

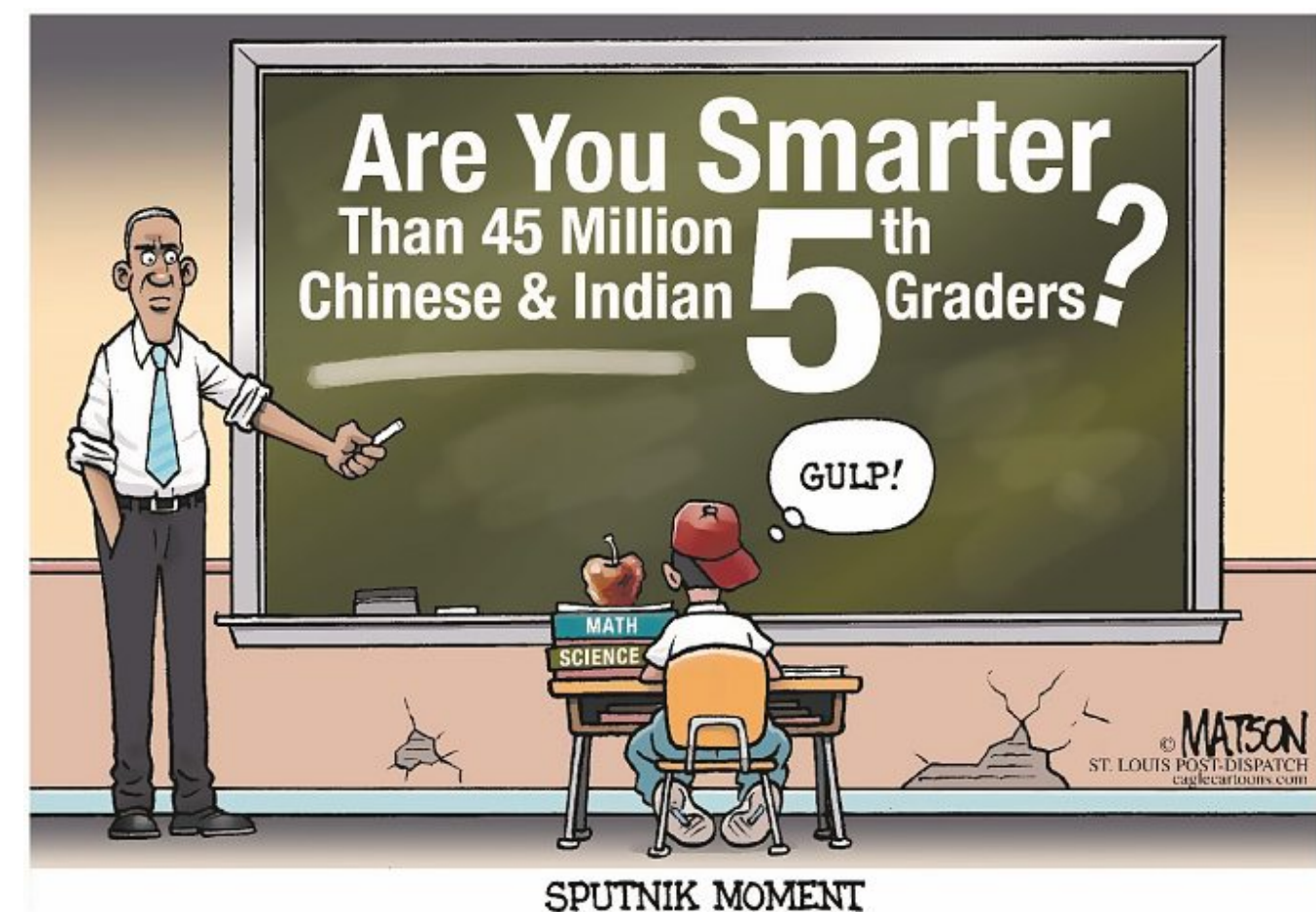
“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievance.”

First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

# Opinion

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## YOUR VOICE

### Warm Sands sex sting Sex in public is not OK

Let me get this straight. Officers in the Palm Springs Police Department are the bad people because one or two said something that his clients may find offensive. So that makes Roger Tansey's clients innocent?

Mr. Tansey, it is not OK to have sex in public, not heterosexual sex, not homosexual sex. I believe my reaction to seeing your client's actions would have elicited a much stronger response from me and others who think that public sex is not OK. I applaud the officers' restraint, having to sit there hour after hour and watch your clients' disgusting behavior.

Let us get back to the issue at hand — were Tansey's clients having sex in public? The real issue is not whether your clients were offended or felt targeted; the real issue is your clients were breaking the law, be it in the Warm Sands area or our public park bathrooms. Your tactics of trying to confuse the situation offend me. Your clients offend me, not that you care, but I am not the only person of this mind. It is not OK!

Michelle Martin Palm Springs

### Raising children Kids need more activities

I believe that more recreational activities should be provided in the desert so kids will have more things to do in their free time instead of resorting to crimes such as violence, gangs, drugs, etc.

The desert has so many teenagers with little recreational activities for them to use and I believe that by providing more things for them to do will dramatically cut down on drugs along with many other crimes in the desert, making our desert safer and more fun.

Dylan Prouty La Quinta

### Rep. Mary Bono Mack District has changed since '08

In your lead article about Mary Bono Mack on Jan. 18, you quoted Jack Pitney, an "expert" on congressional Republicans. In explaining why Mary can't "veer too far to the right" he said, "She currently represents a district that that gave 52 percent of its vote to Obama."

