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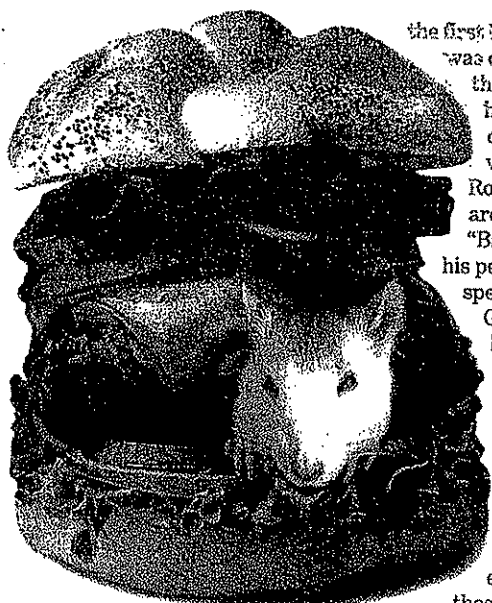
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THAT'S NO SEVERED RAT'S HEAD—OH, WAIT, YES IT IS

A Toronto woman sued McDonald's after her daughter bit into a Big Mac, only to find the severed head of a rat inside, which was later described in her claim as "complete with eyes, teeth, nose and whiskers." The outcome is still pending, and that's really all the time we'd like to spend thinking about that, thank you very much.

CITY COUNCILLOR MOST OBVIOUSLY AFFECTED BY THE SUDDEN RISE IN WORLD PAPER CLIP PRICES

Following an examination of office expenses submitted by City of Toronto politicians in



the first half of 2001, it was discovered that the spending habits of our councillors vary wildly: whereas Rob Ford, known around city hall as "Baby Hughie" for his petulant conduct, spent a total of \$8, George Mammoliti, councillor for York West, spent in excess of \$43,000. When asked by *Toronto Sun* reporters about the gulf between his expenses and those of his significantly more frugal colleague, Mammoliti snapped, somewhat illogically: "I'd have to ask a councillor like that what the hell he does for a living! I work for a living."

THOSE LAZY, GOOD-FOR-NOTHING, SLACKER MICROBIOLOGISTS HAVE GOT TO GO!

In October, two days after getting up close and personal with the anthrax scare on a visit to New York, Mike Harris et al. laid off the province's five top biohazard scientists. It might have occurred to them that this particular moment in history, when a panic-stricken public is regularly mistaking such substances as talcum powder for the deadly spore, was not the best time for such a move.

Defending the decision, a Terry spokesperson said the scientists had nothing to do. "Do we want five people sitting around waiting for work to arrive?" Actually, we're OK with that.

BEST MOCKERY OF OUR SECRET BALLOT SYSTEM, AS EXECUTED BY A SMUG, VINDICTIVE GRIT BASTARD

In May, an 81-year-old World War II veteran by the name of Jim Baxter wrote a letter to his Scarborough MP, Tom Wappel, in which he asked Wappel to help him secure veteran's benefits. The good minister wrote back, not only declining but asking the legally blind Baxter why he hadn't voted Liberal in the



last election. "How is it," the letter queried, "that you are writing me for help if you did not think enough of my abilities to justify voting for me?" When the unfortunate loaded missive found its way onto the front page of *The Toronto Star*, Wappel initially responded by saying, "I can decide who to help and not to help." After a much deserved tongue-lashing from the prime minister, however, he finally apologized.

CONDUCT UNBECOMING A HOMICIDAL SPOUSE

An Oshawa woman, convicted in 1997 of attempting to kill her unfaithful husband, sued him for alimony in Feb-

D F S S

Best specs Eyes on Church Optical is maker of the fanciful frame, creating to match any material, from denim to gingham to the wood grain of your clogs. 483 1/2 Church St., 416-962-3937.



Best place to mine for turquoise The girl's best friend of the moment is found in all its splendour in umpteen forms—Tibetan, fetish, native, make-your-own—at Courage My Love. 14 Kensington Ave., 416-979-1992.

Best place to try on everything in the store Zara's double-sized change room provides ample space for a tagalong arbiter. Its runway rip-offs evolve weekly, so you'll be well supplied. 50 Bloor St. W., 416-916-2401.

Most reliable dry cleaner Dove Cleaners relieves you of that rueful post-party trauma by returning your satins, velvets and suedes looking as good as new. 1560 Yonge St., 416-413-7900; Scotia Plaza, 40 King St. W., 416-869-3000.

Best incentive for conceiving The label does not lie: Yummy Mummy maternity wear is as unfrumpy as it gets. At Lillith. 541 Queen St. W., 416-504-5353.

Biggest savings on menswear Holt Renfrew's Now or Never Sale (Jan. 26-Feb. 10), offering up to 70 per cent off, and Tailored to Measure, with 20 per cent off tailored apparel, are exec favourites. 50 Bloor St. W., 416-922-2333.

Biggest savings on womenswear Line-ups are a half-mile long outside Lida B-day's twice-yearly sample sale, but the savings are irresistible. Stock up on the little black (and white and red and brown) dress. 70 Claremont St., 416-603-7661.

Best-kept fashion secret (until now) The unconventional tweeds and silks of Toronto-based Mercy (416-703-6635) are available at Holt's World Design Lab.

Toughest boulder holders The minions at Sophia's Lingerie will fit you, Old World style, into their Euro armour. Stand up straight, bend from the waist... 527 Danforth Ave., 416-461-6113.

Prettiest pocketbooks The best new addition to Yorkville is Augustina, whose handbags from the ateliers of London, Paris and New York save PYTs the jet lag. 138 Cumberland St., 416-922-248.

Funkiest shoes New Age spats, fox fur snags and sleek stilettos are Jumas's stock-in-trade. 655 College St., 416-530-0207.

Most decadent vintage From Pucci to Pulitzer: Shelley Pufak of Print Vintage gleans only the most gleaming second-hand stuff. 834A College St., 416-504-2267.

Cheapest outdoor gear Head-to-toe camouflage, bullet-holed khakis, reams of plaid flannel and waterproof anything can be yours for a steal at King Sol Outdoor. 639 Queen St. W., 416-504-3333.

Hippest frock designers Damzels in This Dress injects colour, humour and cheek into every concoction. Available at Lillith, 541 Queen St. W., 416-504-5353, and Psyche, 352 Queen St. W., 416-599-4882.

Best positioned to capitalize on the Moulin Rouge craze Hoax Couture has been fashioning corsets for a decade. Now the au moment cinchers are facing a cancan fine of customers. 114 Cumberland Ave., 416-929-4629.

Craftiest cobbler Nick's Shoe Repair will reattach those estranged kitten heels, and reproduce that pair of Gucci boots you spotted in *InStyle*—for less than \$300. 169 Dupont St., 416-924-5930.

