



THE RETURN of the LAME ALIEN SWIMSUIT ISSUE!

In the early years of the second decade of the 21st Century, our species is certainly on a roll. Our greed and avarice are consuming the rest of the planet at an alarming rate, birds are falling out of the sky, frogs are growing extra legs and weather patterns have become strange and unpredictable. A few weeks ago it was warmer in Caribou, Maine than Miami Beach.

The World is going to Hell... Isn't it time for the return of "THE LAME ALIEN SWIMSUIT ISSUE?"

Conservatives hate Liberals, Liberals hate Conservatives, the Arabs hate the Jews and the Jews hate the Arabs. It's a sure bet that of the almost 7 billion people who now inhabit Planet Earth, ALL of us hate SOMEBODY. But what's important is that we keep buying products from China who are about to have all of us for breakfast.

And some mystics and prophets and even a few respected scientists think we've already done enough harm to the planet to cook us to a Venus-like hot cinder in a matter of a thousand years or so.

The World is going to Hell...

Isn't it time for the return of "THE LAME ALIEN SWIMSUIT ISSUE?"



"Klaatu barada nikto."

TAKE IT or LEAVE IT...

By Jim Stiles

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When the idea of a L.A.S.S.I re-birth first came to me in October, I checked the archives to see when the last semi-nude/get weird issue ran. Maybe it's too soon, I thought. It could generate mass hysteria and social disorientation.

I was shocked to realize that morphed scantily-clad images of Orrin Hatch and Terry Tempest Williams had not seen the light of an alien sky in 11 years. ELEVEN YEARS.

Imagine that...and what a simple, golden time it was, when our biggest worry was the Monica Lewinsky affair. Bill Clinton was still president and at the center of his own alien experience. In fact, it was February 12, 1999, just days after the Lame Alien Swimsuit Issue bid its first farewell, that Clinton was finally acquitted by the U.S. Senate. How I miss those days.

Now in the late winter of 2011, as we wrestle with issues and crises that seem beyond our ability to fix, maybe it's time to pause and say, "what the hell...let Spock fix it."

There is still a great deal of serious content in this issue...well, okay...some serious content and, in fact, the reader should keep in mind that this is, above all, a 'lame' issue. The history behind that title and its transmogrification follows. Really, it's all Dan O'Connor's fault.

Origins of the LASSI...

When I started the Zephyr in 1989, I had no idea what I was doing and no equipment not to do it with. I didn't even own a computer. I had to carry hand-scribbled headline type to the Printing Place in Moab where Marge Fleenor humored me and transferred my words to clean type in the fonts and sizes I specified. But I had no graphic skills whatsoever and made do with my cartoons to distract my readers from The Z's decidedly amateurish look.

One day, a couple years into this enterprise, I received a manila envelope in the mail from reader/subscriber Dan O'Connor in Leavenworth, Washington. How he'd found The Zephyr was a mystery, but Dan—a graphics designer—apparently either sensed my pain or my lack of shame and created some new banners for the front page. He attached a note that said something like, "Please consider using these in the future...your banner sucks." He was right, of

course, his new offerings were brilliant and to this day, I use the front page graphics that Dan sent me over the next few years.

At the end of the first year's publication—we did 11 issues a year for the first seven years—I was exhausted. As I contemplated the February content, my



heart wasn't in it. I knew that whatever effort I made, the results would be lame, and so it became the "First Annual Lame Issue."

I got away with that for a couple years but my advertisers began to grumble. Why are we paying you to produce something that, by your own admission, is not worth looking at?

I thought my candor alone would carry the day but clearly I was wrong. At that moment, luck and Dan stepped in. A few months earlier, Dan had again sent me one of his unsolicited contributions (seen here for the first time in years). He rightly acknowledged

THE CANYON COUNTRY ZEPHYR

Planet Earth Edition

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since 1989

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that Aliens of extraterrestrial origin controlled The Zephyr and that I had willingly aligned myself with these green creatures to take over Moab, Utah. When I published Dan's tabloid cover, my readers were simply relieved that the story was now out there in the public domain—none of them seemed surprised at all.