That may have been true 26 months ago, before 15 percent unemployment in Riverside County, before housing prices dropped more than 30 percent and before gas went to \$3.50. Does anyone really think that Obama would get anywhere near 52 percent of the vote today?

Shouldn't Mary bring her politics more in line with reality and listen to her constituents?

Richard Fox La Quinta

## THUMBS UP THUMBS DOWN

### Thumbs Up: Landing 'The Big 4' metal bands another coup for Goldenvoice

The Coachella Valley continues to attract big names in the music world, particularly at the Empire Polo Grounds in Indio.

The already successful Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival and Stagecoach Country Music Festival will hit the stages in April and May, respectively.

But Los Angeles-based Goldenvoice has nailed down four more big names in the music world: heavy metal bands Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer and Anthrax.

The four bands performed as "The Big 4" in seven concerts in Europe last year and were rumored to be planning a U.S. tour. But Goldenvoice promoter Paul Tollett said their April concert will be their only U.S. event. He said snagging the bid over other concert promoters is like "winning the lottery."

So The Big 4 will hit the stage on April 23 at the Empire Polo Club in Indio. We have a quick suggestion, though: How about we just call it Metal Fest? Sounds a little more catchy.

With the two major successes already rooted at the Empire Polo Grounds and now another major concert on the way — all over three consecutive weekends — it would be great to see even more music events at the site.

How about a Folk Fest? Or a Pop Fest? Or a Classic Fest? Congratulations and keep up the good work.



**JACK GRUBER** GANNETT NEWS SERVICE  
Metallica (from left) Robert Trujillo, James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich and Kirk Hammett. The heavy metal band will perform on April 23 at the Empire Polo Club in Indio along with Anthrax, Megadeth and Slayer.

### Thumbs Up: College-bound students get a push to apply for aid

It's been said repeatedly that much of the Coachella Valley's economic success depends on valley students graduating from high school and seeking higher education.

So we're enthusiastic about the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership's "Battle of the High Schools."

The competition will award valley schools that have the most seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

As part of its ongoing mission to help advance a college-educated work force for the future economy of the Coachella Valley, CVEP will award more than \$10,000 in cash prizes and gift certificates to schools and students.

### Thumbs Up: Lorri McCune leaves big shoes for Palm Springs Unified to fill

It'll be a shame to see Lorri McCune go.

The Palm Springs Unified School District Superintendent announced Wednesday she will retire at the end of the school year.

McCune, 58, joined the district in 2006 and committed to stay five years, she said.

"I believe we have systems and personnel in place to keep things moving ahead just as we've been doing," she said.

In a letter sent to staff Wednesday, McCune expressed pride in the district's accomplishments — improving student achievement, building new schools and expanding arts and technology despite three years of "massive budget cuts."

McCune has performed extremely well in that position, which is responsible for educating 24,000 students, despite the budgetary odds.

We wish her luck in her future endeavors and urge the school district to search wide for a worthy replacement to fill those large shoes.



McCune

## Coming Sunday



LEZLIE STERLING SACRAMENTO BEE

The Sacramento Redevelopment Agency invested \$5.7 million in taxpayer dollars in a "mermaid bar" a block from the Capitol.

**Should redevelopment be dismantled?**

To help close the state's \$25 billion budget gap, Gov. Jerry Brown has proposed a constitutional amendment to stop more than 400 redevelopment agencies from committing to new projects.

- Assemblyman Chris Norby, a Brea Republican, writes in support of this idea, cites a Sacramento "mermaid bar" funded by redevelopment as an example of what's wrong with the program.
- John Wohlmuth, city manager of Palm Desert, which has the 10th largest redevelopment budget in the state, defends the program. He says that without redevelopment, the Coachella Valley would not be the kind of place residents have come to love.
- The Desert Sun editorial reflects on a visit by a dozen local leaders representing five desert cities and Riverside County.

### Thumbs Up: New COD campus good news for Indio, not so good for Greyhound

We're excited that the city of Indio and College of the Desert are partnering in the community college's expansion into downtown Indio.

The proposed project on Oasis Street would include a multistory, 40,000-square-foot education center that could accommodate up to 3,000 students; 10,000 square feet of retail space on the first floor; and a parking lot.

"The campus will make a statement, a very profound statement. This will be a campus in the community for the community," said Edwin Deas, vice president for business affairs with College of the Desert. The city, which originally purchased the property with \$2.9 million in redevelopment funding, also has agreed to spend \$2.9 million for off-site improvements such as streets, curbs and gutters, fire hydrants and bus benches.



RENDERING COURTESY OF THE CITY INDIO  
Construction of the College of the Desert Indio campus is scheduled to start in March 2012 and end in 2013.

While we look forward to the new COD campus — with construction set to begin in March 2012 and end in July 2013 — we are concerned that Greyhound, which will lose its building to demolition in the process, keeps getting bounced around the Coachella Valley.

Its customers deserve consistency and we hope the company's next stop is its final stop for the valley.

## MYDESERT POLL

### Today's question

What do you plan to attend this weekend?  
**Arts festival, Koch protest, Circus Vargas or something else?**  
To vote, go to [mydesert.com/opinion](http://mydesert.com/opinion)

### Friday's poll results

195 votes cast as of 5 p.m.

Do you trust smart meters?

**22.6%** ..... **Yes**  
**77.4%** ..... **No**