOP HIM.) Go easy on the kneecaps. (EDDIE FOLLOWS. JUNE COMES TO WARD’S SIDE.)

JUNE: Ward, I’m worried about the Beaver. I think he might do something. You know, he’s still got that German machine gun collection of his.

WARD: Oh, I don’t think so dear. (OPENS AN ENVELOPE AND A PULLS OUT A FEW PHOTOS. LOOKS ONE UP AND DOWN.) You see, the Beaver has a way with little girls. And so will The Enquirer. ★

Contribution

Groucho Binks came to ePasquinade as a small, temperamental Siberian hamster. Today, he is a full-grown, mental Siberian hamster. We’ve trained Binks to run a maze but suspect he may be aware of the futility of his effort. Next up, we’re going to see if he can survive seventy-eight and a half straight hours of *Roseanne* reruns.