

As You See It: Jan. 29, 2010: Kids shouldn't be pawns in state budget battle

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Your series on children's health in Santa Cruz County was outstanding. The residents who have made local children's health coverage a reality are true heroes.

In signing last year's budget, the governor removed money for existing kids' state health insurance. When coverage for hundreds of thousands of California kids was about to actually end, a last-minute post-budget package saved the day. One budget later, we are back in the same place.

The governor projects almost \$7 billion of federal revenue that the non-partisan legislative analyst rates the chances of as almost non-existent. Without it, the governor has indicated he will again trigger cuts to children's health coverage.

It's outrageous that children and their families are being used as pawns in the latest budget battle. Last year's cooperation should be the guide to this year's deliberations. While a long-term solution is necessary, in the short-term California should not remove kids from health coverage.

John Laird, Santa Cruz

Service with a smile at Metro

We all know how busy Les White must be with plans to widen highways, but let us thank him for a thoughtful new service in which Metro guards now hand-deliver bicycles to smokers outside the building. It is a nice touch.

Likewise, we all appreciate the hands-off approach to our free-trade zone in bicycle lockers area.

Using the gloom, we have a pretty decent "hit ratio" when pestering your patrons for an extra dollar or two "for the bus-ride home." It's real good to have a neighbor like Metro.

And last, all of us do appreciate the "heads-up" when your staff and guards tells those few paying passengers to call "PD" when they've got some kind of "problem."

Service with a smile. We promise to check out your buses one day real soon and see you there. You do ride the bus, don't you?

Jim Rothstein, Santa Cruz

Columnist owes surfer an apology

I am a faithful reader of your newspaper and of Neil Pearlberg's *The Perfect Write*. I have a 14-year-old granddaughter who surfs all the Santa Cruz breaks -- longboard, shortboard, and tandem. She is sponsored by O'Neill and other companies, and rides in the wake of the "pioneering women" of Pearlberg's recent article about the women who surfed the "then barely ridden waves of the Pacific."

I find it sad that "The Perfect Write" was far from perfect when it not only left out one of that early group, Mary McGranahan -- who still has her 9-foot wooden board in her garage -- but credited her comment to Jack O'Neill

about his early wetsuit "Jack, this rubber suit of yours is never going to fly" to someone else. I know how angry I would be if my granddaughter's accomplishments were credited to another surfer. I think an apology is due to Mary McGranahan, that Neil Pearlberg get his facts straight and go on being the "perfect writer" that we have enjoyed.

Carol Roberts, Santa Cruz

Supreme Court makes one of worst decisions

I am outraged by the Supreme Court decision on Citizens United v. FEC. This is probably the worst Supreme Court decision since Dred Scott in 1857. It strikes at the very core of our democracy as now corporations can literally buy elections and politicians. Please support the Fair Elections Now Act HR1826 & S752 to publicly finance congressional elections and get corporate special interest money out of the political process. I also recommend supporting Rep. Alan Grayson's "Save Our Democracy" reform package HRs 4431 to 4435. Last, I support a constitutional amendment along the lines recommended by www.movetoamend.org. It points out the following: "... the Supreme Court ruled that corporations are persons, entitled by the U.S. Constitution to buy elections and run our government. Human beings are people; corporations are legal fictions. The Supreme Court is misguided in principle, and wrong on the law. In a democracy, the people rule."

James Lindsay, Scotts Valley

Who is looking out for unborn children?

I read with great interest your series on Healthy Kids and their current financial situation. Yes, it is true. There are currently more than 4,000 children living in Santa Cruz County without health-care coverage. And yes, many of them live with chronic health conditions which necessitate regular visits to a doctor. But what about the 1.37 million fetuses that are aborted each year? Who is looking out for these unborn children? It is important that when we refer to healthy kids, ages newborn to age 5, we consider the needs of the unborn, too.

Natalie Piazza, age 13, Corralitos

What on earth happened to Garfield?

What is this filth? What happened to the comic I once loved as a child? What is happening in the world as I know it? I tried ignoring it, but this has gone on too far. Garfield must be stopped. He has sold out. Garfield, why? Why is Jon Arbuckle dating Liz, the veterinarian? How has this happened? Where is the humor that used to be there? I demand the Sentinel take down Garfield. It is a right of all people to read the comics they like, and Garfield should not be on that list anymore. Garfield must be ended.