So as I contemplated the future of The Lame Issue, it occurred to me that if I could pull these seemingly disparate ideas together, then throw in some bikinis and speedos for extra titillation, I would have found the perfect Final Issue of the Year theme.

Dan went to work; the timing could not have been better. With the Lewinsky Affair gripping the nation and the world and with some interesting local color ro boot, the first Lame Alien Swimsuit Issue was an unqualified success.

We stayed with it for three years and could probably have gone longer, but we decided that leaving at the top of our game was better than being asked to go later.

Now, more than a decade later, we're back. I've reprised many of Dan's original B&W morphs and given them a bit of monochromatic color and have tried my own hand at this as well (though clearly Dan O is The Man.).

I've even considered making ALL future issues a derivative of this one—is there any point whatsoever in being serious anymore? We shall see.

In any case, we urge you to enjoy the return of the Lame Alien Swimsuit Issue and, in fact, warn that those who fail to appreciate this issue and recognize its wit and charm will be dealt with accordingly.

We control your vertical. We control your horizontal.

Do not Resist.

POPULATION 2010 and the MIGRATION WEST

The U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 2, requires a census of the country's population every decade to apportion the House of Representative seats among the 50 states. Last month, the Census Bureau announced its results.

As of April 1, 2010, the population of the United States was 308,745,53

(Here is the updated number, as of 19:18 UTC (EST+5) Jan 22, 2011: U.S. 311,936,195)

The figure represented an increase of 9.7 percent from 2000 when the U.S. resident population reached 281,421,906. While it was noted that the increase was the slowest since the 1930s, it still meant that there are 27 million more of us than a decade ago, all living in the same space, though the distribution has shifted dramatically. Here in the West, the population grew by 8,747,621.

In the arid American Southwest, the numbers are striking

Utah: 23.8% growth to 2,783,885 from 2,333,169 in 2000

Arizona: 24.6% growth to 6,392,817 from 5,130,632 in 2000.

Nevada: 35.1% growth to 2,700,551 from 1,998,257 in 2000.

New Mexico: 13.2 % growth to 2,059,179 from 1,819,045 in 2000.

Colorado: 16.9% growth to 5,029,196 from 4,381,281 in 2000

In Utah for example, the population has almost doubled since I first showed up in the late 70s. And what's next? More of the same. Except more so.

Utah is expected to grow by another 1.2 million in the next decade to 3,485,367.

And Arizona, one of the driest states in America? Its population is expected to explode, to 10,712,397. An increase of more than 4 million people

And they could not pick a worse place to migrate to. There is a growing consensus that cyclical climate

patterns, exacerbated by the effects of global warming, mean increasing drought in the Southwest, where water demands are already exceeding limited supplies.

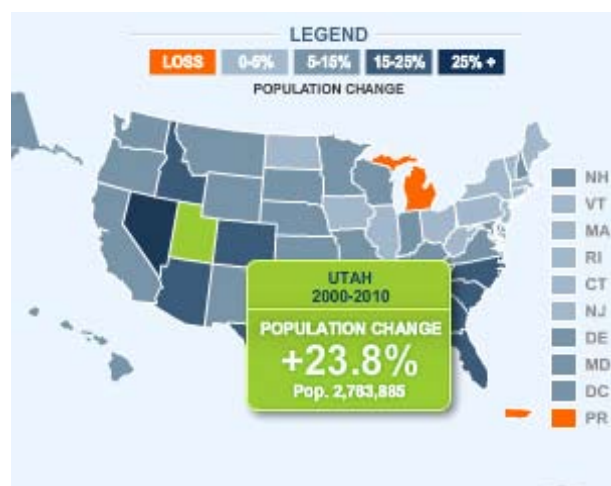
It's—you know?—the desert.

According to Richard Seager of Columbia University's Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory, in an interview with the Associated Press, "The bottom line message for the average person and also for the states and federal government is that they'd better start planning for a Southwest region in which the water resources are increasingly stretched."

Seager and his associates, who prepared their report for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2007 believe that the drought could continue for the next century and beyond.

Other reports reach the same conclusions. At the University of Arizona, climatologists report that "both projections and observations indicate residents of the arid Southwest can count on more extremes in years to come."

Still Americans keep making the exodus West, in unfathomable numbers. Much of the increase can be attributed to our insatiable love affair with the American West and its stunning scenery. Watching cow-



boy movies and *National Geographic* documentaries just doesn't satisfy us like it once did. Everyone wants a mountain or desert view from the condo these days. No one can question their sincerity but these new immigrants from the east just don't "get" the West, especially its deserts.

All of these Urban Migrants want to be a part of something that doesn't exist anymore.

Peter Gleick, the president of the Pacific Institute, has studied water resources around the world. In the arid U.S. Southwest, he notes that recognizing and even conceding the problems of drought, coupled with a booming and consumptive population, has done little to create solutions. He says, "Psychologically and socially, it is hard for millions of people who love this region to admit that it is fundamentally dry and that the rules for building, living, and working there must be different from those in the wet regions where most of these same people were born and raised."

Take Flagstaff, Arizona for example. Thomas Whitham, director of the Merriam-Powell Center for Environmental Research at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, warns, "If we continue to draw down water to maintain our lifestyle with its exorbitant use of water, we can effectively turn a hundred-year drought into a millennium-level drought, which far worsens the community and ecosystem consequences."

Flagstaff's population has doubled in 20 years to 60,000. Its metropolitan area, Coconino County and adjacent communities, had grown to 116,640 by 2000,

a 44 percent increase from 1980 and is expected to reach 168,827 by 2020—another 52,000 residents, all of them placing an even greater demand on resources that continue to dwindle.

Other projections call for the Flagstaff metropolitan area to reach as many as 189,868 by 2030 and 235,707 by 2050. Flagstaff city could hit 124,840 by 2050.

The story is the same across the West. A Brookings Institution report claims that by 2030, nearly 45 percent of homes in the West will have been built since the Millennium, or almost half the homes across the West in 30 years. *Almost half.*

All of these Urban Migrants want to be a part of something that doesn't exist anymore. It's an interesting irony that almost all "New Westerners" rail against the "redneck" mentality that used to govern the rural west before we came along to save it. But at the same time, we long for the West the way it was 40 years ago, when the 'rednecks' were running the show. Go figure.

New Westerners come to live as permanent tourists. They've come here to be closer to the beauty they have admired for so long and rail against those who extract natural resources from it. But at the same time, they have no problem consuming those resources. They oppose oil/gas production but heat their new homes and power their hybrid SUVs. They condemn timber extraction but build new 4000 square foot McMansions in the desert and forests of the West. They oppose new dams and water pipelines but xeriscape their lawns and think they are good conservationists.

And then they blame the old timers for not being progressive enough.

As the West becomes less of what it was, what really made the difference?

Us, *en masse*. Millions of us. We came here to save it and subsequently ruined it with our sheer numbers and our desire to bring our urban habits with us. I doubt you could get a mussel shell dish in Flag 40 years ago, but who'd be willing to trade a seafood dish for some real peace and quiet? In today's rush to be part of a myth, I'm not sure anybody notices.

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/>
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17967097/ns/us_news-environment/
<http://www.onearth.org/article/cadillac-desert-revisited>
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/04/070405-us-drought_2.html
<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/phoenix/reports/ncawss/AppE.pdf>
http://www.newwest.net/topic/article/exurbs_weigh_heavily_on_the_west/

THE PEPCID COMPLETE CONSPIRACY

Putting *The Zephyr* together has been giving me heartburn for 22 years and I have always been able to count on my beloved Pepcid AC Complete chewable tablets for instant relief.

Just now, my computer crashed and for a long hour, until my better half woke up and saved the day, I was in panic mode. I need my mint-flavored Pepcids!

But last summer, they began to vanish from store shelves across America. from Utah to California to Kentucky to Kansas to New Mexico.

Now they are GONE.

COMPLETELY.

No explanation. Nothing.

Talk about an alien conspiracy. If you know what's happened to my beloved heartburn killers, please let me know. I'm burping even as I type this.

Help?